



creative **Clusters**
in low density urban areas



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Imagine IF...

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Kortrijk.
www.innovationfestival-kortrijk.be

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INNOVATION
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Kortrijk

The true power of networking

After the study visit of our network to Kortrijk, briefly reported in this edition of our newsletter, it's important to assemble some impressions. The first one is the commitment of the city with innovation and creativity. Truly impressive. European projects and networks could visit the city and learn with experiences like the Interior Biennale, the Budascoop or the Innovation Festival. The involvement in the innovation process is a brand that should make Kortrijk one of the European examples in this subject. People, universities, public institutions and companies develop projects together, not only as lab, but also as true network of "human solutions", as our partners of Jyväskylä should say.

Another important idea is the positive speech in all the projects, but particularly in the Eurotowns conference, where all the audience was invited to identify their own "idea killers", at the same time that they have to dream without using the negative restrictions that we all have inside our way to work. That's why, once again, we were surprised with the creativity without boundaries of children. The presentation of "my machine" project, born in Kortrijk and admired worldwide, showed us the endless capacity of children to imagine a world with answers to all our problems. Of course, we don't need to be a child to be creative, but if we want to have the capacity to find solutions and solve our challenges we have to be fearless thinkers and producers of goodwill's using networking as a tool.



EMIL PROSCAN, MAYOR OF MIZIL [RO]

Leadership and powerful new visions are key starting points to face new paths in local development for small and middle-sized towns across Europe. This section contains a number of short interviews by Miguel Rivas [the URBACT lead expert for creative clusters] to the Mayors of the city-partners.

Mizil is a small Romanian town located at the Prahova County, 90 km far from Bucharest and near Ploiesti, the County Capital [16.319 inhabitants, 2007]. Given the real challenges that Mizil is facing the URBACT Local Action Plan will be oriented to handle creativity-based activities as a source for job creation (retaining local talent) and as an additional tool for undertaking the current transitional period to a competitive market economy.

MR. First we would like to thank you for your personal involvement in some URBACT Creative Clusters events, and for your excellent work and warm hospitality in organizing our first thematic workshop. Well, could you please tell us what is your vision as Mayor for the future of Mizil?

EP. First of all, I wish that all the citizens from Mizil, but also nationwide, could enjoy a sense of normal life and activity. To me, this means better and sustainable economic activities, jobs and the possibility of achieving a decent standard of living, a larger array of services that can insure a sense of comfort and support to our daily chores, better and extended infrastructure to sustain economic and social development and last but not least, I wish that culture and education can contribute in a more effective way to the spiritual shaping of our young generation character and potential. We are in times of economical struggle and the world itself is not at ease, but through our determination in doing what is needed, and with the support of our European family, we can make sure that our vision has a chance to materialize. I believe in a city of Mizil that can equally reflect prosperity for its citizens and attraction for people or entities willing to invest and enjoy sustainable activities results from placing their economical bet with us. We, myself and my staff at the Townhall - through what was done and continues to be done – want to make sure we create proper conditions for living and working in Mizil, just like any other small European city would do.

MR. Now at the end of 2010 partners of URBACT Creative Clusters network are drafting their Local Action Plans on the issue. How Mizil is focusing that work?

EP. Our focus remain high as far URBACT Creative Clusters local action plans are concerned, and even though we have experienced some unforeseen setback lately, we are determined to close the gap and proceed to a full and positive completion of our local action plan. It is our belief that all creative activities should be encouraged and supported as they represent a dynamic and precious reserve for any social development.

MR. We all are living troubled times, how is affecting current economic crisis to a small Romanian town like Mizil?

EP. We are in deep recession, this is a fact. The economical slowdown affected most of our activities in the city, bringing jobless percentage to its highest level after 1990, drastically reducing individual and also city revenues, and generating a critical standstill due to lack of new investment in our area. To this point 2010 has been a disaster, we hope that 2011 can make a difference and signal a path to recovery. We have several projects in implementation, which will contribute to the

recovery of our city, among them I would like to pinpoint two:

- The investment in creating the new 40 ha industrial park of Mizil, in partnership with the Prahova County Council;
- The investment in creating the 12 ha “Mizil Go4MizAgri Greenhouses”, a project in partnership with the twin city of Lingewaard (Netherlands).

Such projects contribute to economical recovery and will ensure that opportunities are created and continue to be created for the working population and especially for our young people. For Mizil - as an important educational platform with its 3 medium-grade schools and 2 high-schools for the young generation, it is important to keep its citizens at home and count on them on a long term basis. It is my personal goal to insure that our citizens find a steady good job at home, rather than being subject of underpaid and humiliated jobs abroad.

MR. In what extend your vision and bet in promoting creative-based issues in your local agenda is being affected by economic downturn?

EP. Irrelevant if we like it or not, everything is affected by a sluggish economy, and most of all are the activities linked to the spiritual needs. It is not something we can fight very easy, other than with our own determination in concluding what we have started and find solutions to move on, even under adverse conditions.

MR. What about the articulation between national, regional and local levels in Prahova county and in Romania? Can these levels be involved in some way with your strategy promoting a local agenda inspired by creative-based issues? Can you expect some support from your operational programmes managing authority?

EP. Most of the times, through our appointed staff in the Town Hall, we have managed basically all the activities deriving from our strategy and local agenda. Unfortunately, with one exception, no other national or regional levels offered support. The exception was the support we have received from the regional level – i.e. from the Prahova County Council – but other than this, no other mention can be made. I believe we need to communicate better and find time and means to get this articulation effective at all levels, in order to insure a long term development of such projects.

My very best to all URBACT Creative Clusters staff and partners, I thank you for the opportunity of this interview and we look forward to continue our work together and achieve the project targets. ■

Attracting and retaining creative talent in medium-sized towns

THE STRATEGY IN BARNSELEY, UK

Attracting and retaining creative talent in Barnsley is set against a backdrop of a deprived post-mining economy, with a small but emerging creative sector. Located inside the triangle Manchester-Sheffield-Leeds, in Northern England, regeneration investment in Barnsley has provided key venues for culture and creative industries locally but these have struggled to attract occupants and audiences and there is a clear need for more focused activity, building on from a current mapping exercise and strengthening this emergent economic sector by understanding its needs and the challenges it faces.

Sector development is already happening, and over the last few years a stronger connectivity across the sector has been helped by social media. This 'conversation' has enabled individuals in the sector to connect naturally, and the public sector to 'tune in' to what is going on, and contribute where appropriate. Key to this has been creating environments for discourse and allowing free use of this - both cost and restriction free! The sector has been able to stimulate its own informal skill sharing and networking via these platforms.

There is a need to animate the sector if it is to grow stronger and keep talent local. This includes animating the places and spaces that we have built with cultural and



sector development focused events such as networking, and encouraging sector led 'guerilla' activity across all venues and places as well as programmed activity.

The networking programme gives access to speakers, ideas and spaces that wouldn't usually be freely available and brings interested parties from outside of the area to experience firsthand a positive event and atmosphere. The events also encourage a sense of ownership of the sector and its physical assets, which in turn builds confidence, pride and word of mouth promotion. High profile events developed locally but for a local, regional and national audience are also important – Northern Futures, Small World and Barcamp

Barnsley present the town in a positive and proactive way.

To summarise, we are aiming to attract creatives with the animation of our spaces, and our openness to ideas, and retain them with a strong, supportive infrastructure and a sense of ownership. The sector is encouraged to have its own voice, be confident and connected, get on everyone's radar and be a friend to many. It isn't about just throwing money at the sector – providing an ecosystem to encourage creativity is fundamental.

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Visions from the Children

“We could participate in a conference, where not only the project partners but a wider public from all over the country and Europe took part in. We heard lots of interesting presentations about what kind of developments were going on in their regions and how they imagine creative towns”.

“We had the chance to look around in Kortrijk. We admired the amazing gothic churches, cathedrals and the building of the Town Hall, not to mention the Broel Tower, which were pieces of the medieval town wall. In the town, the old buildings were mixed with modern ones in a very fantastic way. We really enjoyed the green areas, plants and parks”.

“We visited a secondary school, where we experienced a lot, and saw lots of interesting and useful things. We had the chance to know a well-equipped workshop, where students made and design different kind of objects either individually or in groups. It was amazing to see the processes, during which they realized their imaginations from design steps till the realization processes, not to mention that we could see several creative objects and materials. They made-for example lamps, jewelry from wood and paper”.

“It was surprising how important is the young generation creativity in this country, because young were involved in the creativity/brainstorming processes in order to solve problems and create new ideas. We think it could have been a good practice in our region too”.

Liza, László and Péter

Getting Visions from Children and Youngster

THE CREATIVE SCHOOL CONTEST IN HÓDMEZŐVÁSÁRHELY, HUNGARY

Under the URBACT Creative Clusters project, the Municipality of Hódmezővásárhely launched the "Creative School Contest" at the end of November 2009. The main topic of it was how young children imagine the city in 15 years. The leadership of the town regards the young generation's opinion and imagination really important and



significant, because the town is built for them, so their ideas are crucial and are the base of local development.

The contest was announced in every primary and secondary schools in the town between the age of 11 and 18. Students could handle their work either individually or in groups. The contest deadline was 12 March, 2010, so children had 4 months to think about their future town.

It was a positive shock for us that more than 44 pieces of arts have arrived from 9 town's schools. The composition of the arts was very mixed: 36

pieces of paintings or drawings, 6 mock-ups, 1 statue and 2 PPT presentations.

The students expressed not only their creativity and fantasy, but also their wishes through their work. More children imagined fountains and baths with huge slides in the city centre, but shopping centre, cinema, zoo and skateboard ground also



appeared. Lots of children's ideas were impressed by the present panel programme (renovation of big block of flats), so they made drawings/paintings which represented colourful buildings with different patterns.

There were several children who besides the amusement, regarded energy-reformation as a really important fact, so they would like to see wind power-stations in Vásárhely in the future. Among the wide-choice, there was only one ceramic-work, a multi-functioning tower with more floors and rooms, named after the late museum director.

The arts were appraised by a 6 member jury, which consisted of ceramists, artists, the museum director, painter and teachers. The opinion of the jury was that young generation had lots of amazing, creative, new ideas and in their decision the most important aspect was what kind of new technologies and methods were used in order to prepare the arts.

The winners were the students of Gábor Klauzál Primary School. Their work was the most complex and it was the closest to the reality and the ideas were absolutely feasible. They have made a presentation about the present situation and at the same time it contained their plans for the future, which are mainly connected to sport activities, just like go-kart, canoe ground, skateboard ring and fountains.

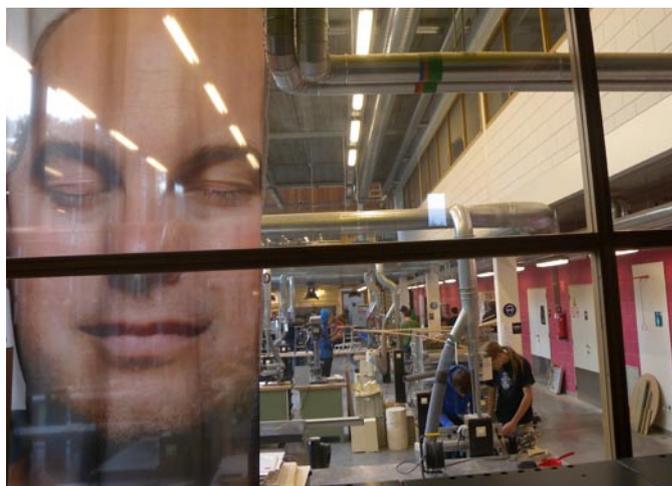
The winners of the contest, three children at the age of 13, won a 4 days Study Visit in Kortrijk, Belgium, together with the URBACT Creative Clusters partnership.

I have a positive note for the contest: seven months after the initiative, the municipality has already realized two ideas from the winner teams' imagination. One of them is the skateboard ring, while the other is the fountains. I think that young generation dream the future.

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URBACT CREATIVE CLUSTERS NETWORK IN THE CONFERENCE

“Fostering Creativity within Cities” in Kortrijk (BE)



Some partners of the URBACT Creative Clusters network attended the conference “Fostering Creativity within Cities” in 21st October 2010 in the City of Kortrijk (Belgium).

The event was organised in the scope of the INTERREG IVB North Sea project “Creative City Challenge” and the Eurotowns network. The organisers intended to bring together experts, companies and cities and to inspire and challenge cities and regions with creative ambitions.

The Municipality of Jyväskylä (Finland), one of Creative Clusters partners, presented a communication on the project “Culture Wellness Centre”, one of the anchor initiatives of its Local Action Plan.

Simultaneously the partners visited several creative places in Kortrijk (BE) and participated in the “European Innovation Festival”.

www.creative-city-challenge.net/kortrijk

URBACT CREATIVE CLUSTERS NETWORK REPRESENTED IN THE CONFERENCE

“World-Class Clusters, Renewing European Industry” in Brussels (BE)



URBACT Creative Clusters was represented in the European Cluster Conference 2010 - “World-Class Clusters, Renewing European Industry”, in Brussels, September 29-30 - October 1, 2010, organised by the European Commission, DG Enterprise and Industry. It was the principal event of the year on clusters and cluster policy in the EU framework.

More than 450 participants participated at the Conference

representing policy makers from national and regional public authorities, key academic experts as well as cluster managers and entrepreneurs from all over Europe.

A main topic of this Conference was the presentation and further discussion of the final report of the European Cluster Policy Group (ECPG) that had been established last year by the EC. This report calls for an improved coordination between the

different EU initiatives in support of clusters and proposes that the “focus of cluster programmes needs to be shifted from capacity building and compensation for poor performance towards a clear orientation on excellence, focusing on clusters with the ability and the willingness to upgrade in the face of global competition and ensuring the consistent provision of public knowledge infrastructure to support them.”

www.proinno-europe.eu/clusterconference2010/

4TH THEMATIC WORKSHOP:

“PROMOTING THE CREATIVE ECOSYSTEM: NEW CITY STRATEGIES IN BIG EVENTS AND CULTURAL AGENDA”

BARNSELEY (UK), MARCH 17-18, 2011

The fourth and last thematic workshop of the URBACT network on Creative Clusters will be devoted to discuss on events and cultural agenda as catalysts in promoting creative-based local strategies in local development.

The range of sub-themes to be tackled will cover issues such as: re-thinking big events: new aims, new formats, and the post-event; linking cultural policies to economic development policies: practical cases; local strategies in events and cultural agendas; giving heritage a new life: linking heritage to the contemporary; public marketplaces for cultural entrepreneurs: lights and shadows; hybrid spaces: new urban cultural & working facilities for experimentation.

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INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CREATIVE TOURISM

9-10 DECEMBER 2010, BARCELONA (SPAIN)

The aim of the conference is to bring together researchers, urban planners, policy designers, artists, cultural activists and tourist professionals to assess the benefits of international collaboration in the rapidly developing field of creative tourism. The

event will provide an opportunity for face-to-face networking prior to the creation of a virtual network on the Internet.

www.creativetourismnetwork.org/conferencia/

CLUSTERS AS DRIVERS OF COMPETITIVENESS: STRATEGY AND POLICY ISSUES

29-31 MARCH 2011, BILLUND (DENMARK)

The aim of the conference is to explore the role of clusters as drivers of firms, regions and nations competitiveness. Specialists coming from several European countries will present contributions (Germany, France, Italy, Austria, Sweden, Switzerland, etc.). The event is organised by the University of Fribourg, the Fribourg Development Agency and the Banque Cantonale de Fribourg.

www.pst-fr.ch/cluster2011/

ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2011: REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND POLICY - CHALLENGES, CHOICES AND RECIPIENTS

18-20 APRIL 2011, NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE (UK)

The conference, organised by the Regional Studies Association will include daily plenary, workshop and special roundtable sessions on the regional development policy. One of the themes of the event is “Creative Industries and Regional Development”.

www.regional-studies-assoc.ac.uk/events/2011/april-newcastle/itinerary.pdf



www.obidoscriativa.com

welcomes Spennymoor to the Óbidos Charter - a Pact for Creativity



<http://www.facebook.com/video/video.php?v=446662217086&oid=184167143955>

Smarter Cities Challenge

Overview About the Challenge Apply Now

The Smarter Cities Challenge is a 3-year IBM Citizenship initiative to enable 100 cities around the world to become smarter by enhancing their capacity to collect, analyze and act upon information across multiple core systems. Cities around the world are invited to apply.

[Start Your Application →](#)

SMARTER CITIES CHALLENGE - IBM

Launched in 2010, the Smarter Cities Challenge is a 3-year IBM Corporate Citizenship initiative to enable up to 100 cities around the world to become smarter by enhancing their capacity to collect, analyze and act upon information across multiple core systems; to apply data-driven system of systems analysis to the key problems facing cities; to create an environment where global cities can learn from one another; and to foster cross-sector partnerships that address critical challenges, enabling cities around the world to become more vibrant and livable places for their citizens.

Each city participating in the Challenge will receive a donation of IBM services and/or technology valued at \$250,000-\$400,000 USD to address a specific problem or opportunity selected by the city in collaboration with IBM. IBM shall, in its sole discretion,

select the cities to receive the Smarter Cities grants.

The donation will be primarily in the form of talent – the time and expertise of top performing IBMers from different functions and locations, who will work closely with city leaders to

deliver recommendations on the selected issue.

Cities around the world are invited to apply for the Smarter Cities Challenge.

<https://smartercitieschallenge.org/index.html>

4TH CALL FOR PROPOSALS - INTERREG IVC

The fourth call for INTERREG IVC project proposals will open on 1 December 2010 and will close on 1 April 2011. The full terms of reference for the call will therefore be published on its website on 1 December.

The overall objective of the INTERREG IVC Programme is to improve the effectiveness of regional policies and instruments. A project builds on the exchange of experiences among partners who are ideally responsible for the development of their local and regional policies.

All the programme's sub-themes are still open to receive applications: innovation and the knowledge economy, environment and risk prevention.

Around EUR 100 million remains available for this call.

A full programme of regional, national and European events will be published, along with dates for individual applicant consultations, during the call period. Interested parties can already take note that the 4th EU Forum will take place on 3-4 February in Budapest, Hungary.

http://i4c.eu/accueil_en.html



SUGGESTED READINGS & SITES

EUROPEAN COMPETITIVENESS REPORT 2010 – INNOVATION AND COMPETITIVENESS OF THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES IN THE EU

A publication of the European Commission (Commission Staff Working Document), 2010.

The report identifies the main future determinants of EU competitiveness on world markets. One of these determinants is the creative industries sector, which is among the fastest growing sectors in the EU creating new jobs, playing key roles in global value chains and spurring innovation.

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/_getdocument.cfm?doc_id=6222

SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL – INNOVATION FROM THE FRONTLINE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

A Discussion Paper produced by Glyn Gaskarth, NESTA, July 2010.

The paper presents ten innovative local projects led by frontline staff and service teams in local government, demonstrating that it is possible to innovate in local government.

www.nesta.org.uk/library/documents/Small_is_Beautiful.pdf

CULTURE OF INNOVATION - AN ECONOMIC ANALYSIS OF INNOVATION IN ARTS AND CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS

A report produced by Hasan Bakhshi and David Throsby, NESTA, June 2010.

This report proposes a new framework for understanding innovation in arts and cultural organizations, stressing innovation along four dimensions: audience reach, art form development, value creation, and business models.

www.nesta.org.uk/library/documents/Culture_of_Innovation100610.pdf

SMALL TOWNS, BIG IDEAS – CASE STUDIES IN SMALL TOWN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

A report produced by Will Lambe, UNC School of Government - N. C. Rural Economic Development Center, 2008.

This report is the result of an intensive, yearlong effort to identify and document the stories of small towns that are surviving – and, in some cases, thriving, as hubs of civic and economic activity. The publication includes stories about planning and implementing economic development strategies in 45 towns with population fewer than 10,000 residents.

www.sog.unc.edu/programs/cednc/stbi/pdfs/stbi_final.pdf

OPEN INNOVATION: RESEARCHING A NEW PARADIGM

Henry Chesbrough (Editor), Wim Vanhaverbeke (Editor), Joel West (Editor), OUP Oxford Publishers, January 2008

Offering theoretical explanations for the use (and limits) of open innovation, the book examines the applicability of the concept, implications for the boundaries of firms, the potential of open innovation to prove successful, and implications for intellectual property policies and practices.

WEB SITES

ECCE – European Centre for Creative Economy
www.dortmund.de/en/leisure_and_culture/ruhr2010_en/art_creativity/ecce_1/index.html

ADDICT – Creative Industries Portugal
www.addict.pt/?lingua=en

Queensland Academy for Creative Industries
www.qaci.eq.edu.au/

Compendium: Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe
www.culturalpolicies.net/web/index.php

ERICARTS – European Institute for Comparative Cultural Research
www.ericarts.org/web/index.php

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creative Clusters
in low density urban areas

The *Creative Brief* is the newsletter of the URBACT network on “Creative Clusters in Low-Density Urban Areas” [<http://urbact.eu/en/projects/innovation-creativity/creative-clusters/homepage/>] lead by the Portuguese city of Óbidos. It is an added value cooperation project with the goal to perform a collective “learning by doing” exercise in the field of urban creative clusters. The fundamental assumption is that creative issues in local economic development are also a functional pattern beyond the frame of big metropolitan hubs. Even more, creativity as source of innovation should act as a cross cutting approach to re-think economic

and social development in middle-sized and small towns given new opportunities related to accessibility, community life, culture and creativity-based business models.

During the period 2008-2011 this URBACT network is working on five key sub-themes: i) creative clusters: diversifying local economic base and opportunities to young people; ii) events and cultural agendas as catalysts; iii) promoting the creative city: a new range of facilities and infrastructures; iv) creative entrepreneurs and talented people: attraction and retaining; v) setting the basis: creative education environments at local levels.

The URBACT Network on Creative Clusters is opened to further collaborations with networks, cities and organizations operating with creative clusters and related fields. This newsletter is also opened to any information and contribution concerning creative industries and economic development.

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