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Study visit report

Study Visit
Aarhus, 9-12 May 2016

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1. Executive Summary

Aarhus is a medium-sized city of around 330.000 inhabitants (1.4 million in the Central Denmark Region), with an edge for creativity and innovation: by some rankings Aarhus University is among the top 100 world universities, and is home to leading creative industries developments. This includes inter alia a large film cluster (Filmbyen), renowned architecture firms such as C.F. Møller, Schmidt Hammer Lassen or AART, as well as important architecture and design universities. Central Denmark Region also carries the title of European Region of Gastronomy, along with Lombardy, Catalonia, Riga-Gauja and Minho regions.

The cultural sector is strongly established already in Aarhus as recent cultural investments came to fruition, strongly supported by private foundations, as tax incentives mechanisms have led to a significant private sponsorship ecosystem. In many ways, Aarhus is punching above its weight in terms of cultural life - three museums welcome more than 500.000 visitors per year each, which is more than 1,5 times the number of inhabitants in the city.

This study visit focused on several of those museums in Aarhus, and especially how they are testing and implementing new approaches to form part of the 'new generation of museums'. It was articulated around key cultural infrastructures such as the new library (Dokk1), the Old Town (Den Gamle By, an open-air museum), Moesgaard museum, ARoS (modern art museum), and Godsbanen, a hybrid cultural production centre. All these cultural spaces presented their vision, strategies, and how they work in practice to deliver on this forward-looking approach.

The study visit also covered the broader cultural policy and perspectives for Aarhus. The city will be European Capital of Culture (ECoC) in 2017. The theme '*Let's Rethink*' aims to create a 'cultural laboratory' in the region where innovative and alternative solutions can flourish (new practices, new ways of forming partnerships, new business models and new concepts of growth). Aarhus 2017 includes a focus on diversified themes such as urban development, integration, business development, tourism, infrastructure and international collaborations. The ECoC and the city's cultural policy seek to bring about a mindset for change and innovation across today's and tomorrow's challenges for a city.

As such, "liveability" of the city is at the heart of the ECoC 2017 programme as well as in the broader cultural policy of Aarhus, with the 2017-2020 vision document entitled "The Good Life". It is articulated around 3 pillars:

- Culture sets the agenda - it is a driver for new impulses across the city (i.e.: the Dokk1 library as the "entry door" to the regenerated harbour district);
- European Capital of Culture legacy;
- Strong cultural sector (in all its dimensions).

Despite cuts in public funding, cultural investment has remained relatively stable over years. No new infrastructure investment was required for the European Capital of Culture as investment in cultural spaces was already foreseen before the title was awarded to Aarhus. Flexibility and partnerships are key in delivering on this vision, as the main cultural institutions operate independently from the city cultural department (arm's length principle). This means that flexible policy tools, such as contracts and continuous dialogue between the city services and cultural

institutions play a pivotal role in ensuring that the whole cultural ecosystem of Aarhus works towards similar objectives.

Trusted brokers or mediators are instrumental in achieving this - from the city cultural department to policy-makers, as well as the managing teams of the different cultural institutions - the openness and trust of all persons involved is clearly a core ingredient for Aarhus' successes as a city of culture.

2. Programme

Date and time	Activity	Venue and Transport	Personnel
May 9th	ARRIVAL DAY		
16.45-17.45	Preparatory meeting	City Hall (next to the hotel)	City Coordinator, Experts
18.00-19.00	Introduction to Aarhus 2017	City Hall	Juliana Engberg/Bent Sørensen
19.15-	Dinner	Hotel (The Mayor) - Italian Restaurant Gäst	
May 10 th	THE NEW LIBRARY AND THE OLD TOWN		
8.30-10.30	Welcome and introduction of participants. Presentation of Aarhus and cultural strategies of the city	Dokk1, VIP-Room (new library, 10 minutes walk from hotel)	Julie Hervé Ib Christensen
10.30-12.00	Site visit, Introduction and guided tour	Dokk1	Project manager Marie Østergaard
12.00-12.30		Walk along the small river	
12.30-13.15	Lunch	The Old Town, Entré Cafeen	
13.15-14.45	Site visit, guided tour	The Old Town	Martin Brandt Djupdræt
14.45-15.35	Presentation of three parallel workshops. Workshop, session 1	The Old Town	Martin Brandt Djupdræt Marianne Bager Henning Lindberg
15.35-15.55	Coffee break	The Old Town, Entré Cafeen	
15.15-17.00	Workshop, session 2	The Old Town	Martin Brandt Djupdræt Marianne Bager Henning Lindberg
17.00-18.00	Transport to Restaurant "Sjette Frederiks Kro". Possibility to walk in the wood and/or along the sea		
18.00-21.00	Dinner hosted by the City of Aarhus	Restaurant "Sjette Frederiks Kro"	Deputy Mayor Rabih Azad-Ahmad

May 11 th	NEW GENERATION MUSEUMS		
9.30-10.00		Bus transport from hotel to MoMu	
10.00-10.30	Introduction to Moesgaard Museum and the process of building up the new museum	MoMu - Moesgaard Museum	Jan Skamby
10.30-11.30	Site visit in the exhibitions	MoMu	Pauline Asingh, Henrik Hatt and Ole Birch Nielsen
11.30-13.00	Workshops in smaller groups on MoMu's narrative story-telling in the light of the core values of seriousness, entertainment and popular appeal	MoMu	Pauline Asingh, Henrik Hatt and Ole Birch Nielsen
13.00-14.00	Lunch	MoMu	
14.00-14.30		Bus transport to ARoS	
14.30-15.30	Site visit, guided tour	ARoS - Aarhus Art Museum	?
15.30-17.00	Workshop about ARoS' new initiative "Museion" - the "mental fitness centre", new ways of approaching audiences	ARoS	Erlend Høyersten/ Lise Pennington
17.00-19.00	Return to hotel, free time	10 minutes walk	
19.00-	Dinner	ARoS	
May 12 th	WORKSHOP AND FEED-BACK		
9.00-10.15	Site visit, guided tour	Godsbanen	Ib Christensen/Bo Hedetoft
10.15-12.45	Workshop: Discussion of visits Lessons learned Conclusions	Godsbanen	Rabih Azad-Ahmad, Ib Christensen, Experts
12.45-13.30	Lunch	Godsbanen	
14.00-	Debrief	Godsbanen	Experts and host
	Departure of delegation		

3. Methodology and tools used

Written sources

The local organisers received the preliminary questions with expectations by the visitors from 10 European cities to the event, which helped them in composing a carefully edited eight-page preparatory file that was sent to the participants. Before presenting the respective stations of the study tour, an overall introduction discussed the cultural strategy of the city, complemented with comments and arguments along the following subjects: Cultural strategy of the European Capital of Culture in 2017; Museums and libraries; Artistic quality and the Aarhus Arts Council; Aarhus - a proud city of culture? Culture and economy.

Beyond factual briefing, this document served as intellectual challenge to the visitors before the travel.

Oral presentations

The introductory presentations summarised the main points of the preparatory file, offering an overview about the recent developments and prospects of the city of Aarhus, with special regard to the role that culture has played and is expected to play in the future.

Preparations for Aarhus European Capital of Culture in 2017 (ECoC) are in full swing. Participants of the study tour received richly illustrated and documented presentations about the programme and the communication of the event, including basic general information about the ECoC.

Site visits

Visits to sites were the most essential part of the study tour. Half a day was dedicated to each of the respective stations of the tour (see section 5 below for more details), which were presented, guided and discussed by competent people, ready to engage in consultation about the sites.

Activities within the group

Participants were active in asking questions as they were guided around in the respective sites, which evolved into moderated group discussions at the end of each tour.

At the closing session of the study tour participants recapitulated their impressions and experiences gained during the visit. The group was summing up the key lessons learned during the three days, in conjunction with the local organisers, including Rabih Azad-Ahmad (deputy mayor for culture in Aarhus) who took an active part in the session. Special focus was laid on what can be transferred to other places. Attention was paid to features that are specific to the Aarhus or Danish context and thus resist easy transferability (e.g. the system of resourceful business foundations). Attempts were made to collect practices elsewhere that could make the cultural arsenal of Aarhus even richer.

4. Key topics presented and learning points

1) Flexibility & Openness

A key aspect of the study visit deals with how cultural policy and the different structures account for future developments and introduce some degree of flexibility to allow for different scenarios, emerging uses and new needs of the population.

At macro level (city cultural policy), it is embodied by a “balance between steering and dialogue” in the implementation of the vision for culture across the city. This is reflected in 1) A clear direction in terms of public policy objectives; 2) Trust towards cultural professionals, with no visible interferences from foundations or policy-makers 3) Flexible policy tools, such as contracts between the city and cultural institutions, which have full independence as long as they work towards those key public policy objectives. Another example would be the use of the ‘percent for art’ (where a percentage of the project cost is placed on large scale development projects in order to fund and install public art), as a way to leverage additional investment in culture and the arts from real estate developments across Aarhus.

Flexibility is also a cornerstone at a more micro level, where the management team of the different cultural institutions showed much flexibility to adapt to unexpected changes (or simply make room for appealing new projects):

- Dokk1 with some spaces dedicated to new uses and unprogrammed events.
- Den Gamle By, with the development of a joint project with people with a migrant background. Interestingly the idea was picked up due to a chance meeting (targeted marketing campaign by Den Gamle By)
- Moesgaard museum has a multi-skilled team that works as an in-house laboratory and enable them to design, test and fast-prototype new experiences for its audiences.
- ARoS is developing a whole floor of digital experiences to reach out to new audiences and break the idea of an elitist culture.

Transferability here is to some extent limited (changing mindsets is no easy task) but was flagged as a highly inspirational aspect of the visit by participants.

2) Coherence and long term strategies

An underlying theme of the study visit was the overall coherence of the different cultural infrastructures and their objectives over the long run in the city:

- Cultural investments have been carefully monitored, planned and discussed across all parties involved over time. As a result, complementarities have emerged between the different cultural operators: the 3 larger museums are partly competing but most importantly they flagged the fact that this cultural offer allows for a critical mass and contribute to the city attractiveness and its touristic capacity.
The overall outcome is impressive given the diversity of actors playing a role here: the city, independent cultural institutions, private foundations.
- The current city council is clearly strongly supportive of culture. That being said, it should be highlighted that long-term investments in culture have resisted electoral changes. From

the initial decisions to renew museums to the ECoC title in 2017, this represents more than 20 years of considerable support to cultural policies and infrastructures. The mix between public support and private investment has certainly played a role there.

In terms of **transferability**, it should be highlighted that the study visits in Aarhus opens up new perspectives: long term coherence and implementation of strategies rely on a mix of highly flexible policy instruments (contracts for largest cultural operators, and management model for city-owned premises), clear goals and adhesion from key stakeholders to the objectives set. In other contexts, such long-term strategies often rely on direct funding instruments and/or city-owned cultural institutions.

3) Other key points and lessons learnt

- **Trusted intermediaries** and individual initiatives are key to make the most of the overarching framework of the city's cultural policy. For example museum managers stepped up to round up financial resources from private foundations.
- **User-driven** perspective: the success of the different initiatives strongly relies on the knowledge of users and audiences' needs and desires. At museum levels it translated into immersive experiences, while at city level the different set of activities developed at Godsbanen provide a good example of infrastructures and services anchored in the socio-economic context of the city and fill an identified gap. This partly explains the popularity of the different activities organised there.
- **Confidence** in testing new and forward-looking approaches. The example of Dokk1 and Godsbanen (multimodal spaces offering or the Aarhus 2017 team show that ambitious approaches, if well-implemented, can be rewarded. Even in a favourable socio-economic context, such important cultural investments testing innovative approaches should be highlighted.

As part of the final session, participants also exchanged on the key words and topics that best illustrated the two and a half-day in Aarhus. A word cloud of the main ones can be found below:



5. Initiatives presented

Title	ECoC Aarhus 2017
Description, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Context - Objectives - Implementation - Key actors involved - Budget 	<p>Aarhus won the title of European Capital of Culture (ECoC) in 2017 together with Pafos in Cyprus. The presentation given by two key persons of the preparations ((Communication Director and Head of programming) confirmed the ambitions to use the opportunity for a fundamental urban and regional upsurge under noble principles. ‘Let’s Rethink’ is the encompassing slogan, for a better future, represented in a variety of key concepts. Some of these are fairly general like democracy and diversity; others break down into more tangible notions, e.g. entrepreneurship expressed by position on the list of smartest cities in the EU. The goal of 15% increase in tourist nights in the ECoC year also links up to this economic development dimension. Liveability is another central theme, including increased opportunities for moving the body: sports for better living, which contributes to boosting health tourism.</p> <p>Sustainability is another key concept, conceived broader than the ecology. Building a legacy from the ECoC is a central challenge, keeping also in mind what to take from history to the future.</p> <p>Preparations were not burdened with constructing new infrastructure for the ECoC - the previous period saw to important cultural and urban investments - thus financial and</p>

	<p>mental energies can be concentrated on the content and on the intangible societal objectives.</p> <p>Celebration, contemplation and provocation are key goals in the preparation of the programme, which caters for a broad variety of audiences, yet aspires to present and even create top level new art. For this aim top artists of the world are commissioned for specific works, ranging from Olafur Eliasson to Philip Glass. The mega opening event, a “festival in the festival in the festival” receives special attention, with a Scandinavian pageant in the centre.</p> <p>The programme includes a large number of international events, the Creativity World Forum in November 2017 being probably the most important. Besides Pafos, Aarhus 2017 reaches out to partner cities (past, future and bidding ECoCs) like San Sebastián, Hull, Istanbul, Leeuwarden, Wroclaw and Washington, the latter in the frame of the European month of culture. The Luther anniversary will be connected in a forward looking manner, searching for the place of belief in the future.</p> <p>Over 70% of the 56 million euros budget is earmarked on culture, 15% on communication. A relatively small staff of 40 are busy with the preparations. Their background and diversity of skills, including those of their external partners as well, have been selected with the overarching goal to sustain the legacy of the ECoC after 2017.</p> <p>Like in similar large undertakings, a main concern of is how to keep momentum and relevance till the opening days.</p>
Results	<p>Bidding for and winning the ECoC has been a catalyst of forward looking planning.</p> <p>Unprecedented ways and degree of cooperation began not just between sectors, but inside, too, e.g. between the three main museums.</p> <p>Connections between culture and tourism, as well as related businesses became obvious, accepted, and highly successful.</p>
Lessons learnt & Key success factors	<p>Real estate investments and iconic buildings is key for success in culture; nevertheless decisive leaps forward can be achieved - as in Aarhus - when their establishment is no longer in focus of development goals, and attention can switch to human and societal aspects of urban development.</p> <p>Quality of senior managers in key cultural institutions (and</p>

	the ECoC staff) has been an important asset.
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Title	Dokk1
Description, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Context - Objectives - Implementation - Key actors involved - Budget 	<p>For the visitor this multifunctional new complex is a perfect example of post-industrial urban regeneration. Primarily the building houses the main public library of the city (the old venue has since been sold and used for other purposes), but creativity and resources have produced a centre with much wider scale of functions. During its first year of operation Dokk1 has had 1.2 million visitors. Beyond the functions of a cutting edge 21st century library, the building houses an ultramodern automated parking area and an official citizen services centre that is not fenced off from the reading, internet and leisure spaces of the library.</p> <p>The setup is what could be labelled a Danish type of public-private partnership. The investment was initiated and steered by the city, managed by a national foundation that has the right to run the parking place for a proper length of time; as in cases of other cultural investments a number of further business based foundations have contributed to the financing of the construction as well as some of the functioning costs.</p> <p>Designing the many details of Dokk1 was done upon the analysis of the basic needs of people, having human growth in sight. With the evolution of the answers given to the perceived needs a centre was produced that responds to needs that the city had not even identified at the very start.</p> <p>Dokk1 is open seven days a week from 8 am to 10 pm, unstaffed in the late hours. The various spaces are regularly used for events - readings, performances, debates etc. - about 40% of which in conjunction with co-organisers and 20% fully by external partners.</p> <p>Dokk1 houses offices for over a hundred clerks at the citizen services; library staff is 60 people plus 40 IT specialists.</p> <p>The 1% of the investment budget that Danish law assigns to artistic works allowed, among others, the creation of The Gong - a huge metal tube that gives sound whenever a new child is born in the hospitals of the city.</p>

Results	From the opening Dokk1 has been used intensively by citizens and has instantly incorporated into the tissue of the city. The project has successfully reintegrated the former harbour area into the life of Aarhus, contributing to the upgrading of the neighbourhood, attracting various businesses and services in the area.
Lessons learnt & Key success factors	<p>Very open, iterative planning process that focused on the needs of a variety of citizens by age and social background.</p> <p>Flexible and generous financing partners.</p> <p>Openness of the space, which makes it truly part of the city's life and integrate seamlessly as a bridge between the centre of the city and the newly-regenerated harbour</p>

Title	Den Gamle By
Description, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Context - Objectives - Implementation - Key actors involved - Budget 	<p>Den Gamle By - "Old Town" in Danish - is one of the oldest open air museums of the world, and probably the oldest at focusing on urban history and culture. At present it displays 75 houses from 24 different places representing four points of time from late 19th century to 1974. The fourth, most recent period is being planned.</p> <p>Similarly to other cultural institutions in Aarhus, Gamle By too, is in constant search of new functions and features. Helping young people to feel and understand the past is a central objective. The museum pays special attention to the needs of children and the old, as well as variously impaired visitors. New ways are sought by involving citizens.</p> <p>Gamle By is home of a unique social experiment, the memory apartment furnished in every detail by the 1950s. Carefully prepared visits by people with dementia offer many is not all of them moments of clarity and sometimes lasting mental improvement.</p> <p>Other than teaching, informing and entertaining, Gamle By generates direct and indirect revenue, the latter by renting venues and through catering and retail shops that sell commodities from the presented periods.</p> <p>A considerable part of funding comes from private sources: Den Gamle By receives a total of 29 million DKK (about €3.8 million) in State and municipal subsidies, while the museum</p>

	<p>itself has to find revenues of approximately 57 million DKK (€7.6 million) and 40 million DKK (€5.3 million) in sponsorships.</p> <p>The annual turnover is approximately 126 million DKK (€16.8 million)</p>
Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More than 500,000 visitors/year, despite a relatively high entry cost: between 10 & 18 euros for adults depending on seasons (for a cultural institution - see below) - Received the Museum of the year 2009 from the Danish Museum Award and the Luigi Micheletti Award 2016. Nominated for the European Museum of the Year 2014 (EMYA) - Prototype projects with strong social resonance ('Somali women house' or working with a homeless person to show how people live in Denmark today). The Old Town is not only about the past, but also stirring reflexions on how we live today.
Lessons learnt & Key success factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attractive pricing compared to theme parks and other open air entertainment structures - Unique cultural offering (one of the few open air museums in Europe). - "Entry door" to the Danish culture and way of life - Openness to new projects despite the limited leeway in terms of building.

Title	Moesgaard Museum
Description, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Context - Objectives - Implementation - Key actors involved - Budget 	<p>Moesgaard Museum - also known as MoMu - originates from the 19th century. From its old building in Aarhus the natural and human history collection moved to an old manor outside the city in 1970, and after a while took the name of the manor. The main attraction of the museum is undoubtedly the new building from 2014.</p> <p>Moesgaard is indeed a brave initiative: an ambitious investment of well over €50 million at half an hour's drive from the city centre must justify that it meets real needs. The record of the first two years is positive. It is based on a variety of components.</p> <p>Large internal spaces can room blockbuster exhibits. The Chinese terracotta warriors were the first show, attracting</p>

	<p>350,000 visitors. The cutting edge 3D technology that highlights the otherwise invisible past colours of a terracotta warrior will be presented at the ICOM conference in Milan, in July 2016.</p> <p>The basis of the current exhibition of gladiators is licensed from an Italian agency, comprised of exhibits from dozens of Italian museums, complemented by a spectacular multimedia show of own production.</p> <p>Next summer a huge Viking pageant will be arranged in, outside and on top of the museum, with the involvement of the Royal Danish Theatre, with tree tall stages and horses... Hoping to tour the performance also abroad, later on.</p> <p>The museum learnt from the success of Danish documentary film: a carefully designed blend of facts with fiction. "It may not be fully true but there is truth in it." This approach is present at the permanent exhibit of human and natural history as well. Otherwise motionless, dumb objects are put into stories and scenic elaboration. These, and the interactive laboratories cater for all visitors of each age and walk of life. The display evolves, instead of very precise schemes and preliminary creative work construction of the display is done flexibly, with in service development.</p> <p>Research and academic rigour is nevertheless respected. Units of university departments of archaeology and anthropology are situated in the museum complex, and presentation is based on scientific evidence. A summer camp of PhD students serves on-going collaboration between academia and museum.</p> <p>The over 400 million DKK of the building and 120 million DKK for the exhibitions were financed by foundations. About 250 people are running the institution.</p>
Results	<p>The exceptionally daring project appears to pay off and promises sustainability. The main criteria of success, the amount of visitors have been met (more than 500,000) and the momentum is being kept. Moesgaard Museum is a top tourist destination, having the potential of attracting visitors from hundreds of kilometre away from Aarhus.</p>
Lessons learnt & Key success factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An investment of such scale needs preconditions: concerted political and professional will over a long time. The top class building is the result of over twenty years of planning and advocacy, combining

	<p>aspects of tourism, city branding and the museum profession.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Having at least two flagship exhibitions per year is attracting different kinds of audiences and entices people to come back. - A lot of attention is paid to the museum's business model and perspectives: loyalty card pricing vs single tickets, promotional events and bonuses, role of the café/restaurant in generating income, etc. - The team is very diverse in terms of skills, which enable them to test lots of features and exhibition design in-house. - Frictions may however occur between bolder ideas to strengthen user experiences and presentation/preservation of the collections.
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Title	ARoS - Aarhus Art Museum
Description, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Context - Objectives - Implementation - Key actors involved - Budget 	<p>The Art Museum of Aarhus - ARoS - is the third example in the study tour of a cultural institution occupying a building that was constructed to meet its specific needs. The building dates from 2004 (though the institution itself dates back from 1859) and is fully suitable to exhibit the classic art collection of paintings and sculpture from the 19th and early 20th century, as well as to display the works of contemporary artistic creativity.</p> <p>ARoS wants to stand proudly in the increasing global competition of contemporary art museums with the declared aim of making it to the top twenty of the kind.</p> <p>To achieve its aims, ARoS arranges high level temporary exhibitions, offers exceptional attractions to its visitors based on latest technology, and organises events outside of the building.</p> <p>The basic attraction, however, in this case is also the building, crowned since 2011 with the unique coloured glass and steel installation of the "rainbow panorama" designed by Olafur Eliasson and his studio.</p> <p>Besides contributing to the fame and attraction of the city of Aarhus, ARoS feels concern about the artistic life of the place, intends to keep and inspire local artists and attract artists from elsewhere.</p> <p>Among future plans the establishing of a huge triennial stand</p>

	<p>out, to be launched in the frame of the 2017 ECoC, based on a budget of 30 million crown. A new edition of the already established sculpture exhibition on the seaside will also be included into the ECoC programme.</p> <p>Participants to the study tour received insight into the computer assisted interactive practices elaborated jointly with the team of the New York 9/11 memorial complex.</p> <p>The staff of 270 people (plus supporting team) have managed 70% own income in the budget. The director considers striving for high box office income an opportunity rather than a burden; an incentive for higher level achievement.</p>
Results and lessons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Generous investment with long term vision is bearing fruit also in this case (more than 500,000 visitors per year since the rainbow panorama was installed) - Keeping abreast with competing attractions requires high standard management - in this case key persons have been recruited from elsewhere (from Norway and from Copenhagen). - Integrity is key for the museum - diversifying audiences is a priority, but compromising on the quality of art works and exhibitions is not an option.

Title	Godsbanen
Description, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Context - Objectives - Implementation - Key actors involved - Budget 	<p>The name Godsbanen means freight rail line, as it occupies part of the abandoned freight railway station area. Another building that was designed and constructed (in 2012) to meet the functions of the institution, a multifunctional public cultural activity centre.</p> <p>The primary aim is to develop cultural competences of citizens. That happens on a broad scale from woodwork through contemporary dance to printing and literature, as well as DIY activities (woodcutting and crafting).</p> <p>Time had been given to preparatory explorations, and processes of development and perfection have not ceased since the opening. The aim is to further increase participation and to attract new groups of users.</p> <p>In the meanwhile challenges connected to the specificities of certain art forms had to be addressed. Certain communities found the place too common for their self-esteem, others put excessive accent on exhibition at the expense of creation,</p>

	<p>again others long for more exclusivity etc.</p> <p>The construction cost 16 million euro, half of which was covered with a foundation grant. The house employs altogether 400 people. The number of visitors is difficult to assess, entrance and use of most facilities being free and without registration. Nevertheless it is estimated to come close to 200,000 a year.</p>
Results	<p>The abandoned area found a lively function.</p> <p>The programme posters tell about very dense usage, including items arranged by outsiders in rooms rented at market price. Intensive activities were taking place along the hours of the visit in most of the area, which also confirms the popularity of the place. The 'upskilling' activities (dance, literature, graphic design, painting, woodcutting lasers, etc.) are often full - almost too successful to the taste of professionals also using this place!</p> <p>One can of course only confer a considerable degree of social and cultural impact at the sight of the intensity of the activities.</p>
Lessons learnt & Key success factors	<p>Dedicated preparations, available resources and on-going municipal support result in an important institution embedded into the urban and social tissue of Aarhus.</p> <p>Diversity of users plays an important part and contributes to the vibrancy of the place.</p> <p>A small creative district (transitional) located in front of the main building also contributes to the attractiveness of the area. This is also a good example of (relatively) cheap investment for successful transitional uses of spaces in an urban regeneration project.</p>

6. Lessons learned

This part was prepared on the basis of 16 evaluation forms received after the visit from 10 participating cities and regions.

Visiting Cities\Regions:

Participants	Lessons learnt in Aarhus	How will you use the new ideas and knowledge gained to improve your working and organisational methods?

<p>Aalst</p>	<p>The need to fail: don't hesitate to try things, to do different things, you can only learn from them. If something goes wrong, see it as a lesson, not as a failure.</p> <p>Openness between different city organisations: work together, see opportunities between them. Collaboration works between different groups and services. Cultural authorities give a boost to the city, and influence to rest of the city activities.</p> <p>Social aspects, try to involve different target audiences. Create social programmes and bring different groups in contact with each other. A museum is a social place.</p>	<p>We need to understand our target audience, listen to them and involve them.</p> <p>Bring your collection in a different way, focussing on storytelling and social aspects.</p>
<p>Athens</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Openness - Citizen engagement - The feeling of being part of the history as common threat to the museums and the cultural spaces - Open access - Mentality of trust between the cultural institutions and the municipality - New uses of public traditional spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We will improve the own experience effect for our museum visitors - We will create a network of technical workshops for our creative industries teams - In the area of educational programming in the social inclusion events
<p>Berlin</p>	<p>Visionary, ambitious city planning is possible. It may take time and involve a lot of discussions with different groups, the general public, various funders etc., but is definitively worthwhile. You can make a city more liveable by investing in "cultural" institutions.</p> <p>I was particularly impressed with the new library Dokk1 as a place for people of all age groups, social backgrounds etc. to come and use the public space according to their needs. It felt so "free" and attractive and it is hard to imagine anyone not wanting to come by</p>	<p>One of the lessons learned also included that it takes time to realize your projects, which is very comforting to know that it is the same in other cities as well. Nevertheless, one should try not to be dispirited by the process, the seemingly endless need for discussions, the difficult search for funding etc. as the outcome can truly create an impact on the way your city appears to and can be used by the general public.</p> <p>The funding part may be difficult to transfer, but still the examples visited show that you have to get a lot of different</p>

	<p>any time for a quick browse in the magazines, a chat with your friends, a go on the PlayStation, an in depth study of media etc.</p> <p>The House of memory project was one of the most emotionally moving and fascinating projects of social responsibility I have ever heard of. The best part of it to my mind is that it is not done out of a feeling that something needed to be done for the elderly/mentally impaired, but out of a deeply humanitarian approach to attempt to give back an identity and thereby dignity to people trapped within their own body and thus misunderstood by family, caregivers and society.</p> <p>Godsbanen stands out as a marvellous place for the normal citizen, families and artists a like. It would have been interesting to see it being used and see the interaction between various groups of citizens.</p>	<p>people on board to get good results. This is definitely transferable to Berlin as well.</p>
<p>Bristol</p>	<p>Flexibility in approach to programming is important - both for the programme of an institution such as Moesgaard but also in the ECOC'17 programme. This allows responsive and up to date programming to happen.</p> <p>Considering culture in its widest sense - not just art galleries and museums, but the blend of skills and attitudes towards culture.</p> <p>City authority /municipality has a key role in facilitation and support that goes beyond financial support, but is about creating a culture of positivity.</p> <p>Building skills and capacity and capabilities within the city is important to make the place sustainable, grow and be 'liveable'.</p> <p>The underlying cultural approach in Aarhus is very stimulating. That culture</p>	<p>I am going to work with Libraries in developing a stronger offer.</p> <p>I will share best practice with colleagues in Bristol. I will use my contacts and information gathered from the trip to inform the city's future European Capital of Culture bid process.</p> <p>Working with Museums and the Cultural team needs to be a standard way of working and capitalising on close cultural links</p> <p>Making better connections with independent cultural organisations in the city to prepare for any future bids</p>

	<p>is acknowledged as important and vital to a developing city and to its citizens. We can learn from this approach in Bristol</p> <p>Community trust in citizens - especially in Dokk1.</p> <p>And the need to try new things and experiment and take risks. We can't be safe in programming or assume that we as employees and managers know what the citizens and community want. We have to keep asking and talking to communities to change and adapt</p>	
Ghent	<p>Awareness of contribution to society as a museum, possibility to expand the museum function towards a social space</p> <p>Being creative in adapting the business model (financial, cooperation with other parties, ...) instead of giving up ideas and waiting for solutions from the government, being proud at generating own income</p> <p>Participating with the audience, not only listening to them, but also involving them in designing and creating things (library, the old town)</p>	Mainly on a strategic and business model level
Kalamata	<p>Clear long - term strategy in the whole city. Long - term commitment of the cultural institutions to this strategy. I had the impression that we saw the results of at least a 10-year strategy of each cultural organisation.</p> <p>Inclusion methods and specific tools that can be also used in my country (e.g. specific card with which you can get points and discounts depending on your income - very inclusive tool!)</p> <p>Audience development strategies and community projects (especially in the Old town with people with dementia, children with disabilities, homeless, minorities etc.)</p> <p>Build spaces for all ages and all target groups</p> <p>Have foundations that donate money to cultural institutions</p> <p>All museums work together and they do</p>	<p>Propose and discuss about the implementation of the discount card</p> <p>Include elements of the trip to our long-term strategy.</p> <p>Communication tools for the promotion of the city as European Capital of Culture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Countdown clock o Press releases - create the international list and the content for it o Milestones o Special events for the programme <p>Volunteering and training for Aarhus 2017</p> <p>Create the long - term strategy and engage the local institutions</p> <p>Create the tools for audience development</p> <p>As I presented an open air museum that we have in Kalamata and it is about the history of trains, I found some useful and very</p>

	<p>not cannibalize each other (don't take visitors from each other)</p>	<p>specific ideas on how to make this open museum more vivid. I took some specific ideas from the Old town museum in Aarhus and in my organisation we are working for a proposal to create a European village in the Railway museum.</p> <p>Specific ideas for the development of the new City Museum and the new art museum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Ideas from the Moesgaard Museum o Use all the senses to create fillings and experiences o Use the structure of the building to create hidden places with special content o Use digital means to engage the visitors more o Use the spaces inside and outside your museum for exhibitions/ performances etc. o always work for the next exhibition o create a network of museums at local, national and international level
<p>Leeds</p>	<p>Unique funding structure in Denmark through private foundations which is difficult to replicate in the UK</p> <p>The differences between Danish and British society - a lot more trusting in Denmark e.g. leaving laptops unaccompanied in at Dokk1, being able to open libraries with no staff and a swipe card system with little problem etc. An atmosphere of trust in society that everyone buys into.</p> <p>The level of ambition to have achieved what Aarhus has with its museums and cultural venues. World class architecture, ARoS aiming to be in the top 20 art museums in the world, etc.</p> <p>Culture is accepted in Aarhus - you don't have to make the case for it - it is an integral part of society and museums and galleries are seen as a key part of this. Politicians trust their cultural organisations to deliver. "Art and culture is not the sprinkle on the cake, it is the cake." Erlend Høyersten,</p>	<p>To work more proactively with the wider Culture team in Leeds to embed Leeds Museums and Galleries more widely in general and with Leeds 2023 discussions.</p> <p>To share some more detailed specific ideas about collections displays with the curatorial team.</p> <p>To share ideas about concepts such as liveability and levels of ambition with colleagues.</p>

	Director of ARoS	
Nice	<p>The difficulty in getting the balance between the economic model of an establishment (who need to generate financial resources) and its social approach (which needs to enlarge the free access)</p> <p>The improvement of a global project is better when the cultural establishments are municipal and used to coordinate their activities and their goals</p> <p>All the activities that a cultural establishment can create must allow people to have a "good life". So, culture has to be included in the everyday life of people and give joy, pleasure, personal enrichment as sport or movies can give.</p> <p>The improvement of establishment is closely linked to the capacity of the cities or establishments to find sponsors. Half part of the resources of the establishments we visited comes from private foundations. In France, in a context of declining public funding, it is our responsibility to engage ourselves in the research of such funding.</p>	<p>The model of Aarhus's infrastructures we visited can't be transposed directly in our working and organisational methods because the Aarhus's model is based on an important private funding which is hard to find in France. Furthermore, France has the culture of the free access or a very low price for the entrances.</p> <p>However, the very "open minded" and "good life" spirit of the culture in Aarhus is an inspiration to actualize our working processes and the way to improve our infrastructures.</p> <p>The concept of Aarhus to create spaces with large uses (culture, social, entertainment, families, citizen services) is the way to the future, which will allow public to come in cultural spaces and have cultural activities</p>
Silute	<p>Community involvement in museums activities/ museums as social areas. The first lesson learned was how strongly the community is involved in the museum's activities. This issue especially stood out in the Old town museum, also in Dokk1. The institutions are more like social interaction area, not just for learning about history or reading books. In general, the museums work for communities, because they respond to their needs in very different and even narrow spheres (project for people with dementia). From the discussions with colleagues from different countries it is clear that such an approach is the "Danish approach".</p> <p>Story telling. All the museums stressed "story telling" as a main approach in creating expositions. The stress is put not on the items, but on the story they tell. The expositions are constructed</p>	<p>One of the main future projects of Šilutė district municipality's Culture department is creation of a new exposition in Hugo Šojus museum. The practices how to involve local community in the museum activities will be transferred directly: representatives from different community groups will be invited to join the Steering Committee and work together on the expositions from the start. Also the "Storytelling" approach will be an aspiration for the new exposition.</p> <p>Due to national regulations it is impossible to transfer the good practice of public funding to Silute district, the same is with stability in the cultural policy. Still the practice of setting long term goals could be transferable and a long term cultural</p>

	<p>around "stories".</p> <p>Private funds. All the projects were partly financed by private funds. The way that public, business and EU funds are combined is very impressive.</p> <p>Cultural policy. As the director of Aros museum pointed out the culture is not crumbles on top of the cake, the culture is the cake. The cultural policy is very stable and long lasting in Aarhus. Most of the projects presented during the study visits lasted for 20-30 years, so the stability of the policy is very important for the successful implementation of such projects.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">---</p> <p>In the museum of "Old Town" were discussed cooperation and interaction opportunities with various social groups. Especially I was impressed by the teacher who works with groups of vulnerable children. I paid attention to the words that teachers have to communicate in order to understand children rather than just try to teach them something. It is a truly useful and interesting approach which I will apply in my direct work.</p> <p>The second lesson I learned during the workshops at Momu museum was that a person, a student, a visitor should be able to choose themselves. But before visiting a museum an individual should already be familiar with the story as well as subjects. Then the person will be able to broaden their mind and deepen their knowledge.</p> <p>Specific attitude and freedom were revealed at the art museum Aros. About private funding raising, longevity and knowledge through the forms of different perception of the world. It was the third lesson that I got interested in and which, I hope, I have learned.</p>	<p>strategy of the district could be initialized.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">---</p> <p>I have already presented the valuable ideas I gained at the Aarhus museums to my colleagues. I am sure that many things and ideas will be used in educational activities.</p> <p>I was very fascinated by the process of dealing with people suffering from dementia. This is a good example worth being learned for everyone. I still carry the image of the library space which I saw and my desire is to implement similar ideas in my town.</p>
Turku	Political commitment is needed to boost	Trying to support culture and museums to

	<p>cultural institutions to the next level as a strategical focus of the whole city.</p> <p>Customers and visitors, and the whole visiting experience, are the most relevant thing when renewing museums; how to make people enjoy their visit, tell about it to others and come back.</p> <p>Museums are social spaces. Cooperation and working with the community strengthens the museum.</p> <p>"Culture is the icebreaker in destroying silos"</p> <p>"Culture sets the agenda in city development"</p> <p>"Let's Rethink!"</p>	<p>be high in the agenda. Not just a surplus.</p> <p>Firstly by sharing my experience and learnings from Aarhus. Secondly by focusing on ideas of museums as social spaces.</p>
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Comments by expert team

Arthur Le Gall (KEA):

This study visit in Aarhus left a strong impression, especially through the seamless articulation between the political level, the city administration, cultural institutions themselves and private foundations. This requires much openness and trust between people and organisations, and sustaining this common ground over the long run is clearly an impressive achievement. The study visit also enabled us to reflect on general cultural (and city) policies, while discussing different aspects related to the management of cultural institutions themselves.

Beyond the impressive cultural infrastructures themselves, this study visit was very well-organised (congrats to the team in Aarhus!) and enabled strong interactions across visiting cities and regions through interactive workshops skilfully facilitated by the staff of the different institutions. This certainly strengthened the peer-learning dimensions and enabled sharing of some practical solutions (i.e.: reward-based card to activate cultural participation).

Péter Inkei (Budapest Observatory):

The outsider is impressed by the stability and continuity of all projects explored, exempt of zig-zags, u-turns and improvisations that political (electoral) changes or personal egos produce in a number of places elsewhere. This, of course, finds explanation in a number of historical and cultural legacies including deep rooted democratic traditions, consolidated economy, well designed and functioning institutions like business foundations and so on.

Comments from Host City (Aarhus):

We found an extraordinary level of engagement among the participants which made the workshops very successful. It is always a big challenge to have the external speakers and workshop organizers adhere to the overall aim of the study visit. We put a great deal of effort in this and think we succeeded quite well.

It was disappointing to have very late cancellations. It was difficult for us to make the necessary adjustments of logistics and we find that it is not respectful to the work of either EUROCITIES or the host city.

7. Conclusions

The study visit in Aarhus has been highly interesting in many aspects. The local team's organisation was flawless, and the teams from the different cultural institutions visited provided a great balance between informative presentations/tours as well as adequate spaces for discussions and Q&A sessions. The presence and commitment of top-level managers of each institution as well as staff responsible for more specific activities, high rank civil servants and Rabih Azad-Ahmad, the deputy-mayor responsible for culture and citizens service, should be highlighted as it enabled a mix between high-level discussions and very practical questions around the day-to-day work of the different cultural institutions.

As a result the study visit enabled both a solid overview of cultural policies in Aarhus, as well as a mix of tours and presentations/workshops that allowed visitors to get a solid grasp of the sheer quality of cultural infrastructures, their innovative management models and their different revenue streams.

The most challenging part of the study visit probably lies in the transferability aspects. What Aarhus achieved is certainly impressive, but the strong share of private financing through a unique foundation model, as well as the overall quality of life of the city (natural and cultural) and a robust economic environment make it difficult to transpose in more challenging contexts. Again, the different levels of analysis covered during the study visit are useful to allow participants to single out some inspirational aspects fitting their own cities or regions.

A. Annex 1: List of participants

Name	City/Region	Position
Lien Grootvriendt	Aalst	Head of Heritage and Tourism
Ann De Block	Aalst	Museum director of public activities
Maria Florou	Athens	Head of the Industrial Gas Museum, Technopolis, Athens
Konstantinos Bitzanis	Athens	Managing Director of Technopolis, Athens
Christine Feuerhake	Berlin	Team Leader Museums and Libraries, Senatskanzlei
Kate Murray	Bristol	Head of Libraries, Bristol City Culture
Phil Walker	Bristol	Head of Engagement- Bristol Culture, Bristol City Culture
Annelies Storms	Ghent	Deputy Mayor Culture, Ghent City Council
Sarah Bastien	Ghent	Managing Director Cultural Museums
Georgia Giannakea	Kalamata	Communications and International Relations Officer
Yvonne Hardman	Leeds	Head of Collections and Programmes, Leeds Museums and Galleries, Leeds City Council
John Donegan	Leeds	Partnerships Manager, Leeds Museums and Galleries, Leeds City Council
Hervé Bonein	Nice	Culture and Heritage policy officer, City of Nice
Reda Svelniute	Šilutė	Head specialist of Culture Department, Šilutė district municipality
Indre Skablauskaitė	Šilutė	Ethnographer, Silute Hugo Sojus museum
Timo Hintsanen	Turku	Director of Urban Planning, Department for city development, Turku City Central administration
Joanna Kurth	Turku	Chief Curator, Turku Museum Centre, Museum services of Turku City

The team in Aarhus

Ib Christensen

Head of cultural department, Aarhus Municipality

Bo Hedetoft

Consultant, cultural department, Aarhus Municipality

Experts

Arthur Le Gall, KEA

Role during the visit: Lead expert

Peter Inkei, the Budapest Observatory

Role during the visit: External expert

Support

Julie Hervé, EURO CITIES

Policy Officer Culture

B. Annex 2: Presentations

Presentations and supporting documents can be found here:

<http://www.cultureforcitiesandregions.eu/culture/resources/Study-visit-12-Aarhus-10-12-May-2016-WSWE-A9LC6M>

Further exchanges between participants have been made on the Culture for cities and regions online forum.

Pictures of the visit:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/135418594@N05/albums>