

II.

The concept of creative placemaking in Visegrad countries

Creative placemaking is a **process** of deploying art and culture for the development of places. Ann Markusen and Anne Gadwa, in an eponymous paper written for The Mayors' Institute on City Design,¹ describe it in the following way: *"In creative placemaking, partners from public, private, non-profit, and community sectors strategically shape the physical and social character of a neighborhood, town, city, or region around arts and cultural activities. Creative placemaking animates public and private spaces, rejuvenates structures and streetscapes, improves local business viability and public safety (...) In turn, these creative locales foster entrepreneurs and cultural industries that generate jobs and income, spin off new products and services, and attract and retain unrelated businesses and skilled workers."*

Creative placemaking is a process that shares objectives with many official policies and public strategies, such as social and sustainable urbanism, cultural and arts policies, support for cultural and creative industries (CCIs) and clusters, public space engagement and revitalizations of brownfields. It is a process that dwells on the specific character of a place and addresses specific problems in its immediate surrounding. Therefore creative placemaking is not a policy, but it depends on others like the policies for cultural, spatial, social and infrastructural development.

That is why creative placemaking is examined through the existing art-and-culture aspects of various policies and strategies here. It is worthwhile to notice, though, how the underlying philosophy of creative placemaking enters national and European policies. This is both obvious in several of the below-mentioned policies in all Visegrad countries and the efforts to create a full-fledged European Urban Agenda. The EU regional policy, whose part is urban agenda, acknowledges that: *"the various dimensions of urban life – environmental, economic, social and cultural – are interwoven and success in urban development can only be achieved through an integrated approach. Measures concerning physical urban renewal must be combined with those promoting education, economic development, social inclusion and environmental protection. It also calls for strong partnerships between local citizens, civil society, industry and various levels of government."*²

Even though the concept of placemaking is relatively new in Central Europe, the process has already been taking place in many cities in a variety of models across the municipality business-community cooperation axis. Revitalization projects are thriving in Central European cities and localities which undergo de-industrialization, leaving many vacant spaces

1 Markusen, A. and Gadwa, A. (2010), Creative Placemaking. A White Paper for The Mayors' Institute on City Design, Markusen Economic Research Services and Metris Arts Consulting

2 European Commission, The EU Urban Agenda, Available from: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/policy/themes/urban-development/agenda/

suitable for community and cultural undertakings. As discussed below, some governments in the Visegrad countries have already recognized that CCLs and the re-using of urban infrastructure can contribute to economic competitiveness, livability, and sustainability of a place. This introductory chapter is an endeavor to trace creative placemaking both at the strategic layer of policies, programs and initiatives and at the practical level of concrete projects, be it public or private. Examples presented in this section are not an exhaustive list of all fascinating ventures that are taking place in the region of the Visegrad Four.

Czech Republic

The relationship between culture and urban development has been traditionally perceived through the lens of tourism and the profit it generates for the national and regional budgets. Although the general understanding of culture in policy documents has not changed much, there are municipalities and cities where cultural policies have recently started reflecting the need of involving cultural institutions and artists into strategies of urban and economic development.

The most recent **Implementation Plan of the National Cultural Policy for 2015–2020** mentions two objectives inseparably related to creative placemaking. First, it acknowledges the importance of the use of cultural heritage and cultural activities, services and estates for the economic development and increasing competitiveness. The Ministry of Culture, in cooperation with the Ministry of Industry and Trade, plans to do this by preparing a strategy for the support of cultural and creative industries, which should be connected with a national strategy for supporting the arts. The Implementation Plan also foresees the establishment of incentive and support programs and projects to boost the art market and related business activities. Furthermore, as of 2017, a dedicated agency will be established in order to raise awareness about the CCLs and provide information about programs for their support. However, the verbal recognition of CCLs is not backed by a strong budget.

The second objective with placemaking relevance refers to a more effective use of cultural heritage for cultural services to the population. Here, the Ministry of Culture recognized the potential of infrastructure (immovable monuments) as a place, where cultural and education events could be organized to strengthen local population's ties with the region's history and culture. Such places could also "serve as a substitute for the lack of infrastructure for cultural services (concerts, exhibitions, lectures, etc.)." To implement that, the ministry intends to cooperate with local authorities and owners of cultural heritage. However praiseworthy is this ambition, the only funds available for this priority in the Im-

plementation Plan are for the analysis of the current state of the use of immovable monuments and heritage institutions and recommendations for improvement to be conducted in 2017.

Similarly, the **Policy for Spatial Development**, adopted in 2008 by the Ministry of Regional Development (and last amended in 2015), mentions as one of its core objectives the "creation of preconditions for multipurpose use of abandoned sites and space (i.e. the brownfields of industrial, agricultural, military and other origin) and the economical use of the built-up area (support for reconstruction and revitalization of redevelopment areas)." Revitalization projects have had their place in the 2007–2013 operational programs under the EU structural funds.³ For 2014–2020, the Integrated Regional Operational Program has community-led local development as one of its priorities, whereas URBACT III, another EU program, financially supports experience sharing among European cities, which aim at sustainable development.

- According to the estimates of the Czech Statistical Office and The National Information and Consulting Centre for Culture (NIPOS), in 2013 the production worth in the cultural sector was CZK 203.3 billion (2.11% of the total national production) and the gross value added was CZK 82.8 billion (2.26% of total GVA generated in the economy). The GDP generated in cultural sector can be estimated at CZK 55.9 billion, which equals to 1.37% of total GDP.⁴
- A 2013 research commissioned by the Prague City Hall estimated that the sectors of cultural and creative industries contribute to more than 10% of GVA generated in Prague (3.8% for the cultural and 6.4% creative industries respectively), while the capital city accounts for 53.5% of the total Czech GVA generated in the cultural and creative industries. According to the study, there are around 125,000 persons working in the creative and cultural industries in Prague, which represents approximately 14% of Prague workforce.⁵

On the regional and local level there several examples of cities which made culture a means of their development strategies. In Prague, the interest in creative placemaking is on the rise since the establishment of the Prague Institute of Planning and Development,

3 In 2007–2013 programming framework these were the Operational Programme Enterprise and Innovation, Operational Programme Environment, Operational Programme Rural Development and the Regional Operational Programmes

4 The National Information and Consulting Centre for Culture, Czech Statistical Office (2013), The Results of the Culture Account, p. 11

5 Němec, M. (2013), Význam kulturních a kreativních průmyslů v Evropské unii, České republice a HL. m. Praze

which gives the process a chance to be translated into official strategies. The Institute is one of the key influencers of the public debate on city-related policies and strategies. Its focus on culture-driven urban development was reinforced by the creation of the office for cultural and creative industries (k r e p) in 2015. The office was tasked to draft a new cultural strategy for the capital city, one that would rely not only on traditional forms of culture and art, but also on live culture, creative industries and their interaction with public spaces. The working version of the strategy, published in February 2016, envisages Prague as a creative metropolis, whose brand and strength will be informed by modern art, culture and arts in public spaces.⁶ The Prague Institute of Planning and Development also prepared a strategy for a Creative Cluster in the heart of the city as well as a Creative Quarter in one of its districts.

In Brno, the second biggest Czech city, the economic and social impact of culture was brought to the foreground with the advent of a new local government in 2014. This is in part due to the Deputy Mayor for Culture, Matěj Hollan. He was elected from a grass-roots political movement “Žít Brno” that perceives culture as a development tool. In line with that conviction, the Deputy Mayor raised the budget for culture, established a “cultural parliament” (a broad debate platform for stakeholders in arts and culture) and planned drafting a cultural strategy for the city. Furthermore, Brno introduced creative vouchers in order to strengthen the cooperation between local entrepreneurs and professionals from creative sectors, and it plans to open a creative center in a former prison building. Recent developments in Brno and other cities where art and culture have gained on importance (such as Pilsen, Ostrava, Zlín) are described in details in the chapter “Creative incubators, hubs and quarters” by Tereza Chrástová.

Across the Czech Republic, there is a significant number of institutions and activists that advocate and cultivate both local and national development by means of arts and culture. The Art Institute – Theatre Institute is a state-funded organization founded by the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic. Among others, the Institute provides the exchange of information and experiences between artistic fields, information and advisory service, and pursued educational activities. One of its recent works includes a certified methodology for calculating the economic impact of cultural organizations and activities, described in detail in Chapter VI. There are several bottom-up initiatives and individual opinion-makers that actively promote the utilization of the CCLs in improving urban life.

Strong advocates of placemaking processes are Adam Gebrian, a popular Czech architect and theoretician who cultivates public debate on public space (e.g. via a video series Ge-

6 Prague Institute of Planning and Development (2016), Draft of the Strategic Plan for the Capital City of Prague

brian vs.) and Ondřej Kobza, an animator of art and culture in public space who successfully transferred the topic of culture and public spaces into broader public debate. There are several well-established international events, keeping track of and discussing recent trends in urban planning and the promotion of culture. They include 4+4 Days in Motion (taking place in vacant building), the reSITE conference, neighborhood festivities such as Zažit město jinak (Different City Experience) during which locals claim back the streets, Open House Prague that makes various buildings open to the public for several days and the Night of Literature which endorses Prague UNESCO titles of City of Literature. Other initiatives are linked to a particular physical space in the city, such as Klinika — a de facto squat that functions as a cultural and commune center and which provokes national debate on the civic appropriation of abandoned and unused buildings.

Hungary

Creative placemaking in Hungary bears many similarities to developments in the Czech Republic, with most activities concentrated in the capital city. Hungarian policies also reflect the change of narrative toward the economy of culture, which often emanate from EU policies.

The culture and art-related policies are distributed among several actors coordinated by the Office of the Government: general cultural affairs are dealt with by the state secretary at the Ministry of Human Resources, film industry by the Ministry of Economic Development, heritage sites by the Prime Minister’s Office and regional governments. Funds distribution is mainly a responsibility of the National Cultural Fund, whereas the Hungarian Academy of Arts is playing an important role both in regard to agenda and financial resources. Moreover, local governments receive funds for the implementation of “cultural tasks” from the national budget via Ministry of Interior.⁷

Currently, there is no national strategy for culture, as the last one adopted for 2006–2020 was not sustained by the government elected in 2010. The development of culture, however, has been addressed in two development plans. The **New Hungary Development Plan** (the New Széchenyi Plan) for the period of 2007–2013 aimed at developing cultural infrastructure in the regions, stating its goal as to “*improve access to services and values, and consequently, social realignment and equal opportunities and non-discrimination.*” This objective, paired with EU structural funds, enabled the creation of more than a dozen complex community cultural centers (Agoras), and in some cases also in cooperation with

7 Inkei, P. and Ms. Vaspál, V. (2015), *Country Profile Hungary*

universities, thus creating a space of interdisciplinary interaction.⁸ The subsequent **National Development 2030 – National Development and Territorial Development Concept** refers to the potential of art and culture on several occasions. In regard to spatial planning, it recommends containing the uncontrolled spreading of cities so as to prevent establishment of mono-functional residential areas or peripheries. Furthermore, it encourages brownfield investments and designing new buildings that match existing townscapes. In terms of cultural and creative industries, the document offers an interesting formulation that: *“the national culture must be transformed into creative cultural servicing industry, the content of a cultural public employment programme should be designed and organized, and the part played by culture in the national economy must be repositioned.”*

The creative sector is also perceived as a launchpad for growth in other services (e.g. training and shopping tourism) and the industry as well as booster of general competitiveness of the economy. Acknowledging the concentration of CCIs around Budapest, the document envisages the creation of alternative hubs *“of intellectual life outside the capital,”* which would support cooperation across the research, business and culture line. This decentralization of social capital can be achieved thanks to relocation of national authorities from the capital city.

- In Hungary, creative industry sectors account for 4.4% of jobs and contribute 3.7% to GDP
- The CCI sector is growing at five times the rate of the overall economy
- The share of export within Hungarian creative industry rose from 14% in 2008 to 21% only four years later

All data from: Design Terminal (2014) Creative Industry as a Resource

The nomination and subsequent awarding of the 2010 ECoC title to Pécs triggered a wide public debate of creative placemaking and the economic value of cultural sector (just as it was in the case of Košice 2013, Plzeň 2015 and Wrocław 2016). Similarly to its Visegrad partners, Hungary struggled with the preparations but eventually managed to put to life projects that outlived the one-year cultural program.⁹ The Zsolnay Quarter, meant to initiate the development of creative industries in 2010, opened only after the ECoC project

ended. Nevertheless, it now constitutes a multifunctional art and cultural heritage site, offering both tourists attractions, CCIs workshops and event venues. Another positive example of public private partnerships can be found in Budapest. The Müpa Budapest and the adjacent new National Theatre are both part of municipal efforts to create a vivid cultural hub in the center of in Budapest.¹⁰ Budapest Music Centre is an even more daunting example of an independent initiative of an artist, financed from a number of public and private sources which are now energizing the Hungarian music scene with a focus on contemporary genres and jazz.

Hungarian capital city is home to a high number of creative business initiatives.¹¹ Many of them revolve around the design industry, which is one of the reasons Budapest was awarded the title of a **Creative City of Design**, a UNESCO network of cities established with the primary aim of peer learning and collaborative projects. The application was prepared by Design Terminal, a national center for creative industries. It is an exemplary¹² institution that successfully combines business incubation with a desire to improve urban planning, supporting the digital economy and promoting industrial design.

On the other side of the creative placemaking spectrum is the phenomenon of **ruin bars** in Budapest. The transformation of derelict buildings located in the Jewish quarter into sought-after bars began around the year 2000. Since then it has been a decisive factor of the quarter's economic revival and, thereby, its gentrification. These bars and cultural hubs exemplify the concept of **short-term** remaking of unused places, even though some of them have been operating for more than a decade and will probably undergo another transformation than a demolition. The conversion of vacant spaces is a topic addressed by another formative Hungarian institution – KÉK, an independent architectural cultural center. Besides public advocacy (e.g. Vacant City publication) and advisory services, KÉK also ventures into urban projects such as the Open! Festival, which aims to match real estate owners with initiatives looking for temporary space.

⁸ ibidem

⁹ Ecorys UK Ltd (2011), *Ex-Post Evaluation of 2010 European Capitals of Culture Final report for the European Commission Directorate General for Education and Culture August 2011*

¹⁰ Inkei, P. and Ms. Vaspál, V. (2015), *Country Profile Hungary*

¹¹ Some of them are listed here: <http://budapest.designterminal.hu/>

¹² In recognition of its positive work Design Terminal received the European Enterprise Promotion Awards by the European Commission

Poland

Although Polish cities and regions are beginning to eagerly adopt the philosophy of economic and social development through culture, this often still does not translate into increased budgets for culture. In Poland, there are several strong culture hubs challenging the CCIs concentration in the Polish capital city.

The **Updated National Strategy for the Development of Culture** for 2004–2020 perceives culture as one of the preconditions for stable economic growth. The increase of culture-related GDP and the number of people employed in creative industries are listed among its objectives, as is the creation of ties between culture and education in order to boost social capital. Funds for the policy realization are earmarked in the operational programs of the EU funds and supplemented with grants from the Ministry of Culture. An assessment¹³ of the ministerial grants shows that there is a gap between the national strategy goals and their implementation in the annual budgeting of the Ministry of Culture. This comprehensive evaluation mentions several other major shortcomings, which can undermine efforts of creative placemaking and other cultural undertakings, all still heavily reliant on public funds. Among the deficiencies listed in the assessment are: (i) poor use of modern knowledge, (ii) insufficient cooperation across sectors, (iii) lack of socialization of cultural policies through cooperation with local government units and other ministries, (iv) the absence of a clearly formulated strategic objectives coupled with financial tools and (v) non-transparent selection procedure. These findings pertain to the implementation of cultural strategies by public authorities in the remaining three countries.

The **National Urban Policy 2023**, drafted by the Ministry of Regional Development and adopted in 2015, is the most relevant for creative placemaking among all other official documents. This policy can be understood as an attempt to create a **manual of good governance practices** and encourage cooperation among units of national and local governments along the vision outlined in the document. Despite the fact that the policy has no budget, it points to specific financial programs of other ministries and EU funds available, which should be deployed to fulfill the policy goals. The National Urban Policy is a bold horizontal document that tries to link existing strategies and policies with the underlying aim to harness uncoordinated urban development and embrace it as a tool of national advancement. It contains several objectives directly connected to creative placemaking, which read as follows:

- **Activation of downtown** areas through art, culture and usage of creative industries to construct local identity; network of local commercial spots enhanced with the usage of innovative technologies should mobilize residents
- **Creation of local identity** thanks to educational programs about local cultural resources and traditions and ways how to deploy them in economic activity
- **Urban cultural policy** which not only helps local economy but improves the quality of life of the inhabitants in the entire functional area
- **Brownfield over greenfield** priority, which requires the re-use of land and buildings instead of expansion into undeveloped areas. This rule is also inscribed in the conditions for investments from the EU funds in 2014–2020
- **Continual and consistent revitalization** as an important part of thinking about the city's development. Because revitalization is understood as a tool (not an end in itself) for the renewal of social, economic, cultural and spatial environment, it has to draw from the local potential of the place, its culture and cultural heritage
- **Participation** of local communities and entrepreneurs in the process of programming and implementation of regeneration projects.

The National Urban Policy echoes the current trends in spatial planning and urban development, and if its only effect was to inspire local governments, it could already be considered a success. Currently, the Polish government is reviewing and prioritizing objectives and activities proposed by the policy in order to draft a strategy.¹⁴ The role of culture in social and economic development of Poland also pops up in the **Strategy for the Development of Social Capital 2020** — drafted by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage and adopted in 2013. One of its four priorities is to strengthen the role of culture in building social cohesion and socio-economic development. The instruments to attain it are supporting the civic participation, education and infrastructure as well as supporting cultural and creative industries.

13 Fatyga, B. and Bakulińska, A. (2015), *Projekt autoewaluacji i ewaluacji programów ministra kultury raport z badań. Propozycja metod i narzędzi*, Obserwatorium Żywej Kultury-Sieć Badawcza

14 Puls Biznesu (2016), Wiceminister rozwoju o Krajowej Polityce Miejskiej do 2023 r.

- In 2008 the share of cultural and creative industries in Poland's GDP was estimated at 1.58% and 2.47%, while they employed 1.86 % and 2.68 % of the working labor force, respectively. The value of production was PLN 17.6 billion for cultural sector and PLN 27.5 billion for creative industries¹⁵
- The number of economic subjects doing business in cultural and creative industries in Poland is constantly increasing. From 2009 to 2013, the number rose from 4% to 4.9 % of all economic entities. Expressed in absolute number: in 2013 there were 173 thousand economic entities working in this sector¹⁶

According to a study conducted by the Research Institute for Market Economy,¹⁷ cultural and creative industries are on the rise in Poland. The increase, however, is in the number of entrepreneurs (micro-enterprises) rather than in employment or sales revenues. CCI's are growing, especially in the southern regions and, unsurprisingly, around large cities such as Warsaw, Gdansk and Lodz. This clustering trend has been amplified by numerous public-private initiatives, which support regional specialization with focus on design (Śląski Klaster Dizajnu in Cieszyn, LabDesign in Kielce), fashion (Podlaski Klaster Bielizny), cooperation between art and business (BizArt in Elblag, Lokomotywa Kultury in Bielsko-Biała), multimedia (computer games industry Creativro in Wrocław) and the film industry (Krakowski Kluster Filmowy in Kraków).

A comprehensive analysis of culture and creative placemaking at the local level is shown in the 2015 report **Municipal Cultural Policies** published by Magazyn Miasta.¹⁸ Following their analysis, local governments remained the strongest financial stakeholders of local culture in Poland, financing 99.8% of cultural centers, 91.9% of libraries, 87.9% philharmonics and 80% of theatres and galleries. In 2013, there were 110 communes that spent less than 1% of their budget on cultural activities, whereas the biggest 100 cities in Poland covered by the report spent an average of 2.5% of their budget on current cultural expenses. This may be partially due to the traditional perception of cultural policies, which, according to the survey respondents, should serve educational purposes and the promotion of the city.

15 Lewandowski, P., Muć, J. and Skrok Ł. (2010), *Znaczenie gospodarcze sektora kultury. Wstęp do analizy problemu. Raport końcowy*

16 Krapieński, B., and Szultka, S. (2014), *Koncentracja działalności i ich rozmieszczenie*, in: *Kreatywny łańcuch – monitoring powiązań sektora kultury i kreatywnego w Polsce*, p. 54

17 Szultka, S. (2014), *Kreatywny łańcuch powiązania sektora kultury i kreatywnego w Polsce*

18 DNA Miasta, Miejskie Polityki Kulturalne 2015, Magazyn Miasta nr 4(12)/2015

The report highlights some positive aspects too, stating that between 2010 and 2015 the awareness of the role of culture in the process of local development has increased exponentially. Authors of the study named three synergic factors, which influenced the change in perception of art and culture, and read as follows:

- the European Capital of Culture competition
- the recovery of culture and art related environment (also coupled with the creation of various interactive museums or revitalization projects¹⁹)
- the maturing of public discussion on the economic role of culture, which is enabled and promoted by various experts and non-profit organizations such as the National Centre for Culture Poland with its Committee for Municipal Cultural Policies, Forum for Revitalization or www.mojapolis.pl, a repository of data on urban policies and politics.

Slovakia

Slovak cultural policy documents use progressive language in defining the role of cultural and creative industries. The Slovak **Strategy for the Development of Culture for 2014–2020** acknowledges that culture can contribute to solving social problems such as unemployment or slow economic growth. Akin to its Polish counterpart, the document also links culture with the advancement of social capital. One of the strategy's priorities explicitly mentions the deployment of culture and creativity for the economic growth of Slovakia. This should be accomplished, according to the document, by the creation of an economic model that uses the potential of creative industries through and raising awareness of the economic potential of creativity via educational programs. An action plan for 2015–2017 derived from the strategy tasks the government with the creation of a plan for creative industries and the inclusion of CCI's as a priority area in the Integrated Regional Operational Programme.

The **National Strategy for Regional Development**, updated in 2014, also adopts the creative narrative, conditioning the development of human resources (social capital) upon the change of focus from the exploitation of cheap labor towards *"quality human resources for the growth of regional competitiveness, supporting the development of cultural and creative communities."* The same strategy notices that creative industries are a relatively new concept at level of regional policies, and the instruments for its support are only being introduced following EU policies (e.g. the Strategy for Creative Industries and its action plan discussed below). Unfortunately, the "how to implement" part of cul-

19 Among others: Multimedialne Muzeum Powstania Warszawskiego, Muzeum Historii Żydów Polskich, Centrum Solidarności in Gdańsk), revitalization projects centred around art: Stary Browar in Poznań, huge revitalization complex in the center of Katowice including the Silesian Museum

tural and creative industries priorities is virtually missing in the official Methodology of the Creation of Programs for Economic and Social Development, based on this strategy.

The **Strategy for Creative Industries** was adopted in 2015 and singled out four priorities: (i) creating an effective system for development of creative industries, (ii) obtaining quality human resources, (iii) creating favorable market conditions and (iv) flanking instruments. From the creative placemaking point of view, it contains tasks such as the development of physical infrastructure (also vital for urban regeneration and regional development) and educational activities. The strategy also gave way to the drafting of the action plan for 2016–2017, which among others, envisages that county seats (*krajská mesta*) organize calls for the creation of infrastructure for CCI, experimental cultural activities and co-working schemes.²⁰ It also assigns public cultural entities (memory and fund institutions) to include creative activities into their standing programs. Realization of the program relies heavily on European structural and investment funds. Despite a bold list of 37 tasks, critics of the action plan say it is merely the collection of projects Slovak ministries and agencies are already implementing or plan to implement, while not really fulfilling the initial strategy.

- Entities operating in the field of creative industries (including software and IT) in Slovakia account for 6.2% of all economic entities
- In 2011, sales in the creative industries were about EUR 5.5 billion and represented almost 4% of all sales in the Slovak economy
- CCI sectors employ over 45,000 people, which accounts for about 4% of total employment. The number is higher because the official statistics do not include self-employment or liberal professions active in the creative industry.

All data come from Neulogy a.s. (2013) Správa o stave a potenciáli kreatívneho priemyslu na Slovensku²¹

Just as, and probably due to the fact that the cultural and creative industries concentrate in Bratislava and its region, the capital city also houses numerous creative placemaking projects. More than 40% of all CCI companies have their seat in Bratislava. In other regions the share of CCIs is markedly lower, with slightly higher numbers like Trnava, Nitra

and the Košice region (around 9% of all CCIs companies in each of them).²² Bratislava can boast several bottom-up projects. The Alliance Old Market Hall (Aliance Stará Tržnica) can serve as a prime example of creative placemaking. The revitalization project of the centrally located building of the Old Market was initiated by a civic association in 2012. The Alliance, composed of 11 Slovak professionals, including architects and cultural managers under the leadership of Gabor Bindics, approached the city hall with the idea to reinvigorate the old market. After negotiations, the authorities rented the building to the Alliance for a symbolic fee, with the condition of monthly investments of EUR 10.000 in its reconstruction and maintenance. Cvernovka was another non-profit revitalization project offering space and offices for CCIs and cultural activities in the city center. It has operated for six years and is about to be closed, giving way to a housing development project.

The inclusion of public partners seems to be one of the main challenges in the development of creative placemaking projects. To address this issue, at the end of 2014 the Partnership for Creative Bratislava was created. It is a platform for connecting public and private stakeholders to initiate systematic change in the way culture is organized and financed in Bratislava. Another vital project, which contributes to debate on the quality of public spaces is Urban Interventions. The project's idea, born in 2008 in the Bratislava-based Vallo Sadovsky Architects studio, is to identify malfunctioning urban spots or processes and present a way to improve them. Revamped projects are designed by volunteers and exhibited, some making it to the implementation phase. Started as a local project, it has spilled over to 15 other towns in Slovakia and the Czech Republic. When speaking about actors nurturing the public debate, one cannot forget the Creative Industry Forum led by Zora Jaurová.

The first serious public debate about the role of culture and creative industries and their economic importance was triggered by the 2013 European Capital of Culture competition — won by the city of Košice. Not unlike in other Central European cities hosting the ECoC title, the preparation and, to some extent, the implementation of the program, exposed the unpreparedness of politicians and public administration to understand and seize cultural and creative potential. Yet, the ECoC had a positive impact on public-private cooperation, as is proven by the example of Tabačka Kulturfabrik. This old tobacco factory was transformed into a cultural center with the financial support of regional authorities, and is now operated by the non-profit oz Bona Fide, which helps the authorities implement their strategy of developing creative economy. The chapter on Slovak creative placemaking, however, would not be complete without mentioning one tremendous project that rose from a grassroots initiative to a pivotal cultural nod. Stanica Žilina-Záriečie is an out-

20 Šimkovič, J. (2016) Kreatívny priemysel v Európe a na Slovensku

21 Jaurová, Z., Jenčíková, K., Geist, R., Lipnická P. and Salajová, S. (2013), *Správa o stave a potenciáli kreatívneho priemyslu na Slovensku*, Neulogy, a.s.

22 Balog M. et al (2014), *Možnosti rozvoja kreatívneho priemyslu na Slovensku*, Slovenská inovačná a energetická agentúra

standing example of organic placemaking, which weds cultural and creative activities to an operating railway station in the middle of a huge residential area in Žilina. One of its founders, Marek Adamov, is now running another DIY culture project in the city of 85,000 inhabitants. In an old synagogue designed by renowned German architect Peter Behrens, whose renovation he started thanks to crowdsourcing and crowdfunding, Adamov now creates a local kunsthalle by the name of Nova Synagoga.

Conclusions

- Most of the reviewed policies and strategies acknowledge the role of culture and creative sectors in the economic and social development of countries, regions and cities. These strategies, however, often repeat the language of the EU policies without trying to translate the objectives into concrete political steps.
- The implementation of revitalization and development policies is heavily reliant on the EU funds. Not being a negative approach in itself, more energy should be invested in mobilizing private investors and the restructuring of national and local budgets.
- There is a visible effort to bring back more human aspects to urban planning and development, especially in the larger cities.
- Culture and art-driven solutions have to come from within the communities and their needs. Cultural and creative industries should not be comprehended only in terms of their potential to boost country's GDP. Otherwise, the region will be overwhelmed with brownfields-turned-creative-incubators that do not fulfill their functions.

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