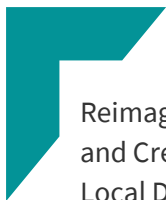# Reimagining Culture and Creativity for Local Development

Lia Ghilardi

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November 2020

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Preface

This report was commissioned by the Trentino School of Management to act partly as a compendium of the debates and the lessons learned from three editions of the Summer Academy on Culture and Creative Industries and Local Development (SACCI) held in Trento and Bolzano from June 2018, the third edition of which was held digitally during April 2020. Such a three-year capacity building project – launched and coordinated by the OECD Trento Centre for Local Development – was supported by local and international partners, such as the Trentino School of Management, The Department of Culture of the Autonomous Province of Trento, The Department of Italian Culture, Youth Policy Unit of the Autonomous Province of Bolzano-Bozen and The European Creative Business Network (ECBN). The writer of this report facilitated the delivery of the three series of the Academy's programme.

Before the pandemic, the Trentino Region (Provincia) had taken important steps in the direction of rethinking the way that culture and the creative sectors are supported, empowered and (ultimately) embedded into the broader policy agenda for local development. To this end, political stakeholders have recently launched a document containing a set of draft guidelines to inspire cultural policies for the region after the pandemic. The Trentino School of Management has played a key role in the preparation of these guidelines. By combining the good practices shared by participants during the three editions of SACCI with an account of current debates about sustainability and the role of culture in fostering a more equal society after the current health crisis, this report intends to add further evidence and case studies to reinforce the arguments made in the guidelines.

The sections of the report are ordered under key concepts, each of which is deconstructed to provide pointers for future policies together with the principles that may guide creative cities in the future.

SACCI 2018-2019-2020

Introduction

It would not be an overstatement to say that since the first edition of SACCI, the world has changed quite radically. The COVID-19 crisis, though first and foremost a health crisis, is slowly morphing into an economic one that will persist long after the virus has been defeated.

The pandemic has had a sudden and substantial impact on the arts and cultural heritage sector. By March 2020, most cultural institutions across the world either were indefinitely closed or had their services radically reduced. In-person exhibitions, events and performances were cancelled or postponed. The response to the crisis was to provide alternative or additional services through digital platforms (with mixed results) and to maintain essential activities with minimal resources (many individuals across the sector have temporarily lost or will permanently lose their job contracts even after activity returns).

A note prepared by Ekaterina Travkina and Pier Luigi Sacco for the OECD, and published in September 2020, shows that along with the tourism sector, the cultural and creative sectors (CCS) are among the most affected by the ongoing crisis, with jobs at risk ranging from 0.8 to 5.5% of employment across OECD regions, and with the largest cities containing the greatest share of jobs at risk (Travkina and Sacco, 2020). The same publication makes the point that the effects on the CCS of the COVID-19 crisis will be long lasting and felt across distribution channels, while the significant drop in investment by the sector is likely to affect the production of cultural goods and services for years to come.

As far as tourism is concerned, the OECD anticipates a 45% to 70% decline in the tourism economy worldwide, depending on the length of the health crisis and on the pace of recovery in travel and tourism activities. On the positive side, domestic tourism, which accounts for around 75% of the tourism economy in OECD countries, is expected to recover more quickly (OECD, 2020). This sector offers the main chance for driving recovery, particularly in countries, regions and cities where the sector supports many jobs and businesses.

At local level, however, a reduction of public and private funding for culture, the hospitality industry in protracted forms of lockdown and a substantially reduced purchasing power in the community at large may hamper even the smallest recovery in domestic tourism.

For over a decade or more, advances in technology-while bringing innovation and hope (see for example the race to find a COVID-19 vaccine)- have also produced challenges elsewhere in society. Teleworking for example, has seen an exponential increase during the lockdown. In parallel, however, we have also seen whole sectors of society unable to tap into the opportunities which digital technologies provide (e.g. those working in the health and caring professions, or those at the lowest level of the employment scale which were also the people hardest hit by the virus). So here is another issue that will be discussed later and which will need to be considered when planning for recovery.

However, as the often-cited Chinese proverb teaches us, every crisis generates an opportunity. The pandemic is an opportunity for the West to reset the way we live, work and build our future together. We know that there is no vaccine for climate change, but the global health crisis has shone a new light on the human and economic costs of the global climate emergency. As a result, a renewed urgency has been put into finding ways to mitigate the effects of unbalanced rapid urbanisation coupled with the displacement of populations and a shrinking of resources for others.

In addition, since the pandemic, the density of urban living has been put into question and what were once the rewards of human contact – the level of conviviality, engagement in cultural and leisure activities, the carefree mixing of cultures and lifestyles that cities afford – are now in danger of disappearing with urban dwellers considering leaving cities for smaller places that offer better quality of life and more opportunities for outdoor pursuits.

Data from a Harris Poll, taken at the beginning of May 2020, found that nearly a third of Americans were considering relocating to less crowded places as a direct result of COVID-19. In particular, a young cohort of respondents (aged between 18 and 35) indicated that they perceive "socially distanced downtowns" as an unappetizing prospect, and would consider relocating to smaller places. [1] The same situation was reported in the UK, where a survey conducted by PwC into the working habits and home moving plans before and after lockdown, found that over a third of 45–64-year-olds living in the capital were considering moving to a different region outside of London the next time they move. This was a 14% increase compared to pre-COVID19.[2]

[1] https://theharrispoll.com/the-harris-poll-covid19-tracker/
[2] https://www.pwc.co.uk/press-room/press-releases/one-in-five-people-now-less-likely-to-buy-a-property-due-to-covi.html

If sustained, such trends may pose considerable challenges not only to urban (and mobility) planners, but also to those in charge of designing the future cultural policies and cultural development strategies who will have to rethink their approaches to resourcing culture and the creative industries (CCIs) for smaller, peri-urban, and more rural places.

To sum up, we live in a time of profound systemic change, and as in similar periods in the past, there is considerable instability and uncertainty before a new society and economy can take shape. However, this is our chance to identify actions that will shape change for the better, and help to build resilience and adaptability to confront future shocks. As well as rethinking the way that policies for local development (culture based and beyond) and growth are devised and implemented, we have now the opportunity of developing bespoke tools and techniques to design those policies on the basis of appropriate data and the evidence gathered through pilots and experiments on the ground.

1. **Creative Cities**

Since the 1990s, first in Australia (1994) and then in New Zealand (2000), notions of creative nation and creative city have begun to be used to describe economic systems where value is accrued through activities based on imagination rather than on the traditional resources of land, labour and capital. The conceptual basis for the creative city according to international urban expert Charles Landry (2000) was provided by the need for cities to find different routes back into competition and recovery after the loss of industry and a rapid shift to services facilitated by advances in technology.

Thus, the answer to the question of what could provide the basis for urban economic revival was to move into a wider range of services, until recently thought to be hardly part of the "serious economy" at all: culture, entertainment, sport, education. This is how cities in the UK, Finland and Germany [3] started to pilot projects and plans aimed at reinforcing this aspect of their economies, once regarded as unserious and even ephemeral.

But there was also another broader element of the creative city framework that was interesting, and this was to look at how *creativity* in general and creative thinking in particular could be used by civic leaders, and those in charge of delivering policies to solve their own problems and find innovative solutions that could be exported or mainstreamed (Landry, 2000).

Landry and his colleagues argued that in any time of crisis and rapid change there is an acute need to go beyond inherited assumptions and ways of working. They stated that the industries of the twenty-first century would depend increasingly on the generation of knowledge through creativity and innovation, matched by rigorous systems of control, and achieving success in these areas would require creative, interdisciplinary and holistic thinking (Landry, 2000). In other words*, it is only by applying creativity to the whole system of relations that makes cities work that we can discover previously unseen possibilities to achieve change.*

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[3] See for example the culture-led renaissance of the Ruhr region between 1989 and 1999.
http://charleslandry.com/panel/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2015/03/Emscher-Park-A-model-of-culture-led-regeneration.pdf

Since then the concept of the creative city has been interpreted and mobilised for different purposes in different ways.

American urban studies theorist Richard Florida, for example, put forward a creative city formula which was driven less by innovation and holistic creative thinking at the top of city governance, and more on sectoral thinking, by arguing that cities (especially large metro areas) should put in place dedicated policies and measures (e.g. in the cultural, creative, retail and leisure industries) aimed at establishing the "right environment" for attracting people working in the creative and knowledge jobs to come and live there. The implication was that those cities that managed to secure a pool of creatives would have a competitive edge on others that relied instead on older forms of industries to compete on the urban hierarchy (Florida 2002).

Despite a public correction of emphasis in which Florida issued an apology to those cities that implemented his creative class thinking through urban policies that triggered problems such as social segmentation, gentrification and the exclusion of the middle and working classes from urban centres (Florida, 2017) his take on the creative city is the one that has stuck in the mind of civic leaders and policy makers until now.

However, in his recent work, Florida now recognises the importance of a more inclusive urbanism, and one that sees creativity not only as the domain of a select few (those that work in creative occupations), but as a quality that individuals and communities inherently have in a raw form and which needs to be nurtured, supported and channelled into a positive force for change, benefitting first and foremost those that live in a place and not just members of some mobile creative elite.

This is a point that American economist and geographer Michael Storper convincingly makes when he says that Florida's "city as playground" (i.e. amenities are the key that lock the creative class in a place) was limiting rather than enhancing the capacity of a city to find alternative solutions to the challenges of growth in post-industrial times (Storper, 2013). The *Floridization* of cities, he argues, is problematic on many fronts, but in particular, when we come the use of blanket cultural initiatives and iconic events, and/or investment in clustering creative productive activity and related services exclusively in urban centres hoping for a trickle-down effect on the rest of the city's economy.

Policy transfers of this kind (i.e. "It has worked somewhere else and therefore it will work here too") should be considered with caution and applied only after a thorough assessment of the social, urban, economic and cultural dynamics of a place has been conducted. The arguments Storper presents for a more nuanced and *place-rooted* creative city are also the arguments that policy makers are using right now to reimagine different ways of achieving a new culture and related industries renaissance of cities post crisis.

During the three editions of SACCI, a lot of evidence was presented of inspiring examples of cities that were building from within and were expanding their creative capacity in a holistic way. Below we discuss some cases that illustrate quite clearly the qualities a creative city approach needs to have (and maintain over time) in order to ensure the sustainability and inclusivity of their growth.

LILLE

The experience of Lille (France) is emblematic and illustrates how, to be successful, creative city processes need to "bed into" the city over time. In this case, the rich cultural offer and infrastructure that was already present in the city since the late 1980s (following the demise of the local industry) led to the establishment of a comprehensive culture-led development strategy for the whole of the Lille Metro area in the year 2000. This paved the way to the delivery of a very successful European Capital of Culture (ECoC) year in 2004. Such an incremental process of change has led to the successful nomination of Lille Metropole as World Design Capital in 2020. Throughout the years, a constant concern for the city has been to develop a cultural infrastructure and offer that was both uncompromising/demanding yet accessible to all. Lille 3000, the legacy organisation set up to keep the momentum after ECoC, continues to work with city institutions, the private sector, regional partners and grassroots organisations to improve the socio-economic outlook and the prospects for the local community.

BRISTOL

Being holistic and incremental is a quality of creative city approaches that put sustainability and the inclusivity of their growth at the top of their agenda. In Bristol (UK), for example, this happened since the early 1990s when the Cultural Development Partnership was set up.[4] Here, from the beginning, the creative city notion has been interpreted as a way of embedding cultural resources into the broader economic, social and urban development plans for the city. They were among the first to see cultural infrastructure as social infrastructure and mobilised existing strengths (such as for example their heritage as a port city, interesting Victorian architecture, a strong media presence, and the historic presence of technology and educational assets) to "up their game". Today, Bristol has one of the lowest rates of unemployment in the UK and in 2016 it was among the 10 happiest cities to work in the UK. [5]

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[4] For a history of the partnership and its achievements, see: https://www.ideasfestival.co.uk/about/bristol-cultural-development-partnership/

[5] https://www.theguardian.com/careers/gallery/2016/feb/02/the-10-happiest-cities-to-work-in-the-uk-in-pictures

FINLAND

In Finland interest in the creative city gained various local expressions long before the idea of the creative city arrived on the global agenda. Here, after nearly twenty years of experimentation and application of this approach in many settings (rural, the capital, and medium-size urban centres) the concept is now firmly enshrined at both national and local government level as central to their economic development plans.

HELSINKI

In Helsinki the journey started *incrementally* with the implementation of large cultural and creative space infrastructural projects at the beginning of the millennium when it was nominated ECoC in the year 2000. In the years that followed the city made other inspired investments that reflected the ongoing industrial restructuring occurring at the time. The transformation of the old Cable Factory complex into a production and consumption centre in 2008, and later on the transformation of Arabianranta, an area located in a suburb of Helsinki into one of the world's first wireless communities and the most important Living Lab sites in Europe are just two examples of the depth and scale of holistic thinking that Helsinki adopted at the time in interpreting the creative city. Arabianranta slowly developed into a leading centre of design excellence and industry, with the University of Art and Design Helsinki at its core.

In 2012, Helsinki – together with four other neighbouring cities – was nominated World Capital of Design. The title was assigned on the basis of the city's exemplary vision in the use of design for social, cultural and economic improvement. Later the legacy of the title was embodied in the launch of the initiative *Design Driven City*, a two-year project to promote the use of design in cities of the larger Helsinki area. As well as raising awareness of the value of design in rethinking services and products for the new economy, the hiring as part of the project of a pool of professional designers to work with city organisations laid the ground for creative city thinking to become a reality. This is because, among other things, designers contribute to deepen city–staff understanding of citizen needs, and they propose ways to encourage citizens to take more active roles in city decision making and development. Creativity (through design) digitalisation and dialogue with city residents are the ingredients of the Finnish model.

How each of the cities discussed here will be successful in maintaining their creative momentum after the crisis remains to be seen.

> " *A city does not reach an end point when it is then finally creative. The creative city concept is dynamic not static, it is more a continuous process of being alert to opportunities than a detailed plan. The truly creative place knows about timing and balance. It is alert.* "
> (Charles Landry, SACCI, 2020)

The examples above are in no way exhaustive of the creative city pilots and policies in existence. In fact, 240 cities are currently members of the *UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN)*. Established in 2004 to promote cooperation with and among cities that have identified creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development, the network provides a good base for showcasing methods, policies and learning from across the globe. There are lessons we can learn from the different generations of creative cities implemented so far that could be useful in both coping with the current crisis and for building happier and more resilient places in the future. These are summarised below:

- **Building creative cities starts from within and is an incremental process** of testing and experimenting initiatives, the outcome of which can be, at times, unpredictable. Taking the long view is essential because cities need to have the time to "bed in" new ways of operating and thinking. Flexible mechanisms of governance capable of adapting to new scenarios are additional key qualities that cities need to practice in order to be ready to face uncertain futures.

- **Cities are not just machines to bring in revenue, they are cultural and creative ecosystems,** and how to enable, nurture and develop such systems so that they can foster innovation while bringing sustained rewards to the local community is the question policy makers should be focusing on. In particular, how to develop policies that offer everyone the best chance to achieve what they want from life should be the aim of the new generation of creative cities. The central assumption is that ordinary people can make the extraordinary happen if given the chance. Such focus on *empowerment and participation* can generate the confidence for people to get engaged and to act.

- **Resilient cities will increasingly draw on the notion of development based on the capability approach to human development**. Initiated by the Indian economist Amartya Sen over thirty years ago (1985) and more recently developed by Belgian economist Ingrid Robeyns (2017) the capability approach is based on ecological notions of an ecosystem's sustainability and provides an alternative way for evaluating and conceptualising success away from the traditional hard economistic indicators (such as GDP) by refocusing instead on the softer and rounder elements that have to do with *wellbeing, freedom and social justice*. Cities that work around these humanistic principles will be more prepared than others to confront the challenges ahead because they will be *building resilience* within their communities.

- **Have the courage to go beyond "one size fits all".** Which means that cities will need to develop, and embed in their ways of working, new tools for mapping and assessing how they are doing across different aspects of local life such as, for example, the quality of the local knowledge base (generation and circulation of knowledge), attractiveness (local culture, skills, talent, and place qualities among other things), connectivity (both transport and ICT), and networking capability (see Sacco and Blessi, 2007; Ghilardi, 2017). This kind of assessment should provide policy makers, civic leaders and communities with the evidence to ensure not just that development plans and initiatives are responding to local needs, but that they are also tapping into the positives and the resources of a place.

- **Put in place transversal governance mechanisms capable of enabling and unlocking sustainable change.** This means that decision making on policy matters may in the future be done as much as possible at local level through *deliberative processes* (by engaging a variety of stakeholders, including, but not exclusively, those involved in the cultural and creative sectors). In this way, a creative city agenda is articulated by communities identifying the capabilities that matter to them, and which policies should follow and expand accordingly.

- **There are many tools in existence that cities can adopt in order to improve democratic participation** at local level. Among these, citizens' assemblies are the most popular. [6] A citizens assembly's role is to deliver an in-depth analysis of a given issue, a deliberation over different solutions, hearing of the pros and cons, and then to make informed decisions. Such a process of deliberation is innately creative and can provide ideas and fresh solutions to problems.

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[6] For an explanation see: https://citizensassemblies.org/

2. Culture as Ecosystem

The creative city notion rests on connecting culture and the city to creativity in exploring how places can better navigate the waves of urban transformation that they will inevitably face (climate change being one of them). Though the agendas for creative city making have changed since their origins in the late 1980s and the priorities of the 2020s are different, the initial cultural focus remains significant. But how do we redefine the role and purpose of culture and the economic activity it gives rise to in the cities of the future?

Over the past twenty years, at European level, a vast literature (matched by evidence on the ground) has been produced showing how cultural activities and especially the creative industries can drive the economies of cities forward while at the same time helping communities respond to the challenges of globalisation (for example, KEA, 2009; EU Green Paper, 2010). The literature emphasises the fact that the economy at large is increasingly innovation led, and, in turn, innovation has become a key competitiveness indicator (for example, UNCTAD, 2008 and 2010).

In this context, innovation is understood as a system capable of going beyond traditional forms of technology and R&D into multidisciplinary and cross-sectoral activity. It was the nature, the consequences and the potential of understanding culture within an ecosystem (made of crossovers between producers and consumers, market and public policy) that was debated throughout the three editions of SACCI.

Here, Pier Luigi Sacco returned to his Culture 3.0 framework and used it as a springboard for debating the need for new creative city policies of the future to move away from taking culture and the creative industries as a discrete macro sector of the economy (where demand is basically constituted by a market-mediated audience) towards reasoning in terms of the structural inter-dependences between the cultural and creative sectors and the other economic and social sectors (Sacco, 2011). The hallmark of the Culture 3.0 is the transformation of audiences into practitioners increasingly interested in active cultural participation and access.

The argument goes that individuals, by accessing cultural experiences, are challenged to develop their own capabilities to assimilate and manipulate in personal ways the cultural contents they are being exposed to.

Thus the predominance of cultural markets is increasingly challenged by the diffusion and expansion of communities of practice where members interact on the basis of non-market mediated exchanges – a change that is made possible by the scale and speed of connectivity among players through online platforms. Here, then, we see a cultural ecosystem in operation: a constantly developing set of interconnections and interdependencies that blur old boundaries between culture and industry, place and space, market and voluntary engagement.

What follows is that in the future policies will need to be more holistic and systemic. Echoing the capability approach of Sen and Robeyns discussed earlier, policies must aim in the first instance at *giving people the freedom (the cultural opportunity) to co-create culture*. In other words, cultural opportunity is the freedom to give form and value to people's experiences. However, in this context, cultural opportunity needs to be understood not as located within single organizations or spaces, but as residing in the interconnections and interdependencies between cultural resources of many kinds.

Thus, we may no longer talk about "cultural" policies as separate from the social and economic ones, but rather talk of building cultural infrastructure as the necessary social infrastructure we need for powering resilient and creative cities forward.

3. Active Cultural Institutions for Creative Cities

Improving the capability of institutions to provide opportunities for engagement and new experiences has been at the core of the recent debate within the museums and heritage fields. This is because cultural institutions act as a space for reflection on the present and a source of debate for negotiating diversity and democratic participation, but today, traditional ways of passively acquiring and consuming knowledge, such as for example visiting museums or galleries, are changing.

People don't just want to be the extras in the movie of history, they want to be the protagonists and the producers of experiences. In a fragmented world where difference dominates and society is defined by a hybridity of identities (a state of in-betweenness), where nobody belongs completely to any one identity given (or sanctioned) from above, cultural institutions are reimagining their role and reshaping the way they operate to put engagement with the communities they serve as a core organisational value.

During the first edition of SACCI, Ekaterina Travkina - the Coordinator for Culture, CCIs and Local Development at the OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities - presented an update on the work done, together with the International Council of Museums (ICOM), towards the formulation of a Guide aimed at testing new approaches to connect local government, communities and museums. The Guide (which features among other things a self-assessment toolkit) contains recommendations (as well as policy options) about how to capture and maximise the cultural impacts of museums across the key thematic areas of inclusion, health and well-being; cultural development, education and creativity; urban design and community development; economic development and innovation (OECD/ICOM, 2019).

To reinforce such aims, ICOM has been leading on work to put in place a revision of the definition of what a museum should do. A group of experts, Committee for Museum Definition, Prospects and Potentials (MDPP), was set up in 2018 to prepare recommendations to be submitted to the ICOM Executive Board on the basis of a worldwide consultation.

Though a report was submitted to the ICOM's general assembly in Kyoto in September 2019, a new definition has yet to be adopted.

However, during the second edition of SACCI Afşin Altayli – Museums and Society Coordinator at ICOM – put a special emphasis on the importance for museums of being inclusive and human-centred rather than collection-centred. He argued that museums need to act as meaningful meeting places and as *platforms for learning and exchange,* as well as facilitators of knowledge and creativity contributing to, among other things, social capital.

> During the lockdown many museums and art galleries went online to present their collections or to organise thematic virtual tours but some went further. For example, the Museum Europäischer Kulturen (MEK) created the hashtag #CollectingCorona. [7] Their argument was that the COVID-19 pandemic has drastically changed our daily life – and as their remit is to showcase everyday culture in Europe – they started to collect impressions (short videos, photos and thoughts) about the pandemic from all corners of the continent. This digital documentation has been updated throughout the crisis and will be made available for future generations as part of the MEK collection.

> The idea of archiving and preserving memories of COVID-19 is also something that cities have embarked on as a new way of reconceptualising museums' role not only in preserving the past but also in actively providing interactive platforms for debating and negotiating anxieties and fears about the future. The city of *Nantes* (France), for example, is collecting memories of the lockdown and has created a dedicated city archive which could be used in the future by both people and scientists to learn about the virus and vaccines. [8]
>
> By appealing for contributions from personal recollections, other cities across the world are finding ways of archiving memories of the pandemic and of other crises that communities have overcome.
>
> The National Museum of Australia in Canberra, for example, has launched a digital initiative to provide a national platform for grassroots storytelling and to honour front line emergency workers, as part of a wider collecting and community outreach program dedicated to the summer fire crisis.[9]
>
> The Museo Etnografico Juan B. Ambrosetti (Argentina) organised the collective exhibition ExpoCuarentena featuring the everyday objects used by its community during the crisis. The Canadian Museum for Human Rights is collecting videos and organising an online exhibition of personal stories about COVID-19.[10]

[7] https://www.smb.museum/en/whats-new/detail/collectingcorona-a-call-for-submissions-to-the-collection-at-the-museum-of-european-cultures/

[8] https://metropole.nantes.fr/actualites/2020/culture-loisirs-patrimoine/nantes-confinee

[9]https://www.nma.gov.au/about/media/media-releases-listing-by-year/2020/digital-project-bushfire-images-stories

[10] https://icom.museum/en/covid-19/resources/museums-and-covid-19-8-steps-to-support-community-resilience/

Becoming Interactive

Galleries are also adopting similar 'interactive' approaches to displaying their art. The *gametization* of gallery visits is another tool that such institutions are increasingly adopting in order to create memorable experiences and to keep audiences engaged in different forms of learning and creation. In addition, even before lockdown, many museums had mastered the art of bringing their collections into people's homes.

> The British Museum, the Louvre and the Guggenheim have all used VR in virtual tours very effectively. Google Arts & Culture [11] asks visitors to recreate the scenes from famous paintings in their own homes (sometimes with hilarious and creative results!). The Musée National d'Art Moderne (Paris) launched Prisme 7 [12] a game (app) to discover the principles of modern and contemporary creation in an immersive world through the four principles of observe, learn, deconstruct and create.
>
> Italian galleries and museums have been experimenting with introducing video games and enhanced reality for a few years now. Tuo Museo [13] – an international collective of artists, game designers, developers, sound designers and 3D animators working at the intersection of art and video games – pioneered the award-winning Father and Son for the Mann Museum (Naples), and branched out into destination marketing and into devised interactive content for the city of Florence and Past for Future for the city of Taranto. *"Learning by playing is a way of stimulating creativity, it's thinking about the past while imagining the future,"* said Fabio Viola, the founder of Tuo Museo during his session at SACCI in 2019.

However, if "gametizing" offers a glimpse of the future experiences for galleries and museums, in a post COVID-19 world there will still be room for traditional forms of decentralization of both access to, and provision of, culture, by literally bringing it to the people.

> Though there is a vast literature showcasing innovative examples of mobile libraries, there is less good practice in regards to galleries and museums. The MuMo (Musée Mobile) initiative was launched in 2011 as a way of bringing collections from well-known art galleries and museums in France to the people who live in rural and peri-urban areas of cities. *The Pompidou Centre*, which has a long-standing partnership with MuMo just launched – together with Art Explora (a non-profit organisation based in France) – the third of their Art Trucks [14] which, this time, will tour not only France, but also other European countries during 2021. Besides bringing art to a wider audience, such innovative practices offer the potential for delivering new and exciting experiences that could make those cities that receive truck visits more attractive for tourists too.

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[11] https://artsandculture.google.com/

[12] https://store.steampowered.com/app/1282500/Prisme_7/

[13] https://www.tuomuseo.it/chi-siamo/

[14] http://www.club-innovation-culture.fr/camion-musee-mumo-centre-pompidou-herault-arnod-architectures/

Rooted in the Social

Delivering knowledge and experiences to communities has also been the principle on which libraries were built. Over the past decade, library services in many countries have been rethinking their role and reshaping their functions within both urban and rural communities. As well as performing their traditional functions (supported by the latest digital technology), the best new models of libraries combine under one roof a variety of services for the community. They often function as job or health centres (by incorporating gyms); provide spaces for youth and community activities; and feature workshop spaces and rooms for informal learning and art workshops. From the first *Idea Store* created in London in the late 1990s, such a multipurpose model of library has been developed in many cities across the world, and communities have benefitted in many ways by using libraries as civic centres.

During the pandemic, many cities had to close their libraries, but their work hasn't stopped. In North America public libraries teamed up with food producers to continue to get food to those who need it. Food security is a big challenge in many American states.

> In California, the California Library Association received a grant from the California Department of Social Services to help libraries promote early learning, nutrition and food access for young children. Promoting nutrition and literacy together can open the door for better partnerships between libraries and community health services of all kinds. These programmes are proliferating nationwide, at the grassroots, and will continue to be implemented beyond the current health crisis.
>
> But during the pandemic libraries are not just distributing food but stories too. In Madrid, the *Soto del Real* library has teamed up with a bookshop to create an innovative service of 'book therapy' for seniors who feel isolated and lonely. [15]
>
> Whereas in normal times staff of the bookshop would go to care homes to bring books and/or read to groups of elderly residents, the new service employs a group of volunteers to read once a week for 20 minutes on the phone to the same person. Each senior has their volunteer and together they choose the books.

Contributing to Health and Well-being

That participation in arts and cultural activity has a positive impact on people's confidence, well-being and capacity to improve economic outlook is well documented. How the arts contribute to good health was the focus of a major UK study (Devlin, Paul, 2010) which through case studies of interviews charted the distance travelled by each individual participating in the study.

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[15] https://mundo.sputniknews.com/espana/202009111092725504-cuentos-por-telefono-la-literatura-llega-a-las-residencias-de-espana-como-balsamo-al-aislamiento/

The study demonstrated how regular participation in creative activities benefited people physically, mentally, emotionally and socially, whether that be from access to the arts as recuperation following an illness, as part of a quest for a better work-life balance, or as part of seeking to deal with stressful situations.

The interviews also showed a range of benefits to participating in arts activities such as increased physical fitness, social contact, lower levels of stress and increased education and skills (Voluntary Arts England, 2010). Since then more research has been conducted and many initiatives launched at European level to provide evidence of impacts (e.g. Grossi et al., 2010; Gordon-Nesbitt, 2015). Outside Europe, in 2018 museums visit prescriptions started to be administered by doctors as part of a new project between the *Montreal Museum of Fine Arts* and the Canadian association of Francophone doctors.

The lockdown and its social distancing measures have made evident the importance of arts and culture for people's mental well-being. What's more, some examples of lockdown *do it yourself culture* (e.g. Zoom concerts, digital collective poetry writing, balcony singing, virtual gardening festivals etc.) show how creativity on its own merits may have an equal foothold in the reasons behind improved wellbeing in people.

But it's not just art that can heal, the US state of Texas has been experimenting for a long time with doctors prescribing contact with nature as a way of promoting good health. Pioneering work in this area started in the 1980s with Robert Ulrich, who was a professor at Texas A&M University. In his work he looked at patients after surgery who had a view of trees out of their window compared to those who had the view of a wall. Those with the natural view reported less pain and spent less time in the hospital. The Centre is currently reviewing Professor Ulrich's observations of patients again for *Health and Nature*, a joint venture between the university of Texas A&M, Houston Methodist Hospital and non-profit organisation *Texan by Nature*, to assess if these effects extend to the virtual world, including immersive VR and virtual windows. [16]

Such recognition provides new opportunities to capitalise on the role of arts, culture and nature in the prevention and treatment of illness across the lifespan of a person, contributing also to reductions in hospitalisation or medication rates, ultimately leading to innovative ways of tackling care, welfare on the whole. There appears to be consistent evidence that exposures to natural environments have a positive effect on pain, stress, anxiety, blood pressure and heart rate. In the future, it may well be that in the design of both health care centres and cultural infrastructure, requirements such as closeness to natural environment may become compulsory.

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[16] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ub7N2YzTA4A&list=PLl3sHpSFmf1VZsqsSdNQAf0edm3mCr12u

4. Catalyst Heritage

Using culture and the heritage of places to generate opportunities as well as new experiences is exemplified in the work done by the *Network of European Museum Organisations (NEMO)* [17] since 2014. Recently published results [18] show how some cities have succeeded in building on museum collections creatively for developing products of high added value, and point to how cooperation between cultural and creative sectors can create many new opportunities for people (e.g. skills) and for local economies.

> One example from the NEMO collection is the *Food We Cook* project, delivered through the *Estonian National Museum* in the city of Tartu. In 2016 the museum hosted an exhibition which showcased food culture, both traditional and new, as seen through the lenses of both everyday life and from the viewpoint of professional gastronomy. The exhibition became the catalyst for a cooperative project that started in 2017 between the museum and local entrepreneurs, which focused on using local food and gastronomic heritage-inspired initiatives and networks to help disseminate the knowledge about food, and associated regional practices and peculiarities. As a result, a number of regional food-culture events, seminars, lectures and cooking workshops were organised to help promote regional food and to support small enterprises in using local food heritage for developing new niche products.

Sustainable approaches to revitalising the unique heritage of places were debated throughout the editions of SACCI. Ilaria d'Auria, project manager of European Regions Research and Innovation Network (ERRIN), for example, introduced the catalogue of 30 good practices compiled by the network.

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[17] www.ne-mo.org/about-us/working-groups/working-group-museums-and-creative-industries.html
[18] See the 2018 Report: 'Museums and Creative Industries, Case Studies from across Europe'. www.ne-mo.org/fileadmin/Dateien/public/NEMo_documents/NEMO_2018_Publication_Museums_and_Creative_Industries_Case_Studies_from_across_Europe.pdf

Examples included the *STOL (Chair) Project*,[19] a Danish initiative focused on reviving traditional crafts in a region of Denmark that had lost nearly all its furniture industry due to globalization.

By reviving the local tradition of chair production and using the existing infrastructure (the 14 furniture factories left), the project created a sustainable platform for reimagining crafts and design while generating new jobs and bringing new life into the area.

The project also became the focus for the local people of all ages to engage together with international artists, designers and architects that redesigned and upcycled the chairs that the community brought.

The golden thread running through the above examples is in the role of local government. As mentioned earlier, to make a place truly creative, governments must activate talents in various directions, preserve their works and inspire new ones. In this ecosystem, the role of a local government is not so much that of putting in place sectoral policies hoping that they would have a trickle down effect. They must, instead, think holistically and adopt approaches that are sensitive to gaps, needs, and the potential within each ecosystem. They must intervene in leveraging the role of cultural institutions and heritage not only for urban regeneration and local economic development, but also for health, wellbeing and community development on the whole.

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[19] https://grasslands.dk/projektStol_eng.html

5. Place Making

Creative ways of reimagining place making in historic settings were debated during various sessions at SACCI. In the last edition, another project from ERRIN was discussed, this time concerning the city of Bologna. Here the municipality, its urban agency (FIU) together with the university transformed Piazza Rossini, a historic square in the university area, into a living laboratory for co-designing actions combining conservation of cultural heritage, innovation and environmental protection. [20] The square is now completely pedestrianised.

Place making a wider scale is also of interest. Sandra Gizdulich, regional development expert and participant in the third edition of SACCI, outlined the themes and objectives contained in the new Urban Agenda for the EU. This new multi-level working method highlights the need for stimulating growth, liveability and innovation in the cities of Europe, and emphasises the importance of inclusive and cohesive urban development processes, involving civil society and communities in the process of place making. [21]

It also advocates the adoption of holistic approaches capable of taking into account economic, environmental, social, territorial and cultural aspects. Cultural tourism and the need to rebalance investment in large iconic attractions with initiatives in less visited sites, together with the adaptive reuse of redundant buildings to revitalise urban fringes and marginalised peripheral areas to recreate an identity, are some of the principles at the heart of the new Urban Agenda for the EU.

[20] https://bologna.rockproject.eu/
[21] https://ec.europa.eu/futurium/en/urban-agenda-eu/what-urban-agenda-eu

As an addition, the Horizon 2020 funded *ROCK project*[22] is worth mentioning because it focuses on adaptive ways of regenerating historic city centres for sustainable development and economic growth. Its overall concept is based on a circular systemic approach that connects different actors, places of cultural heritage value and systems at both European and local level.

Pilot projects include for example the Living Lab located in the former industrial regeneration area of Eindhoven (Netherlands) called Strijp-S.

The lab, which operates around the principles of the quadruple helix approach, generates economic, cultural and technological initiatives which will contribute to reinterpret, and strengthen the identity, cultural and economic significance of the Strijp-S in the region, and internationally.

There are other instances of Urban Labs such as this currently being developed across Europe.

One other example is *The Urban Cultural Planning* project, which has been set up to advance the capacity of public authorities in the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) and local NGOs and associations to collaborate on citizen-driven cultural planning. [23] The project is a cross border partnership of 14 partners and thirty-six associated organizations in eight countries. So far, the project has organized nine *Urban Labs* (the last of which took place digitally) to test out cultural planning methods such as cultural mapping, or cultural visioning, for dealing with issues of inclusive regeneration and active reuse of heritage.

In the future, such small scale, low cost laboratories in real-scale may well constitute the template for other cities to consider their use for adaptable regeneration and place making initiatives. Cultural mapping exercises and urban labs can help to frame the principles of sustainable regeneration (Ghilardi, 2017). They can provide local policy makers, civic leaders, creative practitioners and communities alike with data and evidence for improved understanding and awareness of their city's unique creative capacity and potential. They can pinpoint the type of relations that can be established between the cultural and creative resources and the people who produce and use them in a place; and can contribute to identify holistic policies that can help cities to function more cohesively.

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[22] https://rockproject.eu/role-model-cities#ein
[23] https://urbcultural.eu/about/

6. The Tourism of Experiences

It is often said that creative cities have a strong sense of their identity, their uniqueness and their distinctive strengths, and that they are able to tell their stories in clear and compelling ways. But creative cities also recognize that contemporary urban realities often rest on striking a fragile balance between local expectations and hard global economic realities. While the vision of authentic urban environments buzzing with lively cultural and entertainment options, jostling to attract and retain creative people, is well established in the mindset of policy makers and civic leaders alike, problems remain with the concretisation of such a vision in smaller, economically peripheral places.

Yet if the trends emerging throughout the COVID-19 pandemic (among different sectors of society) which show a renewed interest for living in smaller, peripheral places rather than in large metro areas are proven true, then it's key that the lessons learned from the dis-economies, the overcrowding and the over-tourism that occurred in large cities until now are learned.

Lorentzen and Van Heur (2013) argue that the narrative presented by mainstream current economic geography is rooted in the notion that bigger places benefit from agglomeration advantages while smaller places have limited scope beyond dealing with the by-products of disappearing traditional industries, or as providers of cheap labour and affordable working and living spaces to keep larger metropolitan areas competitive.

However, over the past decade, a consistent body of literature has emerged in regard to how, by adopting culturally sensitive approaches to place making and tourism strategies, smaller places can take control and change the course of their development (Russo and Richards, 2016; Richards and Duif, 2019). The starting point of many such strategies has been the realisation that while cultural and creative products are influenced by the specificity of localities, at the same time they can generate a unique point of sale and opportunities for promoting places.

A recent report by the UNWTO (2018) shows that around 40 percent of international tourism (about 480 million trips a year) include cultural activities.

The report also shows that there is a shift from visits to tangible heritage (museums, national galleries, historic monuments and the like) towards intangible heritage (festivals, community gatherings, lifestyle events, art fixtures) and creative experiences.

In particular, Russo and Richards (2016) have remarked that the new urban tourists often want to explore neighbourhoods which are edgy or off the beaten track and suggest that today's cultural tourist is just as likely to be in search of everyday or street culture as of a heritage site.

Furthermore, the move towards intangible content offers the potential to add value through developing engaging place and people-specific experiences, supporting innovation and helping places (particularly smaller ones) to become more attractive and competitive. Here, as mentioned earlier, links between the creative economy and tourism can be expressed in various ways, such as, for example, food cultures and the gastronomy of destinations, cultural events related to music, fashion or design, or the environment (especially in relation to the circular economy) all of which can become important attractors.

This type of tourism offers the chance of an increase in profitability because not only does it create a new and diversified demand, but also because it has a positive effect on building self-confidence among the local people thanks to a new interest in their culture and ways of living. This in turn can re-energise entrepreneurship and business capacity, as well as inducing innovation of products and experiences.

In her presentation at the second edition of SACCI, academic and tourism expert Melanie Smith draws attention to the fact that linkages between tourism and the creative economy can generate many effects that go far beyond increasing demand for tourism experiences. These include the growth of a soft infrastructure, such as small-scale creative businesses, and the establishment of an urban atmosphere with opportunities for both producers and consumers to interact. Knowledge and skill development increase as a result of improved contact between professionals from creative and tourism industries, and between consumers and residents.

During the third edition of SACCI, the cultural tourism academic and expert Tina Šegota highlighted the dangers of excessive growth in urban tourism for smaller places and the potential adverse effects that over-tourism can have on natural resources, infrastructure, mobility and congestion, as well as its socio-cultural impact on residents. Šegota presented the case of Dubrovnik, one of the most attractive cruise destinations in the Adriatic.

Here, the arrival and stay of cruising passengers has had a significant impact on quality of life and the quality of the visitor experience, and even though it is one of the most important contributors to the local economy, cruise tourism also poses a number of challenges. Cruisers dock in the Dubrovnik harbour predominately from June to September, mostly for a single day or a few hours. During this time there are a few days a week when the ships' call times have overlapped. This burdens the harbour and creates

extreme traffic jams inwards and outwards of Dubrovnik. In addition, docked ships pollute the air, whilst their catering services create masses of waste that has to be taken care of by local waste management services. The latter were built in times with minimal or no cruise tourism in Dubrovnik, which makes waste management a challenging task.

In Dubrovnik diseconomies of excess tourism are also related to the popularity of the city as a location for numerous successful films and TV series (e.g., *Game of Thrones*, *Star Wars: The Last Jedi*, *Robin Hood*, *James* Bond, etc.) and the inscription of the city on the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites since 1979. This means that, excluding cruise tourism, in 2015 there were almost 1.5 million tourist arrivals, while almost one million admission tickets were sold for the City Walls, a 38 percent increase in tourist arrivals, compared to a mere seven percent increase in tourist arrivals in the pre-*Game-of-Thrones* period (Šegota, 2018). This creates crowding, congestion, and increased dissatisfaction.

In 2019, the tourism stakeholders and the municipality developed a strategy for tackling these problems. As well encouraging tourism outside the peak season, another objective of the plan is to promote the dispersal of visitors within the city (and beyond). Another action adopted by the Dubrovnik Tourist Board is to upgrade the Dubrovnik Card with attractions and public transportation services outside the historic core. The Card also promotes attractions across the region and enables timetabling of visits outside peak hours.

As we have seen, creative and cultural tourism development is a multi-sectoral activity and, as such, a good plan for tourism needs to embrace not only the functions of one department, but has to connect with others such as Culture, Planning and Environment (among others) and establish a systematic collaboration between them all.

In order to make experiences attractive and sustainable over time, both co-operation and co-ordination with private sector stakeholders are needed. This means that traditional tourism organisations also need to adapt to such new approaches by developing innovative creative content together with engagingly interactive forms of distribution.

Creative tourism will only be sustainable if developed and managed through considering both visitors and local communities. This can be achieved by means of community engagement, congestion management, reduction of seasonality, careful planning that respects the limits of capacity and the specificities of each destination, and product diversification.

The lessons we learn from the example above is that tourism in smaller places means not only exercising a creative use of endogenous resources, but also networking and building regional partnerships for powering sustainable local development and urban regeneration.

An interesting case study of how to put in place holistic approaches to creative tourism for smaller places (and their regions) is provided by the project *CREATOUR (Creative Tourism Destination Development in Small Cities and Rural areas)*, launched in Portugal three years ago [24] with a series of pilots that concluded early in 2020. One of the key

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[24] http://creatour.pt/en/about/overview/

objectives of this initiative is to understand how an integrated approach to creative tourism may provide feasible options for improving the stability of cultural and creative organisations of small cities and rural areas.

The aims of the pilots therefore were both to raise awareness of the potential of creative tourism, and to provide evidence to inform future policies for the sustainable development of local communities across Portugal. The pilots took place in different centres of four regions of the country (North, Centre, Alentejo and Algarve), each featuring human-scale, interactive, creative tourism activities, and products that were rooted in local cultural traditions, skills, knowledge and emerging artistic practices. Initiatives range from *Coolwool Creative Weekend at Covilha* where – through partnership with two textile museums and a newly revamped hotel – participants are invited to discover (and test their creative skills) in one of the oldest industries: the wool industry (which during the 20th century made of Covilha the Portuguese Manchester).

Also, worth mentioning is the *Creative Walks* project on offer across the county of Mertola in the Alentejo region. In this case, the creative and nature tourism walking itineraries are associated with unique experiences of co-creation. Here, the quality of the walk is determined by the beauty of the landscape of the territory; the dimension of creativity is based on exploring local cultural identity elements such as products, goods, experiences, values, history, arts and crafts.

CREATOUR shows the positive outcomes of 'co-creating' experiences in which skills and knowledge are transferred between local hosts and their visitors. It also illustrates that the public sector and civic leaders have an enabling role to play, for example in supporting SMEs, networks and cluster development.

That said, preparing the recovery and shaping the tourism of tomorrow is the immediate task that governments and cities alike are undertaking. While the medium and long-term tourism impacts of COVID-19 will vary between countries, destinations and segments of the sector, it is clear that in order to open up while travel restraints are still in force, governments will need to take balanced, measured and co-ordinated policy actions in order to protect people, while minimising job losses and business closures in the immediate and long-term.

The OECD has created a map of country-by-country COVID-19 economic measures, [25] some of which involve bringing together public bodies and the private sector to work on recovery plans based on regular surveys of the state of the spread of infection.

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[25] https://oecd.github.io/OECD-covid-action-map/

Greece has set up a governmental coordination committee with representatives *from all ministries*. The strategic aims of this group are to reopen businesses as soon as possible, preserve destinations' safety in terms of public health, and support the entire value chain of the tourism industry and their employees.

In Iceland (with a similar approach in Luxembourg albeit on a smaller scale), actions for the recovery included at first domestic travel vouchers and a domestic tourism promotional campaign, followed by an international promotional campaign when travel restrictions are lifted. Here see also the relaunch of their award-winning nation-branding karaoke song titled *"The a-ö of Iceland"*. [26]

While in Finland, Visit Finland has launched free online training material on the digitalisation of tourism businesses. Many countries are taking the opportunity of the crisis to review their communication and marketing approaches and are putting in place inventive digital campaigns. On-line virtual tours, YouTube films and videos engaging local communities in the creative production of content are among some of these. Turismo de Portugal transformed its destination's communication hashtag from #CantSkipPortugal to #CantSkipHope.

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[26] https://www.citynationplace.com/iceland-hardest-karaoke-song-social-media

ATTORI AL LAVORO
ACTORS AT WORK

7. Creative Industries – At the Core of Creative Cities

Along with the tourism sector, creative industries (CCIs) are among the most affected by the current COVID-19 crisis. Cultural and creative workers are among the more vulnerable sectors of the workforce. Since the pandemic, the sector has seen devastating impacts on their incomes, not only in turnover terms, but also in their charitable contributions and sponsorships. Cultural and creative sectors are largely composed of micro-firms, non-profit organisations and creative professionals, often operating on the margins of financial sustainability. Leaving them behind would also put in danger the economic future of the large public and private cultural institutions and businesses that depend on this dynamic cultural ecosystem for the provision of creative goods and services.

In the UK, a newly commissioned research from Oxford Economics shows that the CCIs, previously growing at five times the rate of the wider economy, employing over 2 million people and contributing £111.7 to the economy, are now on the brink of collapse. [27] The report also projects that the creative sector will be hit twice as hard as the wider economy in 2020, with many sub-sectors expected to lose more than half their revenue and over half of their workforce. The impact on employment is set to be felt twice as hard by creative freelancers with 287,000 freelance roles expected to be terminated by the end of 2020.

The picture is no better in other countries with jobs at risk ranging from 0.8 to 5.5 percent of employment across OECD regions (Travkina, Sacco 2020). Throughout this report we have argued that culture and the creativity that derives from practicing and participating in cultural activity are forces of change, cutting across sectors, solving problems and generating new ideas. The CCIs embody that ecosystem of creation and turn it into products and services that increasingly power our economies. If the CCIs are stalling, the whole of society will suffer.

The study conducted by the European Creative Business Network (ECBN) at the beginning of the first lockdown in 2020 shows the high level of uncertainty that prevails in the cultural and creative industries at the moment.

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[27] https://www.creativeindustriesfederation.com/sites/default/files/2020-07/20200716_OE_Slides_new%20ACE%20data%20-%20Clean%20-%20with%20NEMO%20caveat.pdf

All companies interviewed for the survey expect sales to decline [28] with governments' lockdown measures turning an economic slump into a potential systemic crisis. But in addition to the alarming results of the empirical data collected regarding in particular the CCIs, and the conditions of crisis across the EU, in a White Paper published in April 2020, [29] ECBN foresaw threats and uncertainty at a broader level of society and the economy.

The ECBN pointed out that in view of the crisis, traditional industries and lobbies are calling for a return to Europe's old economy based on unsustainable modes of production, thus putting in danger the European Green Deal. Measures such as the closing of borders and voluntarily curfews to fight the spread of COVID-19 brought some member states to extend the executive power of governments and presidents, thus potentially endangering local democracies which are the ground on which culture flourishes. Bernd Fesel, director of ECBN, [30] also warned against extending the restrictions on the free movement of people beyond necessity. If the economic strengths of CCIs are restrained and crippled by border and travel restrictions within the European Single Market entire cultural ecosystems could be severely undermined, with disastrous consequences.

However, despite the unprecedented scale of the challenges, many cities and governments around the world have quickly coordinated emergency measures targeting the cultural ecosystem upstream down to its industries. The same note prepared by Ekaterina Travkina and Pier Luigi Sacco for the OECD (September 2020) mentioned earlier in the introduction contains a comprehensive, in-depth assessment of the measures taken so far at global level.

Although it is beyond the scope of this report to analyse the merits of each measure, it is worth mentioning the range and reach of these initiatives, which vary from public funding aimed at providing short term liquidity to firms operating in the CCIs; to emergency grants and subsidies for cultural and creative sectors and individual artists, and direct loan provisions to improve the liquidity for businesses.

> Investment incentives include, for example, the Tax Shelter Agreement implemented in Belgium, which is an initiative aimed at incentivizing private investment in the performing arts and audio-visual sub-sectors. Here the normal conditions that make up tax shelter agreements in Belgium have been eased to help producers to bridge the gap in expenditure. Here, the work that was not produced (due to the pandemic) can be replaced by another work in the investor−producer agreement without adverse tax consequences.

Most OECD countries have put in place measures that allow firms in the cultural and the CCIs sectors to defer the payment of taxes in order to keep their liquidity. This includes postponements in corporate and income tax payments, social security payments, pension contributions and value added tax.

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[28] Surveys conducted by Kreatives Sachsen and the ECB Network from mid-March until beginning of April 2020, 1 (https://www.kreatives-sachsen.de/2020/03/13/pressemitteilung-zur-umfrage/)
ECBN study (Trautenberger 2020) doi: 10.25365/ phaidra.140
[29] https://www.ecbnetwork.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/ECBN_White_Paper_CCI-@Covd19_20200409.pdf
[30] See Bernd Fesel presentation at the third edition of SACCI, 28 April 2020.

For workers across all sectors, there are job retention schemes, and income support measures have also be launched, with only a few specifically directed at CCIs.

In this context, Austria's COVID-19 special Fund for Artists and Cultural Educators [31] is worth mentioning. This policy increased the already-existing Artists' Social Insurance Fund by 10 million euros to reimburse income losses of CCIs workers due to cancellations. It is designed to support artists and cultural educators, who are neither entitled to apply to the hardship fund nor to the bridge funding for artists (both in existence since the pandemic). The emergency aid amounts to maximum 3,000 euros (one-off payment).

Private, non-profit, and philanthropic actors are also playing a big role in the culture and CCIs recovery process. These actors typically provide liquidity by funding businesses and providing grants for artists and cultural workers. Collective management organisations (CMO) are also involved and at the simplest level – in order to increase their members' short-term liquidity – advance payments on collected royalties.

As we see from this snapshot there is a vast array of help being laid out to help the cultural sector and CCIs to recover in current months. However, organisations such as the UK Creative Industries Federation have been drawing attention to the fact that emergency measures for supporting employment are very often too generic. Enterprises in the cultural and creative industries sectors are often made of sole traders, and self-employed individuals, who have specific needs related to their unconventional forms of operations (e.g. portfolio working, and the hybrid forms of holding several jobs with different employment status). Measures therefore should be more specifically targeted to better respond to these needs.

The pandemic has emphasised the role of culture in fostering the creative ecosystems of cities, but emergency funding at the moment is predominantly targeting categories or elements of the ecosystem sometimes in a linear way (e.g. support for artists or cultural workers but not for initiatives in the care sector even though the livelihood of those artists may depend on getting jobs in the care system). More attention perhaps should be put on promoting greater complementarities between culture and other agendas (e.g. education, health, place identity and the digital) and funding should be seen as a form of holistic investment, having an impact on the whole ecosystem of the city.

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[31] https://www.culturalpolicies.net/covid-19/country-reports/austria/

> Among the emergency support measures examined, at a micro level, those adopted by the city of Helsinki may be of interest. Here a fund for people and organisations affected by the closure of culture, sports, and leisure has been established to encourage new forms of engagement with the public as audiences or as consumers of services. By investing a relatively small amount of money (300,000 euros with a maximum of 5,000 euros available per applicant) the city invites artists, and creative practitioners to come up with innovative ways and digital means for engaging with the public. [32]

In August 2020 *The World Cities Cultural Forum* (a network of senior policy makers from 40 cities worldwide) published a Policy Bulletin [33] featuring some examples of interventions and initiatives (alternative to direct emergency funding) that world cities have taken to tackle the crisis.

> Tokyo Metropolitan Government, for example, has launched a Support Programme for cultural practitioners to create video works that will be used by the city in communication campaigns in the future; the city of LA has established a programme to create murals and get public artists back to work. In a small way, such initiatives show how – by starting from the immediate needs of local practitioners to survive the crisis – funding can be leveraged to made work capable of responding to the broader agenda of the city.
>
> A similar argument can be made about the Buenos Aires' Cultura en casa and Abu Dhabi's CulturAll digital initiatives. Both are testbeds for how the acceleration of digital can give a new dimension to the cultural offer, while offering the potential for longer-term revenue streams for creatives.

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[32] https://www.hel.fi/uutiset/en/kaupunginkanslia/helsinki-offers-express-funding-to-culture-sports-youth-work-school-lunches-to-continue
[33] http://www.worldcitiescultureforum.com/assets/others/WCCF_Impact_and_Policy_Bulletin_1.pdf

8. The Opportunities and Challenges Ahead

To say that the current COVID-19 crisis has triggered a dramatic reordering of priorities is an understatement and throughout this report we have looked at how we could reframe the argument for culture (in all its ramifications) as the tool by which a creative city builds opportunities for its citizens to reach their potential. We also said that in an age of resurgent populism, poverty of aspirations and intolerance (the crisis before the crisis), we need to reimagine cultural infrastructure as social infrastructure for developing a more equal society.

But we also said that society today is more than ever fragmented culturally, socially and economically. We live in age of hybridity where cultural identity is porous, in constant flux, nobody belongs completely to any one identity, but rather congregates around notions of affinity of principles and values, which may change with time and are never just given (or sanctioned from above). Such fragmentation is reflected also in the way we consume products and culture.

Our economy is characterized by a customisation of products and services, the success of which relies greatly on the unique aesthetic, symbolic and socio-cultural elements of such products. We, the consumers, are keener on brands which are associated with a particular set of values which we share. At the same time, thanks to developments in technology, we can create our cultural experiences increasingly outside the sanctioned cultured space in, for example, cyberspace.

Digitalisation has revolutionised both the economy of culture and our relation to culture. It has led to new forms of cultural consumption that transcend the traditional constraints of location and time; and made possible the establishment of new modes of sharing and co-creating that challenge outdated notions of intellectual property rights.

During the lockdown we have all got used to accessing free content online and while the provision of such digitally mediated cultural content is not sustainable over time, it has proven to be a good testing ground for future innovations.

A case in point is the new forms of digital "edutainment" (as for example in the serious educational games subsector) and in the consolidation of forms of interactive learning, and co-creation of content (we mentioned earlier the importance of gametizating visitors' experiences for museums and galleries). But in order to make the most of such innovations there is a need to close the gaps in digital connectivity if we want to boost both supply and demand in the cultural and creative sector.

Here there is a role for public sector initiatives to support these processes through the establishment of new platforms for disseminating creative content and improving knowledge about audiences and/or consumers through smart data gathering. But this requires first and foremost an awareness at the highest level of government that access to the internet should be a legal right, not a privilege.

Such a call to action seems more relevant than ever for some countries. In the UK, the *Policy and Evidence Centre*, launched by NESTA (an innovation foundation), published its insights on cultural consumption during the UK's first COVID-19 lockdown from their Consumer Tracking Study – a collaboration with the Intellectual Property Office (IPO) and the research agency AudienceNet. [34] The report draws on data collected over the period from 9 April to 24 May 2020, asking a panel of consumers aged 16+ detailed questions about their online cultural experiences in the preceding week.

In essence, what we learn from the survey is that digital culture mattered to people in lockdown, with the vast majority of the public surveyed – 90 per cent in the case of music – agreeing that culture helped them deal with challenging life circumstances such as those that had arisen with COVID-19. The survey also shows that the pandemic has boosted everyday content creation with roughly one quarter of the people surveyed creating or posting online content each week.

From this survey, however, we also learn that the digital divide that existed before lockdown in the UK has widened further. In fact, within the survey, although the share of the public consuming digital culture (in areas like TV and music streaming) generally increased for all socio-economic groups, it grew more slowly for the working class (i.e. the skilled workers, the semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers) than in the middle class (i.e. those working in higher and intermediate managerial, administrative and professional occupations). The sample already by definition excluded those without access to the internet so this added dimension of digital class division is concerning. We also learn from the survey that those working from home were more likely to consume content than those who had stopped working. Despite having more time in principle, economic factors such as lower income and greater financial uncertainty are likely to have played a role in the results.

By contrast, in countries such as Finland – where connectivity is among the highest in Europe – successive governments have pursued digital policies that brought high-speed fibre optic broadband even to the remotest areas in the country. This guarantees that every person in the country can enjoy minimum broadband speeds so that they can access culture, education and training remotely whenever they choose to do so. The

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[34] https://www.pec.ac.uk/policy-briefings/understanding-how-our-habits-of-cultural-consumption-changed-during-lockdown-newest-survey-data

positive effect such policies are evident in the way Finland has managed to retain its high standards in education and industry. [35]

As discussed earlier, the internet is an essential part of modern society (just as much as water or electricity), but in policy terms the question of equality of access to digital technology is not as yet pursued in the way it should be in the Sustainable Development Goals. Our future depends on our creativity, but our creativity needs inspiration. The future is digital and for that to be a force for good we need the internet as much as our predecessors needed the printing press.

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[35] See for example the recent boom in start-ups https://theculturetrip.com/europe/finland/articles/10-startups-to-watch-from-finland/

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