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CULTURAL HERITAGE LEADING URBAN FUTURES
Actions and Innovations from ROCK PROJECT

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ROCK PROJECT

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PROJECT FULL TITLE
Regeneration and Optimization of Cultural heritage in creative and Knowledge cities

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ROCK

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FUELLING THE FUTURE OF CITIES' INNOVATION

CONCLUSIONS

BIOGHRAPHIES

The ROCK project sees historic city centres as laboratories to demonstrate how Cultural Heritage can be an engine of regeneration, sustainable development and economic growth. ROCK approach foresees the systemic and flexible application of a series of role-model practices in the testing sites of three Replicator cities, to turn historic city centres afflicted by physical decay, social conflicts and poor life quality into Creative and Sustainable Districts.

This book provides an overview of the project, extracting themes, material and final remarks from the Open Knowledge Week "Cultural Heritage Leading Urban Futures", held on 27-30 October 2020. Over the past three years, ten ROCK cities – Athens, Bologna, Cluj-Napoca, Eindhoven, Lisbon, Liverpool, Lyon, Skopje, Turin, and Vilnius – together with service providers and knowledge brokers have tested and advanced numerous soft and hard tools, collaborative approaches aimed at shaping sustainable, heritage-led urban futures. This book shows their shared results, best practices and lessons learnt from interdisciplinary research, innovative action, dissemination of knowledge and creation of new synergies at European level.

ACTING IN THE CITIES

Introduction to Cities from Role-Replicator Exchange to Mutual Learning

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ROCK considers cultural heritage as an engine for sustainable growth in European cities. The approach proposed by the project implies dismantling the specialist idea of cultural heritage understood exclusively in terms of conservation. Cultural heritage - especially in its public and unused or underused spaces - is seen, instead, as an incremental and ever-changing repository of value that can drive both spatial and behavioral change. This change occurs in ROCK through incremental experiments based on a continuous exchange between local practices, administrative action and cognitive reflection, giving shape to a research-action-research methodology.

The research-action-research is neither an inductive empirical model, nor a deductive approach. On the contrary, it is a dynamic way to create new paths of knowledge to rethink the evolution of historical centers and prepare them for future challenges. It starts by analyzing the urban context, assessing constraints (conservation, social, environmental and organizational constraints) and identifying existing good practices which can be transferred and locally adapted. It then implements a pilot intervention, co-designed with the support of local administrations, stakeholders and citizens. Such action is then evaluated in its impacts, starting a new phase of investigation aimed at defining a plan of sustainable management of cultural heritage, based on scientifically validated actions.

Timeline: context setting, understand our cities in more details

As we knew, cities are lively ecosystems and priorities can change quite fast when operating at local level. It was therefore important to understand the strengths, weaknesses, challenges faced, objectives and resources from the 10 cities before starting any of the mentoring activities. The needs assessment survey for Replicator cities and resources assessment survey for Role Model cities was created in this aim: collect needs and strengths, organise matchmaking between ROCK cities and collect local examples of initiatives linked to cultural heritage and urban regeneration to be shared later in the Open Knowledge Portfolio. It gave us a clearer picture of the cultural heritage landscape in the 10 ROCK cities and allowed us to better understand their learning needs and what they wanted to share with the other cities.

The core idea behind mentoring activities was that Replicator cities would benefit from experiences of Role Model cities to adapt successful and validated practices to their local contexts, as well as to formulate adequate responses to problems already faced by other cities.

Eurocities produced guidelines that were intended for cities and partners to have a better idea of things ahead. The guidelines provided advice and support on how to use the methodology of 'mentoring' and 'work shadowing' as two different tools for improving the implementation of Replicator and role-model cities' policies and/or projects.

In ROCK, mentoring is understood as Replicator cities learning from Role Model cities and their local experience (i.e. what worked, what did not work, what could be done differently) for overcoming existing problems, by building an understanding of the issues, situations and challenges and exploring new ideas, options and solutions. Work shadowing on the contrary is a method to learn and exchange professional experience and knowledge about good practice and initiatives in a Role Model city. It involves one or two persons from Replicator cities spending a period of time with experts from a Role Model city working in the same field or on similar projects, observing what they do in their professional role, and how.

Cities were set up, the mentoring process could start.

In November 2017, the first work shadowing visit was organised in **Turin**. For two days, the three ROCK Replicator cities learned how the former factory town, heavily affected by the industrial crisis in the 1980s, reinvented itself as a city of art and culture with heavy investment in culture and knowledge.

The visit also focused on the promotion of new forms of collaboration with residents when it comes to local cultural heritage. Cities learned that the strategic plan of the city of Turin aimed to rethink the identity of the city and managed to create a single vision, mainstreaming cultural heritage in all other development policies of the city. The industrial history of the city has been used as a key asset to develop contemporary artistic projects. Cross-sectorial work is important but its results take time to emerge, so it requires long term commitment. 'Contemporary art torino piemonte' is a good example of actors pulling resources together to become more visible, to raise funding and profile the city as an international hub for contemporary art. Data collection and monitoring on a constant basis are important to systemise and harmonise the system, and collate layers of data to understand the past, present and future of the city.

A few weeks later, delegates of the three Replicator cities met again in **Eindhoven** for the second work shadowing visit of the project. Eindhoven suffered a lot from the bankruptcy of its main employer, the electronics company Philips, which left its hometown in the 2000s. Eindhoven was at the time considered more as an industrial place than a real city, but the city capitalised on its legacy and used it for its renaissance.

Transforming the former Philips factories into a creative and cultural quarter made Eindhoven a major technological and industrial hub. StrijpS is now considered an urban rejuvenation success story, and the Brainport region surrounding Eindhoven one of the most innovative regions worldwide.

The main challenge for Eindhoven at the time was to position itself as a location with potential in the creativity and innovation sectors. To do so, Eindhoven has mastered the living lab approach to innovation, where the facilitation of trial uses real life situations as part of the design process. This approach was for instance used in the regeneration process of the NRE-area, where the former gas-supply factories of Eindhoven were located. The redevelopment of this area was managed in an organic way, with as little legislation as possible, and in strong cooperation with the end-users (i.e. future residents of the area).

Replicator cities Bologna, Lisbon and Skopje got inspired by this method of trial and error: cities are labs, and therefore can apply the same

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principles as in any start-up company when it comes to testing new tools and initiatives.

In the French city of **Lyon**, UNESCO World Heritage since 1998, where Replicator cities met for the third time in December 2017, the historic city centre contributes to the city's demographic vitality, with 12% of the population living and working in the area. This number is even rising, as a fairly young and dynamic population has settled down in the historic centre in the last 20 years. The backside of the coin is that this population has a relatively similar profile and the area is becoming less and less diversified, with gentrification problems adding to the mix.

To study the effects of these tendencies on the inhabitants, Lyon introduced in 2017 the Urban Observatory, as part of its objectives in the framework of ROCK. Citizens living and working in the historic city centre and directly concerned by the issues at stake discuss in focus groups with city leaders and planners to find concrete solutions on how to observe these phenomena and best measure them. This collective creativity allows to preserve the continuous modernisation and dynamism of the city centre, while protecting its historical value.

The Urban Observatory, its process and its method has inspired other ROCK cities: after a visit organised in December 2017 in Lyon, participants from Bologna, Lisbon and Skopje decided to deepen the topic of participatory processes and involvement of citizens in cultural heritage management. In Bologna, the objective was to better detect and understand the signs of transformation occurring in the Zamboni area during the ROCK project and beyond. The Lyon Urban Observatory represented a very interesting model for Lisbon as well, as a way to study the interactions between cultural heritage and the community living in the Marvila district, where Lisbon was developing its Living Lab. The need to involve the local community was fundamental also in Skopje, where the Skopje Urban Living Lab started to take shape as a hub of actions, introducing new models of work and collaboration.

All these examples and lessons from the work shadowing visits were gathered in reports, later shared among the ROCK community and used by cities for inspiration and future actions, especially in the replicator cities where next the mentoring visits started.

For each demonstration area in replicator cities, a local roadmap was drafted by the institutions in charge of the implementation process, together with the stakeholders involved. The roadmap template aimed to help the replicator cities in identifying and highlighting local challenges, vulnerabilities, and physical and social barriers in the demonstration area. This process allowed them to plan, monitor and implement the changes they envisage to achieve the

transformation. The template was later updated when the transformation process became more concrete.

The preparatory visits in Role Model cities ran in parallel to the mentoring and work-shadowing visits, representing an early step of the actual implementation process. Each Role Model city was invited to reflect upon their own specific challenges towards the implementation phase through a standard questionnaire, considering the following aspects: 1) local context specificities; 2) pre-identified initiative to be implemented (if already existent step-by-step plan); 3) implementation location; 4) foreseen objectives; 5) expected results/ impacts, 6) coordinating planning tools, 7) partnership type and the governance schemes (identification of relevant stakeholders); 8) relation with on-going/ past implemented actions, as well as 9) available resources (financial, human resources, time, technological).

According to the baseline contextual information from each city survey, a series of on-site support visits were organised in all Role Models, being aimed at validating the baseline status and conditions for the implementation. Each meeting was organised into separate sessions, tackling operational issues related to the implementation process, followed by site-visit/s, aimed at getting an insight into potential implementation locations.

The first preparatory visit was hosted by the city of **Vilnius** in October 2017. During the preparatory visit, Vilnius has set its implementation objective towards evaluating the social impact of cultural-led projects through emotional mapping and measuring opinions, thought and preferences of citizens, tourists expressed through social media channels. Finally, the generated data should set the basis for an innovative decision-making supporting tool, giving recommendations on effective management of the spaces and cultural events.

The preparatory visit in Eindhoven was organised in October 2017 and it was co-hosted by Eindhoven Municipality and Eindhoven University of Technology (TU/e). Within ROCK framework, the city of Eindhoven proposes to monitor and assess the impact of large-scale cultural and creative events in the Strijp-S area, in order to provide necessary feedback for improving citizens' life conditions and set the background for attractiveness-driven policies. Eindhoven planned the testing of people flow analytics tools ("Trace Annotator" program, based on GPS sensors, provided by TU/e) during three different events: Dutch Design Week, Glow Festival and the King's Day. The key point highlighted by the city of Eindhoven is to analyse the data of sound/ noise pollution, air pollution (collected through existing sensors in Strijp-S and the rest of the city) and people flow during large cultural events and investigating the heatmaps during the events to evaluate the impact of these events on the

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quality of life. The end goal is to offer citizens, users and residents localized information about sound level control, as well as air quality.

The preparatory visit hosted by the city of **Liverpool** in October 2017 brought together different local actors at the city level as potential stakeholders for the ROCK project. Among the most pressing challenges, Liverpool stressed on the high urge for citizens and tourists to perceive and become conscious of the tremendous value of Liverpool's cultural heritage, especially the one related to UNESCO's World Heritage Sites (WHS) status recognition. In the framework of ROCK, Liverpool city planned to address the the connectivity challenge in the WHS and its buffer zone by creating connections with the city centre 3D-model provided by Royal Institute of British Architects as a supporting tool for developing an Augmented Reality (AR) tour to encourage historical and cultural heritage exploration of the World Heritage Site.

The preparatory visit in Turin was organised in November 2017, together with the work-shadowing visit. The discussions related to the preparation of the implementation process brought together representatives from the Municipality of Turin and Urban Center Metropolitano Torino, being centered around planning the implementation of the crowd monitoring instrument (Location-Based Analytics provided by DFRC sensors). In the framework of ROCK, Turin aims at generating data analysis providing real-time insights on activity/ mobility patterns during large-scale cultural events of the city. During the visit, the city already identified some potential areas for the sensors' deployment (i.e. Piazza di Castello, Barriera di Milano neighbourhood, etc), during large-scale events (such as the Weekend of Contemporary Arts, Turin International Book Fair, etc).

The preparatory visit in **Cluj-Napoca** was organised in November 2017, with representatives from Cluj-Napoca Municipality and ARIES Transylvania. The discussion was focused on understanding how the LBA sense (Location based analytics sensors for large crowd monitoring) will interact with the city's large-scale cultural events, such as: Jazz in the Park festival, Untold festival, Transylvania International Film Festival and cultural outdoor events. In the framework of ROCK, Cluj-Napoca aims at deploying the LBA sense for generating data analysis, providing real-time insights on activity/ mobility patterns within the monitored area for a better understanding of the city' transformation during large-scale events. The city has already identified several zones in the historical centre which form a larger area of polarization for tourists and locals alike (Unirii Square - main square for socio-cultural activities and events, Central Park with the Casino building - The Urban Culture Center, Cluj Arena and the Polyvalent Hall). The visit was meant to define the preliminary local context for the first sensors' installation.

The preparatory visit hosted by the city of **Athens** in late-November 2017 has been kick-off with a short presentation from the city side, focused on the Democracy and Consultation processes, in which SynAthina plays a very important role, as being a community platform bridging on trust and citizens engagement for the improvement of the quality of life of in their neighbourhoods. Despite its role as a Model, the city of Athens still faces important challenges in respect to the low promotion and understanding of the city's building identity and its interesting history (referring mostly to the "modern history" dating back from 70-years ago). The key point highlighted as being essential for the city of Athens was the increased visibility and promotion of CH assets, showcasing the two models of Victoria Square project (an area-based solution for social integration with diversified activities) and the Municipal Market of Kypseli (a social project of transformation into a community-based open and free space for everyday cultural/ creative engagement, cultural celebrations and artistic productions).

The last preparatory visit was hosted by the city of **Lyon** in early December 2017, together with the work-shadowing visit. The city of Lyon is perceived as a "playground", where Cultural Heritage (CH) is positioned in the framework of three main directions: scientific approach, social inclusion and political approach. Within the framework of ROCK, Lyon has two main goals: 1) advancing the Heritage Observatory work by upgrading the it with a quantitative approach through focus groups and meetings organized in collaboration with UrbaLyon (Lyon linked third party) and 2) upgrading the Light and lightscape model from 2 perspectives: a) permanent lighting (territorial lighting approach) and light cacophony (mostly related to private lighting).

The ROCK cities task force: furthering the exchanges between cities

Starting from the 7 pre-selected Role Models (Athens, Cluj-Napoca, Eindhoven, Liverpool, Lyon, Turin, and Vilnius) which have succeeded to use cultural heritage as an enabler for local regeneration processes, ROCK tested the replicability of the spatial approach and of successful models addressing the specific needs of historic city centres in three Replicator cities (Bologna, Lisbon and Skopje). Initially designed as a mentoring process from Role Model to Replicator cities, ROCK approach quickly shifted towards a collective-driven exchange methodology based on thematic clustering. Overcoming their initial role as Models, the ten cities closely interacted in a mutually exchange process, aimed at enhancing the potential for developing new local economies, as well as strengthening local governance capacities and efficiency.

In order to go beyond the distinction between Role Models and Replicators and to engage all cities in a mutual process, ROCK adopted two layers in relation to the activities performed by cities: the INTER-ACTION layer (based on exchange and knowledge transfer among the cities) and ACTION layer (oriented towards the design of specific action plans for each city concerning the demonstration and implementation activities resulted from the initial Roadmap and the results of the INTERACTIONs). In this context, the Cluster approach proved to be a suitable solution for addressing common challenges and learning needs; its results being definitory for the temporary transformation and pilot actions experimented through the ACTION layer (the phase of Implementation & Demonstration).

Starting from the cities' learning needs (to solve gap closures, overcoming shortfalls in policy, legal procedures and management structures related to heritage regeneration processes) and resources assessment (internationally recognised case-studies and successful experiences on heritage-led regeneration approaches), the Clusters approach adopts a new transfer and exchange methodology, coordinated by EUROCITIES, URBASOFIA and UNIBO. This newly created framework is based on a clear understanding of the local context of each city (from different critical perspectives such as: politics, governance, traditional culture of planning, etc), fostering the adaptation of successful practices and models in accordance to the specificity of each city's local context.

The Clusters approach sets out a framework for exchange and further collaboration and to continue efforts in heritage-led regeneration processes and scale up these initiatives and implement actions, through five defined Clusters related to Cultural Heritage, as follows:

- ROCK CLUSTER 1. Participatory approach and social inclusion;

- ROCK CLUSTER 2. New governance models for creative, sustainable and circular cities;

- ROCK CLUSTER 3. New technologies and tools for CH access and safety perception;

- ROCK CLUSTER 4. New financing and business models;

- ROCK CLUSTER 5. New approaches to green-oriented city growth.

Finally, the need to connect and overcome a one-way transfer process (Role Models mentoring the Replicators) has proven to be a highly effective methodology for sharing thematic knowledge and successful practices related to cultural heritage-led urban regeneration, adapted to concrete learning needs and common tackled challenges of cities.

Supporting the Role Model Cities in their implementation process meant primarily, setting up a common orientation framework for the process of upgrading ROCK models to the next level, as well as testing ROCK tools and technologies into different cities' contexts. The approach followed two main steps: 1) preparation phase based on mapping the baseline status and conditions for the on-site implementation through a set of questionnaires, preparatory visits, and implementation plans (delivered during the first 18 months) and 2) implementation phase (during the entire project lifetime). Besides the one-to-one assistance for each Role Model City, URBASOFIA has also facilitated the dialogue between technology providers and city representatives, in order to define the most suitable approach for tools deployment.

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Lessons from cities exchanges

As the project advanced, the exchange between Role Model and replicator cities evolved and became less unidirectional. Cities became keener on these exchanges because they realised they always had something to share or something to learn from their peers. Cooperation and contact with other municipalities have been crucial aspects of the ROCK project and have allowed exchanges of experiences between cities on various aspects of the project. These moments of exchanges and encounters made the 10 ROCK cities grow together and not only share but upgrade their model. During the different meetings and visits, cities also showed solidarity, mutual help and support and learned together about best practices but also mistakes to avoid and good tips to remember.

For successful exchanges and transferability of practices to happen between cities, one must be flexible and adapt to local context and local cultures. This is how ROCK cities connected to each other, but not only. They also reached out to other cities in Europe, and the ROCK cities task force made sure that the lessons learnt by the ROCK cities were also useful for the other cities, including the Eurocities membership (which is about 150 cities). The lessons and experiences from the project will be carried on after its end, in other projects or simply by nurturing the network and connections that were created between cities. In the end it is also a lot about personal contacts and relations, and about sharing good moments together. A number of partnerships have been created at local level thanks to the ROCK project, which also created connections with new people and new ways of working.