



CULTURE

for Cities and Regions

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Study visit report

Study Visit
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1. Executive Summary

This report provides a summary overview of the Culture for Cities and Regions Study Visit to Vilnius, Lithuania, June 14-17, 2016. This visit, hosted by Vilnius Municipality, involved participants from eleven cities from across Europe. Participants were keen to explore how Vilnius and other represented cities are positioning culture as a vector for development and how this is embedded across the city, with a particular interest in neighbourhood-level activity.

The visit, which was very intensive, introduced participants to many case studies and provided the opportunity to explore how the city plans for and invests in culture-led development. The main recurrent themes include:

- The spatial distribution of culture-led initiatives, including the balance between central city and neighbourhood activities
- The role of government / the public sector - e.g. in providing strategic direction, coordinated investment and a long-term view
- The most effective enabling conditions for creative talent - from the intermediaries and activists who drive hubs and networks to the businesses and organisations who benefit from their actions
- The approach to sector engagement and consultation - including a focus on cultural planning and integrating culture across the strategic landscape of the city (including economic development, social cohesion, innovation, tourism etc.)

This report touches on these areas and should be read alongside the slides provided by hosting organisations in Vilnius.

2. Programme

14 JUNE, TUESDAY

Arrival of participants

19.00 Welcome Reception.

Venue: COMFORT HOTEL, Kauno g. 19

15 JUNE, WEDNESDAY

The Old Town - district regeneration enforced by local creative communities

8.30 Walking Tour from COMFORT HOTEL (Kauno g. 19) to TITANIKAS (Maironio g. 3), organized by Public Institution "Streets Alive".

„Gatvės gyvos“ (“Streets Alive“) is a unique cultural initiative suggesting residents of Vilnius city to discover urban spaces. Local people are invited to take part in free guided tours through the quarters of the town that are usually out of the touristic route and considered to be trivial, insignificant. The main intention of “Streets Alive“ is to give the opportunity for every person, despite of financial or social situation, to explore and develop their knowledge about the urban space they inhabit.

9.30-12.30 *Introduction Session. Setting the scene.*

Venue: Design innovation centre TITANIKAS (Maironio g, 3, Vilnius)

<http://www.titanikas.com/en>

<http://www.facebook.com/vda.titanikas>

Design Innovations Centre TITANIKAS is a division of Vilnius Academy of Arts established in 2005 with the aim to promote collaboration between Vilnius Academy of Arts and business sector and education structures. TITANIKAS seeks to promote young designers nationally and internationally, to increase the competences and skills of professionals in design sector.

9.30 Welcome speech. Alma Vaitkunskienė, Chief Executive Director of Vilnius City Administration.

9.45-10.45 Introduction of the Culture for cities and regions project, general round of introduction from participants. Moderated by Tom Fleming, Peter Inkei and Andrea Lagundzija.

10.45-11.05. Cultural policy in Vilnius: challenges and opportunities. Vytautas Mitalas, Chairman of the Committee on Culture, Education and Sports of the City Council of Vilnius.

Vytautas Mitalas is the Chairman of Committee on Culture, Education and Sports, one of the principle decision-makers at the City of Vilnius, the former Advisor to the Minister of Education and Science and the former Advisor at Seimas (the Parliament) of the Republic of Lithuania. He will open the session and will guide to outline of Vilnius Cultural policy.

11.05-11.35 Innovation in the city: urban development of Vilnius. Mindaugas Pakalnis, Director of the City Development Department of Vilnius City Administration.

Mindaugas Pakalnis is the Director of City Development Department of Vilnius City Administration. He is an architect and an urban planner, a member of the board of the Union of Architects of Lithuania, lecturer in urban planning at Vilnius Gediminas Technical University. Mindaugas Pakalnis took part in developing the major development projects of Vilnius city - master plan, approved in 2007, strategic development plan, development concepts for different parts of the city.

The two decades of independence of the Lithuania country were dominated by market-led development through privatization of public assets and decentralization of decision-making. That has led to extensive development: many residential, commercial, industrial investments aimed for empty, green-field areas, leaving behind the deteriorating buildings in the previously built up areas. In the shadow of the new green-field development Vilnius elaborating new financial, organizational and communication schemes for the existing brownfields, many of them very close to the city centre.

Modern cities dwellers are increasingly feeling the absence of more contemporary residential area planning, as the existing ones lack jobs and services, there is no space for communication or entertainment, secure and attractive urban environment. Vilnius main target areas for the innovative regeneration process are apartment blocks areas, designed before two or three decades, they lack many necessary things, becoming the locations where criminality and social segregation start flourishing. Creative communication, involvement of residents, art and creativity are those modern tools that helps in contemporary urban planning and development.

11.35-12.00. Q/A-Discussions.

12.00-13.30 - Involvement of citizens into cultural activities and regeneration of the Old Town district.

12.00-12.20 Studies of creative industries for creative city.

Dr. Viktorija Žilinskaitė-Vytienė and dr. Eglė Jaškūnienė, Associate Professors at Vilnius Gediminas Technical University Faculty for Creative Industries, Creative Business and Communication Department.

Dr. Viktorija Žilinskaitė-Vytienė is associate professor at Creative Entrepreneurship and Communication Department, Faculty of Creative Industries (VGTU), Vilnius Academy of Arts, researcher at Lithuanian Social Research Centre. Dr. Eglė Jaškūnienė is a Head of Creative Business and Communication Department, Faculty for Creative Industries (VGTU), doctor of Humanities, art historian and criticist, photographer.

Although academic community is factor of creative city just by itself, interaction between students' tasks and city life is especially active in studies of creative industries. Presentation will analyse events and interventions organised as part of study process by students of Vilnius Gediminas Technical University Faculty for Creative Industries. The analysed interventions and events that activate different parts of Vilnius - faculty surroundings as well as more distant parts. Particular tasks that involve citizens into cultural activities and support regeneration of districts will be presented.

12.20-13.00. Innovative approach to activities in Vilnius Academy of Arts.

Prof. Audrius Klimas, Rector of the Vilnius Academy of Arts.

Prof. Audrius Klimas is the Rector of Vilnius Academy of Arts, professor at Graphic Design Department (VDA), graphic designer. He is one of the founders and the member of a board of Lithuanian Graphic Design Association.

Vilnius Academy of Arts is the largest and oldest art university in the Baltic States, established in 1793. Today Academy has over 1,800 students in four cities - Vilnius, Kaunas, Telšiai and Klaipėda. Each faculty has its own unique study programmes, which offer Lithuanian students a possibility to find a specific art specialisation in different cities. Prof. Audrius Klimas will present unique projects and programmes implemented by Vilnius Academy of Arts that are highly innovative, interactive and creative in terms of their design, content and structure.

Role of design innovations in strengthening competitiveness of the city and fostering inter-sectoral cooperation. Focus on public services and innovations.

Prof. Aušra Lisauskienė, Head of Graphic Design Department, Assoc. Prof. Juozas Brundza, Assoc. Prof. Julija Mazūrienė, Heads of Design (Product and Spatial) Department.

Prof. Aušra Lisauskienė is the head of Graphic Design Department of Vilnius Academy of Arts, a graphic designer, organizer of international exhibitions, including, since 2008 "Traveling Letters" exhibition in many European countries. Assoc. Prof. Juozas Brundza is the Head of Design Department of Vilnius Academy of Arts and a professional Lithuanian designer. Julija Mazūrienė is Associate Professor at the Design (Product and Spatial) Department of Vilnius Academy of Arts and food designer.

13.00-13.30. Q/A-Discussions.

13.30-15.00 Lunch at Titanikas (Maironio g, 3, Vilnius)

<http://www.titanikas.com/en>

<http://www.facebook.com/vda.titanikas>

15.00-16.30 Study visit: Republic of Užupis.

The Republic of Užupis is a unique state inside the State. Study visit to Užupis will present Užupis' social - economic phenomenon. The participants will be introduced to the local symbols, rituals and their implications. Užupis is naturally formed creative industries cluster, world famous artists 'republic' with its own Constitution, Flags, Hymn, Calendar fests and Cosmology, it has the president, prime minister, sheriff, 232 Ambassadors in many parts of the world and patron - the bronze Angel in the main square, who symbolizes the rebirth of this area in the city. The ideologists of Užupis republic declare that primarily Užupis is a way of thinking, certain state of mind but not the geographic location. Most things and actions in Užupis primarily are supported with certain symbolic meanings and values, and only after searching for some physically measurable values. And yet Užupis is the area clearly enough defined with its streets, houses and people living and creating here...

<https://www.facebook.com/uzupis/>

<http://www.vilnius-tourism.lt/en/what-to-see/vilnius-for-you/for-art-lovers/republic-of-uzupis/>

Užupis Art Incubator. Deputy Director of Užupis Art Incubator Ieva Matulionytė.

It is the first art incubator in the Baltic States running for more than 10 years. It is the only alternative artistic organization with arts center not only in Vilnius but also in Lithuania. Having experience in the international cooperation with like-minded organizations and centers abroad and using new creative resources to introduce new artistic initiatives, Art Incubator creates and maintains the original and attractive atmosphere which is fully supported and encouraged in many advanced European cities appreciating the importance of the creative industries in the country's cultural, tourism and economic development.

<http://www.umi.lt/en/>

KALNAS gallery is a unique working space located in Užupis. Currently around 40 artists work there, including famous brands like LT-Identity, Goodname Digital Art Studio and others. Multifunctional spaces provide opportunity to organize exhibitions, discussions, creative workshops and other events.

<http://www.umi.lt/inkubatorius/galerija-kalnas/>

16.30-18.00 Session: Culture for social inclusion and community cohesion.

Venue: „Menų spaustuvė” (ARTS PRINTING HOUSE) (Šiltadaržio g. 6, Vilnius)

www.menuspaustuve.lt

Arts Printing House - first incubator of performing art, located in the Old town and established in a former printing-house dating back to 1805. The former printing-house reconstruction work is financed by EU structural funds and city municipality. ARTS PRINTING HOUSE strives to become the first infrastructural complex for creative industries in Lithuania. It aims to foster creativity and support performing arts NGOs.

16.30-16.50 New creative spaces - instrument for cultural development and social inclusion.

Agnė Tuskevičiūtė, Public Relations Coordinator of the Arts Printing House („Menų spaustuvė“).

There was a time when industry crept right into the heart of Vilnius' Old Town. Nowadays, formerly abandoned warehouses and factories are being turned into lively culture venues. After Lithuania regained its independence in 1991, the printing house stopped printing government propaganda newspapers, and the building was gradually taken over by performing arts NGOs and individual artists, who used the premises for independent arts projects. This was like a whiff of fresh air in the otherwise stiff and structured cultural landscape of the Lithuanian capital. It also marked the start of a movement to establish a contemporary performing arts centre. Then, in 2002, the Arts Printing House (APH - Menų spaustuvė) officially opened its doors. Presently, the former industrial building is the leading performing arts centre in Lithuania, with hundreds of theatrical, contemporary dance, circus, interdisciplinary and educational projects taking place there every year. Among the APH's 15 residents are independent theatre companies, photographers and film production crews.

16.50-17.10 Fine crafts days - a way to encourage a sense of community and cultural activity of the society.

Gediminas Rutkauskas, Director of Vilnius Old Town Renewal Agency.

Gediminas Rutkauskas is an architect, heritage preservation manager in various public authorities since 1991, experienced in international partnership, programs and projects performance. He is also a member of ICOMOS, International expert in urban heritage management.

Since Vilnius historic city centre was inscribed upon the UNESCO World Heritage List in Dec. 1994 together with global fame this fact brought the highest international responsibility to entire city's society. It also became a fundamental stimulus to evoke new approaches and treatment of the WH site. The NGO Old Town Renewal Agency was found by Vilnius city council to integrally manage the WH site's urban regeneration and conservation. Wide international intercourses, active participation at the EU projects allowed the Agency to pool proper knowledge on advanced practises in World Heritage management. Commenced from physical upgrade of historic buildings and public spaces the focus gradually shifts towards youth awareness rising, local community sensitization, consultation and engagement, development of PPPs and thematic international networks. Local community understanding, interest and participation appears being a key in making the WH site's regeneration live and continuous process.

17.10-18.00 Q/A-Discussions

19.00 Dinner at the restaurant Grey (Pilies g.2)

<http://restoranasgrey.lt/index.php/en/>

20.30 Cultural programme "Music Incubator NOVUS".

<http://www.menufabrikas.lt/en/muzikos-inkubatorius-novus>

Venue: Menų fabrikas LOFTAS (Arts Factory LOFTAS) (Švitrigailos g. 29, Vilnius)

www.menufabrikas.lt

Music Incubator NOVUS - is a music competition presenting young and upcoming acts of Lithuania's vibrant music scene. Since 2014 Art Factory LOFTAS is providing a professional platform to unsigned artists where they can present their music to a wider audience, get heard by music industry professionals, make valuable contacts and win top prizes. This year competition is also introducing an educational platform - 13 seminars with music industry professionals where young artists can get tips and valuable information on how to kick-start their career.

16 JUNE, THURSDAY

Regeneration in new and peripheral districts: examples from Antakalnis, Pilaitė, Naujoji Vilnia and Naujamiestis

9.00-11.40 Session: cultural initiatives for neighbourhood regeneration.

Venue: Vilnius City Hall (Konstitucijos pr. 3, Vilnius)

<https://www.vilnius.lt/>

9.00-9.20 Seeking for scientific and cultural innovations in Pavilniai Regional Park.

Aida Štelbienė, Director of Creative Industries Park “Architektūros centras”.

Aida Štelbienė is an architectural historian, critic, researcher, and the curator of various events (exhibitions, workshops, etc.). She leads the Creative Industries Park “Architektūros centras” since 2009.

Naujoji Vilnia - an important district in Vilnius, which history has started in XVII century. Naujoji Vilnia is in a very good geographical position: Pavilniai Regional Park is located there, which is full of nature and historical attraction places and many touristic routes. It means that the potential of this district is huge. However, in order to reveal it, several challenges have to be overcome. One of them - several large factories that went bankrupt, were closed and have a negative impact on both the image of Naujoji Vilnia as well as the quality of local residents. In 2015 creative industries park “Architektūros centras” (A Centre of Architecture) initiated a dialogue between municipality, local self-government institutions, the owner of the factories, local residents and artists in order to adapt the territory of abandoned factories for new purposes. Audience will be introduced to the creative workshops that were designed to implement the conversion of Industrial zone.

9.20-9.40 Vilnius Street Art Festival: art for communities.

Ūla Ambrasaitė, Organizer of Vilnius Street Art festival. She is a director and initiator of Vilnius Street Art festival as well as a founder of LAPAS publishing.

Street art is very often related to graffiti culture, which aims to criticize institutions and society. Today street art is more about beautiful creative paintings on the walls that decorate and advertise the city. Street art festival is a contradiction in itself - legally illegal visual expression in the public space. Consequently, organizing such event inevitably means facing a challenge. It is impossible to ignore the principal creative position of illegal artists that are often willing to remain anonymous. On the other hand, festival can be seen as institution legalizing these artists. In order to implement similar event, it is crucial to assure a large budget and licences from the local authorities. Therefore, street art festival often risks to become just a collection of nice (for advertising purposes) big paintings. Ūla Ambrasaitė will share her experience about the creation of Vilnius Street Art Festival concept, main challenges faced and possible solutions to these problems.

9.40-10.00 Introducing the Nėris embankment.

Martynas Marozas, Director „Martyno Marozo architektūra ir planavimas”.

Martynas Marozas is a director and urban designer at “Martyno Marozo architektūra ir planavimas”. Previously employed as an urban designer at We Love the City, as an Architect, Urban Planner & Researcher at FABRIC, Architect at Jungtinės Pajėgos lots of experience in large scale housing and urban projects, community involvement, urban development moderations, leisure complexes, governmental buildings, construction management & supervision.

Martynas Marozas will present new public participation and communication strategies in **Nėris** river regeneration project. He will also discuss the topic of integration of small and medium-scale initiatives into large scale urban development projects.

10.00-11.40 Q/A-Discussions.

12.00-13.30 Lunch at the restaurant **Burė** (Lvovo g.25)

<http://bure1.lt/en/>

13.30-18.30 Study Visit. Transfer by bus from the Vilnius City Hall.

Vilnius Tech Park.

Darius Žakaitis, co-founder of Vilnius Tech Park.

It is a hub for startups and other businesses engaged in the ICT industry in Lithuania. Tech Park assembles tech start-ups and businesses, investors (involving seed and venture funds), accelerators, businessmen and members of the creative industries under one roof. Full new technology ecosystem will be created in the Campus with competent members who are capable of completing the entire process from taking an innovative idea to a working business model and even the advertising for it.

www.vilniustechpark.lt

Antalkanis urban garden - Sustainable initiatives and changes in Vilnius.

Mindaugas Danys, Organizer of the initiative „Antakalniečių sodas“.

Antakalniečių sodai is a unique initiative of the local community which established large urban gardens in Antakalnis district. The goal of this initiative is to educate people to protect nature, to involve local communities into threshing, gardening and nurturing of the surrounding environment. The initial project grew into various related activities: celebration of traditional folk festivals, lectures, catering events, etc.

<http://www.antakalnietis.lt/>

Arts and education centre Rupert: Creative centres in the suburbs.

Darius Žakaitis, Initiator of „Rupert“.

Darius Žakaitis specializes in management, marketing strategy, investments, start-ups and mentoring. He is initiator of art and education centre RUPERT. He co-founded a Baltic startup accelerator and an early seed stage StartupHighway. He is also a co-founder and managing director of the biggest ICT hub in the region Vilnius Tech Park.

Rupert is a centre for Art and Education devoted to establishing close cooperation between artists, thinkers, researchers, and other cultural actors through interdisciplinary programs and residencies. A knowledge-based platform for innovative creative production, Rupert integrates with the social and cultural framework of the city of Vilnius while simultaneously supporting a strong international focus.

Historically (since XIVth century) **Valakampiai** have been known as recreational zone (former hunting castle of grand duke Žygimantas Augustas). During Soviet times this area was used for children camps. Darius will take participants from the start through regression times to how Rupert looks today. The main reasons for the success of Rupert are creative and professional programme, open-access centre (galleries, events, installations, etc.), attraction of competent staff and scale effect (implementation of ideas by local community). The progress is accelerated by city's priorities as well as creative society.

www.rupert.lt

BEEpart: Relevance of social initiatives in the peripheral districts.

Andrius Ciplijauskas, Founder and Director of Creative workshop BEEPART.

Beepart is a unique community house, located in the Pilaitė district and a platform for social innovation. It aims to improve the local social climate, promote dialogue, inspire people to get engaged in cultural activities and foster social innovation. The building, which was designed over two years by Simonas Liūga and Andrius Ciplijauskas, distinguishes itself by its unique design and innovative, environment-friendly solutions. This initiative has a tremendous positive impact on urban development and the revitalisation of the Pilaitė residential area.

www.beepart.lt

LOFTAS: Reviving Naujamiestis district - a result of creative initiatives.

Živilė Diavara, Founder of „Menų fabrikas LOFTAS“.

Loftas is an independent, non-profit cultural centre based inside an old factory providing creative opportunities, outlets and events for the community including parties, fashion shows, educational seminars, film screenings and many other activities. LOFTAS is popular for big music shows with worldwide known live bands & DJs.

www.menufabrikas.lt

19.30 Transfer by bus from Comfort hotel

20.00 Dinner at the restaurant Belmontas (Belmonto g.17 A) www.belmontas.lt

17 JUNE, FRIDAY

9.00-11.00 **Conclusions.**

Venue: Comfort hotel (Kauno g. 19)

Workshop moderated by Tom Fleming, Peter Inkei and Andrea Lagundzija.

3. Methodology and tools used

Preliminary briefing

The Vilnius local organising team provided detailed contextual information and agenda to Eurocities/KEA in advance of the study visit. The organisers were also provided with a summary of main interests, questions and biographies of the participants. The local organising team also received a detailed and iterative briefing from the Brussels-based programme leads.

Oral presentations

Presentations - mostly in PowerPoint format - were delivered in each part of the study visit. As a special service from the local organisers, over a dozen presentations were collected and delivered to the participants after the visit, which has been a great help in digesting the information, impressions and lessons learned.

Site visits

Visits to different cultural and creative sites formed the most central element of the study tour. Ample time was left in each part of the tour for discussion, reflection and clarification. All hosts were very generous in the information provided.

Activities within the group

Participants were active in asking questions as they were guided around different sites. Presentations often evolved into moderated group discussions at the end of each visit.

A final debrief session was held on the last morning to extract the main learning points and define lessons and recommendations - involving also those present on behalf of the hosts.

4. Key topics presented and learning points

Broadly, the study visit focused on two core areas: culture-led development in city-making, inclusive of neighbourhood-level activities; and social development through culture, inclusive of peripheral districts and harder-to-reach communities. The programme majored on the former, which meant some participants were more satisfied than others. The following thematic learning points emerged through the visits and discussion.

Strategic position of culture

The introductory presentation led by the Chairman of the Culture Committee of the City Council of Vilnius suggested sophisticated leadership, an understanding of the role and nature of culture in development, especially in longer term urban planning. The importance of strategic vision was corroborated by the Director of the City Development Department of Vilnius City Administration, who talked about the key issues in urban development planning in Vilnius.

Retaining, and in particular attracting talent (thereby gaining demographic advantages in the regional, Baltic, context) was a key element in both presentations. Partners are trying to position Vilnius as forward and outward-looking, conveying youthfulness, openness, and a high quality of life. The main focus here has been on the city centre (the historic heart), but this is now shifting to the riverside and neighbourhoods.

The authorities (the city and the state) are also seeking to involve civil society in decision-making and implementation. Yet some of the impressive initiatives observed during the study visit seem stand-alone and bottom-up achievements, with little perceived links to national or local strategies. Achieving a balance of locally driven and 'grassroots' cultural activities, with those driven and implemented at a strategic level, will be a difficult balancing act going forward. Certainly the absence of a city-wide cultural and creative industries strategy and the engagement process this would require means that there is a disconnection between civil society organisations, artists and creative businesses, and city authorities. Without a joined-up strategy which links sectoral, neighbourhood and overarching civic interests, the city will continue to struggle to build capacity in the cultural sector, achieve critical mass in key clusters, and project a clear vision internationally as a city of culture and creativity.

Neighbourhood-based cultural regeneration

Participants to the study tour were repeatedly confronted with the challenges of the somewhat 'heavy' legacy of the Soviet-type communist system. Low levels of ownership and citizen engagement in the Soviet-built residential blocks makes mobilising active participation in cultural activities challenging. Initiatives like the urban gardening in Sapięga Park are thus welcome interventions bringing local people together and providing some therapeutic value. Particularly laudable are the perseverance, devotion and professionalism of specialists and activists in administering the involvement of local communities in a number of cases (e.g. in building engagement to re-imagine the river banks, exploring options for revitalising an unused paper factory, and reviving traditional crafts). However, comparatively, levels of neighbourhood-led cultural development are low, ad hoc and under-connected. The cultural sector itself is not playing a strategic role in neighbourhoods (i.e. it is central-city-focused). And most neighbourhood-led activities are driven by inspirational individuals rather than a wider civil society movement / sector.

Diversification of strategic priorities and investment

Vilnius does not have a clearly articulated investment programme for culture - e.g. one underpinned by a city-wide strategy with clear investment tools (e.g. thematic grants). This does not mean investment does not take place - the study visit included plenty of examples of activities and infrastructure funded by the city (and via structural funds), but these were not the outcome of a clear and coherent investment plan strategy. In the future, the city might establish a set of strategic priorities and an overarching investment

strategy to help inform investment decisions and make it clear to the sector how they can work with the city and the benefit this can deliver.

Culture-led Innovation

The study visit involved a rich mix of very innovative individual projects - from hubs and performance spaces to community projects. They were each driven by very creative and entrepreneurial individuals or small teams motivated to build and grow the cultural life of the city, often at a neighbourhood level. These ranged from multi-partner and co-investment projects such as the Art Printing House - a positive example of collaboration between an independent cultural organisation and the city, supported by EU structural funding; to Loftas - an old factory transformed into an excellent independent music venue and creative hub. In each initiative visited, levels of innovation were apparent - such as the energetic, committed and driven approach to supporting young talent at Loftas; or the open, generous approach to community engagement at BEEpart. However, these examples of local innovation were not connected in a strategic way at city-level, which presents an exciting challenge for partners going forward: how to embed local innovation in a holistic and systematic way as part of a wider transformation programme for Vilnius.

5. Initiatives presented

Title	Arts Printing House (Menų spaustuvė).
Description	<p>The Arts Printing House is one of the first cultural hubs developed in the city utilising support from European Structural Funds. After Lithuania regained its independence in 1991, the printing house stopped printing government propaganda newspapers, and the building was gradually taken over by performing arts NGOs and individual artists, who used the premises for independent arts projects. This marked the start of a movement to establish a contemporary performing arts centre. Then, in 2002, the Arts Printing House (APH - Menų spaustuvė) officially opened its doors. It has subsequently benefitted from investment from a blend of local and EU funds to improve the quality of the building, with European Capital of Culture in 2009 an important catalyst.</p> <p>Presently, it is the leading performing arts centre in Lithuania, with hundreds of theatrical, contemporary dance, circus, interdisciplinary and educational projects taking place there every year. Among the APH's 15 residents are independent theatre companies, photographers and film production crews.</p>
Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A major cultural hub of regional significance, playing a vital role in talent and audience development - A key resource for rehearsals, training, and as a place for creatives to meet and exchange (e.g. via events, the library and café) - A vital venue for a growing festival sector - Strong and growing links with the education and skills sector - toward a centre of excellence model.
Lessons learnt & Key success factors	<p>The arts printing house is in many ways a 'classic model' of post-industrial culture-led regeneration utilising a mix of local and EU investment. What makes it relatively interesting is that it was initially occupied by NGOs as an informal hub of arts activity rather than being entirely public sector-led. These organic beginnings have instilled it a sense of sector-ownership and helped to nurture a real community of practice. While this might have made the development process more complex and less efficient, it has led to a strong organisational model and one which bodes well for sustainability.</p>

Title	The Republic of Užupis
Description	<p>Užupis is a neighbourhood in Vilnius, a few streets surrounded by a small river from three sides. Every tenth inhabitant claims to be an artist. This organically evolving creative industries cluster declared itself an autonomous republic. The mock independent entity has been a tourist attraction for years. Nevertheless, the visit gave the impression that the initiative has not been overwhelmed by commercialism or gentrification. The urban environment suggests artistic flavour and fresh feeling.</p> <p>The Užupis Art Incubator, which claims to be the first in the Baltic area, fits perfectly to the traditions of the quarter. The main building, a wooden construction at the edge of the quarter, called Kalnas Gallery, serves for a variety of functions that interact in a lively and positive manner. Besides debates, presentations or conferences, the house has exhibition space, accommodation and workplace for six resident artists at a time as well as rented space for start-ups.</p> <p>The institution is embedded into the environment on various levels. About a quarter of the incubated artists are local residents, selected in the course of open calls. Close connections are entertained to the Art Academy, which commissions some of the incubated artists. The municipality provides an annual subsidy, based on a long term agreement till 2030. The Art Incubator is also connected to the international network of similar institutions.</p> <p>Besides the municipal support, renting spaces is a main source of revenue.</p> <p>https://www.facebook.com/uzupis/</p> <p>http://www.umi.lt/en/</p> <p>http://www.umi.lt/inkubatorius/galerija-kalnas/</p>
Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A maturing cultural district with a distinctive identity on the edge of the city centre - A strong brand and collective ethos - An emerging cultural tourism attraction - A high quality incubator providing space and a platform for creative businesses.
Lessons learnt & Key success factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The balance of regeneration and gentrification - with artists being priced out of the area - The under-connection of incubators and grow-on spaces across the city, meaning that businesses stay in the incubator than they might for other models in Europe - Maintaining a balance of production and consumption activities in the district - has it become too much of a destination and not a place of production?

Title	Tech Park Sapiegos
Description	<p>The 18th century baroque palace built by one of the most ambitious members of the Sapiega / Sapieha aristocratic family, in the middle of a once stately park, lay abandoned after its former user, a post-soviet public hospital moved out. A group of successful young entrepreneurs took charge of regenerating the complex, strictly observing the principles of heritage restoration, and are on way to create the region's most complex and integrated ICT hub to attract and unite innovative talent from game development, big data, cyber security, smart solutions, fintech and digital design. The plan foresees over 700 workplaces on 9000 square metres.</p> <p>The consortium has the backing of a number of public agencies including Vilnius municipality.</p> <p>https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sapieha_Palace,_Vilnius www.vilniustechpark.lt</p>
Results	The park is in start-up mode and still under construction. It is though already impressive - in scale and ambition. As a private-led initiative, it also symbolises the confidence in Vilnius as a major regional hub for creative and tech firms.
Lessons learnt & Key success factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The opportunity to re-imagine heritage assets for contemporary creative production - The scale of ambition - that with the right enabling conditions, Vilnius can be a major hub for high growth creative and digital firms - The links to investors - providing opportunities for accelerator programmes that genuinely grow businesses - The quality of the spaces and proposed surrounding services - The location could prove a challenge - although it is a beautiful park, it is not connected to main public transport infrastructure (although this is weak in Vilnius overall) - so it will encourage car use - The lack of consumption space - although a café bar is proposed.

Title	Urban gardens
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Description	<p>The abandoned derelict glasshouses in the park of the Sapięga castle prompted the initiative of urban community gardening. The construction needed repair which was carried out with contributions from companies and involving volunteer work from the neighbourhood. The other challenge was the lack of tradition and models of community engagement among the locals in the district. Thanks to the mobilisation and education activity of a few devoted activists, the glasshouse and the raised beds displays and boasts a variety of plants and vegetables.</p> <p>The community events organised in the garden are an important constituent of the project.</p>
Results	A small scale community garden project which encourages a volunteer culture and enhances community wellbeing and cohesion.
Lessons learnt & Key success factors	<p>While very common across Europe, this model is still novel in Vilnius. It has scope for expansion - e.g. to develop a volunteering programme for the new tenants of the Tech Hub (see above). It could also provide an events / activity function - e.g. for parties, BBQs, performances etc.</p> <p>The municipality charges rent, which seems unnecessary given the public value generated by having an amenity such as this - which encourages fresh air, healthy eating and exercise.</p>

Title	Rupert arts and education centre
Description, including -	<p>Rupert is the realisation of the ideals of a successful young entrepreneur. Situated in a natural environment that formerly served for a recreational zone of aristocrats, later for children camps in the Soviet times, and beginning to serve as an excursion area thanks to the Rupert centre. The imaginatively designed building offers accommodation and first class working conditions for a number of artists and creative businesses. It is also a hub for debates, book launches, exhibitions and concerts.</p> <p>www.rupert.lt</p>
Results	A high quality facility for cross-art-form practice, talent development and entrepreneurship. It is a stunning building located in a lovely semi-rural district - an example of neighbourhood regeneration as part of a wider cultural renewal and leisure development.
Lessons learnt & Key success factors	The development of high quality infrastructure is not simply the preservation of the inner city. This offers a fresh alternative in a lovely context. It is also a key enabler for creative talent - offering the space to be creative and to grow. It is though difficult to reach

- requiring a car for most people.

Title	BEEpart community centre
Description, including	<p>BEEpart is a relatively small space erected with two stacked shipping containers on a slope between a Soviet-type residential complex and a small wood, meeting principles of environmental sustainability and contemporary architecture (lacking nevertheless permanent licence for the use of the land owned by the municipality). Sustainability is a priority - in the materials used, in heating and sewage, but also in the management. To the astonishment of the participants, BEEpart gets no regular funding from the city or the district authorities. The main revenue stems from arranging for family events (e.g. birthday parties) and offering space for courses (e.g. yoga). It is then the outcome of the incredible vision, passion, hard work and generosity of the husband and wife team who set it up and run it.</p> <p>BEEpart appears to be at the same time the negation and the successor of Soviet-style houses of culture. It embodies the ideals of a young creative designer, resident of one of the adjacent blocks of flats, who wanted to create improved life chances for the locals of Pilaitė district for cultural and community activities.</p> <p>While the building focuses on catering to the needs of the immediate neighbourhood community, an initiative rooted from BEEpart is of much greater scope and fame. BEEpart has been organising the <i>BEEpositive</i> international light installation festival, held every autumn since 2011. A mainstream project involving landmark sites of the city, the festival also attracts attention to the Pilaitė district, lending it a new and improved image.</p> <p>Realising the light festival requires massive support from public and private contributors. These include the Lithuanian Council of Culture, as well as a daily newspaper, an internet provider, an event and advertising company and a construction firm. Also, the work of volunteers is of great significance.</p> <p>http://www.beepositive.lt/en/about/festival/history/</p> <p>http://nws.euocities.eu/MediaShell/media/Vilnius_BEEpart_01072015.pdf</p>
Results	<p>BEEpart is an exemplar of grassroots community innovation. It is contemporary, welcoming, engaging and generous in spirit. Its model is simple - a community space and platform for project development and community activity, including a strong focus on cultural practice. But its implementation is exceptional - in the quality of the building, its symbolic role as a marker for neighbourhood renewal and wellbeing, and in the passion, energy and skill of its management,</p>

Lessons learnt & Key success factors	As an exemplar, it is surprising to find how precarious it is. BEEpart's business model does not benefit from regular or structured investment from the municipality, although the partnership is developing. It might be fulfilling to conceptualise it as a pilot and then identify opportunities to develop comparable interventions in other neighbourhoods across the city - as a network of community cultural infrastructure that helps to mobilise active citizenship, wellbeing and cultural practice.
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Title	Loftas culture centre
Description, including -	<p>Loftas is a prime example of the post-industrial regeneration in urban environment. The factory complex was the seat of the pride of Soviet Lithuania's electronic industry, where Elfa record players, tape recorders and other equipment and accessories were produced between 1940-1990 - now precious items in electronic oldtimer collections. When industrial production had largely discontinued, a young couple of entrepreneurs invested into the abandoned halls, turning them into a cutting edge cultural centre, equipped with everything necessary for top class concerts, recording, film screening and various kinds of happening.</p> <p>With the buzz the centre has created, in cooperation with the similarly spirited Comfort "rock'n roll hotel" a block away, Loftas lends momentum to the regeneration of a relatively depressed post-industrial neighbourhood of the city.</p> <p>http://www.menufabrikas.lt/en</p> <p>http://comforthotel.lt/</p>
Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A high quality music venue and talent development programme in an otherwise post-industrial district - A further example of how energy, vision, commitment and cultural entrepreneurship can drive success - An example of an incredibly proud and creative team which can play a transformational role for the creative and cultural life of the city if given the platform and resources.

Title	Preserving traditional crafts
Description, including -	<p>The participants of the study visit got acquainted with a sophisticated set of strategies to save and develop traditional crafts in the city. The work is managed by a public body, the Vilnius Old Town Renewal Agency http://www.vsaa.lt/index.php/en/, and execution is commissioned to the lately established Vilnius Fine Crafts Association</p>

	<p>http://www.vdaa.lt/index_en.htm.</p> <p>The scope of aims and activities got diversified over the years. From preservation, demonstration and tourist attraction it evolved into broader scale participation and education. The historic fairs connected to major patron saints in the city (St. Casimirus and Bartholomew) were revived involving local communities. The establishment of a quarter of old crafts in the old town is under way.</p>
Results	A clear and joined up approach to craft development which is providing a livelihood for skilful practitioners, helping to revive and retain skills, and playing an important role in building confidence and wellbeing.
Lessons learnt & Key success factors	This is a relatively standard local crafts development programme - witnessed across Europe. It might benefit from an approach that connects historically acquired skills to contemporary design or explores how craft thinking and practice can deliver spillover effects to the wider innovation ecosystem of the city.

Title	Paper factory museum
Description, including	<p>The Kučkuriškės paper factory operated in the outskirt of Naujoji Vilnia between 1823 and 2001. The plant is at the edge of the beautiful Pavilniai regional park. A series of inquiries, consultations, debates and polling has distilled the idea of establishing a science and technology museum, connected among others to the history of paper manufacturing. Municipal authorities, experts of urban planning and architecture, the owners of the factories, artists and local residents were involved into the process which is still in the phase of evolution and planning.</p> <p>The site is at a kilometre as the crow flies from the Belmontes entertainment complex, in the middle of the regional park, where the participants of the study tour were treated to a pleasant dinner and music show.</p>
Results	A significant leisure attraction in refurbished industrial buildings which is popular for a range of leisure uses.
Lessons learnt & Key success factors	A very expensive undertaking with some participants concerned that the rustic feel of the surroundings had been compromised by the slightly glamorous interiors.

6. Lessons learnt

Visiting Cities\Regions

This part was prepared on the basis of 17 evaluation forms received after the visit from 10 participating cities and regions.

Participants	Lessons learnt in Vilnius	How will you use the new ideas and knowledge gained to improve your working and organisational methods?
<p>Antwerp</p>	<p>The relationship between the city municipality in Vilnius and the Vilnius University is very strong and mutually beneficial. In this way a city can 'market' itself as a promoter of young and creative minds, start-ups.</p> <p>A certain lack of government funding can spur a creativeness and a drive in people to start initiatives and find (private) funding for these initiatives themselves, something we see less of in Belgium/Antwerp, where there is a lot of government funding.</p> <p>On the other hand, some very worthy initiatives in Vilnius, such as BeepArt and Loftas, now scrape by without any government funding, while they are obviously in need of more funds, and are also very relevant to the city (which, in turn, unfortunately cannot support them due to lack of city funds).</p> <p>In Vilnius, the municipality uses little or no method for consulting inhabitants. This could be something that they need to focus on more.</p> <p>Vilnius / Lithuania is still recovering from its soviet past, financially, institutionally and mentally > that makes it difficult for western European countries to relate to the</p>	<p>I will look more into relationships with schools and universities, to see if we can work closer together.</p> <p>I will promote looking for sponsorship and private funding more, when talking to inhabitants wanting to take initiatives/wanting to organise projects or events.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">---</p> <p>To be honest: I did not learn anything new professionally, although on a personal level I was very pleased to meet so many competent, enthusiastic and cooperative people</p> <p>I will (in the future) keep contact with some of the other participants or even pay them a visit > so networking was ok</p> <p>The confrontation with a rather under-subsidised and therefore market orientated cultural / creative scene makes one think of news ways to attract private sponsors in the municipal network of cultural agents</p>

	<p>very liberal and free market inspired cultural practice they have right now.</p> <p>All over Europe budgets for socio-cultural projects and (small) institutions are cut, while a lot of these are actors are the first to be confronted with the ever growing divide between haves and have-nots ... sometimes individual politicians acknowledge the fact that culture has a very broad impact on society and is a partner in fighting a lot of different social issues</p> <p>Exchange projects should be a long term process ... just when you start to understand the local way of thinking (of the guest city or other participants) one has to leave.</p>	
Bristol	<p>Cities need strategy which is bottom up and which people buy into</p> <p>Individual vision can make a difference if you are willing to share it</p> <p>Culture faces the same challenges right across Europe and by discussing and working together we can learn from others success and failures</p>	<p>Just starting work to revamp culture strategy so will take on board the lessons of bottom up and inclusivity in order to make progress</p> <p>Some practical things we will follow up on such as Harbour Festival issues we share with Ostend and others</p> <p>Was impressed by the vision and bravery of the Rupert programme and will pass that example on to others</p>
Kontula-Helsinki	<p>The visit did not answer to all the expectations the letter of introduction promised. However, there were lot of independent actors and operators whose work were very interesting and really worth a visit. These should have been more time for common discussion between the visits and lectures. Now the feedback and possibility to change experiences and opinions was quite slight.</p> <p>People of the city want to take to their own hands small tasks in area</p>	<p>We are considering having Beepart as our partner in Horizon2020 -project next year. We see also a lot of potential between Loftas and some actors in the same field in our own city.</p> <p>Possible cooperation/collaboration with the organizations presented during the visit, especially in development of our regional work</p>

	<p>of "green city" and city gardening</p> <p>Private money and private supporters are important partners for the city</p> <p>Old industrial buildings have been taken</p>	
Nuremberg	<p>First of all I'd like to stress the fact, that every member of the EU seems to face similar challenges, and even if it seems like in every day life's struggle, no one is struggling alone, we all are: on different levels, with different possibilities and approaches.</p> <p>One other great impression was that every participant was eager and highly interested in how things work in the other member states. Looking beyond one's own backyard was and is one crucial necessity for the ongoing integration of the EU as one.</p> <p>Therefore, it was highly welcome, not only to hear about, but also see and feel/ try those different approaches of cultural and social integration.</p> <p>One crucial point to mention was that most of the participants applied exactly for this study visit because of the focused "sleeping districts" in the description form. So did we. But unluckily, this was not the focused issue during the study visit itself. We heard and saw a lot about cultural projects, but only little about the inclusion of sleeping or somewhat disconnected districts. This reduced the usage of the study visit to some extent.</p>	<p>Well, many, but mainly the open mind set for cultural projects, despite the debts of the various entities. Not only monetary return is important, but also what culture can effect in people lives, way of thinking and understanding.</p>
Ostend	<p>To have creative industry is extremely important to have a university. The link between education and the creative industry was very clear.</p> <p>Vilnius has an enormous opportunity to develop urban space since there are lots of former Soviet buildings to</p>	<p>Especially the projects that were started by the residents themselves without funding may perhaps be an example for our community Ostend. But all too often it is expected that the government gives structural support.</p> <p>The methodology is not really applicable in the legal and political</p>

	<p>be renovated/reused.</p> <p>Presence and contact of Higher education is very important for the success of innovative start-ups Social projects are only partially supported by the municipality (contrary to the fact sheet we received in advance)</p> <p>There is a clear distinction between the centre and the suburbs with regard to budget, cultural projects and events.</p> <p>Apparently, it is possible to initiate new cultural projects without financial help from the local government: this liberal point of view was experienced throughout the visit.</p>	<p>context in Belgium. This relatively new country and capital has another dynamic and other drives than 'the old world'. Initiatives are much more formalised in Belgium (permits, budget)</p>
Piraeus	<p>The first lesson as a result of the discussions we had during the study visit is to listen to the needs of the community you are working for. Secondly gather as much information as you need to overcome the obstacles you'll find. Thirdly take lesson from you country's cultural history.</p> <p>Don't hesitate to be innovative. Take inspiration from the community. Don't forget the past.</p>	<p>The study visit I attended was very interesting and informative. On that base I will pass on all the information to my colleagues so together we'll try to find ways of applying whatever is possible to our working environment and organisational methods.</p> <p>Though the circumstances in my country and furthermore in my working environment are a lot different from those demonstrated in Vilnius, in many aspects, I was inspired and motivated by my visit in Vilnius.</p>
Porto	<p>Lesson 1 - if you advocate a political axis, or several, make sure you interpret it/them in relation to a wider policy and in dialogue with other possible axes. Do not tackle them separately.</p> <p>Lesson 2 - if you give a project as an example of good practice and publicly recognize its positive externalities, make sure you support adequately; do not take their existence for granted. Small scale</p>	<p>There were interesting contacts developed during the visit capable of furthering the international network and visibility of some municipal projects of Porto. Being my first visit, it was possible to understand the relevance of taking time to share knowledge and experience developed in different cultural contexts and models. I believe it is worth investing time and resources in hosting an annual meeting of this kind. This will be incorporated in our working method more consistently</p>

	<p>support should be valued and not underestimated.</p> <p>Lesson 3 - it is important to take time to listen how local and national agents and interlocutors of the cultural sector perceive the work we develop in the sector and the policies we are implementing. This applies to the chance to listen to and understand how European peers perceive our management model and cultural strategy.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">---</p> <p>Having been in this network from some time but not having been given the chance to participate in study visits before (it was our first), I believe we have learned that benchmarking is key to the definition of cultural policies in our municipal level. Not only because we can draw ideas and inspiration for future projects (domestic or international) from other experiences. Also the knowledge and discussion of problems and challenges faced by other cities may help us anticipate future similar or comparable situations that may emerge. I trust we have given our feedback in terms of our case (Porto) and how we have been handling our approach. However, other lesson to be learned is we should have brought more materials (namely a PowerPoint presentation or something like this) that could have facilitated the communication with other local representatives in terms of presenting our city's questions.</p>	<p>henceforth.</p> <p>Apart from actively using the contacts that we were fortunate enough to establish with both the representatives of the host city, Vilnius, other cities, the European Commission and the represented organisations (like the Budapest Observatory), we will convey some of the key points that were learned regarding cultural action within peripheral districts to our executive teams in order to generated a greater awareness about this and a more active engagement of the teams with the policies.</p>
Sunderland	I was struck by the number of shared challenges across the group	The observations around Sunderland's visibility have informed my thinking

	<p>despite the variety of cities and regions represented. Many of the representatives were facing similar issues around resourcing, public engagement, diversity and ownership in their cities and regions. I was particularly interested in the discussions about how you generate a broader public engagement in conversations about culture, in decision making and in ownership in a changing society.</p> <p>I was struck by the DIY and independent start-ups that we saw in Vilnius and the energy of those organisations and businesses. It made me think a lot about the independent sector in Sunderland and how we encourage more independent cultural endeavours and how you make the most of that DIY spirit and ensure that independence does not result in isolation (as it had appeared to at BeepART)</p> <p>It was very interesting for me to note the groups perceptions (or perhaps even lack of perceptions) of Sunderland. It was noticeable how few of the groups knew much about the city or had even heard of it. It made me reflect a lot on the city's visibility and reputation and what culture can do to change that. It made me think a lot about the power of something like UK City of Culture.</p> <p>The trip gave me the opportunity to have a number of very detailed conversations with UK colleagues (from both Sunderland and Bristol) about specific national projects and opportunities.</p>	<p>around the City of Culture Bid.</p> <p>I would like to look at the possibility of an exchange with some of the independent / DIY organisations like BEEPart and Loftas and Sunderland organisations like Cultural Spring and Pop Recs. I think organisations in Sunderland would find a huge amount of learning from those conversations.</p> <p>I would like to explore walking tours. I was very inspired by the power of the walking tours in uncovering stories about a place and I would like to see us do more of these in Sunderland.</p>
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	<p>Given recent events in the UK it was sobering to observe the powerful impact the EU was having on Lithuania - from start-ups locating themselves there specifically to benefit from access to that market to the impact of European investment on cultural organisations.</p>	
<p>Utrecht</p>	<p>We didn't have many discussions during the study visit besides talks during dinner and while travelling. It was in general very interesting to know more about the city of Vilnius and how it still differs from our point of view. It was also very interesting to hear more about the field of culture in other European cities. It is always good to take a step back from your own practice and hear and see how others are doing.</p> <p>As mentioned there was too little time for discussion. What I learned: for any project in which citizens and different (private and public) parties are involved it's always important to zoom out before your start and have a strategy and long term vision. Initiatives should be embraced as success is often connected to one or two people, but this should not be taken for granted. Ownership should be shared and this should be subject for discussion on time. The city walks with input from citizens or done by citizens are a nice tool for introduction AND a good way to involve citizens by their neighbourhood.</p>	<p>More time and focus on co-operation and sharing ideas with colleagues, both from my own department, but also other departments and other cities.</p> <p>Not quite new ideas, but more a confirmation and good reminder. I want to discuss ideas at an earlier stage with colleagues and parties, to enlarge support and shared ownership. I want to introduce these Citizen City walks to my colleagues.</p>

Zuglo-Budapest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) creative industries must be key drivers in local development b) community building is basic for urban development c) co-creation with local partners make development sustainable d) post-communist countries have different approach to community based cultural development e) creative industry is the most influential sector of the local economy f) bottom-up initiatives are to be supported by the local government g) it is always necessary to show best practices to city leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) creating a “strategy for creative industries in Zuglo b) engaging stakeholders of the district in development process c) finding the key players for cultural development d) we’ll establish a “creative working group” with local people to create a meeting point of new ideas to be developed further e) we’ll support and help develop the idea of INNOCITIES as networking creative industries of cities working with urban innovation f) we’ll invite some members of our group visiting Vilnius to work together in our developments and/or to create common projects
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Other comments:

- Time should be given to discussion and exchange of ideas in this kind of meeting opportunities. Attention should be paid to the focus of the visit -- many sessions had relative interest and pertinence in the light of the theme of the visit.
- Especially I think extra time needs to be observed for q&a and discussion platforms throughout the visits, since we seem to always be running short of this. Also the studied cases were not, in all examples, the best and most illustrative of the visit’s theme focus, which was noted by many of us.
- The schedule during the visit could be more loose, so that there were more opportunities for informal discussions and exchange of ideas and thoughts. It was very interesting though that the programme was this many-sided and diverse.
- The description of the aim of the study visit was rather general and was not the centre of this study visit. It was only one project that was presented, alongside many others, which reflected another policy of the municipality: social projects are not really in the core of the cultural policy. We had only a very brief encounter with the political representative who had no time to answer any questions.
- Even more time for discussion. And make more use of the ‘experts’ in facilitating conversations about the learning from the talks and visits. I think we should have had a daily debrief / round up of thoughts and learning rather than just one session on the last day.
- I applied for a study visit on Culture in sleeping districts: social cohesion, social innovation, social dialogue, urban regeneration. The study visit consisted of many interesting presentations, but was not specific on the above mentioned topics.

- The programme contained too many presentations, there was too few time for discussion which I missed. I wished to have more time talking to the very interesting group we travelled with.
- I would like to thank the team for all the hard work and hospitality. It was a pleasure to be in Vilnius. For future study visits I recommend the team to have fewer presentations, more time for discussion, and more field trips. I hope the city can develop an overarching strategy for culture and work with its very interesting emergent cultural organisations in realising its potential.

Host City\Region

To begin with, we would like to note that it was a real pleasure for us to welcome such a competent and interesting group of experts from various European cities. Participants keenly shared their experiences, expertise and good practice examples, and as a result, valuable insights and advice on cultural strategy, urban regeneration and funding of private initiatives were received. The project "Culture for Cities and Regions" has encouraged us to reassess the future goals of our city's cultural and urban development. Since majority of cultural initiatives in Vilnius fall under 'bottom-up' approach, we believe that similar projects, as well as sharing of knowledge and experience are vital for a successful cultural development of the city.

The programme of the study visit in Vilnius was extremely rich and evolved around three major topics: how bottom-up initiatives enforced by local communities (Loftas, Antakalnis Urban Gardens, etc.) can become an effective catalyst of urban development; how cultural initiatives can compensate a lack of infrastructure in peripheral districts (Beepart, Rupert), as well as what measures and actions can encourage the development of social innovation and expression of creativity of local communities in the city. Presentations were followed by site visits to Beepart, Loftas and Vilnius TechPark, which are situated in the residential districts or the so-called 'sleeping districts'. To sum it up, we are quite assured that we have covered the entire program with which we had applied for the Study Visit in Vilnius.

The key people (founders, project initiators, etc.) willingly presented initiatives and projects themselves, which substantially contributed to the success and quality of the event and created a ground for exciting discussions and networking opportunities. Indeed, a number of important contacts between Vilnius cultural operators and visitors were established. However, the tight schedule of the study visit limited the time allotted for networking activities, though given the number of interesting initiatives and projects happening in Vilnius, this was inevitable.

In the future a core coordinator of the project should have a very clear and precise plan of the preparatory activities. In this way neither visitors, nor organizers of the study visit have to experience unexpected turn of the events. Arranging an introductory Webseminar would have helped to present the programme of upcoming study visit. This would have helped participants to get an impression about overall vision, context and underpinning concept of the programme. It would have been worthwhile to have more politicians participating in the discussions and site visits. Dedicating some time for experience sharing session (giving a word to the visitors) may have been beneficial for the cultural operators from Vilnius.

7. Conclusions

Comments by expert team

Dr Tom Fleming (TFCC):

In the fourteen years since I first started working in Vilnius, the city is unrecognisable in terms of the scale, diversity and confidence of its cultural and creative sectors. It is clear that the economy has diversified, new governance structures and business models have opened up the cultural sector and driven innovation, and that there is a new energy mobilised by a confident community of globally facing creative entrepreneurs and change-makers. However, it is equally clear that much of this has happened in spite of rather than due to policy or investment from the city or national government. This is not to say that the public sector has not made a positive contribution - clearly projects such as the Arts Printing House are outcomes of a committed public sector, many of the projects visited had some element of public sector support, and there is no shortage of vision or passion from key figures in the municipality. With a dedicated cultural and creative economy strategy which looks to the long-term and builds connections between the city centre and neighbourhoods, global competitiveness agendas and local talent, and where culture is integrated across strategic planning agendas; then Vilnius may be able to go up another level as a leading cultural city.

Péter Inkei (Budapest Observatory):

More than a quarter century after the transition from a restrictive regime, and freed from an alien empire, a few impressive cases of private engagement and creativity that yield public benefit are proof of the huge potentials in democratic market economies, open to individual ingenuity and determination. On the other side, the protracted survival of the mentality inculcated during the decades of totalitarianism is still a greater challenge than it was forecast at the time of the regime change.

Annex 1: List of participants

Participants

Name	City/Region	Position
Sophie Goyvaerts	Antwerp	Cultural coordinator for the neighbourhood Linkeroever - district of Antwerp
Filip Martens	Antwerp	Operational Cultural Coordinator District of Antwerp
Laura Pye	Bristol	Head of Culture, Bristol City Council
Melissa Inman	Bristol	Arts and Events Manager, Bristol City Council
Őrs Szokolay	Zuglo - Budapest	Senior advisor to Mayor, Municipality of Zugló, District 14 of City of Budapest
Gergely Karácsony	Zuglo - Budapest	Mayor (Green), Municipality of Zugló, District 14 of City of Budapest
Raisa Niemi	Kontula - Helsinki	Producer, cultural contents, Lasipalatsi Media Centre Ltd
Jani Suonperä	Kontula - Helsinki	Coordinator, Kontupiste
Stefan Bege	Nuremberg	Project director, Lord mayor´s office for integrated urban development; scientific research, City of Nuremberg
Bart Plasschaert	Ostend	Alderman for Culture
Martine Meire	Ostend	Director of cultural affairs
BAFOUNI EVANGELIA	Piraeus	Director - Department of Culture, Municipality of Piraeus
DOROTHEA MAKRI	Piraeus	Representative of the municipal library of Piraeus
Joaquim Guilherme Blanc Esteves Bento de Melo	Porto	Deputy to the Mayor for Culture
Mónica Filipa Carneiro Guerreiro	Porto	Municipal Director for Culture and Science
Francisco Cerrejón Aranda	Seville	ICAS Managing Director
Rebecca Ball	Sunderland	Director for City of Culture Bid 2021, University of Sunderland
Dan Hattle	Sunderland	Regeneration Manager
Mathilde Heijns	Utrecht	Project manager Art in Public Space, City of Utrecht
Gertrud Van Dam	Utrecht	Senior Advisor International Affairs, City of Utrecht

The team in Vilnius

Veronika Jaruševičiūtė

Chief officer, Education, Culture and Sport Department, Culture Division

Migle Paskeviciute

Expert of Culture Division of Vilnius city Administration

Experts

Tom Fleming - Tom Fleming Consultancy, London

Role during the visit: Lead expert

Peter Inkei - The Budapest Observatory, Budapest

Role during the visit: External expert

Support

Andrea Lagundzija - ERRIN, Brussels

Guests

Maciej HOFMAN, European Commission, Brussels

European Commission Policy Officer

Culture - Cultural and creative industries

Annex 2: Presentations

Presentations and supporting documents can be found here:

<http://www.cultureforcitiesandregions.eu/culture/resources/Study-visit-15-Vilnius-15-17-June-2016-WSWE-AAVEM2>

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>