



## **OpenHeritage: Deliverable 2.2**

# **Observatory Cases Report**

- 1 Cascina Roccafranca, Turin**
- 2 Scugnizzo Liberato, Naples**
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## Executive summary

OpenHeritage relies steadily on cases: practices and challenges on the ground. Therefore, strong connection and exchange with adaptive heritage re-use initiatives, whether run by citizen groups, municipalities or private companies, is a key component of research within OpenHeritage. While Cooperative Heritage Labs are conceived to test ideas and tools in cases in development, Observatory Cases explore existing practices of adaptive heritage re-use through their innovative community involvement methods, resource integration, territorial impact and heritage impact. Observatory Cases provide micro-level analysis in the multi-level analytical framework of OpenHeritage, focusing on a contextualised understanding of how adaptive re-use works in practice, how the specific local circumstances interact with the larger institutional and regulatory framework, and how this influences the outcome of the specific re-use projects.

The **selection of Observatory Cases** has been designed to provide data for policy analysis and input to Cooperative Heritage Labs. The 16 Observatory Cases reflect a variety of regional experiences and geographical situations (urban, peri-urban and rural) across Europe; a diversity of heritage assets involved, including industrial, ecclesiastical, royal, administrative, military, residential and commercial buildings, as well as natural sites; a range of initiative types, from bottom-up, community-based engagements through private undertakings to public projects; with a mix of social, environmental or commercial motivations; and an array of traditional or innovative financing mechanisms, economic models and governance arrangements. Observatory Cases are ongoing, advanced experiments of adaptive re-use of heritage sites. They are predominantly well-established cases, with a few exceptions that are at different levels of development. While the earlier offer crystallised models whose success or failure can be determined, the latter allow the OpenHeritage consortium to capture their evolution through a series of snapshots at different moments of their development.

The **methodology** of developing Observatory Cases aims at creating an in-depth exploration of on-the-ground experiences, relying more on personal visits, encounters and interviews than on academic literature. This approach was to ensure that Observatory Case reports are accessible, easy-to-read texts and describe tangible situations and practices, through which readers can not only have access to state-of-the-art models, mechanisms and tools but also gain an insight into personal motivations, values and commitments of the protagonists of the cases. For models, mechanisms and tools can rarely be successfully implemented without engaged individuals or organisations. Observatory Cases were distributed among 8 partners of OpenHeritage and they received guidelines for producing the case studies. The guidelines included a list of themes to focus on as well as practical recommendations like preparing the interview by sending all questions to interviewees in advance; meeting at least 3-4 protagonists of a case, ideally including initiators, policy makers, external observers; visit different parts of the case study site accompanied by members of the initiative themselves; and complete the interviews with desktop research.

The **main themes of the case studies**, to be explored during the interviews included aspects of telling the story of the initiative (actors, the process, influences, values, identity); an architectural analysis (the typology of the site or buildings, their condition at the beginning of the initiative, the uses envisioned in the transformation and the design principles of adaptive reuse); a geographical analysis (position, social, demographical and economic trends); a regulation and policy analysis (regulations and policies affecting the adaptive reuse, heritage protection, zoning, ownership and procurement issues); a resource analysis (financial and non-monetary resources and business plan); a stakeholder analysis (main actors and governance); an impact analysis (reception of the project, impact on policies, knowledge production, jobs and services); and an analysis of the role of heritage in the adaptive reuse process.

Once the Observatory Case studies were prepared, they went through a **review process**: appointed reviewers gave feedback to the case writers, highlighting missing elements in the study or asking for clarification in some matters related to the key components of the study. The result is a panorama of a diversity of efforts across Europe to reuse heritage spaces for social, cultural, economic or community purposes. Observatory Cases **contribute to other components of OpenHeritage**. They inform scientific research (heritage policy analysis in WP1), model-formation (evaluation of adaptive reuse policies (T2.4 and WP3), tool development (Database development in T2.3 and toolbox development in WP5) and implementation (Cooperative Heritage Labs in WP4) during the project.

The studies show a general pattern of **growing civic involvement** in the reuse of vacant buildings and heritage assets throughout Europe, despite varying institutional and regulatory backgrounds, and highlight the innovation capacity of NGOs and bottom-up initiatives. The cases describe the potential that adaptive reuse can bring to smaller or bigger localities, and especially to underdeveloped areas. Among others, Stará Tržnica in Bratislava or Largo Residências in Lisbon clearly demonstrate that initiatives of adaptive heritage reuse can obtain the power necessary to influence their wider surroundings. Like the Sargfabrik in Vienna, which started as a small co-housing project reusing the remnants of an old coffin factory, and by now has changed not only a neighbourhood but also the way housing is thought and discussed in Vienna. Importantly, increase in territory size – like for the Jewish District in Budapest or the Navy Yard in Amsterdam – does not mean that civic initiatives become insignificant. On the contrary, temporary solutions and ideas pioneered by local groups have contributed also to the transformation of larger areas.

Besides setting the basis for the further development of OpenHeritage, Observatory Cases and their dissemination will also have a **broader impact**. Many of the cases examined have a strong social mission, aiming to help the inclusion and integration of more vulnerable social groups, while keeping their activities financially and economically sustainable and saving a heritage building or site from abandonment. Sharing these stories through various channels of the OpenHeritage partnership will give insights to a wider audience into practices that can steer the adaptive reuse of heritage spaces towards more sustainable and inclusive ways.



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# 1. Cascina Roccafranca (Turin, Italy)



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## Executive summary

[Cascina Roccafranca](#) is a multi-functional community centre located in a former farmstead in Turin's outskirts. After 30 years of vacancy, Cascina Roccafranca was bought by the Municipality of Turin and requalified with the support of the European Union Urban II program. Today, Cascina Roccafranca is a public asset managed through a cooperation between public and civic actors and it provides a wide range of social and cultural activities. Since 2012, Cascina Roccafranca has been part of a network of similar community centres in Turin which was formalized in 2017, and today collaborates with the City Council in the management and the regeneration of urban commons.



**Picture 1. Cascina Roccafranca's building seen from the court. Photo (cc) Eutropian**



# 1 Timeline

1600s – Cascina Roccafranca is built by the Compagnia dell'Immacolata Concezione

1689 – Cascina was sold to Count Lorenzo Ballard

1734 – Cascina Roccafranca becomes an independent feud

1840 – Baronessa Chionio buys the building and enlarges it

1957 – Cascina Roccafranca's agricultural lot is halved

1970s – Cascina Roccafranca stops its agricultural function due to the area's industrialization

1999 – the Municipality launches a social forum (tavoli sociali) to discuss the requalification of the Mirafiori area

2001 – Mirafiori Nord is selected as the area of intervention for the European Union's Urban II program

2002 – the Municipality of Turin buys Cascina Roccafranca with the Urban II funds

2004 – Requalification starts in the Cascina Roccafranca

2006 – Cascina Roccafranca Foundation is established

2007 – Cascina Roccafranca opens

2012 – Coordinamento Case del Quartiere is formed

2014 – The Case del Quartiere network withs the national grant "Che Fare?"

2015 – Manifesto delle Case del Quartiere is published

2016 – Torino City Council approves the Regulation on Urban Commons

2017 February – Network Case del Quartiere is established

# 2 The story of the building complex

Cascina Roccafranca (Roccafranca farmstead) was built in the XVII century to serve as a farmhouse for the religious confraternity, Compagnia dell'Immacolata Concezione. In 1689, the farmhouse was sold to Count Ballard, and it is raised to a feud in 1734. In 1840, its following owner, Baroness Chionio, enlarged the farmhouse and modified its original structure. From 1957, the agricultural land connected to the Cascina Roccafranca was progressively reduced and took over by the Fiat Mirafiori establishment and by a residential development aiming at accommodating workers. In the 1970s, Cascina Roccafranca ultimately lost its function and was dismissed. Over thirty years of vacancy, this building became an urban void, degraded by time, nature and site of small-scale criminal activities, homelessness and marginalisation.

# 3 The area

Cascina Roccafranca is located in Mirafiori Nord, a neighbourhood in the south-western outskirts of Turin, six kilometres from the city centre, covering an area of

over 2,000 km<sup>2</sup>. Its population grew exponentially in the 1950s with the establishment of the Fiat Mirafiori factories. This growth was managed by the construction of a significant amount of public housing in the area. With Fiat's departure and the closure of many of its production facilities, from the 1990s the area experienced economic crisis and growing unemployment. These economic difficulties were accompanied by the ageing of the population and the obsolescence of many commercial and other economic activities.



**Picture 2. Cascina Roccafranca in its surroundings. Photo (cc) Eutroplan**

Today, Mirafiori Nord has about 25,000 inhabitants, 30% of whom are over 65. The area has been struggling with severe social and economic problems: unemployment, crime, poverty, low levels of education and training, decaying buildings and public spaces, as well as environmental damage, high level of air and noise pollution across the area. On the other hand, the area disposes of significant green and open spaces and has a history of strong community involvement and an economy with significant growth potential.

**"The Mirafiori Nord district was suitable for such a project because it is very heterogeneous, it has many problematic areas but it also has some more regular-quiet sides. Moreover, the citizens' participation was central for this project and in fact, in Mirafiori the participation was already strong." Renato Bergamin**





**Picture 3. Cascina Roccafranca in Turin. Image by Jorge Mosquera**

## 4 The initiative

In 2001, Torino was selected for the European Union's URBAN II programme and it received 16 million euros to carry out a project requalifying the Mirafiori Nord area. This intervention took into consideration various type of innovative actions: public space renovation, ecological renewal, an economic intervention for employment and trading raise, and cultural and social action. The adaptation of Cascina Roccafranca into a venue for collective use by citizens use became part of the cultural and social intervention plan of the Urban II project. In 2002, the Municipality of Turin used the funds received from the Urban II project to purchase the Cascina Roccafranca and transform it into a space for public services. Cascina Roccafranca's transformation into a community venue was overseen by a committee formed for this scope.

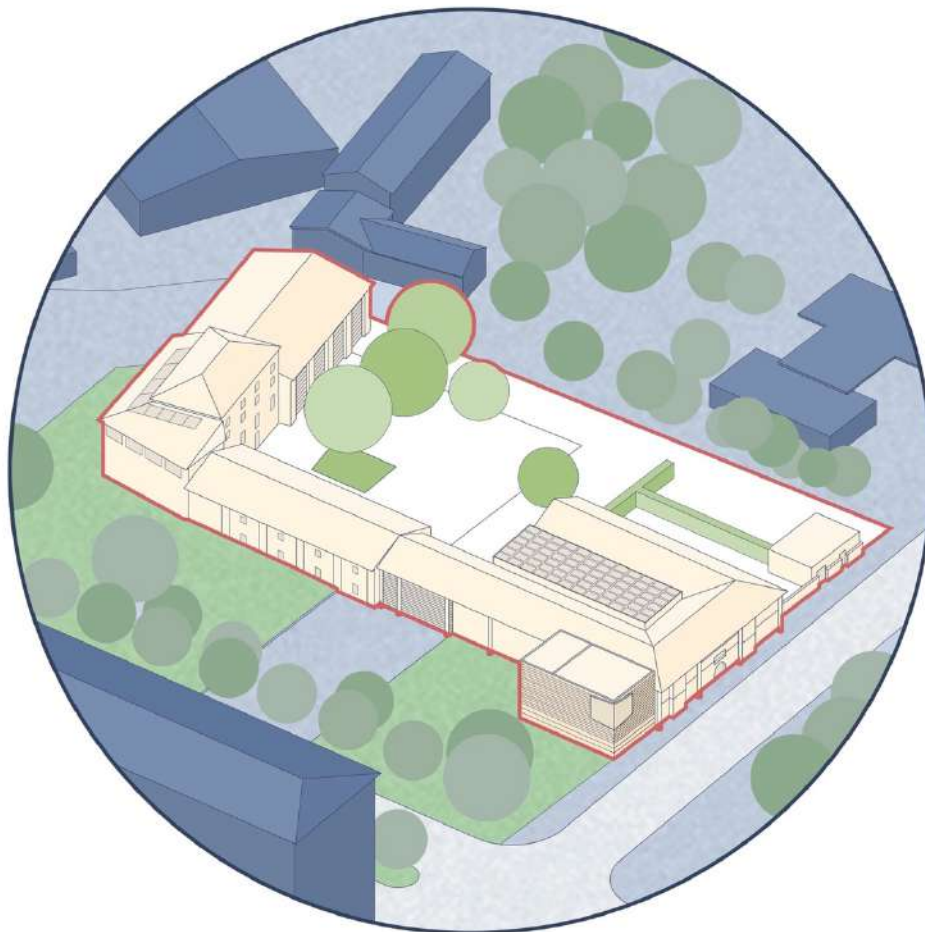
In 2004, requalification works began. During the redevelopment, in 2006, the building's management was assigned to the [Fondazione Cascina Roccafranca](#), a foundation established to represent a group of formal and informal organisations who aimed to requalify the building and to transform it into a multipurpose neighbourhood centre. In 2007, Cascina Roccafranca opened its doors.

## 5 The complex and its reconstruction

**“The first time we entered the site, it was a small forest with trees. People experienced it not just as a degraded building but also as a dangerous place.” Renato Bergamin**

Cascina Roccafranca was originally a farmstead, a typical structure present in the Italian countryside and particularly in the Piedmont region. Constructed in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, it did not have any rare architectural significance, yet with its 2500 square meter buildings and 2000 square meter courtyard, it had a significant place in local history and the community’s memory. Dismissed due to the increasing industrialization of the area, Cascina Roccafranca represents a bridge between agronomic life and cooperative economy.

When it was selected for renovation, the buildings’ infrastructure was in a deteriorated state, covered by vegetation and with structural problems. Already before its renovation, the building was defined as a **site for service provision** so no changes of land use regulations were needed. The building was **not protected heritage** either: it did not have any specific artistic value and there were no restrictions concerning its reuse, so the architectural project was free to change its physical aspects. Nevertheless, while the complex was entirely rebuilt following contemporary safety and environmental norms, its design was also trying to evoke its original historical appearance.



**Picture 4. The Cascina Roccafranca buildings. Image by Jorge Mosquera**



One of the biggest **challenges in the reconstruction process** was to create a space that would adapt to a wide range of activities while presenting a unique style. The main concept of the building is to create a multifunctional and inclusive space that would welcome a wide range of activities and audiences, but which would also have a clear identity and style. Glass and transparent surfaces were used to convey inclusivity and openness, but architectural features important for the identity and the recognizability of the place, such as brick, the door and window fixtures, were maintained.

**“This building is ‘transparent’ to facilitate the idea of sharing and of publicness. In the past there have been similar activities in the district but they were not concentrated in a space but carried out in rented spaces often in former classrooms or basements – never in a beautifully designed space.”**  
**Stefania Ieluzzi**



**Picture 5. Cascina Roccafranca's reception area. Photo (cc) Eutrobian**

Cascina Roccafranca today is divided into five parts that refer to the pre-existing spaces in the ancient Cascina. The **canopy**, originally used as storage, is today's main entrance to Cascina Roccafranca. It features an entrance hall, the reception area, the “Piazza,” a play area and baby parking, and an incubator space. Rooms are situated around the high-ceiling central space, often used for public initiatives. On the upper floor, there is a mezzanine that is connected to all the other floors of the structure. **The stall** is the best-preserved part of the old farmhouse and it

has been restored respecting the original architecture. On the ground floor, it hosts the cafeteria, a space accessible from the entrance hall, directly from the pedestrian entrance on Via Rubino, from the inner courtyard, from the villa and from the barn; on the first floor there are multimedia rooms, artistic workshops and classrooms. The **villa** is the most ancient part of the venue but it was also the most degraded. It was completely rebuilt following its original structure and preserving its architectural style. Today, it hosts the area's Ecomuseum on the ground floor, while the two upper floors are used as administrative offices. The **barn**, on the ground floor, hosts a restaurant and on the upper floor a large room used for meetings, gatherings and parties. The restaurant has preserved the original arches and it has a glazed wall facing the courtyard. The **internal courtyard** is a passage point connecting all parts of the building and it is used in summer for events.



**Picture 6. The internal courtyard of Cascina Roccafranca. Photo (cc) Eutropian**

**"These spaces have a spirit, a vibe, but not an exclusive spirit. In the same room, you can have yoga in the morning, children's activities in the afternoon, in the evening the meeting of another group. Space is shared and it has to be adapted to everybody's needs." Stefania de Masi**

The participatory planning process around the conception of the Cascina Roccafranca fed into the new venue's planning with many ideas. The idea of total accessibility, with no barriers and thresholds of control, like in a public living room,

came from this process; and so did the idea of architectural transparency that allows people to see what is happening inside the building.

**“At the beginning some people were upset, but eventually, everyone appreciated it because it has a fair mix of elements that somehow recall the past but they also suggest modernity. The high-quality refurbishment is as important as is the originality. All these elements give a positive image of the venue itself.” Renato Bergamin**

## 6 Community involvement

The Cascina Roccafranca project was developed following the indications of the community living in the Mirafiori area. At the end of the 1990s, the Municipality of Turin launched a programme to develop a requalification plan of interventions that would improve the environment and its daily use, and which would relaunch the economic activities in the Mirafiori Nord district. Over a year and a half, a group of formal and non-formal organisation composed by social workers, educational and healthcare workers, religious organisations, associations, local committees and schools came together in a social forum (tavoli sociali) and discussed possible innovation in their area. They brought up the need for a meeting space for the community and pointed Cascina Roccafranca as a suitable venue.

**Tavoli Sociali:** In 1997-98, the Turin Municipality began Progetto SpecialePeriferie, a programme to requalify its urban peripheries. The programme created a series of tavoli sociali (social tables), working groups composed by various formal and non-formal organizations present in the area of intervention, for example associations, informal groups, social workers, school teachers; a variety of people working, living and managing activities in the neighbourhood. The tables were coordinated by municipal workers specifically selected for this task. The Tavolo Sociale di Mirafiori Nord was composed of about 60-70 people, representing associations, social workers, health services, children organisations. Discussions with them gave birth to the idea of Cascina Roccafranca as a community venue.

**“Using the few resources they had at the time, they were trying to develop new projects and a new strategy of intervention in low-income neighbourhoods and in the planning of public housing.” Renato Bergamin**

In order to supervise the requalification of Cascina Roccafranca, to manage the project budget and the communication with the European Union, a committee with representatives of the municipality and of the district was formed, to be dissolved with Cascina's opening. The committee envisioned the development as a participatory planning project in close collaboration with the citizenry. The committee engaged with the community on both organised and informal levels. Following the model of the social forum, it invited citizens and associations to brainstorm about the features of the future community venue and launched an ideas incubator project to gather proposal of activities from the community. In time, citizens and organisations attending the committee's public meetings organised themselves into an association called Tavolo della 2 (2's table). This



became a structured assembly of citizens and local organisations with regular meetings and a director.

As discovered in the participatory planning process, the community in Mirafiori Nord needed **a space suitable for an intergenerational encounter**, which would supply to a wide range of necessities and interests, but which would be also fluid enough to accept constant proposals and innovations. Cascina Roccafranca was envisioned as a multi-purpose space for socialization, civic engagement and cultural activities, to promote an ethical lifestyle and to support the dignity and diversity of ethnic, religious, gender or physically challenged minorities.



**Picture 7. The women's library at the Cascina Roccafranca. Photo (cc) Eutropian**

The organisation's goal was to gather in the same space a variety of groups of different age, social background and with various interests. For this reason, the planning committee found it fundamental to be conceived as a place welcoming everyone. To achieve this, initiators visited similar spaces across Italy and Europe, carrying out surveys and opening a discussion with the local community.

**"For us, a challenge was to imagine a space that could be used on the same day by users of different age. Space is shared, and everybody needs to feel home but at the same time it has to be adapted to everybody's needs."**  
**Stefania de Masi**

Over more than 11 years of work, Cascina Roccafranca has adapted to new needs that were not envisioned during the planning phase. For instance, with the economic crisis of 2007, Cascina Roccafranca became a support facility for

residents of the neighbourhood facing unemployment or poverty as well as a centre for integration of the local migrant community.

**“Our first feasibility study from 2002 suggested the need for community wellness services, as it was a period of great economic prosperity. With the 2007 economic crisis, we were asked also to deal also with unemployment and with poverty, needs we didn’t plan for when we opened the Cascina.”**

**Stefania de Masi**

Creating an environment that enables cooperation among various associations remains a key objective of the organisation. The Cascina holds regular meetings with the associations working there or using the spaces of the complex, in order to connect long-established associations with newcomers, enhancing their dialogue and innovation. Together with associations, Cascina Roccafranca relies on the work of volunteers and in-kind service providers. This district-level network is fundamental for the efficient organisation of new projects and their success.

Besides meetings, Cascina Roccafranca also promotes accessibility through its open doors policy. The front desk, situated at the entrance of the complex, next to the cafeteria, serves as an everyday communication and reception platform. It is managed by trained volunteers who welcome visitors, answer questions regarding Cascina and the neighbourhood, listen to visitors’ requests and suggestions. The role of the front desk is to gather all sort of information in regard to people’s demands and needs so that Cascina can reach new audiences and start new projects, strengthening its links with the neighbourhood and mobilising youngsters.

**“It is hard to fight social isolation without available spaces. When you provide opportunities and spaces, people then respond with a proactive attitude. But you need to have some basic conditions. Cascina Roccafranca gives people an opportunity.”** Stefania de Masi

Cascina Roccafranca proposes a model of participatory planning and cooperation between citizens and the local administration. To do so, it experiments with survey tools to gather knowledge from the community and to put it in practice by including the citizens in project development. The work of cultural animators and social animators has been essential in the evolution of Cascina Roccafranca. These social workers have the role of accompanying organisations and private citizens in the realisation of projects, providing support and the necessary tools for independent project management. They help those who propose an idea but do not have organisational experience by discussing their ideas, connecting them with potential partners, and providing a free venue and helping them in all the planning stages, sometimes for months.

**“My job requires the ability to listen and to embrace people’s projects. As a social worker, you have to take a step back and support the participation of citizens. This is why our community is truly active because we help ideas become projects accompanying them until their realisation. We give the tools to make it happen but also learn new skills from the people we meet.”**  
**Stefania de Masi**



## 7 Activities

In its event venues, Cascina Roccafranca hosts **hundreds of activities a year**, targeting a variety of groups and interests. About 90% of the activities are directly organized by associations and independent groups who use the venue. Cascina Roccafranca's social workers are also involved in planning events and meetings but much of their work is dedicated to supporting groups in organising activities, especially when it regards younger or more disadvantaged groups without experience. The programming follows closely the needs of the community and therefore, many events and activities are proposed by the users of Cascina Roccafranca.

**"We imagine this place, and this project, as a container with spaces to fill. As operators, we monitor if activities correspond to the framework that we defined, the strategic goals we decided upon, the working conditions. But we expect the groups and associations to fill this space with activities."**  
**Renato Bergamin**



**Picture 8. Theatre rehearsal at the Cascina Roccafranca. Photo (cc) Eutropian**

Cascina Roccafranca accommodates about 195 **cultural programs** a year. These activities include music, theatre, conferences, book readings and roundtables with authors of books, language courses, cabaret, dance, even dance in a wheelchair for disabled people. The summer program is usually different from the winter's

schedule as it features more outdoor evening festivals and a summer camp for children on holidays, with a total of 40 programs.

Besides its own events, Cascina hosts about 127 **wellness programs and courses proposed by external organisations** per year. These are weekly activities organized for a period of 4 months or a year. Some of them are free of charge for the participants and the organizers do not pay rent to Cascina either, while in others the participants pay a small annual fee to the instructor but in this case, the instructor also pays a small fee – 8 euros per hour – for the space.

The complex hosts 7 **regular educational activities** per year: an after-school run by volunteers to help students improve on their week school subjects and it targets elementary school students, middle school students, and until the first or max second year of high school; summer activities for groups of 0-6 years old children and for groups of 6-13 years old with games, workshops, and excursions; support activities for children with physical or mental challenges.

Cascina Roccafranca works regularly in collaboration with two cooperatives promoting the **integration of people with mental disabilities**: [Mente Locale](#) (Local Mind) uses creative methods to address depression and eating disorders; [Alzheimer Café](#) proposes meetings for people suffering from this disease and for their families as well as organizes informative meetings with educators and specialized doctors and physiologists.

**“We don't have particular limitations in terms of themes but we are open to what people are interested, if they are willing to invest in it. As social operator, we help them by providing spaces, tools, and by connecting them with other groups or other organizations.” Stefania Ieluzzi**

Cascina Roccafranca hosts 355 **private parties** yearly. The Foundation has two rooms which can be used on Saturday evening, Sunday afternoon and Friday evening giving space to an average of 4 parties every weekend. Other festivities are organised by the restaurant cooperative. Lastly, a cooperative managing the baby parking and the toy library sublets its rooms for children birthday parties as well.



Picture 9. Event at Cascina Roccafranca. Photo © Cascina Roccafranca

## 8 The policy environment

Mirafiori Nord and Cascina Roccafranca have been at the centre of a series of urban policies and funding programmes that enabled the Turin Municipality to design and implement a long-term regeneration strategy. In the late 1990s, in the midst of growing discussion about the problems of urban peripheries across Italy, but in lack of any national policy addressing the issue, the Turin Municipality launched the **Progetto Speciale Periferie** (PSP – Special Periphery Project).

**Progetto Speciale Periferie:** Launched in 1997 by the Turin Municipality, PSP aimed to help the municipal administration to develop skills and capacities necessary to work with larger urban regeneration programmes. PSP focussed on Turin's crisis areas in the peripheries, according to an incremental logic that facilitated local development and the active participation of local citizens. Another characteristic of the programme that it linked the territorial logic of the "neighbourhood" with a wider urban strategy of rethinking the city according to a polycentric model and building new centralities and identities at the peripheries.



Enabled by the capacities developed in PSP, the Turin Municipality could successfully mobilise resources from other funding sources as well. Since the early 2000s, the Turin Municipality's careful use of URBAN II (2000-2006) and Urban Innovative Actions (2017-2020) resources allowed the city to articulate a coherent vision for the territory.

**URBAN II**, the second round of the European Union's URBAN Community Initiative supported 70 deprived urban areas across the EU in the period 2000-2006. Discontinued in the following EU funding period, the URBAN programme, financed by the European Regional Development Fund, aimed at the "economic and social regeneration of cities and neighbourhoods in crisis in order to promote sustainable development" (European Commission). The programme provides funding for the renovation of buildings and public spaces, local employment, education and training for disadvantaged groups, environmentally friendly public transport development, more efficient energy management systems and the use of renewable energy.

The URBAN II programme's 10.7 million euros funding included 6.2 million euros for infrastructure and urban rehabilitation, 2.5 million euros for training and economic development, 1.4 million euros for social development and integration, and 0.6 million euros for technical assistance. The intervention in Mirafiori included some infrastructure development (the requalification of some squares and the introduction of door-to-door recycling collection), economic development and training, as well as cultural and social activities. Renato Bergamin, the founder of Cascina Roccafranca was responsible for some of these cultural and social activities, and one of the actions funded by URBAN II was dedicated to the adaptive reuse of the Cascina Roccafranca and its transformation into a community venue. The URBAN II programme's design included incentives to build local partnerships with community groups. Complying with this requirement, the Turin Municipality could rely on the Tavoli Sociali, the already existing participation mechanism in Mirafiori Nord, and refocus it towards a common specific goal, brainstorming on the possibilities of a new community venue. This phase of participatory planning lasted about 2/3 years, and eventually resulted in a concept for the Cascina Roccafranca.

**"Sometimes we underestimate this stage of engagement with regular citizens because we always take for granted that no good ideas would come up from it. But actually, in this case, there were few ideas that helped us. Paradoxically, some people suggested a sort of shopping centre which seems absurd, but it was actually useful: we understood that we needed an attractive force similar to the one of the shopping centre. Our decision to create a space for all citizens, from the younger to the older, and to have a wide branch of offers – some very simple for leisure and others more cultural – are the results of this idea."** Renato Bergamin

Besides the participatory planning process, the last one and half years before the inauguration were spent to test some activities and launch the incubatore di idee (ideas incubator), inviting citizens to suggest ideas for activities to take place in the Cascina.

## 8.1 Case del Quartiere

As a result of the Progetto Speciale Periferie, participatory planning processes were undertaken in several neighbourhoods of Turin. These processes had a variety of results but in all of them there was an ambition to create a concrete outcome like a space that could collect initiatives, and give a structure and continuity to participation. The spaces created through these processes, although they had different trajectories, had many similarities as well. At some point, these spaces began to connect to each other and began to identify themselves as Case del Quartiere (Neighbourhood Houses). More developed than other Houses, the Cascina Roccafranca was defined as a model for the Case del Quartiere.

**“We realized that different single programs of urban regeneration in different neighbourhoods with different stories, different characteristics, different financial tools, different operational tools shared the same goal of creating a space for informal socialization and service provision.” Giovanni Ferrero**

**Case del Quartiere:** In Turin there are 8 Case del Quartiere (Neighbourhood Houses). These are community spaces that offer citizens opportunities to meet through cultural events, social encounters and self-produced workshops. They are managed by a team that collects proposals from external organisations (associations, third sector organizations, social enterprises, committees, groups, individual citizens) to develop a rich program of activities using the spaces of the Houses. The Neighbourhood Houses work in collaboration the city council and they also collect proposals from citizens within the Co-City program.

In 2012, after the Turin Municipality and the [Compagnia di San Paolo](#), the city's most powerful bank foundation, began to recognise the importance of the Case del Quartiere, and encouraged them to build a network. From May 2012, the 8 Neighbourhood Houses in Turin established an informal coordination platform that favour the organization of common projects. Its first milestone was winning the national grant [Che Fare?](#) (What shall we do?) in 2014 which provided the economic resources for regular meetings. Following the publication of a [manifesto](#) in 2015, the Coordination of the Neighbourhood Houses was eventually transformed in 2017 into a formal [Rete delle Case del Quartiere](#) (Network of Neighbourhood Houses), in the form of an [Associazione di Promozione Sociale](#) (an Association for Social Promotion).

**“One of this association's goal is to make the Case del Quartiere model a political choice that influences city policies. We have already started a dialogue with the administration so that we can make this become a Turin policy.” Renato Bergamin**

The Network's goal is to support the work of the Case del Quartiere by gathering information, managing internal communication and to discover and suggest potential areas of intervention. The Rete delle Case del Quartiere has monthly executive meetings with one representative from each 8 houses and it has two annual assemblies: in Spring to monitor the activities of the Houses and to

evaluate their resource-efficiency, and in Autumn to dig deeper in the themes on which the Houses work. The Network has two offices managed by two part-time employees: an office for internal coordination and a communications office.

**“The network enables discussions for coordination, at a practical level, and for the management, at a political level. This gives awareness not just about what we do but also about the consequences our projects have.”**

**Marialessandra Sabarino**



**Picture 10. The Neighbourhood Houses. Image © Rete delle Case del Quartiere**

## 8.2 Regulation of the Urban Commons and Co-City

The Case del Quartiere model, based on an experimental cooperation between the Turin Municipality and local civic actors, has opened a new way for public-civic cooperation. The network has informed the local discussion about the commons, and its experience contributed to the design of Turin’s version of the [Regulation of the Urban Commons](#), approved in January 2016. The regulation establishes new forms of cooperation between citizens and the local authority for the care, the shared management and the regeneration of urban commons.

**The Regulation of the Commons:** Urban commons present the opportunity for citizens to gain power in the management of urban resources and reframe city life based on the use value of public and community assets, rather than their exchange value. In the last decade, municipalities across Italy have been starting to develop regulations that allow the co-management of common goods at a local level, recognizing the active role of citizens in using, administering, maintaining and organising public spaces, buildings or natural areas. Different versions of Urban Commons Regulations have been approved in hundreds of Italian cities.

The Regulation of Urban Commons in Turin provides tools for a formal collaboration between citizens and administration in running community venues. Specifically, by signing the Pact of Collaboration (the main instrument introduced by the Commons Regulation), the Municipality and active citizens (such as informal groups, associations, NGOs or individuals) agree to share responsibility in managing and intervening in various urban spaces. Enabled by the Regulation, the Municipality gathers proposals submitted by citizens and opens public consultations to identify urban common assets to include in pacts of collaboration.

Urban commons are at the centre of the [Co-City](#) project, developed by the Turin Municipality with support of the European Union's [Urban Innovative Actions](#) programme. Co-City aims at bringing the Regulation of the Urban Commons to a higher level, reducing urban poverty with the help of new social enterprises organised around commons-based welfare services and activities. Co-City also envisioned to establish a new Casa del Quartiere, recognising the model as a uniquely efficient means for citizen involvement and neighbourhood work.

The Case del Quartiere are spread across Turin and they rely on district-level networks that makes them an important partner for the Municipality to develop locally rooted projects. The governance of the Case del Quartiere is similar to the collaboration pacts proposed by the Commons Regulation. They also share the goals of creating spaces for the co-production of welfare services and developing tools to address urban decay and the fragility of peripheral areas, by inviting citizens and neighbourhood communities to participate at the decision-making.

The Rete delle Case del Quartiere is a key partner of Co-City, mobilising its experience in generating public-civic cooperation in social inclusion and poverty mitigation as well as in reusing abandoned buildings for socio-cultural initiatives. Having the most important financial capacity among the 8 Houses, Cascina Roccafranca became the representative of the Network for Co-City and it provides the rest of the network with legal infrastructure to manage financial and administration.

**"One of the goals of Co-City is to find solutions to the growing urban complexity. This area- and people-based approach on a local scale can strengthen support networks, opportunities of empowerment, but it doesn't affect the structural elements that produce the social and economic crisis in the city. Most of the social frailty are structural such as unemployment on which projects as ours cannot have a broad impact."** Giovanni Ferrero

## 9 Governance

The buildings of Cascina Roccafranca are owned by the Turin Municipality. The Municipality assigned the venue to the Cascina Roccafranca Foundation that manages it jointly with the municipality and district representatives. As a public asset, Cascina Roccafranca's use is limited to social and cultural purposes, preventing commercial activities.

Cascina Roccafranca is managed by the **Fondazione atipica in partecipazione Cascina Roccafranca** (Cascina Roccafranca atypical participated foundation), legally established in 2006. This foundation works with a model between public and private law: in some aspects it depends on public procedures and for others it



works as a private organisation. As a legal entity, Cascina Roccafranca has to respect public procedures when it comes to subcontracting, purchasing goods or services and has to follow the regulations on corruption prevention and privacy. At the same time, it is a flexible entity and it can hire external contractors and freelancers if it needs specific expertise. Cascina Roccafranca's status as a public-private foundation is an experiment, an attempt of close collaboration with the Turin Municipality and after more than ten years, it is generally conceived as a virtuous collaboration.

**"This form of governance created a positive form of co-responsibility between public and private actors: the administration gave up some of its powers, and on the other hand, the private associations' mindset shifted from an idea of claiming something from the administration to a perspective in which they co-manage it." Renato Bergamin**

The foundation's **governance structure** consists of a Board of Directors with 5 members: 3 of which are nominated by the Municipality (the Councillor for integration policies, the President of the District and one member appointed by the District) and 2 members appointed by the College of Participants (made by 45 associations and groups that operate in the Cascina). The College of Participants meets every six months and nominates its representatives who attend the Board of Directors. This latter meets once a month and it decides on some activities and dilemmas the foundation is facing.

**"What happens here is not actually decided by the Board of Directors. The Board mentors, monitors and verifies because all the activities performed here are the result of the suggestions and the ideas coming from associations or groups." Renato Bergamin**

## 10 Economic model

The foundation is autonomous in its financial management and it has its own financial report, besides its institutional report towards the Municipality. It differs from classical foundations as it relies on more than material assets (funds, buildings, etc.), proposing, instead, a joint management by the public administration and various informal groups. The foundation works with over 80 associations and informal groups, as well as 20 individuals who promote activities in the venue. They all contribute to the foundation with their intangible heritage as associations, groups and private citizens but not economically. In particular, they invest their competences and knowledge, as well as their ideas and time to the Cascina's operations.

The Turin Municipality, as the owner of Cascina, is the founding member of Fondazione Cascina Roccafranca. The municipality has contributed to the foundation's work in a variety of ways: it provided a physical asset, giving the building in use, free of charge, to the foundation; and it covers a part of the costs of its services. Some of the Cascina's employees are on the municipality's payroll, the municipality gave a part of the venue's original furniture and covers most of the maintenance work costs. It also manages some of the office's utilities where Cascina's employees work, while other utilities are paid by the entities using the rooms (the cafeteria, and the restaurant).

Besides the 7 employees that are directly paid by the municipality, Cascina Roccafranca's yearly **expenses** amount to around 200-250,000 euros. The biggest part of this expense is constituted by the wages of the foundation's 7 own employees, adding up to around 95,000 euros. Around 20,000 euros are paid out in taxes and other charges. The cost of complying with safety regulations as well as organising services and events amounts to around 76,000 euros.

Cascina Roccafranca's yearly revenues amount to about 250,000 euros. The foundation format simplifies Cascina's management and it enables it to **generate revenues through its spaces and activities**. Selected a through a public call, the cooperative managing the café and the restaurant pay a fixed rent of about 58,000 euros a year. Another revenue stream, about 60,000 euros a year, comes from the use of other spaces by social or private entities. Some of them long-term activities are courses; for example, the English course is open to people who pay about 130 euros a year and the association providing the course pays a low hourly rent to the foundation. Cascina also rents space for private events such as graduations or birthday parties: in 2018, Cascina Roccafranca hosted about 355 private parties, with an average of 4 parties every weekend. Private support through self-financing events and fundraising activities like the occasional campaign 1000 amici per la Cascina Roccafranca (1000 friends for Cascina Roccafranca) brings in about 30,000 euros. Sponsors who pay for specific activities contribute with around 6,000 euros and other grants cover another 10-15,000 euros. The Cascina's biggest sponsor, Compagnia di San Paolo contributes with around 80,000 euros yearly.

**"We aim at reaching maximum self-sustainability. When we started in 2007 we could only cover 33% of our costs on our own, now we cover 66%. Besides our income from commercial activities and space rental, we do fundraising with public and private foundations and develop economic partnerships with the private sector on joint projects." Stefania de Masi**

Cascina Roccafranca's economy goes beyond the foundation's own revenues and expenses. According to data from 2017, Cascina Roccafranca's partners (mostly users of its spaces) have generated about 770,000 euros worth of economic value.

## 11 Impact

Cascina Roccafranca's impact is realised at a variety of levels. At the level of the neighbourhood, the foundation invests a significant amount of energy to better **understand its reception and impact on the territory**. Cascina Roccafranca periodically surveys the community's reception of the organisations, and it regularly invites members and participants to public assemblies to evaluate ongoing projects and to discuss possible improvements. For example, the project La Cascina si ripensa (The Cascina rethinks itself) called Cascina's members to evaluate its work over the year. As part of the Rete delle Case del Quartiere, Cascina Roccafranca regularly evaluates its social impact collecting data of people entering the premises, activities, events, the state of its partner associations, its economic revenue.

According to data collected 2017, Cascina works with 178 partners, including associations, informal groups, social enterprises, committees and individual

citizens. In a year, Cascina accommodated 766 activities, of which 195 cultural events, 127 well-being activities and courses, 351 private festivities. Only 10% of activities are directly managed by the Cascina, the other 90% of events are organised by partners. In terms of the hours spent in Cascina, 85% of the time is used by regular, stable partners. 50% of the activities are for free, 34% have fees that cover the event's costs, 13% of events with subsidised fees and 3% with individualised prices. In 2017, 480 volunteers contributed with over 15000 hours of work, as an equivalent of 11 full-time employees.

On the user side, Cascina Roccafranca registered over 160,000 single entries in 2017, with 4000 people inscribed for courses and other activities. Most of the Cascina's public comes from Mirafiori Nord (53%), with another 22% from the district Circoscrizione 2, 19% from Turin and 6% from outside. The largest user group is between 26-64 years (44%), with 26% over 65, 25% under 14 and only 5% between 15-25.

By conducting its programme and hosting a variety of activities, Cascina **creates a variety of jobs**. The Foundation itself employs 7 administrative staff paid by the municipality and 7 staff paid by the foundation. According to data from 2017, all the organisations on the site together employed around 141 people, with hours equivalent of 38 full-time employees.

**A social cooperative-run restaurant:** The restaurant and the cafeteria inside Cascina Roccafranca are run by Cooperative Raggio, a B-type social cooperative that hires staff with physical and/or psychological disabilities. The cooperative was selected through a call for tenders, Cascina Roccafranca provided the space and the equipment, the restaurant only needs to pay rent. Cooperative Raggio employs 9 full-time partners, and 12-20 part-time employees. In 2018, 16 of these employees belonged to weaker social categories, their employment is subsidised.

Some of the activities in Cascina Roccafranca are provided by social cooperatives, selected through inclusive procurement that aims at creating significant social impact through the choice of partners or service providers. Cooperativa Raggio, the cooperative managing the restaurant and the cafeteria gives work to 25 people among partners and part-time employees.

The Cascina also helps the creation of new social enterprises. The [Cooperativa Educazione Progetto](#), a cooperative running children's activities, received 50,000 funding to start up their business, before becoming autonomous. The baby parking service requires a fee, this gives the cooperative revenue, while the municipality pays for the playground, so none of their activities rely on the Cascina's financial support. The cooperative now employs 7 part-time staff.

**„We invested in the first effort, the cooperative that manages these baby areas does the rest. They are doing an excellent job and believe in our mission, they are active participants in the discussion on our centre. We don't have a typical customer/contractor relationship as we choose a collaborative approach and we think it's the only way to make things work.” Stefania de Masi**

The Cascina is also a carrier of local **memory and heritage**. It hosts the Centro Interpretazione e Documentazione Storica (Local History Interpretation and Documentation Centre) of the Circoscrizione 2, the district surrounding Cascina Roccafranca. This centre is conceived as an Ecomuseum, that is, a place where local historical memories are archived and made accessible to citizens.

**An Ecomuseum** is a structure to enable local communities to take care of their territories. Ecomuseums function as collections of local knowledge and memory as well as an effort to valorise local environmental, historical and artistic heritage. Museums on a 1:1 scale without walls, Ecomuseums usually cover entire areas and promote opportunities to learn about an area's history and get involved in its present. In Italy, from the early 2000s, a variety of laws support the creation of "diffused" museums, Piemonte being the first region to adapt such law.

At the level of the city, the organisation had a strong **impact on public policies**, inspiring the creation of other Neighbourhood Houses and serving a model for the Rete delle Case del Quartiere. Its success served as a proof that new forms of the public-civic co-management of spaces are possible in Turin and beyond. Cascina Roccafranca's model also informed the city's Regulation of Urban Commons and the organisation's support was fundamental for the city to obtain EU funding for urban regeneration projects.

**"Although the Commons Regulation didn't exist at the time, many of its concepts were already experimented in Cascina Roccafranca in its form of public-civic cooperation. Its model of long-term participation, not limited to decision-making related to the realisation of a project inspired a new way of structuring urban environments and the relations among people in the long term." Giovanni Ferrero**

## 12 Interviewees

Renato Bergamin, director of the Cascina Roccafranca Foundation

Stefania de Masi, project manager at Cascina Roccafranca

Giovanni Ferrero, project manager of Co-City

Stefania Ialuzzi, project manager at Cascina Roccafranca

Marialessandra Sabarino, president of the Rete delle Case del Quartiere

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## **2. The Scugnizzo Liberato (Naples, Italy)**

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# 1 Introduction

The Scugnizzo Liberato is one of the bottom-up experiments formally recognized by the Municipality of Naples as part of their broader strategy of heritage development. The focus of this strategy is to give value to common goods and reinterpret the traditional legal institute of the “civic use” (*uso civico*). It is located in the seventeenth-century complex of San Francesco delle Cappuccinelle in the heart of the historic city centre of Naples. The Scugnizzo Liberato experiment started on September 29<sup>th</sup> 2015 when it was squatted by the Scacco Matto organization. Recognized as a common good of the city, it is currently considered to be a place of congregation and socializing as well as an experiment of urban regeneration.

# 2 Timeline

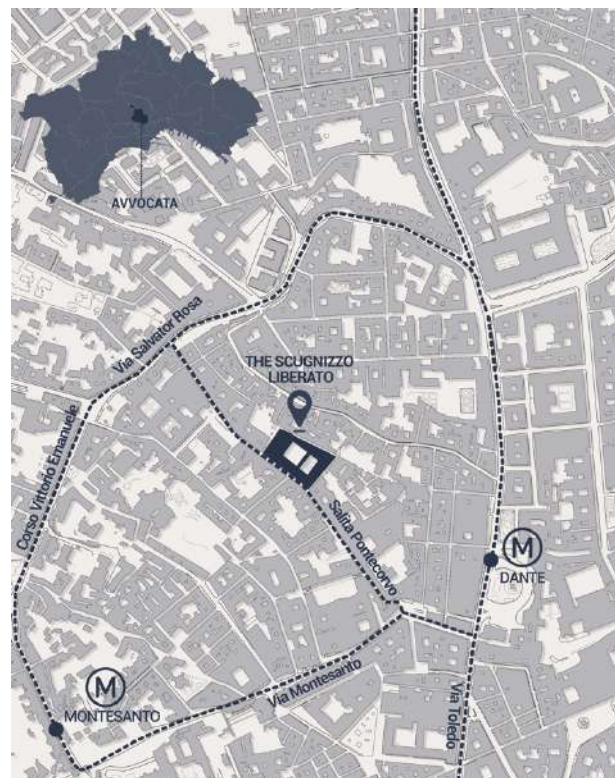
- 1585 – Foundation of the Cappuccinelle
- 1613 – Extension of the former structure
- 1616 (or 1621) - The convent becomes a cloistered convent
- 1746 – 1748 - Addition of new functions, of a building and two belvederes
- 1756 – 1767 - Partial renovation of the complex
- 1809 – The monastery is converted into the Filangieri Institute (*Istituto Filangieri*)
- 1925 – 1930 – Filangieri Institute named Juvenile observation institute
- 1945 –1980 – Filangieri Institute named Rehabilitation Institute
- 1980 – The building was abandoned after the Irpinia earthquake
- 1980 – 1985 – Eduardo De Filippo financed a renovation of the complex
- 1999 – The Filangieri Institute becomes a diurnal multifunctional centre
- 2000 – University of Naples Parthenope was purchased of the Cappuccinelle complex for academic purposes
- 2005 – 2009 - The Cappuccinelle complex was declared an Italian cultural asset
- 2014 – The ownership of the Cappuccinelle property was passed to the Municipality Council
- 2015 – The complex was occupied by the Scacco Matto organization and launched as Scugnizzo Liberato
- 2016 – Inclusion of the Scugnizzo Liberato among the urban commons of the municipality
- 2019 –Through the Institutional Development Agreement – Naples City Centre (Contratto istituzionale di Sviluppo – Centro storico di Napoli) was assigned a capital of 7.500.000 euros to restore the Cappuccinelle

### 3 The history of the building

In 1585, the San Francesco delle Cappuccinelle convent was founded by Duchess Eleonora Scarpato, widow of the notary and Duke Luca Giglio. She financed the construction of a small church and a shelter for young women in her house, with the aim of thanking Assisi Saint to whom she believes healed her. The Cappuccinelle shelter and convent became so frequently used that, in 1613, it was necessary to enlarge the space due to the growing number of inhabitants. For this reason, the Giglio-Scarpato's property extended to the nearby De Mari building. In the first decades of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the monastery was transformed into a cloistered convent<sup>1</sup>. New properties were acquired up until 1712, when the complex was reshaped into baroque forms by the architect Giovan Battista Nuclerio, who carried out the renovation of the church. The same architect constructed the dome and the bell tower, which have been both demolished for safety reasons post-World War II. Between 1746 and 1748 a new workshop, a furnace, a cellar, a cistern, a refectory with kitchen and a mill with a new barn were built. In the same period, an infirmary was added in a new area of the monastery as well as two belvederes, one covered and the other uncovered. The latter is still clearly visible from the street as a result of aerial arches that were designed between the 1600s and 1700s by the architect Cosimo Fanzago<sup>2</sup>.



**Picture 1. Location of Scugnizzo Liberato  
(Google Earth)**



**Picture 2. Location map**

<sup>1</sup> Contrasting bibliographic sources indicate a period between 1616 and 1621.

<sup>2</sup> Other interventions between 1756 and 1760 are to be attributed to the work of architect Niccolò Tagliacozzi Canale who carried out some transformations in stucco and marble, for example of the church façade and of the front door.

The 1775 G. Carafa Duce di Noja's topographic map shows the definitive design of the block, which has remained unchanged to this day<sup>3</sup>.

The first significant renovation to the building was made in 1809 which was ordered by Gioacchino Murat during the French control of the South of Italy<sup>4</sup>. In the same year, it was decided to suppress the monastery and to convert it into a juvenile detention centre, named Filangieri Institute after Gaetano Filangieri, a famous Neapolitan jurist. Although the institute changed its name several times<sup>5</sup>, it continued to be a juvenile detention centre into the following century. As a consequence of a destructive earthquake happened in Naples in 1980<sup>6</sup>, the building was severely damaged and thus abandoned. Hence, the complex underwent several changes, including the construction of the apartments for the director and his officers, who will play a big part in the internal construction of the building. In order to achieve the abovementioned conversion of the building, it was crucial – and to some extent still is – to support and commitment of Eduardo De Filippo<sup>7</sup>. In 1985, after becoming a senator of the Italian Republic, he financed the construction of a theatre within the Filangieri Institute; the purpose was to transform a place of detention into a social and cultural space. "Eduardo's dream", as it is still remembered<sup>8</sup>, embraced an overall rethinking of the former prison and it gave an essential push towards the development of the building. His objective was to give a different purpose to the complex by transforming it into a recovery centre based on craft labs, rehabilitation and educational activities. However, the project failed and remained incomplete. In 2006, the so-called "Eduardo regional law"<sup>9</sup> "Interventions in support of improving youths living condition in Campania", was no longer financed. Nevertheless, in 1999, a further restoration project – promoted by De Filippo – was concluded and the building was transformed into a Day-time Multifunctional Centre (*Centro polifunzionale diurno*).

*"I spent about one year in the Filangieri Institute. I am still very grateful to Eduardo De Filippo who supported the renovation of the theatre. Thanks to him, we had the possibility to leave our cells, and experience different activities. Before that, we were locked in our cells 24/7. Just getting out of there was so important for us."* Vincenzo Vidone

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<sup>3</sup> It is also showed in the map of Naples Schiavoni - Giambarba (1872 - 1880) and then in the cadastral map of the Municipality of Naples (1896-1897).

<sup>4</sup> He was the King of the Napoleonic Regno di Napoli.

<sup>5</sup> During the fascist dictatorship (1925 – 1930) it was called Juvenile observation institute (*Istituto di osservazione minorile*) while between WWII post-war and the late Seventies (1945-1980), it was called Rehabilitation Institute (*Istituto di rieducazione*). Although the specific name underwent some changes, when it was a juvenile detention centre it was almost always called the Filangieri Institute.

<sup>6</sup> The Irpinia earthquake involved the whole region of central Campania and Basilicata on November 23<sup>rd</sup> 1980.

<sup>7</sup> Eduardo De Filippo was a Neapolitan theatrical author, actor and director, among the most eminent figures of the Italian theatre of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>8</sup> This is often recall during interviews with Scugnizzo Liberato activists.

<sup>9</sup> Regional Law no. 41 of 1987.





**Picture 3. A view from the rooftop nowadays (the areal arches)**

In 2000, the Filangieri Institute was purchased<sup>10</sup> by the University of Naples Parthenope in order to use the complex for academic purposes (Scala, 2018). However, after six years, only the consolidation of the areal arches of the uncovered belvedere was carried out whereas the structure itself went through 15 years of abandonment.

Meanwhile, the complex – such as many other Neapolitan cultural assets (Montanari, 2013) – was robbed of its more precious materials (e.g. gold and church decorations, metal cell bars, etc.), and it was then informally occupied by local citizens. Moreover, a part of the complex was also used as a branch of the local high school over a time period. In 2014, the Municipality acquired the property on the base of a valorization agreement as regulated by the “Cultural Federal Agreement” (Federalismo Culturale, art. 5 (5) of dlgs.85/2010)<sup>11</sup>.

Finally, in 2015, the Scacco Matto<sup>12</sup> organization re-opened the structure with a different name: Scugnizzo Liberato. Few months later, the Municipality of Naples recognised the Scugnizzo Liberato as “an emerging common” (bene comune

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<sup>10</sup> In these years, contrasting bibliographic sources about the property.

<sup>11</sup> It establishes the procedure to transfer cultural heritage assets, from the Italian national management to local administrations which present enhancement programs which need to be approved by the Ministry of Cultural activities and heritage and tourism (MiBACT).

<sup>12</sup> Scacco Matto is a group of local university student activists formed in 2015. Scacco Matto literally means “checkmate”.



*emergente*) through the Municipal Council Resolution no. 446 of 2016. Since then, it has been part of a network of disused public assets, known as Common goods of Naples Municipality (*Beni comuni della città di Napoli*).

## 4 The initiative

*"The Scugnizzo Liberato shows that despite there being many abandoned spaces in Naples they are still able to add to the vitality of the city. A sort of pride is hidden behind the people who are engaged in the transforming this ancient place into a collective one. It is a way to take back what was, and has always been, ours. Scugnizzi<sup>13</sup> are those rebels who aim to free Naples from everything that is choking its potential. Scugnizzi do not need prisons but alternatives to become new partisans of the community's needs and wishes."* Cristiano Ferraro

On September 29<sup>th</sup> 2015, a symbolic date for the city of Naples<sup>14</sup>, the activists of the Scacco Matto group, with the support of local citizens, re-opened the former convent launching the Scugnizzo Liberato. The initial phase of the new life of the building was characterized by initiatives which reclaimed the value of this asset. Showing – along with other urban commons of the city – to what extent social and political activists' actions assume a proactive role in the heritage regeneration processes (Gargiuolo and Cirulli, 2017). The main purpose of the occupation is **"to fulfil Eduardo's dream"**, namely overcoming the stigmatization which affected the structure over the Centuries.

*"It was in the dream of Eduardo De Filippo to turn the convent into a daily multi-functional centre where different kinds of courses and craft labs can be hosted. Therefore, the goal was to create a shared knowledge, and we stay put in this endeavour."* Cristiano Ferraro

The project ultimately aims at redeeming **the figure of the scugnizzo** itself. The term *scugnizzo* is usually used to indicate young men who have committed crimes and are confined in a specific neighbourhood, due to this they lack a concrete chance to go beyond its physical and social boundaries. Giving the ex-convent a new identity as Scugnizzo Liberato, which literally means "released Scugnizzo", represents a symbolic way to relieve new and old *scugnizzi* from this kind of burden. These reasons thus make the Scugnizzo Liberato a public space, managed independently by a community which rejects any form of "fascism, sexism, discrimination and abuse"<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup> The term *scugnizzo* comes from the Neapolitan dialect and it indicates a lively and smart street-boy who is used to rely on poorly honest expedients. The term is known and adopted throughout Italy.

<sup>14</sup> It is the anniversary of the "Four Days of Naples" (*Le quattro giornate di Napoli*), a historical popular insurrection occurred during the WWII, between September 27<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> 1943. Civilians, with the contribution of soldiers loyal to the Southern Kingdom, released the city of Naples from the occupation of Wehrmacht forces, assisted by groups of local fascists. Therefore, this day was chosen to recall and represent an important moment of resistance in the city.

<sup>15</sup> These are constitutionally oriented principles that belongs to all experiments enabled by the Municipality of Naples.

The Scugnizzo Liberato shows how Eduardo de Filippo's contribution – tangible and intangible – as a well-known patron was decisive for the future of the following experiment. Eduardo's status as an icon of Neapolitan popular culture has constituted a kind of "brand image" for the project. His vision has been influencing the regeneration project, still impacting and guiding its current development. This evidence shows to what extent a "cultural leadership" is also a crucial element of successful participative process. Looking at the Scugnizzo, suggesting valuable visions and rising the community awareness regarding the potential of the Cappuccinelle (people and buildings) is the most significant legacy of Eduardo.



**Picture 4. The Scugnizzo Liberato entrance**

The word *scugnizzo* comes from Neapolitan popular usage and generally indicates a lively and smart street child who is used to scraping a living by not entirely honest means. The term was used for the first time around the end of the 19th century by Ferdinando Russo, a Neapolitan poet and journalist. In 1887 he composed a collection of sonnets called "*E' Scugnizze*" in which he talked about everyday life in Naples, including street children whose presence was typical part of the urban landscape (De Blasi, 2006). As De Blasi (2006) underlined, Russo's point of view was influenced by other Italian and European literary works such as *La Ginevra* by Antonio Ranieri and *Oliver Twist* by Charles Dickens. Therefore, these works increased the attention paid to the underworld of children living in the street without any practical support. As a result, the concept of *scugnizzo* was

popularized and adopted throughout Italy, although different words were used in different areas. Scugnizzo Liberato – which literally means “released *scugnizzo*” – aims at liberating old and new *scugnizzi* from this condition, which is still very common in the working-class districts of Naples. Thus, naming the project *Scugnizzo Liberato*, the community want to shed a light on how, in this kind of context, reusing and regenerating a heritage building could encourage the caring of the most vulnerable residents of the city.

## 5 Influences

Two concepts assumed a crucial role in the Scugnizzo Liberato project: the mutual support and the “do it yourself” (DIY) practices as basis for collective living. The Scugnizzo community supports the culture of mutuality, as a universal value inherent in the everyday life of the community itself, promoting social cohesion and inclusion. Such aspects, it has to be noticed, concern all those Neapolitan experiences which aim at strengthening the capacities of the most fragile subjects of the city. Self-recovery and collective care of the space represent the cornerstones of “civic use” (*uso civico*) practices. By recovering the history of the place, they practically support and reshape the collective imaginary and “in-common” narrative. This is considered a starting point for the participatory evolution of the project, as well as the primary mission of an authentic collective interest<sup>16</sup>.

## 6 Buildings and complex description

The main entrance of the Scugnizzo Liberato complex is located at Salita Pontecorvo n°46 which leads to a rectangular plan around a squared courtyard. The complex is surrounded by a high wall, visible from Vico Lungo Pontecorvo, a small alley that follows the south-east side and the back of the area. The convent surface measures about 10.000 sqm, distributed across 6 levels, one of which is a half-ground floor<sup>17</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> See: Adaptive reuse.

<sup>17</sup> Since the complex develops on a steep hill side, the ground floor is in part above the ground and in part below it. For the distribution of all functions see: Activities.





**Picture 5. The main courtyard of the complex from the second floor**

It is important to notice that the difficulties in managing such a large complex were one of the main reasons behind the dissolution of the Scacco Matto organization<sup>18</sup>. Two external courtyards located on different levels make up the ground floor. The smaller one can be reached straight from the main entrance, while the second one is on the highest level. Both courtyards are divided by a pedestrian corridor that leads to their respective entrances. Two *bassi*<sup>19</sup>, located on both sides of the main entrance, are currently used as residences and two apartments of different size are located on the half-ground floor. On the first floor there is a wide gallery with high naves and barrel vaults. The gallery surrounds the whole perimeter of both yards and other spaces: a small theatre, a gym, creative labs, study rooms and toilets.

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<sup>18</sup> Interview with Fabrizio Vitali. Naples, 11<sup>th</sup> December 2018.

<sup>19</sup> The *basso* is a ground level house constituted by one, or less frequently two, rooms, facing the street where it often extends through unauthorized (temporary or not) installations. It is a multifunctional space with no rigid partitions or functional areas, seamlessly connected to the public space.



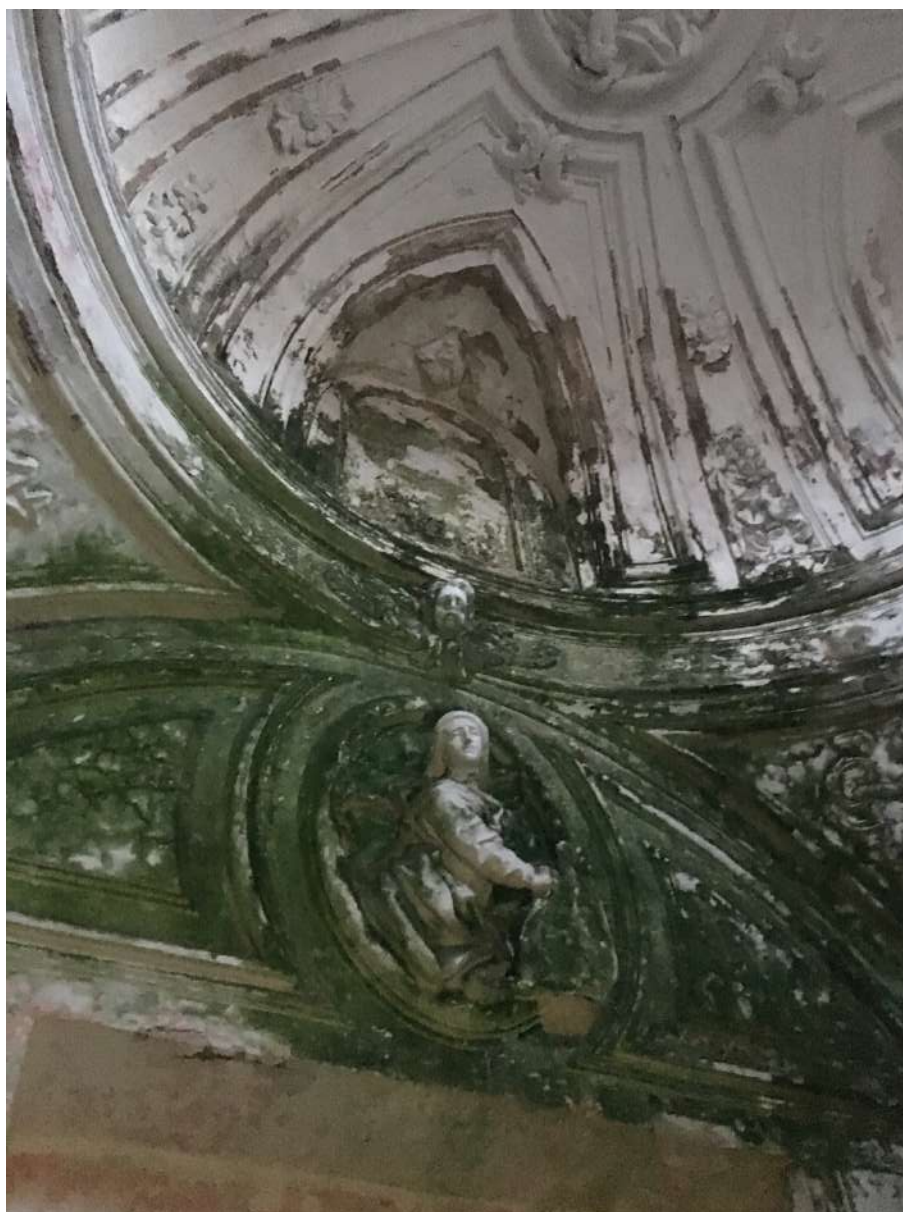
The entrance to the church, currently not accessible, is located on the first floor too; it has a main nave supported by four pairs of columns and it measures around 400sqm.



**Picture 6. The church**

The second floor is made up of modular offices, classrooms and living areas. The living areas, former detention facilities, consist of a series of rooms with a toilet. Whilst few of the rooms have been repaired (a drawing-creative lab called *disegnatoio*, and some rooms employed as warehouses). The main part of this floor is perishing. Although it has no offices, the third floor is comparable to the second one, as it hosts a similar number of living spaces and classrooms. Wide hallways cover the entire perimeter and balconies define the outdoors. Such as the second floor, it lies in a state of abandonment. As Giaccio explains:

*"This is one of the rooms that still shows its original shape: the small domed vault, once fully frescoed. The one still visible depicts the Madonna Veronica with a veil showing an image of Christ's face. Humidity is wearing it off; in fact, it is destroying everything. See that spot on the shoulder of the Madonna? It is constantly growing. Ah, and do you see the angel over there? When it rains, it looks like he has tears in his eyes!"* Giaccio



**Picture 7. View of the domed vault**

The surface of the fourth floor is around half of the total size of the complex and its height has been increased. The floor hosts mainly classrooms that run along the courtyard perimeter. The fourth floor is in the same state as the previous ones. The long-lasting state of neglect determined the poor preservation of the convent, recently certified by a technical-estimative evaluation carried out by the Naples Municipal Offices.

## 7 Adaptive re-use

Along the centuries, the layout of the convent (1500-1700) underwent significant transformations that affected the façades and increased the number of floors. Thus, it is in a continuous process of adaptation, at the end of which the Scugnizzo Liberato project will be the most recent intervention. The adaptive re-use of the Cappuccinelle convent is at the very core of the complex social and political process which motivates the group. Before 2015, the Scacco Matto group founded its political activity on an abandoned spaces recovery campaign, striving for social participation. The re-use project is reclaiming the complex through a spatial justice prospective. The starting point for the Scugnizzo community “civic use” (*uso civico*) has been through self- recovery operations that they consider are a basic tool for collective living. It has been argued that inhabiting and taking care of the space (or, on a broader scale, of the city), is part of a legitimization process which creates a “right” to decide the use of the spaces. This kind of reuse thus constitutes an incremental project based on small steps<sup>20</sup> and, mainly, on self-organization / building. Currently, the ground and the first floor have been made accessible through a series of ongoing interventions, periodically planned and verified by the Scugnizzo management assembly (*assemblea di gestione*)<sup>21</sup>. Among its objectives, the assembly aims to carry out the restoration through initiatives which should generate multiple ripple effects. The gathering of the communities around the spaces is part of the progressive reactivation. As activists recall, when the complex was first occupied, it was inaccessible due to widespread mould and vegetation. However, restoration works between the 80s and 90s, in particular the construction of the theatre and the gym, provided important anchoring points for the reuse project.

*“The building started to be restored, especially in the first period, thanks to people’s efforts. When we arrived to the convent it was traumatic: both courts were completely covered with grass and trees that were rooted up to the internal rooms of the complex. In addition, the condition of the church clearly showed that many assets were plundered.”* Gaetano Quattromani

Therefore, the initial works focused on minimal operations to ensure the safety of the complex<sup>22</sup>, allowing the use of some spaces. When the Scugnizzo Liberato was formally recognized by the Municipality of Naples, an official collaboration began. Then, restoration practices were aligned with safety and usability regulations. It is relevant to underline that the recognition of the ex-Cappuccinelle had been taking place in context of severe economic austerity, due to the pre-bankruptcy state of

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<sup>20</sup> Interview with Valerio Figliuolo. Naples, 27<sup>th</sup> April 2019.

<sup>21</sup> See: Governance and community.

<sup>22</sup> Since the informal phase lasted several months, this was developed without the technical opinion of the municipality. The evaluation process, thus, consisted in an informal technical consultancy based on community’s expertise.

the Municipality<sup>23</sup>. Although managerial costs are partially remitted to the public authority<sup>24</sup>, economic difficulties emerged, for instance, the disposal of the large amounts of construction waste as well as in ordinary repairing techniques<sup>25</sup>. As Fabrizio Vitali states:

*"These issues have been solved - and still are – following the "Neapolitan style": effectively connecting people towards a common goal. In this perspective, maintaining an informal relationship with the public authority is also essential. We advance our requests by calling councillors and assessors. We can say that the most effective method to communicate with the administration remains the direct one."* Fabrizio Vitali

The maintenance of the building has been ensured through a sort of public-private-people collaboration, evaluating the available social and territorial capital. Hence, methods and objectives are negotiated through interventions based on a strong interdisciplinary approach and with available resources. Moreover, one or more public officials of the administration are directly engaged in the project, in order to ensure a permanent contact between the community and the municipality and to avoid time-consuming processes. Overall, interventions of the complex have been made on one hand because of personal commitment from the community of inhabitants and on the other hand thanks to the support of the public administration. Up until now they consisted of:

- Securing the complex in light of the assessment of the overall structure run in accordance with the law. Consequently, the closure of the church and of the prison director's house have been decided;
- Ordinary maintenance works such as: waterproofing the roof without alteration of the original characteristics; interventions for plasters, painting and interior coatings; electrical and water systems adaptation; repairing of the sewer system; door installations;
- Extraordinary maintenance works such as: moving or adding partition walls to create an open space bar area; paving and finishing work; construction of a soundproofing system for the theatre;
- Integration and recovery of furniture to design outdoor and indoor areas.

## 8 Context

The Scugnizzo Liberato is situated in the historical area of the city and it includes some of the most important squares and main streets of the city: on one side,

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<sup>23</sup> In 2013, the Naples City Council declared pre-bankruptcy, namely an interim phase during which it is recognized the financial crisis of the PA, but it is still reversible. Since that, it has opened up a multiannual procedure that aims at restoring the debt of the Municipalities by including the State's participation.

<sup>24</sup> See: Actors.

<sup>25</sup> In particular, a water leak dating back to the years of the juvenile prison.



Piazza Dante and via Toledo and, on the other, via Salvator Rosa and Corso Vittorio Emanuele. This area can be accessed by public transportation that can be easily reached from the Cappuccinelle ex-convent. Conversely, the Cappuccinelle area is hardly accessible by cars due to the high urban density and the narrowness of the alleys. Specifically, located in the Avvocata area, the Scugnizzo Liberato is in the second municipality of the city, along with Montecalvario, Mercato, Pendino, Porto, San Giuseppe. As part of the city centre of Naples, the area has acquired urban relevance due to its historical character. Avvocata, commonly known as “Pignasecca”, is characterized by a texture of narrow streets and ancient buildings dated back to the 1700s. Its tuff artefacts, inner openings, street markets and many minor artworks make it a tourist destination. As it is well-known, the historical centre of Naples is still densely populated<sup>26</sup>. In 2016, the population of the II Municipality was about 10% (98.337) of the total population of Naples (981.374). Between 2010 and 2016, there has been an increase in foreigners of about 101,11%, and it has reached 14% of the centre’s population (13.241), one third of which resides in the Avvocata district (4.356)<sup>27</sup>. In comparison to the average rate of social unrest<sup>28</sup> in Avvocata is in line with the average rate in Naples. However, Avvocata has one of the highest rates of unemployment in Naples, 7,27% compared to the city average of 7,06%<sup>29</sup>. Avvocata, such as many other popular areas of the historical centre in Naples, shows a spontaneous mingle of urbanisation due to different groups which inhabit the area: low-income families carrying out activities to the limit of legality; middle class composed by public employees; documented and undocumented immigrants; intellectuals who belong to the high class and own the buildings of the area (Laino, 2017). The Salita di Pontecorvo, where the Cappuccinelle complex is located, is considered by many as “another world”. It is mainly composed of clans, meaning that the majority of the residents are relatives to a certain extent<sup>30</sup>. In the opinion of the Scugnizzo activists, this situation notably facilitates the interaction among local inhabitants.



**Picture 8. View of Avvocata district**

<sup>26</sup> As the 2017 National Statistical Report (Istat, 2017) shows the city centre of Naples is a “popular area susceptible to degradation” that still housing about 2/3 of the City Council population.

<sup>27</sup> Statistic Office, Naples Municipality Council. Online, available at:

<http://www.comune.napoli.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/34362>.

<sup>28</sup> The “social unrest index” is based on the rate of unemployment and the enrollment rate in the schools in the city and is compared to the national average.

<sup>29</sup> In Naples, the “social unrest index” is 11,09, with a peak of 25,78 in *Scampia* and a drop of 1,45 in *Arenella*. In *Avvocata* it is 6,84. Ibidem, Appendix B.

<sup>30</sup> Interview with Fabrizio Vitali. Naples, 11<sup>th</sup> December 2018.

## 9 Regulations and policies

The ongoing process happening in the Cappuccinelle complex is part of a broader strategy adopted by the Municipality of Naples, based on common goods and the notion of “civic uses” (*usi civici*) which are defined as the local community’s right “to benefit from (state, local or private) lands, water and forest [...] subject to construction and privatization restrictions”<sup>31</sup>. Specifically, the Municipality has been experimenting with new urban governance tools to give back to the local community public and private abandoned properties. This term “civic use” (*uso civico*), thus, refers to a collective free use of public and private spaces, inspired by the constitutional principles of art. 43 of the Italian Constitution<sup>32</sup>. It «focuses on the possibility to entrust the ‘user communities’ (along with public bodies) with the management of essential services or energy resources» (Ciancio, 2018:287). The Neapolitan model has brought citizens to the core of the decision-making process, overcoming the dualism of the public-private regime based on new community relations (Masella, 2018). Since 2011, the neo-elected Mayor Luigi De Magistris has been opening the way to a new shared and participatory system to identify and implement local policies inspired by principles and concepts of the commons. After the well-known national referendum (June 2011), during which Italians were called to vote about common goods related matters (e.g. water)<sup>33</sup>, Naples was the first (and in some respect the only) city to put into practice the referendums results regarding the issue of water supply<sup>34</sup>. Hence, several of the city council and mayor’s office resolutions have been carried out to the framework of the urban commons’ assets. The first act of 2011 was the modification of the Municipality Statute by including the legal notion of *common goods* (art.3, c.2)<sup>35</sup>, and establishing Italy’s first department for this matter: Department of Town Planning and Common Goods’ (*Assessorato ai beni comuni e all’urbanistica*). In 2012, the Naples Laboratory for the Constituent of Common Goods (*Laboratorio Napoli per una costituente dei beni comuni*) was established<sup>36</sup>. The laboratory is composed of thematic chambers accessible to citizens that can act as an advisory body and express citizens’ concerns. The Laboratory, thus, is set to support the development of bottom-up initiatives meant for the care and regeneration of the urban commons. In the same year, the Regulation of the Council for the Legislation of Common Goods (*Regolamento delle consulte per la disciplina dei beni comuni*) was also approved to set principles for the governance and management of

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<sup>31</sup> Local act no. 458, 2017.

<sup>32</sup> Constitution of the Italian Republic, part I - Rights and duties of citizens, Title III - Economic relations, art.43: “For the purposes of the general benefit, the law may originally reserve or transfer, by expropriation and subject to compensation, to the State, or to public entities or to community of workers or users, certain companies or categories of companies, which refer to essential public services or energy sources or to monopolies and that have a prominent general interest.”

<sup>33</sup> This was the opportunity to clarify Italians’ opinion about four topics: the first two regarded local public services, namely water service privatization, and the following nuclear energy and legitimate impediment (*legittimo impedimento*).

<sup>34</sup> We refer to the transformation of the former company for the hydric service, Naples Water Resources Company (*Azienda Risorse Idriche Napoli*), in accordance with the principles of the commons, i.e. *Abc Naples – Water Common Good (Abc Napoli - Acqua Bene Comune)*.

<sup>35</sup> The Council resolution no. 24 of 22.09.2011 included in Title I of the Statute, entitled Fundamental purposes and values: “The Municipality of Naples, in order to also protect the future generations, recognizes common goods as functional to the exercise of fundamental rights in the ecological context and it guarantees their full enjoyment in the sphere of municipal competences.”

<sup>36</sup> Council resolution no. 8, 18<sup>th</sup> April 2012. See:

<http://www.comune.napoli.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/14959>.

common goods for 2013<sup>37</sup>. In this framework, the initiative held in March 2012 carried out by part of the workers of the cultural sector<sup>38</sup> played a crucial role in this policy-making process. In particular, we refer to the informal occupation of a 16th-century public building (about 4000 square meters) located in the historical city centre of Naples, known as the Ex Asilo Filangieri. In 2013, the building was renovated to host the Universal Forum of Culture<sup>39</sup> and it was at the centre of controversy because of the absence of transparency in the management of the event and of the building itself (Ciancio, 2018). Hence, the choice to use the Ex Asilo Filangieri as the location of the International Forum of Cultures inspired the occupation of the space. Since, activists stated, this would have produced an additional underused public space (Ostanel, 2017). Moreover, members of the workers of the cultural sector movement founded the group *La Balena* by gathering experts, in particular lawyers, strongly engaged in the regulation of the commons<sup>40</sup>. The group started working on a proposal to regulate the use of common goods in order to submit it to the local authority in charge. Their intention was to surpass the classic concession agreement model, which is founded on the monopolistic view of the public-private partnership, and to recognize the existence of an “informal community” (city inhabitants and local communities) to collectively act in the general interest (Iaione, 2019). Thus, the Ex Asilo became a proactive actor in a dialogical process with the public authority representatives. The first step in the process was: “[...] to guarantee a democratic form of management of the monumental common good called the Ex Asilo Filangieri. In accordance with art. 43 of the Constitution, **in order to facilitate the practice of the *uso civico* of the common goods**, in relation to the community of cultural workers”<sup>41</sup>. Hence, with the resolution no.400 (2012), the Municipality started to recognise and co-design urban common governance mechanisms through the involvement of the community inhabitants that wanted to deliver forms of cultural and social services. The ex-Asilo Filangieri is identified as a place where free access and the enjoyment of common goods are ensured, and where the culture of the commons develops (Piscopo, 2017).

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<sup>37</sup> Resolution no.17/2013

<sup>38</sup> In Italy the group ‘workers of immaterial labour’ (*lavoratori dello spettacolo e dell’immateriale*) had already occupied other important spaces such as the Teatro Valle in Rome.

<sup>39</sup> The Universal Forum of Cultures Foundation (*Fondazione Forum Universale delle Culture*) was established by Council Resolution no. 16, 29<sup>th</sup> September 2009. Promoted by UNESCO, the Universal Forum of Cultures is an event that takes place periodically in different cities and territories. It has a specific a format designed to stimulate attention on cultural issues such as dialogue among different cultures, languages and religions, human development and societies.

<sup>40</sup> It is important to underline that the civic use policy tool design not derived mainly from the Municipality, but it is the Ex Asilo the main designer and creator of it (Ostanel, 2017).

<sup>41</sup> Resolution no. 400 of May 25th, 2012.

The “civic use” (uso civico) is a traditional legal institute which dates back to old rights of collective enjoyment of earthly goods (Cinanni, 1962). The reinterpretation of this “device”, which has been taking place in Naples, transfers this old right from the original structures of pasture, hunting or firewood to abandoned real estate and urban context.

Relying on this concept, a city regulation was conceived and drafted by grassroots organizations within a squatted public building in Naples’ historic center, named Ex Asilo Filangieri. In parallel, several resolutions approved by the city council of Naples (e.g. no. 400/2012; 893/2015; 446/2016) recognize squatted places if they serve community needs (cultural services, welfare, refugee protection, health services, housing). The city pays ordinary expenses, the building is collectively managed, and the property remains public. Since there is neither a transfer nor a delegation of the good, the process does not correspond to a specific set of provisions under Italian law. On the contrary, self-organization and self-governance are identified as legal forms by the municipal regulation. Miciarelli (2017) points out that it represents an unusual and creative use of the law. The process aims at researching alternative regulations, which are also inspired by principles based on “horizontal subsidiarity” (*sussidiarietà orizzontale*). This results in the change of Art. 118 of the Italian Constitution in 2001, which now states that “[...] State, regions, metropolitan cities, provinces and municipalities encourage the autonomous initiative of citizens in starting collective interest activities”. Based on Iaione’s point of view (2019), it has enabled citizens, as individuals or as part of associations, to take care of common interests, breaking up the public authorities’ habitual monopoly in that field. Hence, it has supported an opportunity to develop a new governance model which takes into account the concept of the commons.

In 2013, the Municipality of Naples further consolidated the ongoing process with the introduction of **the Permanent Observatory of Common Goods (*Osservatorio permanente sui beni comuni della città di Napoli*)**. The observatory is a public body with analytical and operational functions on the common goods protection and management. It is also entrusted with the inventory of the municipal properties, including private assets, abandoned, unused or underused. This body is composed of eleven experts in the field of common goods who have experience in social activism, including representatives of the current Neapolitan common goods network<sup>42</sup>. It carries out “*study functions, analysis and plans for the protection and management of the commons*”; it evaluates the Municipalities Councils proposals and proposals of the Commissions Council concerning common goods. It has been argued that the Observatory is, in practice, the space where «mutual learning between “low” and “high” cultures» (Ostanel, 2017:14) takes place.

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<sup>42</sup> The Observatory was established by the Mayoral Decree 314/2013. The body was renewed in January 2019 (mayoral decree no. 16, 28<sup>th</sup> January 2019).



The Permanent Observatory of Common Goods (Osservatorio permanente sui beni comuni della città di Napoli) is an important experiment in terms of institutional innovation which supports community involvement and community building. The Observatory as an advisory body was established by a Mayoral Decree (no. 314/2013) and its members are selected through public notice, or by mayoral appointment. The members of the observatory are not remunerated. They meet in public assemblies and anyone can take part, as a way to ensure open and horizontal discussions.

Specifically, they work on mapping used and unused public or private properties (always abandoned), to encourage their reuse in cultural and social activities. Furthermore, the observatory supports the self-governing process of the communities taking care of public properties and contributes to the development of declarations of public use and urban collectives. It promotes the creation of links between the different associations and volunteering networks on the territory; it works with the relevant departments to collect requests for temporary use and common use of those properties to be assessed; it evaluates the proposals in deliberations with a focus on common properties, participative democracy, new municipalism and fundamental rights like the right to housing (Mayoral Decree 314/2013).

In 2015, a further step forward was the establishment of the "Directions for the identification and management of real estate assets of the Municipality of Naples, that are not being used or partially used and perceived by the community as 'commons' and susceptible to collective use" (*Indirizzi per l'individuazione e la gestione dei beni del patrimonio immobiliare del Comune di Napoli, inutilizzati o parzialmente utilizzati, percepiti dalla comunità come "beni comuni" e suscettibili di fruizione collettiva*)<sup>43</sup>. This Municipality Resolution established the possibility to identify a common good as being characterized by a "civic and collective use" (*uso civico e collettivo*). Consequently, the public administration gives citizens (as informal group of citizens and not organized in a specific legal entity) «the space to be active in forms of co-management of the political and cultural process of the city» (Miciarelli in Ciancio, 2018:289).

*"Scugnizzo Liberato is part of a group of buildings which were first occupied then allocated to the municipality, because it belongs to and is used by a community of citizens. So, the gift is not for associations or legal-accredited bodies but for a community that, by its own nature, changes over time."* Enrico Tommaselli

In the same year, this regulatory process also led to the drafting of the **"Declaration of the Urban and Civic and Collective use"** (*Dichiarazione di uso civico e collettivo urbano*), written by the ex Asilo community and approved by the Municipality Council<sup>44</sup>. The declaration is composed of a set of rules that carved out the self-governance of the good by the community of inhabitants. Thus, "the autonomous model (capable of generating a self-regulation system) containing the declaration of civic and collective urban use (...) as a set of rules to access, the

<sup>43</sup> Council resolution no. 7, 2015, amending resolution no. 259 of 2014. Moreover, it is important to underline resolution no.259 of 2014 that included an administration proposal on privately owned abandoned heritage.

<sup>44</sup> Resolution no. 893, 2015.

program and develop activities as an innovative model of the government of the public space<sup>45</sup> was adopted. In 2016<sup>46</sup>, seven public properties being informally occupied were recognized as “relevant civic spaces to be ascribed to the category of urban commons”<sup>47</sup> giving life to the so-called network of “freed spaces” (*spazi liberati*) in the city. Along with the former Cappuccinelle convent there are the former Schipa School; Villa Medusa; ex-Lido Pola; ex-Opg (nowadays ex-Opg Je so ‘pazz); former Teresiane convent (now Giardino Liberato di Materdei); former convent of Santa Maria della Fede (now Santa Fede Liberata). Also recognized as “emerging common goods”, these assets represent a community-led initiative, carried out by groups of citizens and / or committees. They transformed the abovementioned assets into places “of strong sociality, elaboration of thought, of intergenerational solidarity and of deep rooting on the territory” (Piscopo, 2017). As Daniela Buonanno<sup>48</sup> points out, in order to have a common good, there must be a cohesive community of neighbourhood inhabitants, aware and capable of bearing the responsibility of the process.

Moreover, on the model of the ex-Asilo, the recognition by Municipality resolution no. 446 (2016) will be finalised with adequate agreements after the communities managing the spaces draft a Declaration of Civic and Collective Use (*Dichiarazione di uso civico e collettivo urbano*) ensuring that the governance of the assets are inclusive, accessible and impartial (Iaione, 2019). However, it is still an ongoing process for all the seven spaces. It has to be noted that the Department of Town Planning and Commons Goods’ (*Assessorato ai beni comuni e all’urbanistica*) evaluates the civic use of the property by monitoring the promoted public services<sup>49</sup> and checking the real openness of the self-governing process. Annually, each space has to provide the administration with a detailed report on the activities carried out and on the results of the self-government process.

The abovementioned processes, thus, defines the administrative structure has led to the formalization of the commons in Naples. In synthesis, the Municipality, owner and administrator of the good, manages it through third parties (Micciarelli, 2017), putting in place of a new form of public-community or public - civic partnership (PCPs) (Iaione, 2019).

**Since there is neither custody nor a delegation of the good, the process does not correspond to a specific legal set that is recognized by Italian law. On the contrary, self-organization and self-governance are identified as legal forms by the Municipality regulation.**

In this context, the municipality fosters «the development of a civil environment, supporting the citizens in their process of becoming a proper institution themselves» (Ciancio, 2018:289). Naples’ Urban Civic Uses policy aims to recognize the urban commons as collectively owned, overcoming both the individual property regime and the traditional public management one (Scala, 2018). As mentioned by Iaione (2019), this allowed for the community-led initiatives to be recognized and institutionalized which ensured that both parties

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<sup>45</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>46</sup> Resolution no. 446, 2016

<sup>47</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>48</sup> Interview with Daniella Buonanno. Naples, 24<sup>th</sup> April 2019.

<sup>49</sup> Accessibility and quality are among the main indicators of the evaluation framework.

involved were autonomous: citizens involved in the reuse and the municipality are enabling the practice.

Finally, it is worth it to note that the majority of these spaces<sup>50</sup> are in the historic centre of the city and identified as a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1995. In particular, the former Asilo Filangieri was part of the UNESCO Big Project (*Grande Progetto UNESCO*)<sup>51</sup>, i.e. the enhancement plan operating in the UNESCO area (approximately 720 hectares), which includes the whole city built before World War II. Within this perimeter, the municipal administration monitors landscape and urban conditions, as well as characteristics of renovation/construction projects in accordance with limits set by law. The Department of Town Planning and Common Goods' (*Assessorato ai beni comuni e all'urbanistica*) has been collaborating with superintendence offices, to define possible trajectories of reuse. One of the main issues is how to make the system more flexible, particularly with respect to the change of use. Although the Neapolitan model has recently gained recognition as part of the European best practices<sup>52</sup>, it has to be noted that in Italy it has been widely criticized from the viewpoint that it creates tools to foster illegal practices i.e. building occupations<sup>53</sup>.

## 10 Actors

In order to describe all the actors involved in the Scugnizzo Liberato, we will proceed chronologically. As mentioned above, the Scugnizzo Liberato arose from the Scacco Matto, a group of local university student activists formed in 2015. Since the beginning, the group founded its political activity on a campaign to recover abandoned spaces located in the Avvocata area by encouraging citizens' participation. Firstly, the Scacco Matto occupied a small space next to the Montesanto Station<sup>54</sup> and to the former Filangieri Institute. In September 2015, the group squatted the Cappuccinelle complex and, with the aim of involving the inhabitants in the management of the space, activists immediately opened it to everyone. Then, the Scacco Matto expanded progressively, becoming first and foremost a network of collectives, including the inhabitants of the neighbourhood and other city groups such as *Nadir - Napoli direzione opposta* and *Nablus*.

*"We have put up posters to communicate that this space was once again open for all. We strived to inform everyone that we wanted to recover and re-functionalize it collectively. This transparency increased the popularity of the project and the overall citizens' involvement. People were also very curious about the space itself, since it had been locked for almost two decades. They were curious about what was hidden inside. Many of them approached us, so we could establish our first relationships"* Valerio Figliuolo

Hence, the will to establish a dialogue with the public authority emerged among the Scacco Matto activists who decided to join the local "neo-municipal" movement

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<sup>50</sup> All except for ex Lido Pola and Villa Medusa which are in the Bagnoli area in the west of the city.

<sup>51</sup> See: Heritage.

<sup>52</sup> See Transfer Network, Urbact III: <https://urbact.eu/civic-estate>.

<sup>53</sup> These aspects were presented in depth by Elena Ostanel in a lesson held on 11 April 2019 at the Master U-rise (Urban Regeneration and social innovation). Focus of the lesson was "Local government innovation".

<sup>54</sup> This is the urban railway stop serving the Avvocata district. It is five minutes' walk from the Scugnizzo.

Massa Critica. Massa Critica was born in October 2015 as a shared platform composed of political stakeholders, including associations, committees, city networks and urban movements (Gargiuolo and Cirulli, 2017). Its objective was *"to affect the governance of our territories, to continue the path of active resistance that makes the city of Naples an exceptional laboratory of self-organization that sometimes manages to dictate the political agenda also to the municipal administrations; to open places of political discussion and generalize them; to rethink forms, methods, contents, and ways of relating"*<sup>55</sup>. The purpose of Massa Critica was to support the creation of active citizenship models through a path of dialogue with the municipality, in order to reach the kind of relationship already created with the Asilo Filangieri community. Objectives were discussed in thematic meetings in which the topics of how the common goods and real estate played a central role. While the two main resolutions on the matter – i.e. *Declaration of civic and collective urban use of the Asilo Filangieri*, and the *identification of the seven spaces of civic importance ascribable to the category of common assets* – were approved. Meanwhile, the Scacco Matto network broke up which gave space to a new territorial community, the Scugnizzo community. Nevertheless, the Scugnizzo Liberato has kept cooperating with the other communities of the commons, trying to bring forward this experience collectively. The platform proposed by Massa Critica went on to become the Table of Common Goods or Public Assembly of Freed Spaces (*Tavolo dei beni comuni* or *Assemblea pubblica degli spazi liberati*) which includes some representatives of the seven spaces, along with the ex-Asilo Filangieri community. The assembly gathers at least once per month, at the former Asilo Filangieri, in order to discuss hypothetical new tools to improve the governance of the common goods and to strengthen existing experiences in matter of self-organization, self-government, self-recovery and community participation. Hence, it keeps tracing the path towards the common goods by following the administrative, political and social outcomes. Moreover, this coalition has collectively written the *"Declaration of the Urban and Civic and Collective use"* (*Dichiarazione di uso civico e collettivo urbano*), of all spaces, sharing this responsibility with the entire network:

*"In February 2019, after a year of collective action, all the spaces were able to write their civic use declaration for a public urban use. The municipal administration should approve them all by the end of 2019. Since topics such as self-management and communication are key elements on the Table of Common Goods, we decided on a joint coordination of the declaration for the use of the areas."* Gaia Del Giudice

The work of this table flows into the Permanent Observatory on the Common Goods (*Osservatorio permanente cittadino sui beni comuni*) which mediates between the collective work of the table and the municipal administration, working in synergy with the civil society<sup>56</sup>. As it is clear, another central actor is the municipality itself. If its role is crucial in the definition of the policy and legal framework of the commons, with the formal recognition of each common good, such as the Scugnizzo Liberato, the Municipality undertakes specific responsibilities on that asset e.g. managing expenses and utilities and by ensuring adequate accessibility and safety of the building. Despite this, as already argued, the economic support

<sup>55</sup> See: [www.massacriticanapoli.org/istruzioni-per-luso/](http://www.massacriticanapoli.org/istruzioni-per-luso/).

<sup>56</sup> See: Governance and Community.



of the municipality, is in practice often insufficient. Especially in the case of extraordinary maintenance costs<sup>57</sup>, preventing the proper maintenance of the Cappuccinelle convent. As Fabrizio Vitali underlines, on some occasions it was possible to overcome the public impasse solely by private citizens cooperating. Within the Naples' Municipality, the first partners for the refurbishment of the building were:

- The Special Water Company for the Common Good (*azienda speciale acqua bene comune Napoli*) – ABC, a Company born from the transformation into a special public company of ARIN S.p.A. and which operates in order to ensure the excellent quality of water distributed and the regularity of the supply;
- Waste Management and separate waste collection, with the Environmental Health Services Company (*azienda servizi igiene ambientale*) - ASIA Napoli Spa - Napoli Spa, the joint-stock company with local public capital, for waste disposal and green area cleaning.
- The Parks and Gardens Management Service (*gestione parchi e giardini*) is part of an "online service card", which allows citizens to consult the list of all the services they can request from the municipal offices<sup>58</sup>.

At neighbourhood level, the Scugnizzo community shares many of the assembly moments with other subjects of the Neapolitan political scene and with collectives and urban movements outside the network of the commons. These are committed mostly to environmental issues and to the right to housing or student collectives, including: *Zero81* - Mutual Aid Lab<sup>\*</sup>; *Collettivo Autorganizzato Universitario Napoli (CAU)*<sup>\*</sup>; *Isurgencia* – community centre<sup>\*</sup>; Committee of the former Convitto Monachelle<sup>\*</sup>; *Terra nostra autogestita*<sup>\*</sup>; *Si Cobas Napolii* – organized worker union<sup>\*</sup>; MOPE - Campaign for housing and social space rights<sup>\*</sup>; *SPAZIO DAMM* (Diego Armando Maradona Montesanto<sup>\*</sup> – a self-administered area; *Casa delle donne di Napoli* – women association<sup>\*</sup>; Link Napoli University Union<sup>\*</sup>; USB – Basic union<sup>\*</sup>; Rete SET – City against mass tourism – Naples<sup>\*</sup>; Occupied Mezzocannone (Mezzocannone Occupato)<sup>\*</sup>; *Non una di meno Napoli*<sup>\*</sup>; The occupied church in Montesanto; *Parco dei Ventaglieri* – Coordinated Social Ground. The dialogical effort, above described and mainly held "outside" the complex, in the urban environment, shows the willingness of the group not only to share and encourage good practices but also to foster the debate, as Fabrizio Vitale states, "in terms of mutualism and active citizenships with national bodies that work on the matters." In the managing of internal activities of the complex, the network of actors varies systematically. As an exception, part of these actors run the macro-area of stable activities (craft labs and mutual support activities). These groups are: the artisan community (including teachers of the Arts Academy in Naples); several communities of migrants, especially the Sri Lanka and Cabo Verde communities based in Avvocata; *Nadir*, a collective composed of musicians and technicians who follow the cultural production; *Cuore di maschera*, a group for theatre productions; the *Naples popular aid network* that, thanks to the group *Oggi nessuno escluso*, fights poverty and discrimination; *Nablus*, a collective promoting activities for

<sup>57</sup> Interview with Fabrizio Vitali. Naples, 31<sup>st</sup> July 2019.

<sup>58</sup> See: <http://www.altuoservizio.comune.napoli.it/main.php>.

migrant integration; *Banda Basaglia* teaching music; the *Aya lab*, an art collective; the *Neapolis balfolk* group, proposing dance lessons; the *Spartak San Gennaro* group, to support a soccer popular project. Finally, the Morra Foundation, administering the Hermann Nitsch Museum - Archive Laboratory for contemporary arts, located alongside the Salita Pontecorvo, cooperates with the Scugnizzo and the municipality to transform Avvocata district into an art and craftsmanship neighbourhood<sup>59</sup>.

## 11 Governance and community

The Scugnizzo Liberato is a co-designed space where plural and heterogeneous communities take actions, by activating services and sharing experiences with neighbours. As previously introduced, it is a "territorial community" engaged in a project based on the principles of mutualism, self-management and self-recovery.

*"Before joining the process, neighbours used this place. Then, we gradually involved them in the overall management, sharing a common goal: how to re-use this space. Others, like migrants, instead, joined immediately. Due to several reasons, among which the size of the complex itself, everyone considered this space a place that could fill several needs. Thus, the Cappuccinelle became attractive, and it keeps attracting many."* Fabrizio Vitale

As activists underline, the Scugnizzo is self-governed through interdependent and radically democratic practices. Spatial organization and activities are planned at weekly assemblies where all interested citizens (even those outside the Scugnizzo community) are invited to participate. This organization aims at consolidating the relationship between the community and project, creating bonds of mutual trust and cooperative dialogue which are needed to achieve results. In addition, Gaetano Quattromani<sup>60</sup> maintains that these moments of congregation are fundamental in allowing interactions among community members – usually coming across the ex-convent in different times, spaces and manners. Additionally, assemblies are also the opportunity to share ideas about specific management issues and to encourage the exchange of good practices. Assemblies are organized as follow: (a) a *management assembly (assemblea di gestione)* and (b) four *thematic assemblies (tavoli tematici)*. Whereas the latter gathers community members engaged or interested in specific topics, the former is a sovereign assembly which brings together the whole community. It must be noticed that interviewees conferred equal value to both kinds of meeting, stressing the a-hierarchical logic of the system. During the management assembly (*assemblea di gestione*) the routine management of the complex it is organized, meaning the activities are programmed, the recovery work is scheduled, as well as communication and logistic. To mediate disagreements, several interaction activities are taken in concrete and supported by a psychologist of the Scugnizzo community, who attends the assembly in person. As mentioned above, the four thematic assemblies (*tavoli tematici*) focus on the most relevant themes of the Scugnizzo: craft,

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<sup>59</sup> Interview with Fabrizio Vitali. Naples, 31<sup>st</sup> July 2019.

<sup>60</sup> Interview with Gaetano Quattromani. Naples, 31<sup>st</sup> July 2019.

mutualism, culture & events, and narrative. The first, craft assembly, brings together artisans, coffee shop and kitchen activists. This assembly has been created to support a productive and economic perspective of the common goods. The mutual aid assembly aims to build and to put in practice a territorial strategy based on mutualism. It includes representatives of the community, particularly who are able to deal with relationship problems which often occur in the ordinary living of the community. The activity of the third assembly, culture & events, is mainly to focus on the management of cultural activities, festival and events taking place in the Scugnizzo (weekly, monthly and annually). Finally, the narration assembly is a discussion space where a communication strategy regarding the common goods is put forward. As Fabrizio Vitali argues, since the former Scacco Matto group came from a counterculture movement and strongly political-oriented, a reflection upon this represents a significant chance to build a new and more inclusive identity<sup>61</sup>. The decision making in the assemblies relies on the consensus model, never on majority vote, due to the fact that they are oriented to inspire a common feeling around each and every choice. These are also accompanied by “informal moments” e.g. chatting, meetings which are parts of the daily life of the space, etc. are crucial factors in the ex-convent management. By considering the disadvantaged conditions of Avvocata district, Fabrizio Vitali<sup>62</sup> underlines the significance of these moments. In other words, establishing solid links among people and spaces ensures the Scugnizzo liveability. This system is linked externally with the Table of Common Goods or Public Assembly of Freed Spaces (*Tavolo dei beni comuni* or *Assemblea Pubblica degli spazi liberati*), with the ex-Asilo Filangieri and thus with the Permanent Observatory on the Common Goods (*Osservatorio permanente cittadino sui beni comuni*)<sup>63</sup>.

## 12 Activities

For the Scugnizzo community, the artisan vocation of the former convent has been of crucial value, since the beginning of the occupation. This is due to the nature of the neighbourhood itself, reflecting both the objectives of the UNESCO Big Project (*Grande Progetto Unesco*) and of the Municipality Council of Naples<sup>64</sup>. Indeed, the thematic area of intervention identified creative arts and craftsmanship has promoted the rediscovery of local labour and traditional activities. As Giuseppe Sbrescia<sup>65</sup> points out, the number of artisanal activities, which have always characterized the city centre, are decreasing and often replaced by tourist activities. The project received the municipality support, that was based on the existing territorial strategy to support artisanal activities in the historic centre area

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<sup>61</sup> Interview with Fabrizio Vitali. Naples, 31<sup>st</sup> July 2019.

<sup>62</sup> Interview with Fabrizio Vitali. Naples, 26<sup>th</sup> April 2019.

<sup>63</sup> See: Regulation and policy.

<sup>64</sup> Regulation 875/2012 defines the list of the great project called “Historical Centre of Naples, valorisation of the UNESCO site”, approved by the Region. The program includes actions aimed at recovering and enhancing the historical centre of Naples through the restoration of monuments and buildings and through an series of intervention on the urban landscape and the public areas management (Napoli website – <http://www.comune.napoli.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/26910>). See also: Heritage.

<sup>65</sup> Interview with Giuseppe Sbrescia. Naples, April 26<sup>th</sup> 2019.

of the city. Laboratories occupying rooms faced on the main courtyard and alongside the aisles at the first floor were opened.



**Picture 9. Inside the main courtyard, view of some craft labs**

The project Scugnizzo Factory is composed of all current craft labs and it proposes courses aimed at safeguarding traditional crafts and at widespread related knowledge. Laboratories include both free courses for children and teenagers and paid ones for adults; self-produced objects are sold to generate income to reinvest in the activities (e.g. materials) and in the space itself (maintenance).

It is significant to underline that artisans, as well as everyone else, don't pay any rent to run their activities<sup>66</sup>. Decisions about rooms' allocation - to singles or groups - are collectively taken in the management assembly. Selective criteria are: requests presented by people in need of a workspace, specifically oriented to support and develop craft traditions, are often preferred; spaces must not be subjected to "exclusive uses" but still have to be shared and managed in a common way; grantees have to participate in the collective restoration and management of the complex in addition to the single space<sup>67</sup>.

Currently, laboratories actives are distributed at ground and first floor as follows:  
(Ground Floor)

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<sup>66</sup> See also: Impact.

<sup>67</sup> Interview with Giaccio. Naples, 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2019.



- The restoration laboratory: to restore antique pieces of furniture;
- The carpentry laboratory: to create wood objects (e.g. skate ramps, wooden sound boxes);
- The textile laboratory: to learn cutting, sewing, textile processing, dyeing and tailoring (run by a teacher of the Academy of Fine Arts of Naples);
- The recycling laboratory: to recycle plastic creatively;
- The sculpture laboratory: to bas-relief, fretwork and papier-mâché woodworking (run by a teacher of the Academy of Fine Arts of Naples);
- The glass laboratory: artistic stained-glass windows, glass cutting and composition;
- The goldsmith's laboratory: to create jewels made with fretwork and welding technique;
- The stone mosaic laboratory: to learn about practical foundations of mosaic art;

(First Floor)

- The ceramic laboratory: to learn about manual clay processing. Ceramic glazes and traditional majolica painting decoration are carried out.
- The creative arts lab: graphic arts, illustration & cartoon lab, lithography, etching and etching, metalworking;
- The serigraphy laboratory.



**Picture 10. Building's diagram exposed at the ground floor**

The main courtyard is also used as a football field and it hosts weekly the Spartakus San Gennaro, a popular soccer project participated by local teenagers. Additionally, the groups Nablus and Oggi Nessuno Escluso have been jointly running a school of language. Along with Italian and English courses, they offer activities such as legal assistance for immigrants (available also to Italian inhabitants of the area as long as they are willing to undertake shared paths) and a canteen for the homeless and the distribution of food and clothes.

On the ground floor there are also the following uses:

- La Scugnizzzeria, an information point;
- a museum which collects photographs, artefact, documents of the complex; in addition, some former cells witnessed the past use of the Istituto Filangieri as a prison;
- an open space, consisting of a bar and a free room mainly dedicated to assembly and other variable activities;
- a kitchen and a canteen.

As mentioned, a church (currently closed) can be accessed from the first floor where the gym, the language school, study rooms, and the theatre are also located. Some areas and rooms at the first floor are used by the Sri Lankan and Cape Verdean communities which every Sunday transform the gallery in a ceremonial space for the religious service. This space is also the venue for several cultural events among which the UE' FEST<sup>68</sup>, the Mediterranean festival of comics and self-produced prints which since April 2017 takes place in the Scugnizzo annually. As the UE' FEST is gradually gaining national recognition, it's important to keep reminding us that the Scugnizzo Liberato promotes an intense program of cultural events of great importance at the local and metropolitan level, which include concerts, book presentations, and theatre performances. Programs and activities change continuously, including "regular" activities and "external" proposals. Although the flexibility and the dynamics of this process strongly encourage the communities' participation, it has to be noticed that the rapid turnover shows also a weakness in terms of management.

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<sup>68</sup> The festival is self-organized and self-produced by independent authors and producers of the underground scene.



**Picture 11. The Scugnizzo community in the theatre. (<https://it.ulule.com/scugnizzo-liberato/>)**



**Picture 12. The gym (photo by Vittoria Boccia)**





**Picture 13. The restoration laboratory**

## 13 Impact

The governance of the commons has been gaining national and international recognition. Naples is considered a relevant laboratory of urban and social innovation, widely observed, studied and discussed. Obviously, the impact of the Scugnizzo experience cannot be considered apart from the complex context within which it emerged. For this reason, impacts of the macro and micro urban scale will be conveyed jointly. Indeed, as a result of the ex-Asilo Filangieri experience and of the following legal innovations, in 2017, Naples was selected as an URBACT best practice<sup>69</sup>. In 2018, Naples joined the Civic eState - URBACT III project as a lead partner. Civic eState net is one of the 25 "Transfer Networks" approved by URBACT in April 2018. Its purpose is to consolidate and implement the use of the common goods and collective practices of heritage management, propagating the Neapolitan experience. In particular, the network has been developing a focus on

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<sup>69</sup> See: <http://urbact.eu/lost-found>.



sustainability issues, addressing one of the most significant weakness of the Naples' experience<sup>70</sup>.

By applying the framework of the commons, Barcelona, for instance, is currently working on a set of regulations to manage (selected) cultural heritage assets. A similar process has occurred also in other Italian cities such as Turin and Palermo. Locally, the network of the commons has been strongly impacting the metropolitan and urban area of Naples, boosting a cultural shift. In other words, the (social and territorial) mobilization put in place in the Scugnizzo, and in the other Neapolitan common goods, is changing preconceptions regarding places and people<sup>71</sup>. As Lina Mele states, this sets the ground for a more inclusive environment:

*"The Scugnizzo is a lively place frequented by both the folks of the block and by many others. I see people from all walks of life passing by. And I like this because it is the key to inclusion."*

Additionally, from a different cultural perspective, the Scugnizzo has been attracting great interest not only at local level but also at metropolitan level due to the cultural proposal variety. It mainly comprehends alternative music, arts and theatre events, and it encourages the development of underground cultures. In particular:

*"Our theatre is considered one of the best concert halls in Naples! It really attracts a significant audience since is known we offer high-level countercultural events and setting. For us, this is in accordance with our political principles based on mutuality."* Valerio Figliuolo

With reference to the space, the adaptive reuse process has also a strong impact on the Avvocata district itself. As several interviewees point out, the Scugnizzo opening has improved the liveability of the area. Indeed, the former Cappuccinelle Convent is situated in a dense and compact urban area that lacks significant gathering space and square. The Scugnizzo, thus, offers a new urban centre characterised by a high degree of freedom and inclusion, providing the Avvocata district with a meeting place, a *piazza*, which it lacked. Moreover, as the section "activities" shows, the re-functionalization of the former complex provided the district with new services, both cultural and social. With regards to this, craft labs have a double role. In addition to being an incentive for learning artisanal labour, the spaces are granted for free which is a form of public support to the craftsmen who are economically disadvantaged<sup>72</sup>. Furthermore, the project sheds a light on other abandoned spaces converging in the same area, and on many communities around them<sup>73</sup>.

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<sup>70</sup> See: The economic model.

<sup>71</sup> e.g. those related to occupy movements. Interview with Valerio Figliuolo, 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2019.

<sup>72</sup> Interview with Marco Pinto, master of the restoration laboratory. Naples, 11<sup>th</sup> December 2018.

<sup>73</sup> Interview with Valerio Figliuolo. Naples, 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2019.

## 14 Heritage

*"This is a former 17<sup>th</sup> Century convent, it is not a joke! We know we have a huge responsibility, so it is clear that we cannot just think about a socio-political project or occupying the building in the previous fashion. It is too precious. The community is becoming conscious of the architectural and historical value of the Cappuccinelle. Thus, the program of activities needs to agree and proceed parallel to a restoration project, preserving the complex in its integrity. In order to attain this aim, we are cooperating with the public authority."* Gaetano Quattromani

Between 2009 and 2012, the Cappuccinelle complex<sup>74</sup> was declared an Italian cultural asset, in accordance with the Rules on cultural assets and landscape (*Codice dei beni culturali e del paesaggio*, d.lgs. 22/01/2004 no. 42). Since then, the Ministry for Heritage and Cultural Activities (MIBAC) is responsible for supervising the conservation of the Cappuccinelle complex. Also, it implies that any intervention on the complex must be approved by the local *Soprintendenza*, a branch of the MiBACT which has the responsibility to assure the conservation and management of cultural heritage within a specific territory.

The complex is situated in the historical centre of Naples, inscribed in the list of UNESCO assets since 1995. As mentioned above, the UNESCO Big Project (*Grande Progetto UNESCO per Napoli*) is a renovation plan which embraces the entire UNESCO area (about 720 hectares). So far, 26 projects have been financed thanks to 2014-2020 POR FESR Campania funds. With the exception of the ex-Asilo Filangieri, no interventions are foreseen for those assets currently identified as common goods. Even though the Scugnizzo Liberato is not included among the interventions selected for the UNESCO Big Project, the area where the former convent is located, namely *Montesanto*, underwent a large-scale renovation public program which affected the urban and infrastructural dimensions<sup>75</sup>. As mentioned, in 2014 the ownership of the Cappuccinelle property was passed to the Municipality Council. Hence, the UNESCO Program service presented a restoration proposal for the ex-convent<sup>76</sup>, with the aim of preserving it by assuring proper maintenance and public accessibility. Moreover, the proposal includes the cultural purpose of the "Isola Pontecorvo"<sup>77</sup> and of part of the Avvocata neighbourhood by the

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<sup>74</sup> Decrees no. 232, 01<sup>st</sup> December 2005 and no. 568, 03<sup>rd</sup> July 2009 approved by the Regional Director of landscape and cultural assets of the Campania Region (*Direzione regionale per i beni culturali e paesaggistici della Campania*).

<sup>75</sup> Among public interventions there are: the transformation of historical buildings in social housing buildings, the recovery of the Ventaglieri Park; the restoration of *via Pignasecca*; *via* and *piazzetta Olivella* including the monumental staircase of *Montesanto* (completed); the recovery of the *Vico Lepri* school complex; interventions in the *Trinità delle Monache* convent (considered the most relevant monumental and landscape centre in the area); the escalator system between *Via Ventaglieri* and *Salita Cappuccinelle*; the *Montesanto* metro station (Line 1), the Funicular change Funicular – circumflegrea, connected with metro Line 2 (construction work is about to start); the *Diaz* and *Montecalvario* stations (work in progress) and the cableway project Museo – Museo (Resolution no. 905, 2015).

<sup>76</sup> The restoration motion is included in the Enhancement Program of the Cappuccinelle Complex.

<sup>77</sup> Resolution no. 905, 2015.

restauration of key public and private buildings aimed at creating the “neighbourhood of the arts” (*quartiere dell’arte*). The plan includes also Nitsch Museum, the cultural structure next to the Scugnizzo Liberato. This objective is part of a wider project of artistic and cultural improvement of the historical centre. As discussed, the Scugnizzo project concerning the uses (e.g. craft, culture, etc.) met the expectations of UNESCO and of the public authorities. In July 2019, several public authorities<sup>78</sup> signed the Institutional Development Agreement – Naples City Centre (*Contratto istituzionale di Sviluppo – Centro storico di Napoli*). The agreement assigned a capital of 7.500.000 euros to restoration of the ex-Cappuccinelle. The funds will be invested in the 2014 enhancement project which is part of the operative plan Culture and Tourism - FSC 2014/2020 (*Cultura e turismo*). This combination of funds, community and public interests shows an innovation in terms of urban strategy, explicitly supported by the Municipality, as evident from the words of Massimo Santoro:

*“It is a particularly innovative operation that being undertaken in the ex-Cappuccinelle. In fact, we are organizing activities that fit with the inhabitants’ uses and practices. We could have said: ‘Project financing!’ and surely a private investor would have invested in the project. Instead, we decided to make another choice and we will keep looking for financing for the restoration of these assets. These buildings are not well preserved. Our objective is to intervene with these buildings in a way that is compatible with their current use through opportunities of financing that present itself to us.”* Massimo Santoro

In the interim stage of the financial transfer, the Municipality wants to develop a participation project with the Scugnizzo community. As Massimo Santoro<sup>79</sup> states, it is a very delicate stage since it will probably find the disagreement of the community that often claims exclusive rights on building, although in violation of the Municipality regulations. The restoration project will follow public procedures set by local building regulations and national laws concerning cultural heritage, i.e. it will need to be approved by the responsible superintendent. In this regard, Santoro also highlights that the physical alteration of the complex is an unsolved issue since these buildings are managed by people that have low or no expertise in matter of cultural good and restoration. Although conflicts might arise between Soprintendenza’s requirements and those claimed by current users, it is significant to underline the relevance that the cultural value of the Cappuccinelle has for the Scugnizzo community. This is witnessed also by an important collection of memorabilia which includes documents, stamps, writings, wall paintings and

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<sup>78</sup> Among which: Ministry of Cultural Assets and Activities (MiBAC), Naples Municipality Council, Campania Region and Ministry of Southern area.

<sup>79</sup> Interview with Massimo Santoro. Naples, 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2019.

ancient tools. This former collection is displayed in the small museum at the entrance of the ex-convent.



**Picture 14. A view from the rooftop**

## 15 The economic model

According with the “civic use” (*uso civico*) model, the Scugnizzo community autonomously defines its own rules of use of the ex-Cappuccinelle, including any decision on its economic life. Though partially tested, the economic model of the Scugnizzo is still in an initial phase. The aim of the community is to create a “mutual aid fund”, inspired by models of “regenerative” welfare, namely a system based on facilities which are able to regenerate the community economy. Profits produced by cultural activities should generate – as they already did – outcomes to invest in other material and immaterial activities such as courses and physical redevelopment of the spaces and, thus, this model shall support self-employment. Ideally, the fund should absorb urgent needs of community workers and, at the same time, safeguard the sustainability of the overall (economic and not) system. To guarantee fairness and balance, community representatives have been charged with the responsibility to manage the overall economy of the ex-convent. In particular, fundraising and mediation between community and institutions are assigned to them.



*"To define our model, it has been very important to take part in 2017 – along with the ex-Asilo Filangeri - to Culturability, a national call promoted by Unipolis foundation<sup>80</sup>. This was an opportunity to shape the model we would like to proceed towards. We transform the old Cappuccinelle in a new factory where materials and knowledge are re-processed and promoted. For this reason, we want to support in parallel the production of the spaces and the inclusion of young generations." Fabrizio Vitali*

It must be noticed that the Scugnizzo community – as others common goods - has a short-term "adoption" of the complex which depends on the current Mayor's mandate<sup>81</sup>. Activists underlined that this impacted on the implementation of a long-term and strategic vision of the project, weakening their efforts towards a more consistent fundraising. Current economy and management of the Scugnizzo are strongly related to the restoring and caretaking of the space, programmed in relation to structural priorities and/or emergency. So far, the Scugnizzo community has relied almost exclusively on self-financing, investing profits from cultural events. These, indeed, have mainly been used to repair and restore the structure and its facilities. In addition, artisans independently finance materials and tools to develop laboratories, which include both courses held on a volunteer basis (children and adolescents) and paid (adults); self-produced objects are sold to generate income to be reinvested in the activities (e.g. materials) and still in the space itself (maintenance). However, in 2017 it was launched a crowdfunding campaign to support the renovation project of the theatre. In particular, this profit was invested in the sound insulation of the space, protecting the neighbourhood from noise<sup>82</sup>.

In conclusion, the city pays for ordinary expenses such as utilities and security guards, as mentioned above, because they do not have enough economic resources to invest in the common goods. Despite this, other relevant details need to be mentioned. Naples' policies are aimed at transforming the city assets into social infrastructures that are of public value and have social impact (Iaione, 2019). Hence, it considers the social value (e.g. community service) within the economic value. Consequentially, the public real estate has gone from an asset that compensates for municipal losses, to resource that enables self-organisation groups to act for the collective interest. Therefore, it changes the main objective of the Municipality from maximizing economic value (exchange value) to maximizing social value (use value). Furthermore, the municipality provides the building for free for the community. The procedures concerning the traditional

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<sup>80</sup> Culturability is a call for proposals supporting social innovation projects focused on recuperation of spaces. In September 2017, the Ex Asilo won this competition. As Ciancio (2008) highlights, it was the first time that a bank foundation recognized the participation in a contest about social regeneration by giving the award to an informal community.

<sup>81</sup> It must be pointed out that the legal experimentations based on civic uses hereby discussed are linked to the specific mandates of the Mayor Luigi De Magistris (I mandate 2011-2016, and II mandate 2016- ). In other words, the recognition of the "7+1" cultural assets, under the umbrella of the common goods, will be over with the conclusion of the Mayor's mandate. This, it has been argued, represents one of the main criticalities of the Neapolitans approach. Moreover, due to this fact many accused the Mayor of political-electoral alliance with some social movements in Naples. Therefore, in order to ensure a more sustainable and durable process, it has been decided to rely on constitutional principles, re-frame the administrative structure of the City Council (i.e. putting in place the Department of Common Goods and Planning, the Observatory of Common Goods, etc.) and mobilize strong communities of reference (Interview with Daniela Buonanno and Giuseppe Sbrescia. Naples, 26<sup>th</sup> April 2019).

<sup>82</sup> It is the result of a consultation between the community and neighbours which complained about the noise during the night.

assignment of public real estate such as rental payments, expansive municipal charges, complicated procedures about safety standard, etc are therefore free: as occupiers that have been formally recognized, the community is now free from these restrictions (Laino, 2018).

## 16 Communication

Communication is mainly addressed inside the “storytelling assembly”, a discussion space that encourages a new narrative of the common goods by developing communicative strategies interlinked with specific urban issues of the city.

This is expressed in the following channels:

- Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/ScugnizzoLiberato/>);
- Twitter (<https://twitter.com/scugnizzolibero>);
- Instagram (<https://www.instagram.com/scugnizzoliberto/>);
- Website (<https://scugnizzoliberto.org/>).

Facebook and the website mainly present programs and activities. They are also tools used by the municipal offices to monitor the evolution of the spaces, in accordance with municipal resolutions.

## Interviewees

Giuseppe Sbrescia, Naples City Council - Department of Common Goods and Planning

Massimo Santoro, Naples City Council - Director of the UNESCO Big Project (*Grande Progetto UNESCO*)

Maria Teresa Sepe, Naples City Council - UNESCO Big Project (*Grande Progetto UNESCO*)

Daniela Buonanno, Naples City Council - Department of Common Goods and Planning

Fabrizio Vitale, activist of Scugnizzo Liberato

Valerio Figliulo, activist of Scugnizzo Liberato

Enrico Tomaselli, activist of Scugnizzo Liberato

Lina Mele, activist of Scugnizzo Liberato

Gaetano Quattromani, activist of Scugnizzo Liberato

Giampiero Riccio, inhabitant of the Avvocata district

Gigi Monaco, inhabitant of the Avvocata district

Silvana Giannotta, activist of Giardino Liberato

Maria Cerreta, Full Professor at the University of Federico II in Naples – Architecture Department

Gaia del Giudice, PhD Researcher at University of Napoli Federico II – Department of Architecture and activist of Asilo Filangieri

Giaccio, activist of Scugnizzo Liberato

Francesca Paola Milione, PhD Researcher at the University of Napoli Federico II – Department of Architecture

Vincenzo Vidone, ex-prisoner of the Filangieri Institute and activist of Scugnizzo Liberato (<https://scugnizzoliberato.org/servizi-tv/>)

Cristiano Ferraro, activist of Scugnizzo Liberato (<https://scugnizzoliberato.org/servizi-tv/>)

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### 3. The Case of Sargfabrik, (Vienna, Austria)



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## Executive summary

The adaptive reuse of the architectural remains of the former coffin factory (Sargfabrik), the embracing of its past (even if only partially) and as a result combining the idea of a home with that of the activities surrounding death is a surprisingly avantgarde project. And making it more avantgarde is the fact that the housing concept put forward by the Association for Integrative Living (Verein für Integrative Lebensgestaltung, <https://www.sargfabrik.at/Home/Die-Sargfabrik/Verein>) - formed as a bottom up initiative - was based on collective living arrangement, a very much talked about/often supported housing form today, but less so in the 1980s, when the story of the Sargfabrik began (Lang, Carriou and Czischke 2018). The reuse of the Sargfabrik is an illustrative example of how bottom up initiatives can navigate in the bureaucratic field successfully to reach their goals, but of how uncomfortable heritage can be reinterpreted, how strategic forgetting can be employed and how an aptly employed new narrative can influence the wider environment, contributing to its profound transformation on a neighbourhood level. (Pendlebury, Wang and Law 2017)

The Sargfabrik is a housing project with a very clear social and cultural message and explicit social goals, focusing on integration and social equality both among its residents and in its wider neighbourhood. It is a place of integration that develops an urban space within itself. Along with the roof garden, a number of common areas are available for communication and pleasure. The publicly accessible cultural house, restaurant, kindergarten, conference room and a twenty-four-hour bathhouse make it a meeting place for people of different ages and backgrounds.

It is situated in the 14<sup>th</sup> district in Vienna, in an area that had been traditionally full of small workshops but was rather desolate by the early 1980s, when the story of the Association began, as a result of changes in industrial production and city use patterns. The once rather prestigious factory (the largest of its kind in the Austro-Hungarian monarchy) was closed, creating an environment of industrial waste. Although reusing the site required architectural compromises from the Association, it also offered opportunities, and importantly it was available. The building was not under any official heritage protection, still, the members of the Association decided to keep a single physical relic from its past, the chimney. It has been maintained ever since despite the increasing costs. The connection with the factory's history has been strengthened on an intangible level as well, both in the design – one could argue that the balconies resemble strongly a coffin – and in the narrative. The latter has been supported both by keeping the name Sargfabrik and the organisation of two exhibitions on site about the factory's history.

Ties to the history of Vienna appear yet at another level as well: although the specific constellation of the project is very individual, its creation is embedded deeply in the Viennese housing history. Its success is indivisible from the tradition of supporting affordable housing for the residents in Vienna and is part and parcel of the municipality's very conscious project to accommodate innovative living

arrangements and bottom-up social innovation in the territory of its jurisdiction. In this sense it connects the municipal working-class homes (Arbeitshöfer) of the 1920s with the large-scale projects of the 2000s that include the building of a new city district in Aspern. All these housing projects put an emphasis on common facilities, communal living and the tradition of relatively accessible housing.

Coming from the scene of the 1980s green movements, the ecological aspects were always considered to be of outstanding importance for this group of people. These original residents of the Sargfabrik were mostly middle income. They fought very hard for their dream, overcoming both administrative and financial obstacles, and weathering the almost 10-year process between founding the Association (1987) and completing the first phase of the building (1996). (The second phase, the so-called Miss Sargfabrik was finished in 2000.) Importantly, despite the difficulties posed by the long waiting period, the recollection of the original residents is unanimous in a way that these years have contributed to strengthening the community, who have developed effective ways of handling conflicts and resolving disputes.

The Sargfabrik was realised before collaborative housing arrangements became more mainstream, and it can easily be termed as a classic social innovation project. (Oosterlynck et al. 2013) Founding members not only wanted to change the lives of those involved but also had bigger intentions – they wanted to influence an entire Viennese neighbourhood. To achieve this, they have taken integration very seriously, practicing it in different aspects of their daily operation:

- they maintain comparatively affordable rental prices and support a self-sustained social fund to integrate people of different income levels in the Sargfabrik housing complex. 15% of all housing units are reserved for elderly, disabled or displaced;
- they seek to integrate people with different working capacities maintaining a cafe where people with disabilities can work;
- they consciously integrate the world from outside to their daily routines through the public kindergarten, the swimming pool and most importantly the cultural centre; and
- finally, on a more abstract level they integrate the old with the new when they reuse local history to create a new building and environment.

Today, this multi-level integration project is of unquestionable success, with waiting lists for people wanting to move in and similar housing arrangements appearing elsewhere in Vienna. Furthermore, the Sargfabrik has been the topic of countless academic inquiries and political visits, including mayors from abroad. Despite these, the future holds many questions, most importantly that of the sustainability. As it seems now the current cost level could be hard to maintain, the current rent level is lower than in the neighbourhood, but it is doubtful how long this can last. The building complex needs imminent renovation, and so far, the community does not have the required funding. There is also the question of demography and age composition of the community. The original residents have

aged, but they do not want to move out, while many children, who grew up here would like to stay. And finally, the relationship with the neighbourhood is changing – whereas the surroundings used to be run down, it has been gentrifying steadily, partially as a result of general housing market and economic conditions, and partially as a result of the Sargfabrik itself, which brought it new life to the once derelict area.

# 1. Introduction

*"Living – culture – integration"* – this is the motto of Sargfabrik, one of Austria's most complex bottom-up housing projects. In 1996, on the site of a former coffin manufacturer in West Vienna (Matzner, District 14), an innovative style of living was realized by a non-profit housing association. But the Sargfabrik is much more than a housing model— it's a way of life, something that resembles a small urban district, a "village in the city". Since then, the Sargfabrik is admired by many – because it is an unusual mix of public and private, because it is the expression of an individual will and an outstanding example of what can be achieved by a group of people with a shared mission. Grassroots democracy, co-determination, participatory planning and operation, collective ownership – these are the most commonly used terms related to the Sargfabrik project. However, what really made it work is the people and their communication. People who *"wanted to live there, and wanted to live together"*.

Due to the unexpected success and immense popularity of Sargfabrik's apartments, in 1998 the association purchased another small plot on the opposite side of the street and built another experimental unit. In this project, known as Miss Sargfabrik, the architectural focus was again on the community, with the motto "Separated and connected", reflected both in the common spaces (shared kitchen, laundry, library) and the apartments.

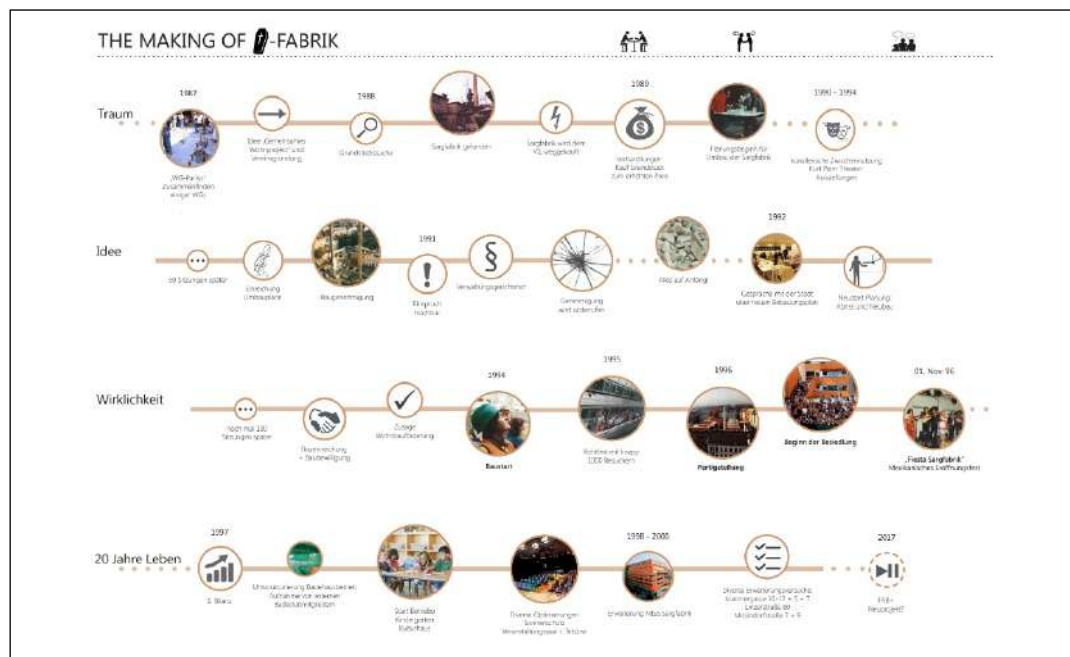
	Sargfabrik	Miss-Sargfabrik
<b>Plot of Land</b>	4711 m <sup>2</sup>	850 m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Property area</b>	2747 m <sup>2</sup>	608 m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Usable floor space</b>	7922 m <sup>2</sup>	4372 m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Start of building work</b>	April 1994	April 1999
<b>Completion</b>	July 1996	September 2000
<b>Total building costs</b>	13,6 million Euro	5,4 million Euro

**Table 1: Main project data**

The project is also characterized by ecologically friendly design and optimized energy consumption (green electricity, composting, solar water heating, etc.).

Besides the dwellings, the building also contains a restaurant, a culture house, a seminar room, a Turkish bath, a swimming pool and a kindergarten, the majority of which are open public spaces. Based on a co-housing structure, the residential complex offers a variety of amenities such as a car sharing system and laundromat. Considering all these functions, it is obvious that Sargfabrik is a professional NGO like functioning similarly to a business company. There is a professional management, a balance sheet, all kinds of supervisor bodies that are involved in the every-day operation. There are responsible parties for all kinds of areas like the bathhouse, the seminar room, the events hall with its cultural program, and many more.





## 2 Anthropological analysis

### 2.1 The story

*"We wanted to make the world better with our engagement, and this spirit is still there inside us."* (SF2: Board member, 2019)

This project has a long history, dating back to the eighties. At that time a group of people got together and raised the idea of *"let's start a fun project where not everything is run-of-the-mill, something that goes beyond the traditions of the nuclear family and makes living interesting – or at least designed in an interesting way."* They wanted to realize a housing association, which collectively accommodates different models of life and cultural possibilities and set up a registered association for integrative living in cooperation with two architects. Their aim was to create a community- and leisure-based housing estate and to design the new living quarters according to their ideas.

At the very beginning it was just a small group of friends (10-12 people), they did not even know what they really wanted, but the essentials were clear: they did not want to live lonely in the city and they wanted to develop something in collaboration with others. These people were coming from the different scenes of civil society (at that time they called it green political movements) – mobility, peace, school, feminism, ecology, etc. They had the same interest, all of them felt an inner mission to make the world a better place to live. During the initial gatherings, they discussed the basic ideas of a housing project and drafted fundamental papers on mutual responsibility for children, shared economies, social and cultural initiatives – utopias of a social-idealistic housing and living situation. And they started to look for a suitable property. One of the options was found in a newspaper announcement, saying that the Sargfabrik, a coffin factory was going bankrupt. Everyone thought the building was too big, too inconceivable. However, they decided to go ahead and have a look. On May 3, 1989 the Association purchased the building.

The first design envisaged the preservation of the old production hall, the housing units were to be placed within this attractive brick building. In order to preserve the hall, a decided disadvantage was taken into account: the south-facing dwellings at the rear faced onto the hall, only their north front projected into the open. The project was submitted for planning permission in this form and was approved. Objections were raised by the Constitutional Court and the project was halted. With all kinds of problems related to submission, zoning, and building regulations, the building was increasingly subjected to moisture, despite the protective measures taken. Eventually, they made it to a point where everything was approved: all of the building criteria, the insulating of steel beams, the preservation of the brick wall outside. But the costs escalated and they had to draw the line. The architects then made a suggestion and the Association agreed:

they had the building permit for renovation, and they decided to follow it by partially tearing the old factory down.

*"...all these collective facilities are actually missing in today's urban planning, where individual homes are being built. But that does not provide a vibrant city anymore."* (SF7: member of Association, 2019)

During the long years of waiting for the different permissions, the Association kept on holding regular meetings. One outcome of these deliberations was the decision about building not a normal apartment block but a "residential home" or hostel (Wohnheim) which would belong to the association and be used by its members. The disadvantage of this solution is that no one actually owns the dwelling used. But this approach also had an important advantage: through subsidies it was possible to actually build those communal facilities which make this "residential home" so special. It was obvious from the very beginning, that beside the dwellings, the community will need some collective facilities like the bathing house, a café, a kindergarten, a seminar room – so all these functions were part of the original idea of the Sargfabrik project.

*"When buying something in my opinion there are two fundamentally different models: Either we buy what we need and then figure out how to get reimbursed later. Or we take a systematic approach and determine: what do we need? How much will it cost? Which other options might we have? But in a way that we get a grip on the office finances. And this way we can determine that each one of us has to contribute a certain amount."* (SF7: member of Association, 2019) – this question was raised in several meetings at the beginning of the project. And finally, this systematic approach was applied throughout the way.

In 1996, the vision of self-defined living together finally became a reality. 110 adults and 45 children moved into the 73 accommodation units. Due to the unexpected success of Sargfabrik's residence and operation, the Association purchased another plot on the opposite side of the street in 2000, and built another experimental house. In addition to the extraordinary architecture of this second building, there are also some special facilities: a socio-pedagogical living community of the Youth office of the City of Vienna; three wheelchair-accessible housing units, small apartments for students and young people, five residential units with studio character as "home office", a guest living unit, teleworking, a club room especially for young people, a library and a communal kitchen with dining area.

Both Sargfabrik and Miss Sargfabrik were committed to participatory design strategies and community engagement: during the planning process (7 years for Sargfabrik, 2 years for Miss Sargfabrik) BKK-2 (later BKK-3) initiated discussions and brainstorming sessions with the potential tenants to find out their personal desires as well as communal aspiration, and ways in which the building would still be functional in 20 years' time.



**Picture 2. Sargfabrik and Miss Sargfabrik  
(picture made by author)**

## 2.2 Governance

*"When I consider the term codetermination, then to me it means that something needs to be decided and I can do a little participating. We were always interested in creating things, in embracing processes and actually influencing their creation. When I take the concept of codetermination a bit further, then it means assuming responsibility."* (SF9: Board member, 2019)

Back in the eighties, when this group of people founded the Association, two objectives were clear: (1) they wanted to share what they had and (2) they wanted to create a "better small society". They always tried to choose the most democratic way of organizing things. But *"democracy is hard work in decision making"* – said one member of the Association. By now, after more than 30 years of living together, they became *"masters of conflict resolution and communication"* (SF1: office manager, 2019).

At the beginning, there was an attempt to reach consensus on every single decision. Sometimes this was a very time consuming and tiring process and the "winners" were those who could stay awake until the end of the debate. But on the other hand, the long debates helped to fully understand the counterarguments. *"This was a great lesson in social skills. Naturally it cost us lots of blood, sweat and tears"* – remembers one member. At certain point they involved an external professional to moderate the debates. This was also part of the learning process.

**The decision-making process** evolved during the years. *"Can you live with that" – this was a magic sentence at the beginning. One didn't have to say "yes, I want it that way" but instead "yes, I can live with that". This was a completely different approach, one that made it possible to enter into compromise without giving oneself up completely. During the construction/renovation works people had to make decisions about million things concerning the design, architecture, materials, etc. BKK-2 had to deal with a group of 70*



*people, everyone having very strong ideas. But every concept was discussed with the people, everything was developed in an organic way, time was devoted for every idea – this could have never happened in a “normal” housing project on the competitive market. “It was like a 7-year ongoing housing symposium” – remembers one of the architects involved in the project. Because everyone wanted to know each other, many of more unusual architectural designs could happen under the premise of communication. When the architects proposed to put all the balconies together, it was obvious that this solution will increase the intersection of everyone. But they agreed that “opening is not to eliminate people’s privacy, but to have the opportunity to open” (SF1: office manager, 2019). It was the time when they realized that the consensus was not efficient enough, so they shifted to a two-thirds majority. It was necessary to arrive at decisions more quickly because of the building deadlines. Though they still aimed to strive for consensus.*

Communication, talking, chatterboxes are the essence of living here. From this aspect, it’s really like a “village in the city”. Everything makes the rounds very quickly. The laundry, the staircase, the restaurant are the main meeting points.



**Picture 3. Sargfabrik meetings** (Source: <http://www.mvd.org/prj/leben-in-der-sargfabrik/>)

## 2.3 Values and identity

Nowadays Sargfabrik has a good reputation, people from all over the world are coming to visit it, study, gather ideas. “Why is there only one Sargfabrik” - they usually ask. Well, on one hand it was a zeitgeist phenomenon. The 80’s in Vienna was a time when the city government supported all kinds of fresh initiatives, bank loans were quite easily accessible, building sites were affordable and people were full of utopian visions about how to develop a better society. In the case of Sargfabrik all these things led to a co-housing model with very strong identity of openness and connection. The main values of this innovative style of living (“Living-culture-integration”) are existing from the very beginning, but one special feature of Sargfabrik is that the status quo is never too long, once a goal is reached, several other goals are identified that invite collaboration.

### 2.3.1 Cultural values

As stated in the project's motto, cultural values play a fundamental role of everyday life in Sargfabrik. People are engaged in various cultural events and activities, and they have lots of common spaces for these purposes. The entity has its own "**Kulturhaus**" (<https://www.sargfabrik.at/Home/Kultur/Kulturhaus>), which has already secured a permanent place in Vienna's cultural scene through its varied programs and events. With its high quality design, programmable lighting and sound equipment and the flexible use of space, the room is suitable for concerts, dance and theatre productions, readings, children's theatre or clubbing. The cultural program of the Kulturhaus covers a great variety of European and non-European music, from jazz to world music and folk traditions from the most diverse cultures in the world. The concert hall has a capacity of 300 people, and there is a small bar for snacks and drinks outside. Sargfabrik organizes about 30 concerts per year.

The cultural programs for children are also very popular, they are a particular attraction for the young audiences.

When there is no other event, the hall can be used by community choirs to sing or it can be rented by music groups to rehearse. The vast majority of the audience are citizens of Vienna (and not just from the neighbourhood). In Vienna the small concert halls like this can get a subsidy of 100,000 euros/year from the City Council. This subsidy plus the income coming from the tickets are adequate to balance the high performance fees and operating/maintenance expenses.



**Picture 4. Concert hall (picture made by author)**

The Sargfabrik's children house (<https://www.sargfabrik.at/Home/Kinder/Kinderhaus>) offers space for varied and exciting activities which strengthen the creative learning process of children. It is a private institution subsidized by municipal funds. Although the kindergarten operates within the public educational framework, as a private institution it is maintained by the community of the Association.

The Kindergarten has a capacity of around 60 children between ages 2 and 6. They are divided into three groups and supervised by trained kindergarten teachers who have German, Turkish and Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian as their mother tongues. The pedagogic principles are based on the teachings of Maria Montessori. In the

Deliverable 2.2

Observatory Case report: The Sargfabrik

afternoons, after-school educational support is offered. The children have access to the art and craft rooms. Each week they are accompanied to the bathing house. They regularly visit the theatre productions in the Culture House and the seminar room is used for gymnastics and other activities. Children's meals are produced in the Sargfabrik Café-Restaurant.



**Picture 5. Kindergarten (picture made by author)**

### **2.3.2 Social inclusion**

Social inclusion/integration was also part of the original mission of the project. The intention was – and still is – to “*mirror real life*” (SF3: architect, 2019). This is why they are so concerned with involving and integrating various groups of people. There are currently around 150 adults and 60 children living in the 112 accommodation units. They provide space for a socio-pedagogical living community of the City of Vienna's Youth and Family Offices. There are also seven places for disabled people and six accommodation units with limited contracts for tenants in need of short term housing and social housing for refugees.

In Miss Sargfabrik many flats are between an area of 30 and 70m<sup>2</sup>, because they wanted to enable single parents and singles to also participate in the project.

*The Association also found a way to involve interested parties who could not afford living here. As the building is a collectively owned residential housing, no one would be eligible for social benefits to support rental payments or housing costs, so an internal distribution system with social fund was created (a fixed fee of 27 cents per square metre useable living area is levied for a solidarity pool). This money is distributed in the background – no one knows the specifics. There are two ombudsmen who allocate the money to those who cannot afford the rent. This is kind of an internal social transfer. Also, for those who could not afford it, the association has taken on part of their mortgage, or these residents pay it back slowly over very extended periods. There are also some social donation of people who lived here before they died (one of them is a former Hungarian refugee of the '56 revolution) – these funds are also allocated for social housing.*

### **2.3.3 Solidarity economy**

The Café-Restaurant Sargfabrik situated right at the entrance of the building is a typical pub-restaurant, functioning as an important meeting point for residents. In addition to the culinary purposes, it also has a social mission.

*As a socio-economic enterprise, they offer people over the age of 50 a temporary job in order to increase their professional know-how and thus their chances on the job market. The restaurant is operated by Der Kümmerlei, the social-economic employment project of Job-TransFair GmbH (<https://www.bfi.wien/ueber-uns/organisation/abteilungen/job-transfair/>). It is funded by the Public Employment Service of Vienna. This model can be considered as a win-win situation for all parties. The Sargfabrik community benefits from the services provided by the restaurant, and at the same time with its tolerant attitude and supportive atmosphere it is an ideal working place for these people.*



**Picture 6. Café-Restaurant Sargfabrik**  
(picture made by author)

### 2.3.4 Jobs and voluntary work

An “office-style” administration is responsible for the necessary organisation and communication needs of the housing administration and management. At the moment fifteen people are employed.

Members of association are actively engaged in all areas of communal life. Communal life is greatly influenced by these important unpaid initiatives and work groups, like for example the planning of the legendary “Sargfabrik Ball”, looking after the garden, the library, organising diverse birthday celebrations and normal parties or running a cooking group that prepares weekly meals in the communal kitchen.



### 2.3.5 Architectural and environmental innovation

Numerous architectural and environmental innovations were realized both in Sargfabrik and Miss Sargfabrik projects, for which they were awarded by several prizes. A dense, but at the same time very green architecture was realised. There is a biotope in the inner courtyard and a rooftop-garden. The method of construction used energy saving technologies. A high living quality was received without causing additional land consumption.

The project set new architectural standards in terms of ecological history. Large glass fronts with southern orientation make the 4.5 m high living rooms bright and transparent. Heating is with district heating via wall heating. One of the roofs is equipped with solar collectors for water heating, the other with a spacious roof garden.

People are living in a perimeter block, however, it really functions like a recreational area. The courtyard within Miss Sargfabrik is like an oasis of calm, the dense vegetation provides such a microclimate that eliminates the need for air conditioning even on the hottest summer days.

In general it can be stated that the technical and regulatory requirements did not lead to compromises but raised creativity and brought innovative solutions.



**Picture 7. Rooftop, green areas, solar collectors (picture made by author)**

### 2.3.6 Heritage protection

*"We rather look into the future, but sometimes we remember..."* (SF9: Board member, 2019)

*"The history is alive...even if it's a little morbid"* (SF3: architect, 2019)

Heritage protection comes in two forms: the protection of the building and the protection of intangible heritage.

Today, only the layout of the new building, the still standing chimney - and the name Sargfabrik ("coffin factory") - are reminiscent of what was once the largest coffin factory in the Austro-Hungarian monarchy – the "Maschner & Söhne". Although the first designs envisaged the preservation of the old production hall (the housing units were to be placed in this building), later it became clear that the old building could not be saved and it was replaced by a new building – preserving only the original development structure. The chimney still stays in the middle of the building complex, as a symbol of the past.

Although heritage protection is admittedly not very important for the community, they decided to preserve the past in the name of the project. This turned out to be a smart decision, as it often raises the question "where does it come from" and then the old stories can be told.

The community has already organized two exhibitions about the old factory, which attracted many visitors from the area and proved to be a great opportunity for collecting memories from the past and keeping the heritage alive.



**Picture 8. Before and after re-use (Source: BKK – and picture made by author)**

### 2.3.7 Other values

Another place that makes Sargfabrik famous is its bathing house. The bath is open to the community residents free of charge throughout the day, but there are also about 500 paid bath members. Here one can experience diverse international ways

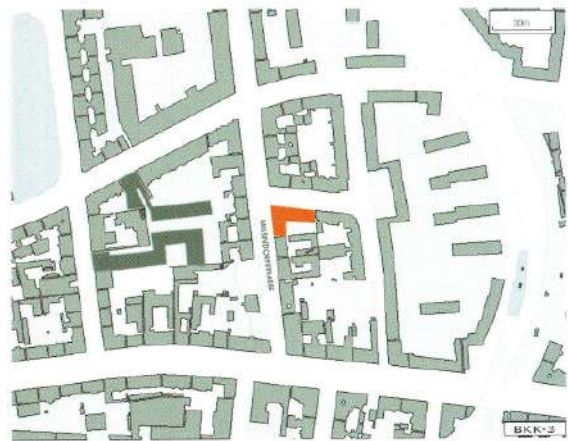
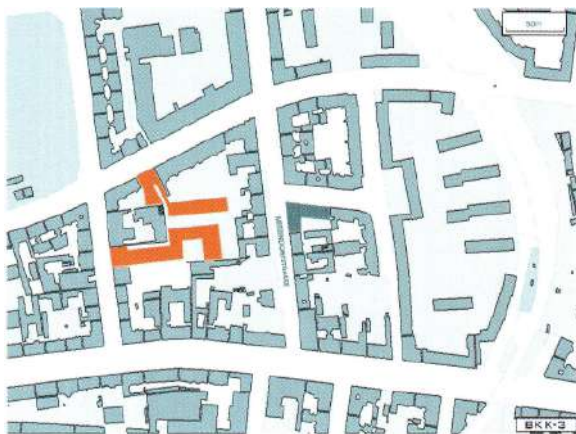
of bathing: there is a Finnish sauna, a cold water pool, a tepidarium and a heated swimming pool. The bathing house is open for members 24 hours per day. Support is also offered for disabled bathers, and there are timeslots allocated for babies, small children and events organized by residents.



**Picture 9. The famous Badehaus (picture made by author)**

### 3 Architectural analysis

#### 3.1 Main characteristics of the buildings



**Picture 10. Location of Sargfabrik and Miss Sargfabrik (Source: BKK-3)**

The housing scheme was designed by a group of young architects, BKK-2 (later BKK-3 <http://www.bkk-3.com/>).

The structure of the coffin factory was not very stable, and despite the protective measures, during the long years of waiting for permissions the building was increasingly subject to moisture. Because of the serious corrosion of the old wood



structure and Vienna's strict thermal insulation regulations it seemed a better solution to build a new building. Although there are not many reserved parts, the architects worked hard to preserve the layout of the original factory. The central long-shaped pool is the main space of the former production hall. The new block is a completely new structure with the exception of the chimney. It took ten years of planning and three years of construction, and finally it was opened in 1996.

At the beginning it was a bright orange building. This colour resembled the original red brick building of the original factory. (Unfortunately, the paints did not prove to be UV-resistant, so now the building has a "Manner-rose" colour.)

The new Sargfabrik building is a multi-storey maisonette building. This allowed the architects to create rooms with various heights. Bedrooms are up to 2,25 m high, while the halls are of 5m heights. The units are 4,6 m wide and each of them have an individual balcony overlooking the courtyard. The units are placed in rows and can be accessed from an external corridor. They have large windows facing southward. There is a wide choice of apartments for different family arrangements. The whole Sargfabrik has a flat roof with the exception of the façade facing the street, which has a sloped roof in order to achieve visual equity to the rest of the blocks. The roofs were either dotted with solar panels, or vegetation. This solution served two purposes: it was ecological, and it created private outdoor spaces for the families.



**Picture 11. The sloped roof of the façade (picture made by author)**



The open spaces in Sargfabrik are several courtyards, each of them with a communal function (gardens, playground, a small football field, etc.)



**Picture 12. Open spaces (picture made by author)**

The materials used were reinforced concrete and glass. The inner walls could be arranged according to the wish of the residents.

One of the architecturally most significant novelties applied was the “box system”. This means integrating a half-level into the existing grid system. The architects preserved the original development structure, they kept the layout of the building elements and the original 4.8m grid and even the unusual room height of 2.26 meters in the boxes, which however also encompass a double-height space oriented to the south. This reflects BKK’s philosophy that “if one plans intelligently, then extremely low room heights in secondary spaces are acceptable if the living area offers sufficient volume to provide the necessary spatial differentiation”.

*The architects didn’t want to take any risk in designing the building. So first they built a 1:1 testing model of the box, and the residents could test how it works for them. People lived there for a few days, and then the concept was accepted. One “box” (or living unit) comprises of a 45m<sup>2</sup> space on the ground floor and an upper mezzanine of about 70m<sup>2</sup>. Usually a family with one or two children is living in one unit, bigger families have two units. The details of each interior were designed with slightly different adjustments to each individual’s life.*

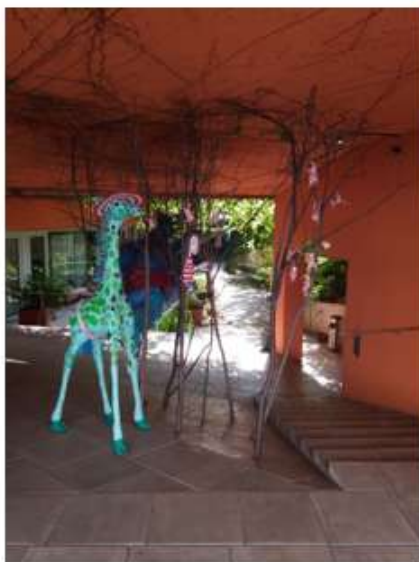
*“I’ve heard building contractors saying an arcade is nothing more than stress and problems with the renters. But in our case the arcade is a delight” (SF3: architect, 2019).*

Beside the chimney, the other symbol of the building is the “balcony”. This is also an invention of the community. At that time balconies were generally constructed of steel and glass, placed on the facades. Here instead uniquely shaped balconies and an arcade was built, so when people exit their housing unit, they are immediately “immersed in life”.



**Picture 13. Special shaped balconies**  
(picture made by author)

The concept in case of “Miss Sargfabrik” was “separated and connected”. Here the flats are much smaller. Instead of erecting partitions and squeezing the required floor area into a fixed order, BKK-3 separated spaces in many of the apartments by using abrupt changes of level in the ceiling and floor, by introducing steps and ramps. The units are connected to each other by a steeply upward-curving ramp.



**Picture 14. Separated and connected**  
(picture made by author)

### 3.2 Adaptive reuse

*"This is an urban planning of shortcuts. We have our own kindergarten, event hall, library, laundry ... much-much more than in a normal housing" (SF3: architect, 2019)*

The main focus of the design of adaptive reuse was communal activity. Before, this was a typical craft-building, with a production hall in the front and apartments for the workers in the back. Now it is a housing complex for living, working and recreation. The property area is 2747 m<sup>2</sup>, while the communal spaces count to 2000 m<sup>2</sup>.

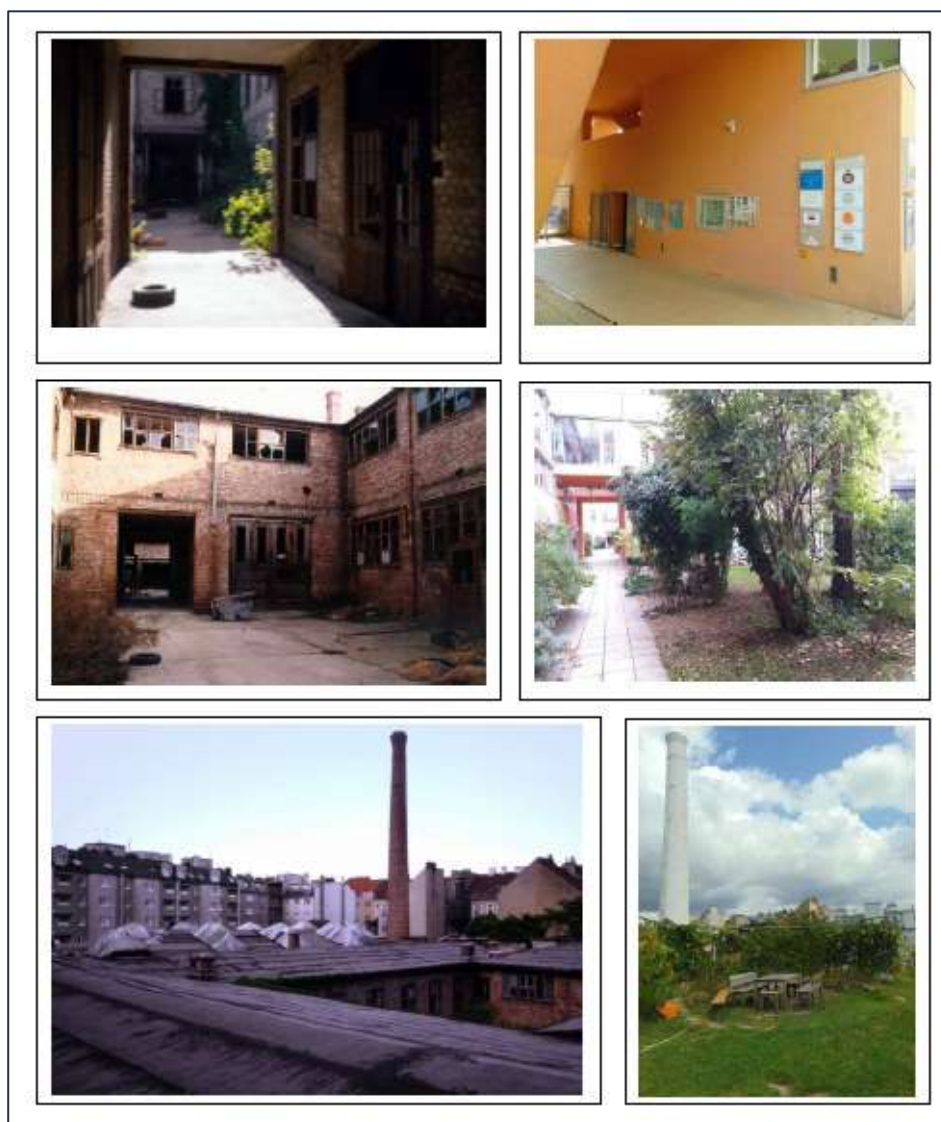


**Picture 15. Public spaces (Source: <https://issuu.com/nushratj/docs/sargfabrik-booklet>)**

The public or semi-public character of the site was an important element in the architectural concept. Entering the site from the Goldschlagstrasse one first passes a café. The access to the seminar rooms lies close to the café, they occupy the ground floor and a mezzanine level. After the coffee shop we pass through a spacious foyer and then the bathing house. The first open space contains a large water basin, with the old, white painted brickwork chimney in the centre of it. The path becomes narrower or wider, depending on the site boundaries. If we go further we arrive to an almost square courtyard with trees and a green garden

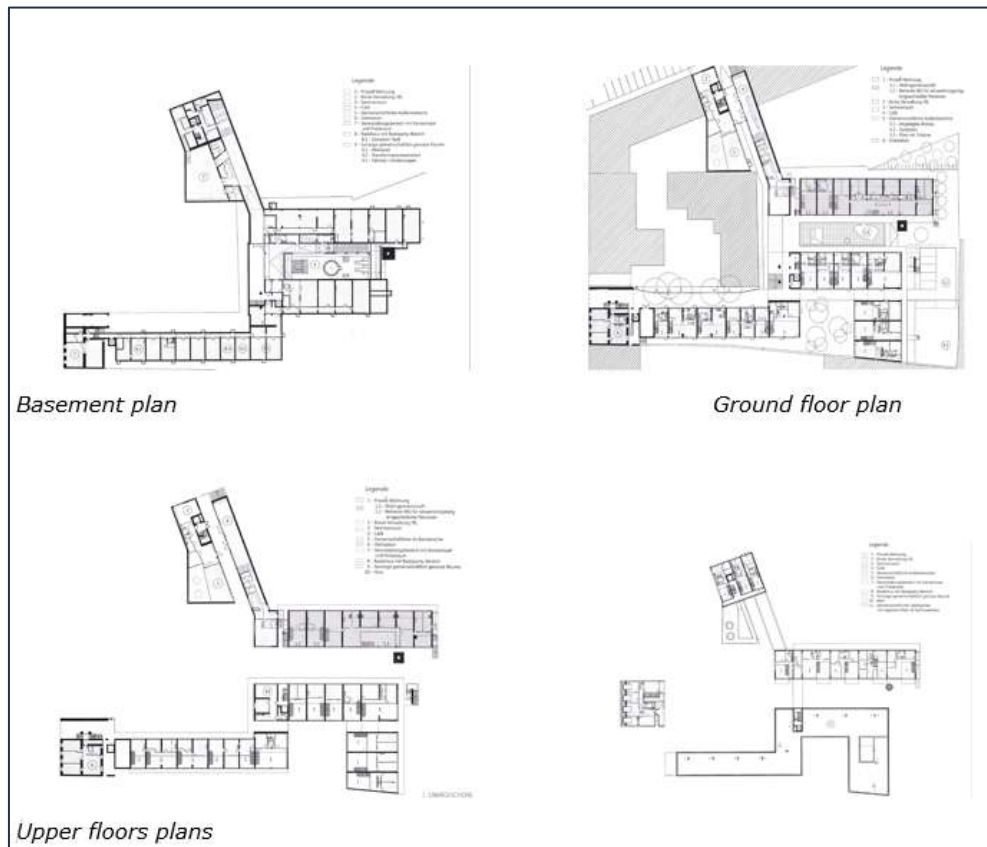


area. Few steps further there is a playground divided in two parts, one for smaller children and one football/basketball field for the bigger ones. On levels one and two, there are open galleries in front of each apartment.



**Picture 16. Before and after re-use  
(pictures made by author)**





**Picture 17.** Sargfabrik architectural plans (Source: BKK-3)

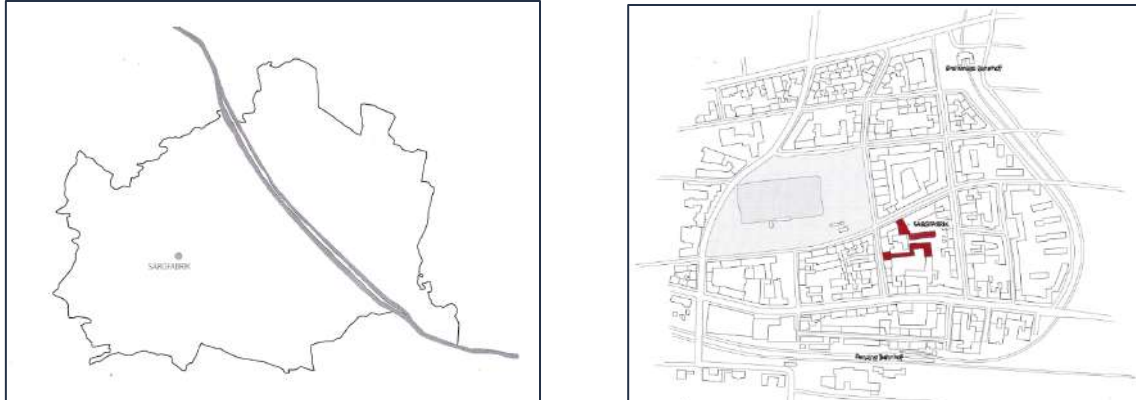
## 4 Context<sup>1</sup>

### 4.1 Geographical and Demographical analysis

Sargfabrik is located in Goldschlagstrasse 169, district 14<sup>th</sup> of Vienna (Penzing). Penzing has an area of 34 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of 92 990<sup>2</sup>. More than 60% of its area is green space, this makes Penzing the district with the second largest green area in Vienna. 83% of the green space is forest, but there are also around 200 hectares of meadows and numerous streams and rivers.

<sup>1</sup> Data from <https://www.wien.gv.at/statistik/pdf/bezirke-im-fokus-14.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.citypopulation.de/php/austria-wiencity.php?cid=914>



**Picture 18. Urban layout (Source: BKK-3)**

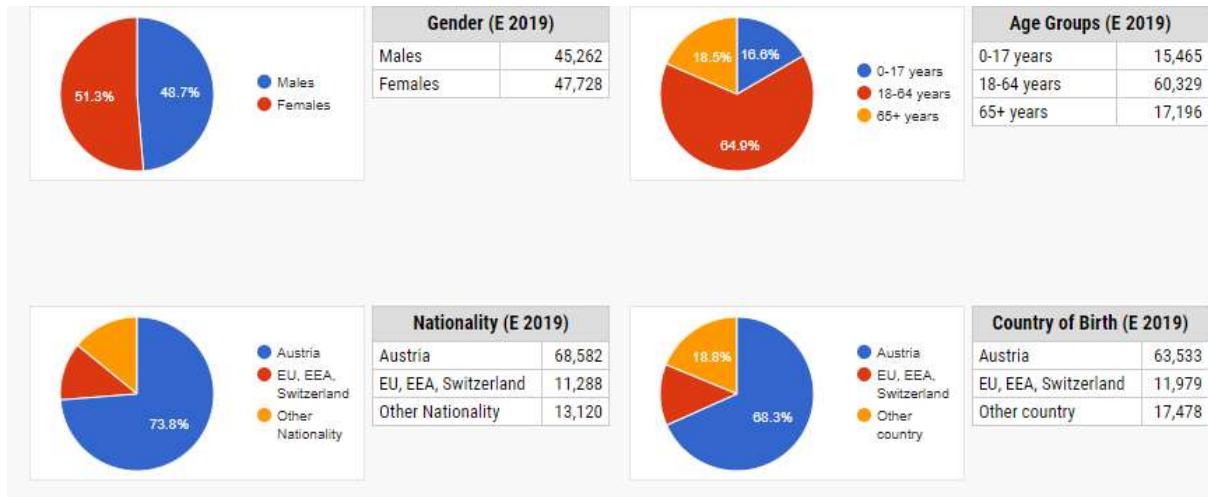
The area used for transport counts only to 9% of the district area (this figure for the whole country is 14%), which is the second lowest value among the Viennese districts. The built-up area is also quite low (29%), with most of it (81%) being residential areas. There are 34 playgrounds and eleven large sports facilities.

There are 44,883 housing units with an average size of 72 m<sup>2</sup>. These units are placed in 12,388 buildings, out of which 7,787 were built after 1945. The average living space per person is 40 square meters. The share of car/person is 0.38 cars, and 34% of Penzinger inhabitants have an annual ticket of the Viennese Lines.

The income in the 14th district is slightly above the Viennese average (22,233 euros/year).

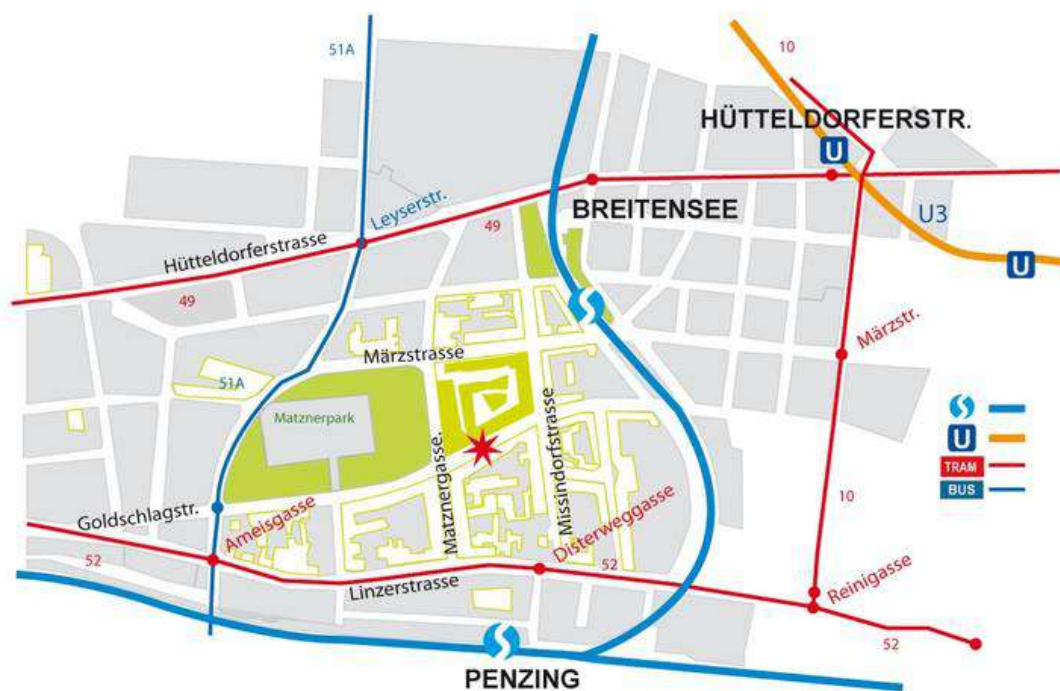
Between 1951 and 1971 the population of Penzing remained unchanged, then until the 21<sup>st</sup> century population losses were registered.

Population in Penzing unchanged and registered until the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup>. After 2001 the population shows a stronger growth. For the coming years a weak population increase (up to 3%) is expected due to the immigration from other parts of the country and from foreign countries.



**Picture 19. Population structure Penzing**

The close neighbourhood of Sargfabrik is Matzner quarter (Matznerviertel). The Matzner quarter includes the Matznerpark and Goldschlagstraße and its borders are Hütteldorfer Straße in the north, the Westbahn in the south, Ameisgasse in the west and the S-Bahn-line in the east.



**Picture 20. Matzner quarter (Source: <https://matznerviertel.at/unser-leitbild/>)**

The quarter has undergone through major changes in the last 20 years - from a former district of factories and workers it became a place of diverse uses. Originally there were houses built in the 19th century with family businesses (small factories). In a typical building there were the housing units in the front and production halls/workshops behind them. During the 70s-80s most of these businesses went bankrupt, so the buildings became available to purchase, to re-build or to renovate. Most of the houses were totally torn down and new buildings were erected. Another popular solution was that they put rooftops on the old houses. In this way, expensive houses were created, but due to the specific features of the housing subsidies in Vienna, these houses still have a mixed population (usually people with lower income live in the basement and very rich people on the top).

Nowadays, there are some attractive open spaces as well as car-dominated, noisy and dangerous zones. However, streets are still monotonous, the one- and two-storey houses with gardens and open spaces have been replaced with higher buildings and the area is becoming like an ordinary big-city district. Recently an association was established, called the "Lebenswertes Matzner Viertel", which is a platform of dedicated residents, entrepreneurs and employees from the neighborhood who are seeking to upgrade the public space in the area. Sargfabrik plays a crucial role in this initiative.

When the Sargfabrik project started, this area was considered as a periphery, but the initiators did not mind it, since these type of sites were available only on the periphery and anyway *"all the interesting things were outside the downtown"* (SF9:Board member, 2019). The public transportation connections to the downtown were also quite poor at the beginning. The situation changed significantly in 1998, when the U3 metro line was completed.



**Picture 21.**

**Goldschlagstraße (picture  
made by author)**



## 4.2 Policies and regulation

The success of the Sargfabrik is indivisible from the general housing policy and urban development environment of the city of Vienna. The Viennese municipality uses housing development as a way to support urban renewal, urban development and equity within the city. These circumstances, the generous housing subsidies available for constructing buildings, made it possible for the Association, who did not receive any special support, to realize the Sargfabrik project and allowed its middle to lower-middle income members to successfully apply for bank credits, and to complete the construction process.

***The provision of housing in Austria** has traditionally been a strongly prioritized area with complex arrangements, whereby support has not only been given to social housing or only to public stakeholders. Rather, a wide array of housing arrangements have been subsidized, and public authorities are involved in the process at various (national, regional and local) levels. Owners, private developers, the construction sector and credit institutions are also part of the stakeholder system. Regarding the financing, spending on housing and other aspects of urban planning has been overwhelming financed by national resources. The specific subsidy forms have changed over the years, but construction subsidies, direct subsidies and even tax breaks are among the forms, although the latter to a smaller extent. Importantly, privately rented, owner occupied dwellings receive subsidies as well, creating a well-functioning and inclusive market for affordable housing for people with different income levels, where the income threshold is set so high that it is way above the poverty line. This has been a key to the creation of social mix in municipal and subsidized buildings. (Reinprecht 2007)*

The municipality is very proud of its achievements, and it clearly states that “The City of Vienna is known for its special focus on social dimension in urban housing far beyond mere economic criteria.” (Magistrat der Stadt Wien 2016) As a result, in Vienna more than 60 per cent of the residents live in homes that are in some way subsidized. About half of the units, approximately 220,000, are owned directly by the municipal housing company, Wiener Wohnen, which is as a result the biggest public landlord in Europe. There are approximately another 200,000 that are owned by associations and cooperatives and receive subsidies from the public sector for maximizing their rents. (Ball 2019; Makris 2018)

Alternative housing projects, similar to the Sargfabrik can thrive under the conditions created by the City of Vienna. On the one hand there are the socially sensitive and socially responsible housing projects, like the ones carried out in the framework of the HabiTAT group ([https://habitat.servus.at/?page\\_id=608](https://habitat.servus.at/?page_id=608)). The group has three projects (two established and one in the making) in Vienna, and they all specifically target people interested in innovative, communal housing solutions. HabiTAT follows the example and model of the German Miethäusersyndikat, does so by lowering the expenses, and creating a financial model, where collaborating and sustainable living arrangements are within the

reach of lower income households.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, Vienna is also full of initiatives also for the middle-classes, often-led by architectural firms, that try to establish a more community-centered and sustainable living style in the city.<sup>4</sup>

An area, where these initiatives are abundant is Aspern Seestadt, the site of a big municipal-led urban development project that tries to create a futuristic city in the fringes of Vienna. A city within the city, but reachable with public transportation, Aspern Seestadt is expected to provide housing for approximately 20.000 by 2028, matched by equal number of workplaces. It is a political project not only in a sense that the city tries to realise many of the smart city ideas conceived, but also that it supports community development, identity building and sustainability together.<sup>5</sup>

Finally, identity building and urban development as supported by the municipality's policies are also exemplified by the rebuilding and redevelopment of the Kabelwerk<sup>6</sup> area. The first of its kind done by the municipality of Vienna, that redevelopment process took place between 2004 and 2010. In many ways there is a close resemblance to what happened in case of the Sargfabrik, but the scale was much bigger. The activities meant the complete transformation of a desolate industrial area, but while keeping the intangible heritage alive and maintaining the identity. Today home to approximately a thousand new dwellings available for people with mixed incomes through the different subsidy systems, the development treasured identity and local history, and took place in close cooperation with the local community. Serving as an example for developments to come later, the realisation was preceded by years of collective work, starting as early as 1996. This long process, just like in case of the Sargfabrik, allowed all stakeholders to find appropriate and satisfying solutions.

## 5 The model

### 5.1 "Wohnheim"

One key aspect of the Sargfabrik project was defining the building as "Wohnheim" (dorm, or residential home). The Association (VIL) acts as the owner, constructor, operator and rental agency of the housing complex.

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<sup>3</sup> This is an important goal, as the collaborative projects tend to be inhabited by better off and more educated residents. See among others the article by Jakobsen and Larsen (2018) on the Danish co-housing scene.

<sup>4</sup> For these projects it is a good start to look at the webpage <https://www.einszueins.at/>, that showcases some examples delivered by a local architectural firm.

<sup>5</sup> Among the sign of the conscious identity building are the street names – they are named after women. For more details, see Hunt 2019.

<sup>6</sup> Magistrat der Stadt Wien n.d.

*Initially, the **Wohnheim model** was designed for student accommodation or homes for elderly. By the Sargfabrik project this model has been adopted for the purpose of living collectively and turned into a sort of cooperative within the framework of Viennese housing provision. This specific organizational legal form provides a resident group access to housing subsidies, yet only for the construction and not for housing allowances. Moreover, the Wohnheim offers a number of exclusions from the general building regulations. These exceptions from several building codes contribute to lower building costs that could be re-invested into the social infrastructure of the project.*

Through the choice of this legal form special subsidies of the city of Vienna could be claimed for educational, social and cultural activities (WWBF, Wiener Wohnbauförderung). Other advantage of this solution is that many building regulations do not count. Operators were allowed to build for example parking facilities in the proportion of 1:10 instead of the 1:1 rule (meaning that they one car park for ten households). Instead of building an underground car park, they saved money for communal facilities. Three out of 11 car parks are now used for car-sharing, the rest is filled with bicycles. As tenants stressed out, they did not need so many parking places, because even at the very beginning they preferred to use bicycles.

This model also allowed the share of public operating space up to 25%.

This model also raises some so-called “security aspects” related to owning a property. This type of security is not present in such a rental-apartment project where no ownership is involved. However, residents feel that in a way this model still make them owners. They possess a large piece of valuable real estate and there is an agreement about how they can retrieve the equity they have invested. So Association members do not consider collective ownership as an unsecure venture. Moreover, they see Sargfabrik rather as an enterprise, in contrast to conventional housing, holding both entrepreneurial and proprietorial responsibility.

*“We are interested in people that keep the spirit of the project – it works like this because people put their heart and soul in it” (SF9: Board member, 2019).*

Through this model the Association can keep control over the “spirit” of the project. There are very strict rules and a complex scanning process for those who want to move in.

## 5.2 Organizational structure

Sargfabrik is the biggest self-administered housing and cultural project in Austria. The association members live in the flats and their rights and obligations are detailed in an internal contract, like in a cooperative. The members pay a “rent”, most of which goes for the repayment of the mortgage. They also contribute to the administrative and maintenance costs of the building (operation of the bathing house and the institutions, contribution to the social fund, etc.). In the case of moving out, members return the flat to the association.

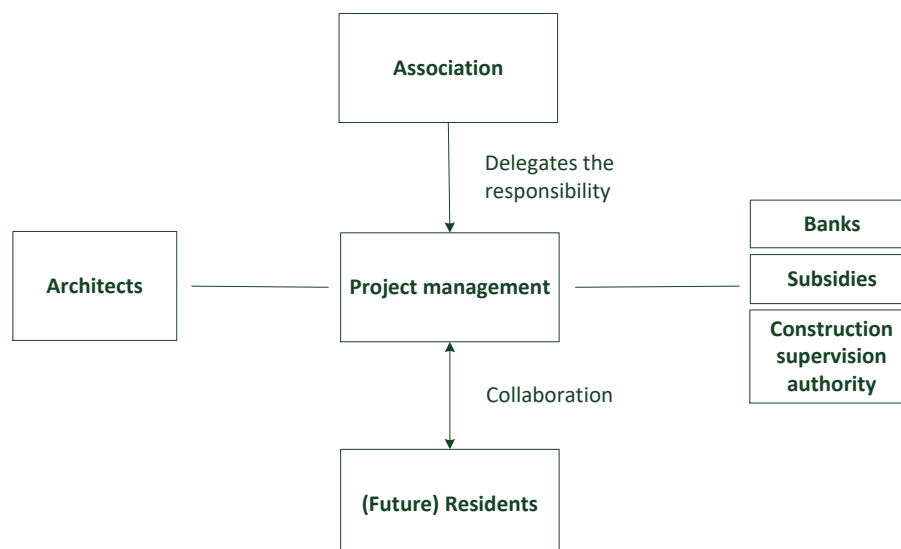
Because of the autonomous status of the Association, over the years occupants could take over a lot of responsibilities and were allowed to participate in the planning process. For instance, they could influence the architecture plans, the materials used, the inside design - so each flat has its own style.

The association has a special model of households and builders. From the very beginning, two architects of BKK-2 were part of the group which initiated the project, they are members of the Association and they live in Sargfabrik. The office of BKK-3 is situated in Miss Sargfabrik. The participatory planning with the addition of the personal incentives and involvement of the architects resulted in a design process which is quite unusual on the competitive market.

The project has a professional project management team consisting of 16 people (two Association members are full-time employees of this team), with a responsible person for each branch of activity (facility management, public relations, culture house, kindergarten, bathing house, seminar room, etc.)

Important decisions, such as statutes, standing orders, business plan, annual planning, budget, flat allocation, rules of use etc. are discussed twice a year on the General Assembly. The general assembly elects six board members (they are acting on voluntary basis). The Board appoints a professional executive director for implementing the yearly work plans and managing all departments. In order to keep the discussions focused, the Board prepares the proposals very thoroughly before presenting them to the GA. The decision-making is supported by the trust between the members, on the principle that *"no one works for its own benefit"* (SF9: Board member, 2019).

Beside the two big General Assemblies there are around ten-twelve smaller meetings a year focusing on particular issues.





**Picture 22. Organizational structure**

## 5.3 Financing

The financing of the project had two major elements: purchasing the site and financing the building costs. The price of the site was 1 million euro. This was financed by a mortgage, but in a very special way. The original community contributed with 250.000 euro (35 people were involved in this action, each of them paid around 7300 euro - ca. 100.000 schilling that time). This was the collateral for the loan, as the Association itself had no money that time. The maturity of the loan was 25 years.

The total construction costs amounted to 13,6 million euro. This was financed from three sources: (1) the Association received an 5,8 million euro support from the City of Vienna (Wohnbauförderungsmittel) – those days any Wohnheim-type project was eligible for this grant; (2) a long-term bank loan of 5,3 million euro (with 20 years maturity – by now this is already paid back by the association) and (3) 2,5 million euros as the own contribution of the owners <sup>7</sup>(the “equity”). In 1995 this was 660euro/sqm, but according to the indexing process applied by the Association, the value of the equity in 2016 was around 1000 euro/sqm.

As Sargfabrik is not just a residential building, but a professional NGO, they also have incomes and expenditures related to the services they provide. As they are a non-profit organization, they make only very little turnover. For most of their activities they get support from the City of Vienna or the Federal government, but they also generate income from fees (kindergarten, cultural house, seminar room, etc.).

The level of the rents is quite low, especially considering the facilities available for the inhabitants. The total amount of the rent is around 8,45 euro/sqm, which is half of the rent paid in the neighbouring houses. Around 30% of the rent goes for the repayment of the loan, the rest covers some general costs of the building (the operation of the bathing house, insurance, hot water and heating, institution support, renovation fund, social fund and maintenance costs).

## 6 Impacts

### Long waiting lists

The “Sargfabrik” is a special model for urban housing. Its success can be proven by very long waiting lists. Currently around 600 people are on the waiting list, being interested to move into Sargfabrik. In fact, there is rarely any vacancy in

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<sup>7</sup> This amount was on top of the 7300 euros per person they already contributed to the collateral

Sargfabrik. People are usually emotionally attached to this building and community, and they live here until they die. In Miss Sargfabrik, due to the lower size of the apartments (and kind of a lower reputation), the fluctuation is higher. Those, who want to live in the Sargfabrik have to fill in a questionnaire, and then they are scanned by a group formed of Association members. The potential newcomers are usually asked the questions “*Why do you want to live here*” and “*Why do you think we want you to live here*”?

### Bringing vitality to the neighbourhood

The Bathing House, the Concert Hall, the kindergarten, the open cultural events and the lifestyle represented by this community turned out to be very popular attractions in the District and vitalised the surroundings (especially the very close surrounding, the Matzner quarter). Programs and facilities at Sargfabrik are provided for all age groups. Also, some members of the Association are actively involved and play a leading role in the revitalization of Matzner district.



**Picture 23. Vitalizing the neighbourhood (Source: BKK-3)**

### Gentrification

*"We cannot buy any site here, because the success of our project. We grew up our own gentrification project"* (SF3: architect, 2019)

Twenty years ago, the west of Vienna was still a factory district of workers, and Sargfabrik was the first project to bring the concept of experimental living. Today, there are many high-quality residential groups nearby, so the self-organized business model has also led many new communities that are effective in organizing themselves and bringing vitality into the area. Now everybody is advertising the area with the Sargfabrik project, and the sites in the neighbourhood became quite expensive.

### Trendsetting model

Sargfabrik is not just a building for living, but also for meeting, communication, recreation. It became a trendsetting model for an urban and modern way of living. It has hundreds of visitors every year: students, architects, living communities, experts of housing and social activities are all interested in the projects and the keys of success. Asking many people living in the building complex, the answer was always the same: *"the key of success is people, open communication and collaboration."*

## 7 Future challenges

*"Back then, people had little money and lots of ideas. Now, they have much more money...but still many ideas"* (SF9: Board member, 2019)

One of the specifics of the project is that it is never completed, there are always new goals, new ideas, new challenges. Seven years ago there was a GA dedicated to "The future of Sargfabrik", where a record number of Association members showed up to re-think the future and develop new project ideas. Another big meeting with the focus on the future is planned for November 2019.

One of the most urgent issues is to think about how to finance the building when it gets older, how to keep it in good condition.

It is also the moment, when the interest of the Association is different than the interest of the individual people. The Association also need to look at the big picture. Most of the original inhabitants are getting old, their children left, but they still live in big apartments and do not want to move out. The Association is trying to find an adequate solution which serves everyone's satisfaction.

It also needs to be considered how they can change their regulations to avoid that those who want to stay pay the part of those who want to move out. As mentioned earlier, when someone leaves, the Association has to pay back their personal equity. At the beginning they created a system where interest is paid on the personal equities. Normally, the interest should be discounted with the depreciation of the apartment. However, they wanted to encourage the growth of the personal equity. The idea was that the property would accrue value and that everyone should profit from this added value. But they did not consider that the building is naturally aging and there will be a need for new infusion of funds to renovate it. This was an error in planning.

The Sargfabrik model doesn't provide security for the youth either. When the first generation moved in, there were several children of similar age. They could get together on a daily basis, they were raised among adults with different behavioural pattern and different lifestyles, but always in a very supportive ambiance. However, the youth cannot afford to stay here because their parents are not allowed to pass on the apartment to them. The apartments cannot be inherited. If

they want to live here, they would have to go through the screening process as anyone from the outside.

During the mentioned GA, the Association discussed 17 new project ideas, including activities to reduce the ecological footprint of the building. to solve the situation of the inhabitants getting older, and also to strengthen the embeddedness of the community into the neighbourhood. In fact, there is a consensus that many things have been achieved inside Sargfabrik, now it is time to think about how the surroundings could and should be improved. VIL members would like to play a pro-active role in revitalizing the neighbourhood through a participatory process.



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## Interviews

SF1: office manager (2019, 22-05-2019) *Interview with an employee in the project management team (Interviewer: Hanna Szemző and Andrea Tönkö)*

SF2: Board member (2019, 22-05-2019) *Interview with a member of the Board, responsible for Communication (Interviewer: Hanna Szemző and Andrea Tönkö)*

SF3: architect (2019, 28-06-2019) *Interview with an architect (BKK-3), involved in designing Sargfabrik and Miss Sargfabrik (Interviewer: Andrea Tönkö)*

SF4: canteen project manager (2019, 27-06-2019) *Interview with the project manager of the Café-Restaurant Sargfabrik, operated by Der Kümmerei (Interviewer: Andrea Tönkö)*

SF5: cultural and financial manager (2019, 28-06-2019) *Interview with an employee in the project management team, responsible for financial and cultural issues (Interviewer: Andrea Tönkö)*

SF6: teenager tenant (2019, 28-06-2019) *Interview with a teenager living in Sargfabrik with her parents (Interviewer: Andrea Tönkö)*

SF7: member of Association (2019, 28-06-2019) *Interview with a member and founder of the Association, involved in the project and living in Sargfabrik from the very beginning (Interviewer: Andrea Tönkö)*

SF8: educator (2019, 16-06-2019) *Interview with an employee in the Children's House (Interviewer: Andrea Tönkö)*

SF9: Board member (2019, 09-07-2019) *Interview with a member of the Board, responsible for Communication (Interviewer: Andrea Tönkö)*

## 4. Färgfabriken (Stockholm, Sweden)



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## Executive summary

[Färgfabriken](#) is a platform and exhibition venue for contemporary cultural expressions, with an emphasis on art, architecture and urban planning established in an industrial building built in 1889. The building previously accommodated a paint factory, from which it also borrowed its name. Färgfabriken is run as/by a foundation and was founded in 1995 by Alcro-Beckers AB, ColArt Sweden AB (both owned by [Lindéngruppen](#), a private industrial company) and [SAR](#) (Swedish Association of Architects). Since its creation, Färgfabriken has not only become a key cultural institution in Stockholm, but has also pioneered a model of building inclusive, participatory processes through art and dialogue. Through a cultural agenda that conciliates architecture, arts and urban planning with contemporary societal issues, Färgfabriken remains a significant actor in Stockholm, with a great impact on the development of the surrounding area and on the inclusion of a great variety of stakeholders in decision-making processes.



Picture 1. Färgfabriken. Photo (cc) Eutropian

# 1 Timeline

- 1889 – the building is built by Helge Palmcrantz, to accommodate the company's production
- 1902 – the paint firm Beckers moves into the building
- 1985 – Beckers is bought by Lindéngruppen, owned by Ulf G. Lindén
- 1987 – Beckers Art Award is established
- 1994 – the paint factory stops its production and Ulf G. Lindén plans to create a cultural venue
- 1994 – first visits by a group of artists and architects to the Beckers building
- 1995 – Färgfabriken Foundation is created
- 1995 – First basic renovation works are done and first exhibition "Triangular" is held in May
- 1996 – Interpol exhibition and first important events about architecture
- 1998 – Stockholm is European Capital of Culture with a major contribution from Färgfabriken
- 2001 – Lindéngruppen sells Alcro-Beckers, the decorative paints business of Beckers
- 2001 – Stockholm at Large exhibition introducing the Färgfabriken method
- 2008 – Jenny Lindén Urnes, the daughter of Ulf G. Lindén takes over the company and the foundation's chairmanship
- 2009 – Ulf G. Lindén dies
- 2008 – Jan Åman resigns as director, leadership change in the organisation
- 2009 – industrial activity ceases Lövholmen, all factories are relocated
- 2010 – Building Blocks exhibition
- 2012-2013 – Stockholm on the Move exhibition
- 2011 – second renovation of the building by architect Petra Gipp
- 2020 – 25th year anniversary, with plans of social exhibition Symbiosis

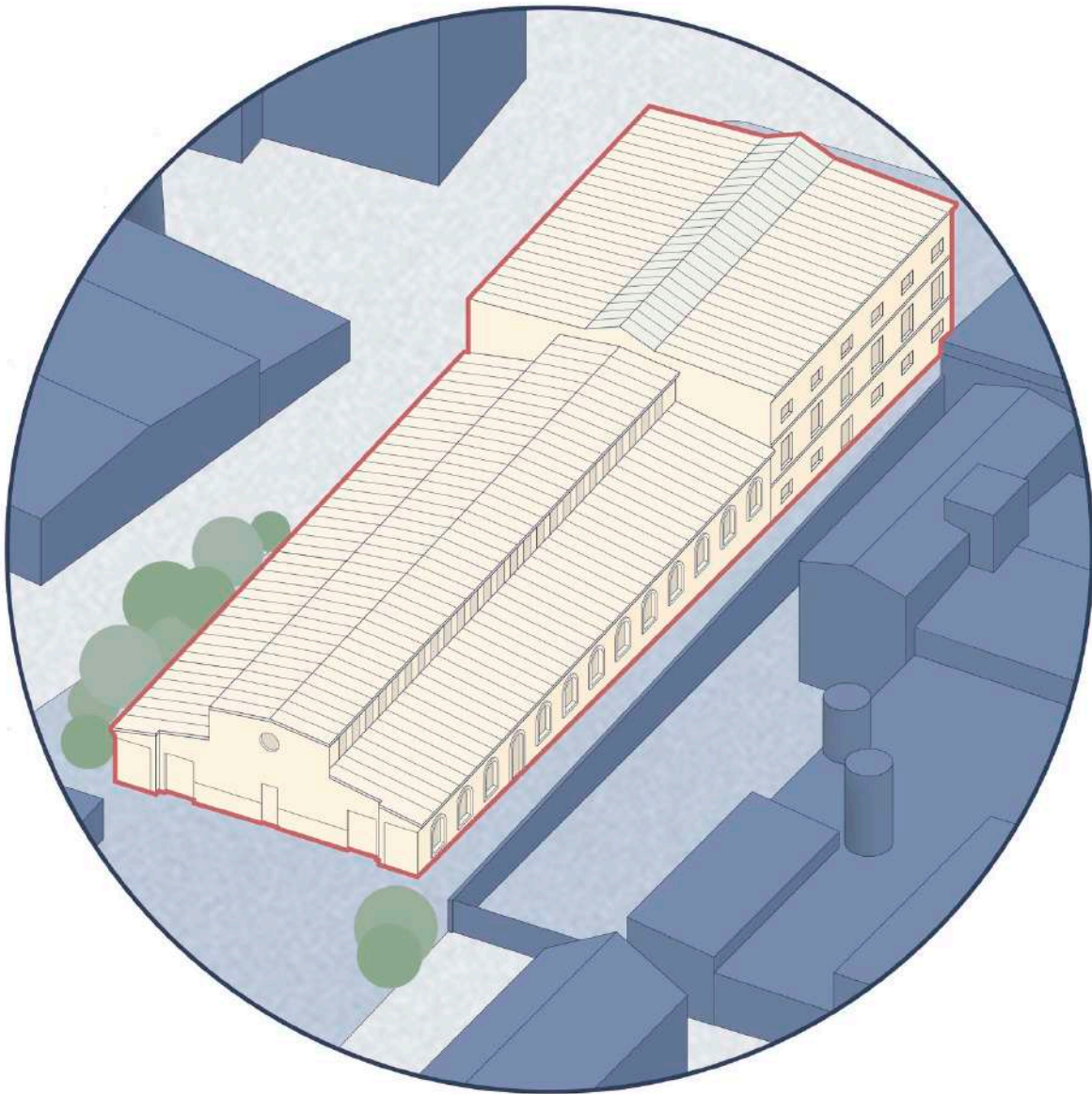
# 2 The story of the building

Färgfabriken's building was built in 1889 in Lövholmen, an industrial zone in Southwest Stockholm, by Helge Palmcrantz. The Palmcrantz House, as it was called at the time, was specifically designed to accommodate the reaping machine, mower and machine gun production of the Palmcrantz company. In 1902, the paint firm Wilhelm Becker moved its production in the building, leaving a more central area of Stockholm that became unsuitable for industrial production. In 1974, Ulf G. Lindén became managing director of Beckers and in 1985 his company [Lindéngruppen](#), focusing on the long-term development of industrial companies, became owner of Beckers; this ownership also included the company's properties in Lövholmen.

Ulf G. Lindén and the Lindéngruppen were key protagonists in the creation of Färgfabriken. When the paint factory discontinued its production, the art-lover

Lindén began to make plans for a cultural venue. In 1994, when discussions began between a group of artists and architects and Beckers, the building was abandoned, practically a ruin, with its walls standing but without a roof and with trees growing inside the main hall.

**“This was just a ruin. The wall was there, this iron construction in the main hall was intact, but there was no roof. Just a ruin. Beckers said we can take over, use it for free, if we can find a sponsor for reconstruction. I thought this would be a suicide mission but we understood that it is architecturally an amazing space.” Thomas Lundh**



Picture 2. The Färgfabriken building. Image by Jorge Mosquera

### 3 The initiative

**“We presented an idea to do something else, between contemporary art, fashion, design, architecture, at the same time be very open for partnership.**



**That time when you were a painter or an artist you didn't want to work with other companies. It was unusual at that time. It was in the papers that we sold our soul." Thomas Lundh**

Färgfabriken ("paint factory" in English) was created in 1995, as a result of collaboration between the Association of Swedish Architects (Svenska Arkitekters Riksförbund), Alcro-Beckers, ColArt and a group of artists and architects. In the 1990s, the paint company Beckers, owner of an empty industrial building in Lövholmen, was interested in building collaboration with architects, in order to open up a new market for its products. Coincidentally, a group of artists and architects including Jan Åman, Thomas Lundh and Elizabeth Hatz had been for long discussing the idea to open a space for art activities and reflection on architecture and contemporary art. Through Elizabeth Hatz, then chairwomen of the Association of Swedish Architects, these two ambitions met and the group visited the building in Lövholmen.

**"For Beckers, it was not so much about collaboration between different fields, architects and other partners. This company, producing paint, just wanted to reach out to architects because they saw the construction industry as a big market for them." Thomas Lundh**

**Sponsorship:** Lindéngruppen's role in facilitating the creation of Färgfabriken is due to the engagement of Ulf G. Lindén, its former owner. When the building in Lövholmen stopped its paint production, Ulf G. Lindén, inspired by his love for art, decided to use the space to create a cultural venue. While Lindéngruppen's sponsorship is a philanthropic gesture and a continuation of the company's engagement with arts through the Beckers Art Award, Färgfabriken as a cultural venue could also help the company reach out to new fields and explore new ideas for its own development. In the meanwhile, the creation of a foundation and the separation of Färgfabriken's daily operations from the company also ensured the curatorial independence of the new cultural centre.

Beckers offered the use of the building for free, if the group finds a sponsor for the building's renovation. Beckers' plan on the longer term was to demolish the building. However, with pressure from the artists, the building received heritage protection from the municipality. The artists' involvement and their capacity to bring in funds convinced Beckers. In 1995, a foundation was created with the participation of Alcro-Beckers (still owner of the building), ColArt and the Association of Swedish Architects, with Alcro-Beckers taking a more important role.

**"It was a philanthropy issue, but not only that. We knew that the questions we discussed here both within architecture and society we can use in our business because it opens up ideas and gets another perspective of things. It helps us think about the future and where our businesses can develop." Joacim Björk**

Färgfabriken opened in May 1995 with the exhibition Triangular, bringing together artists from Sweden, Mexico and Guatemala, funded by international development aid funds. Färgfabriken's second exhibition, [Interpol](#) gave the organisation nationwide visibility in 1996. It was a group exhibition, but the most memorable event of the opening was a performance by Oleg Kulik, a Russian artist: he acted as a dog on a chain and losing control of his performance, he bit the leg of the vice-

mayor for culture who opened the exhibition. Director Jan Åman called the police and the next day the incident was covered by all media outlets, creating an immediate visibility for Färgfabriken.

**"Färgfabriken became famous as a free space: not managed by the city or the government, it was a non-religious, non-political and non-profit foundation." Pernilla Lesse**

In the meanwhile, in parallel with its art exhibitions, Färgfabriken began to organise seminars about architecture and urban planning and received additional funding from the municipality to run activities discussing the future of the Lövholmen area. In the first years, Färgfabriken has developed partnership with a variety of ministries, municipal agencies as well as embassies and private companies and also began to attract a wider audience.

**"It was quite new for a cultural institution to have very open, transparent collaboration with partners not used to work with the cultural field. And for that we got lot of criticism, mostly from the traditional cultural field, that we were not serious, that we were mixing money with culture." Thomas Lundh**

Färgfabriken's breakthrough was partly due to a lack of competition in the cultural scene of the Swedish capital. The city was poorly equipped with art centres and a temporary cultural vacuum created by the construction of the new building of the Moderna Museet gave an opportunity to Färgfabriken to create a new position in this scene. In a context with a few art institutions owned by the state, the city or private banks, Färgfabriken was conceived as a free place where more open discussions can be held with no external control. In 1998, Stockholm was European Capital of Culture and Färgfabriken, as its main partner, became internationally known. In 2001, Lindéngruppen sold Alcro-Beckers, the decorative paints business of Beckers to the Finnish company Tikkurilla but kept the ownership of the Färgfabriken building.

**"When Lindéngruppen sold Alcro-Beckers, we were very nervous that they would also sell this building. But they kept the building and continued to support the foundation. It was very important for them." Thomas Lundh**

Färgfabriken defined itself as a Kunsthalle, different in its activities from art museums or art galleries. Building its unique profile among art institutions, the organisation also refused to join the star system of art and architecture, and focus on emerging artists and creators instead of established stars. By opening up towards a variety of collaborators, many actors were invited to contribute and shape the organisation.

**Kunsthalle:** In the founding documents Färgfabriken is defined as a Kunsthalle for contemporary arts and architecture with a focus on creating a communication platform for local stakeholders through the making of workshops and seminars. As a Kunsthalle, Färgfabriken is a space for art exhibitions that, according to the definition, distinguishes itself from an art museum by the lack of a permanent collection and from a gallery by the lack of commercial activity.

In the early 2000s, a few exhibitions brought a paradigm shift to Färgfabriken. The exhibition [Stockholm at Large](#), organised in 2001, can be identified as one of Färgfabriken's main turning points. The event brought together urban planners, project managers and students, to look at the city from a distance. For the first

time in Sweden, such a diverse group of local stakeholders came together to work on issues concerning the development of the city of Stockholm and various towns in the metropolitan agglomeration began to talk to each other. The participants were asked to approach the city through the use of a giant map, specifically created for the occasion. The working session revolved around the question “What would happen if 300,000 more people moved to Stockholm?” Participants were mixed up in thematic groups and were asked to look at different issues relevant to the analysis of the city and the projection of its development. A dramatic situation of urban segregation rapidly came out. For the first time, Stockholm was defined as a very segregated city, with little communication among different neighbourhoods. The results of this participatory workshop were so unexpected that it immediately got the media attention. The public reaction was so loud and enthusiastic that the initiative got very well known in the Stockholm and its model of bringing together different stakeholders was labelled as “the Färgfabriken method” and was brought forward in various cities in the framework of the [New Urban Topologies](#) series.

**“We divided people into seven groups, and in each group we invited stakeholders with different backgrounds to collaborate. We had urban planners, project managers from companies and students who were gathering together in mixed groups. To avoid the deadlock of everyday discussions, we put the scenario into the future of Stockholm, 40 years ahead of us.” Joachim Granit**

Building upon the media attention created by Färgfabriken’s early activities, the success of the European Capital of Culture season and Stockholm at Large ensured that Färgfabriken would soon become a national cultural brand. Later on, Färgfabriken’s profile has further expanded with some other experiments. In 2010, the exhibition [Building Blocks](#) invited children to commission architects to build their dream houses at a 1:1 scale. The exhibition, giving voice to children in shaping the urban environment, was a great success and was later invited to a variety of countries. In 2012-13, the event series [Stockholm on the Move](#) examined questions about the development of the city of Stockholm. In 2015, [Experiment Stockholm](#) created a laboratory to address the challenges of the rapidly growing Stockholm region.

**“We need to aim towards the future and use our amassed knowledge and experience as a force to go forward. We have to be at the forefront of where a cultural institution can be, to challenge the status quo and get new ideas, being this platform where different worlds and interests come together as they have not done before.” Joacim Björk**

## 4 The Färgfabriken method

Following Stockholm at Large and its other events focusing on urbanism, Färgfabriken soon became a reference point for community groups experiencing dynamics of segregation and exclusion in their neighbourhood in Stockholm. Accordingly, the foundation developed an expertise in organizing exhibitions and workshops exploring issues relevant to the surrounding urban context, inviting inhabitants and local stakeholders to participate. The methodology rapidly came to be known as the Färgfabriken method, referring to the organisation’s approach

to build interdisciplinary dialogue around urban challenges. Although participatory and multidisciplinary focus groups might sound like a common practice in today's urban planning and management, Stockholm at Large caught the Stockholm public opinion by surprise at the time. The events triggered a broad interest in collaborative ways of working on urban challenges.

**"In a way we are a think-tank. We think it is very important for the development of our future cities and societies to be able to find other angles that help tricky questions emerge." Joachim Granit**

Färgfabriken's success is explained by the innovative and intriguing take that the model has on societal issues. The Färgfabriken method explores in different, unexpected and innovative ways how to approach complex issues by putting in place an interdisciplinary and participatory strategy for problem resolution, using art as a starting point and referring to other disciplines such as urban planning and architecture in a collaborative work including a variety of stakeholders, among which the local inhabitants.

**"We developed a model that finds its strength in being an open platform where different parties from society can meet around societal issues in a creative way, being in the same room as they never come together otherwise. That is the most exciting part. Färgfabriken is not an art gallery. It's a platform for culture, art and architecture that makes discussing and generating new ideas societal issues wonderfully possible." Elizabeth Hatz**

One of the characterising elements of Färgfabriken relies on the ability of invited artists to work in synergistic relation with Färgfabriken, contributing to the making of a better cultural agenda, according to an inclusive, collaborative and transparent decision-making process. Thus, the model is not based on the popularity of the guest artist or expert, but rather on the concept of continuity, aiming at developing exhibitions and projects that stem from a diverse group of people sharing a common vision. Such an approach is favourable to the development of strong collaborations, triggering a much more consistent and long-term local impact, avoiding ephemeral projects that vanish soon.

**"As a cultural institution you can support fancy art but you need to support important ideas." Joachim Granit**

The **Färgfabriken method** is the realisation of the founders' vision for the cultural institution with events and exhibitions helping to discuss important societal issues. Involving a variety of stakeholders, organising workshop situations to create exchange between different positions, mediating between different professional and laic languages and supporting such discussions with exhibitions and artistic research has become a trademark format of Färgfabriken's projects. The art context has proven to be fruitful for discussions, liberating ideas and enabling empathy instead of confrontation.

**"We create these platforms where people can interact without being in the usual roles of client and municipality. They can be in a creative process because they have some knowledge about the city or urban planning, or something relevant to the project. It unlocks many ideas." Karin Englund**



## 5 The area



**Picture 3. Färgfabriken in Stockholm. Image by Jorge Mosquera**

In the 1990s, while most of Stockholm was under construction, the Lövholmen area was a “white spot” on the map. Although the area had been an industrial site for over one hundred years and remained such until 2009, the traces of the industrial crisis were visible already in 1995, and after working hours the area was frequented by drug dealers and prostitutes.

**“People in the beginning told us we are stupid, no one could come this area, especially in the evening. When we had bigger events here, we accompanied female staff to the metro. Nothing happened but it was a very uncomfortable feeling.” Thomas Lundh**

The area surrounding Färgfabriken was gradually provided with basic infrastructure such as decent lighting and a school. Following the introduction of basic but essential public services, it was increasingly easy to attract people to Färgfabriken and the Lövholmen area. Moreover, the major urban changes going on in the city at the time also ignited an interest to regenerate the area. In the 2000s, Stockholm was going through many changes and the introduction of new environmental regulations paved the way for the remaining industrial activities to be progressively relocated further away from the city. As a practical arrangement,

once industries have left Lövholmen, landowners began to offer buildings to artists and designers, protecting their properties from vandalism and attracting a critical mass of art and design activities in the area. Recognising this transformation, local authorities also started to support individual artists with studio grants and Färgfabriken with funding for activities.

**“There is something about the potential of this area, like a blank piece of paper, like a canvass. It’s like a magnet for ideas.” Jan Rydén**

Partly as a result of Färgfabriken’s attractiveness, this previously industrial and abandoned area was hit by a big wave of change, a kind of an unplanned cultural revolution. Although a big part of the area is still left abandoned, the presence of Färgfabriken and of other small art studios that slowly settled in the surroundings suggests a particular vision for the future development of the neighbourhood. Plans for the area, currently in the state of a suspended construction site, depict predominantly residential complexes, threatening the survival of the cultural initiatives that have settled there. Färgfabriken, together with other actors in the area have been promoting the idea of an organisation to manage ground floor spaces and establish a mix of art and commercial spaces.

**“With the right actor you can create a model that would give some hipness for the commercial developer, and studio spaces for the artists. Otherwise they would be just thrown out and the area would become a sanitised version of what you have now.” Jan Rydén**



**Picture 4. Industrial buildings in Färgfabriken’s surroundings. Photo (cc) Eutropian**

## 6 Adaptive reuse and heritage

In the mid-1990s, Färgfabriken was basically locked in a guarded site, for the surrounding industries were still working. It was dangerous even to smoke a cigarette outside, for chemicals were everywhere in the air. Moreover, the area was not at all connected with the city centre and it suffered from a lack of basic services and an overall decadent environment often linked to drug abuse and poverty. However, the building had quite a charming character and the team accepted the challenge to start working there after the first renovation in 1995.

**“When I stood in front of Färgfabriken for the first time I said - wow, it has an incredible character! - with its low façade, the way in which the building meets the water and the topography of the big stone wall. The building looked so robust.” Elizabeth Hatz**

When discussions began between the paint firm Beckers and the groups of artists, the building was in such a bad shape that on the longer run, Beckers wanted to demolish it. The building was lacking a lot of basic amenities: it had a dirt floor, no toilets, no system for ventilation, no heating or hot water and its roof was open. The artists who nevertheless recognised the building’s value were reluctant to accept the building’s fate and contacted the municipality’s heritage department, asking for protection for the building. The department understood the danger of demolition and acted quickly, moving the building under heritage protection.

**“We were very lucky. We had the building, we had access to the building, we had the decision from the authorities that it has to be saved.” Thomas Lundh**

Through their contacts at the Association of Swedish Architects, the initiators approached Skanska, the large construction company active in the area, and received 600,000 Swedish crowns that allowed a basic renovation of the building: restoring the roof, opening the water system, levelling the floors and installing heating in some of the spaces. The renovation itself was quite a simple and humble action, designed by architects Catharina Gabrielsson and Staffan Henriksson, specialised in industrial architecture. The idea was to make as little renovation as possible, supporting the building and not making fancy things out of it. After the first renovation, although it was already suitable for work, the building was still quite uncomfortable and unwelcoming, with its cold spaces. Nevertheless, Färgfabriken’s raw industrial spaces were an important part of its success.

**“If you are a civil servant, you are used to sitting in a controlled environment, a narrow framework. When you come here in this run-down, industrial setting, you are part of this crazy architecture exhibition, there are artists in the room, you are allowed to think much more freely. You have a license to speak more freely.” Jan Rydén**

It was more than 10 years later, that the second renovation turned the building into a state-of-the-art cultural venue. Following the leadership change in the foundation in 2009, Lindéngruppen stepped in, stabilised Färgfabriken’s budget and financed the renovation of the building to upgrade the organisation’s facilities. This second renovation was designed by Petra Gipp and was finished in 2011. As a result, the atmosphere of the building has been altered, it became posher. The ground floor gave space to a new restaurant, adding to the financial stability of Färgfabriken.

Färgfabriken's most important space is its large main hall at the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the building, characterised by monumental pillars and a raw factory interior, used as the institution's central exhibition space. Next the main hall, two smaller project rooms give space for smaller exhibitions and workshops. The same floor also hosts a shop selling books, catalogues and artefacts related to the institution's cultural programme and the office of the Färgfabriken staff. At the top floor, a spacious and bright loft space hosts a variety of events, talks, workshops and occasionally, is rented out for private events. The ground floor, besides the building's main entrance, accommodates the Färgfabriken Kafé and an additional event space.

The Färgfabriken building is protected and cannot be demolished or altered externally. The renovation had a fundamental role in the protection of the site from demolition. The authorities were quite responsive to the need for industrial heritage protection and immediately accepted to collaborate, allowing the renovation to happen. The presence of strong heritage protection policies was very helpful to the creation of the foundation. Besides protecting its building, Färgfabriken has been acting as a catalyst of debates about and different visions for Lövholmen, engaged in the broader discussion about the area's future, the preservation of its industrial character

**"Our vision is to keep much of the historical value of the area. It has so much industrial and cultural history, these are things that should be part of the future of the area and not be replaced by a sterile space." Karin Englund**



**Picture 5. Färgfabriken's loft space. Photo (cc) Eutropian**



## 7 Community involvement

Once Färgfabriken was launched and its building renovated, the biggest challenge of the organisation was to make people interested in the activities happening there and motivate them to reach an area they would not have gone to otherwise. The media coverage resulting from the success of Färgfabriken's events and exhibitions was definitely helpful in attracting a bigger audience.

**"It is as if we were in a no-go zone and would still have an audience."  
Joachim Granit**

Among factories already abandoned or about to close, Färgfabriken has been a catalyst to attract new initiatives in the area and build relationships with them. Continuously reaching out to other art spaces and studios in Lövholmen, Färgfabriken has created a variety of collaborations with different local initiatives. For instance, products from local designers and artworks from local artists are sold in Färgfabriken's shop under the label **"created in Lövholmen!"**

**"We try to gather information and make it available for more people, also to be a space for creative ideas about the future. We don't have formal power and are not the ones to plan the area but we're the only ones to be still here at the next stage. We are a gathering point." Karin Englund**



**Picture 6. A project space in Färgfabriken about Lövholmen. Photo (cc) Eutropian**

Since 2007, Färgfabriken has been directly engaged in the discussion about the future of Lövholmen. Following an [exhibition about Lövholmen](#) in 2007 that

explored the possibilities of keeping existing buildings and the industrial ambiance of the area, Färgfabriken has taken the role of initiating, coordinating and hosting a [series of exhibitions, events and discussions](#) about the area's transformation. Recently, the foundation has been granted by the culture administration of the municipality with funding for collecting knowledge about the area, mapping local actors, building networks among them and serve as a gathering point for their discussions. Färgfabriken has kept a space in its building devoted for this discussion where opinions, ideas, feedbacks are collected. An online questionnaire complements this platform in the virtual space.

**"We became a brand: interesting, young, with unexpected activities."**  
**Thomas Lundh**

## 8 Policies and municipal relations

Since its foundation, Färgfabriken was intended to be a place for free expression, avoiding any political, religious or any other kind of affiliation. With the foundation's backing, Färgfabriken is more autonomous in setting its own agenda than state-owned or funded cultural centres. However, Färgfabriken's success is also to be found in the support coming from the local institutional and political contexts, which was indeed interested and conducive for the use of culture as an instrument for urban renovation and rehabilitation of industrial sites.

At the time of Färgfabriken's opening, the organisation's members approached the Ministry of Culture for funding. Not being a museum or a private gallery, Färgfabriken was initially not eligible for funding but later, changes in eligibility rules gave the organisation access to about 800,000 crowns (about 80,000 in today's euro) per year.

The foundation also entertains a good relationship with the municipality of Stockholm and receives regular funding for its activities. However, this relationship lacks more concrete projects, a clearer vision and more consistent funding for longer term collaboration between the municipality and Färgfabriken.

**"Municipalities pay enormous amounts to consultancies. With Färgfabriken, instead, they get a lot of value out of being a partner in an exhibition, just by confronting new audiences, a mix of different people."**  
**Jan Rydén**

Despite the lack of municipal ownership in the area, municipal regulations can have a strong impact on the future of Lövhölmén. Zoning regulations demand that new residential areas have active ground floors. This gives an opportunity for more diversity in the future development of the area, and the chance to Färgfabriken to coordinate efforts to keep artistic production in the neighbourhood.

## 9 Economic model

At the early years of Färgfabriken, its founders explored a **variety of funding sources** to help run its activities. The first exhibitions, for instance, were covered by Development Aid funds that had a cultural exchange dimension as well as by the Swedish Institute, focusing on cultural collaboration. Färgfabriken's economic

model has been consolidated in the past decade but a big part of the foundation's budget is linked to **grants and sponsorship**. The building used by Färgfabriken is owned by Lindéngruppen. As such, the foundation depends on a lease of the space that is usually renewed every three/four years. As of today, Lindéngruppen is Färgfabriken's main sponsor, contributing around 3 million SEK (285,000 euros) to the organisation.

**"There are rich philanthropists who want to do something good and they give money but are not involved. Then you have cultural people who receive the get money and spend it. It's never a real collaboration. We want to bridge that gap between the business and the cultural centre." Joacim Björk**

The rest of the budget is made up of **public grants** coming from the government (amounting to one million Swedish crowns, or 93,000 euros), from the city (amounting to 800,000 Swedish crowns, or 75,000 euros) and from the region (amounting to 450,000 Swedish crowns, or 42,000 euros). Some activities are financed by EU funds through international collaboration networks.

Besides this combination of private engagement and public funding, the foundation has been engaged in looking for ways to receive more support from third parties. As an example, the image of the foundation is with time becoming more and more comprehensive of a diversity of subjects that are approached within exhibitions and events.

**"This is the strategy: creating an image that includes many stakeholders, corresponding to common subjects, yet including various positions, interests and expertise." Joachim Granit**

As a matter of fact, the projects exhibited at Färgfabriken are rarely "standard" art projects. It is important that the foundation does not only rely on the art world for sponsorship, but from other sectors too. This is the main reason why the initial focus on arts and architecture was eventually enlarged to include urban planning. In this sense, when the foundation decided to add urban planning as one of the main subjects tackled, there was a real need to draw attention from a larger variety of actors and stakeholders. By opening up their interest to urban planning, a lot more funding became available and pertinent, from a variety of European sources as well as in partnership with the [Swedish Institute](#). Hence, as projects exhibited at Färgfabriken are very diverse, the kinds of stakeholders they build partnerships with are too.

## 10 Governance

Färgfabriken's governance follows the classical organisational structure of a foundation. The organisation's operations are overseen by a **board**. The board is made up of nine people. Jenny Lindén Urnes, daughter of Ulf G. Lindén and owner of Lindéngruppen, is the director of the board. In addition to her, two architects, one former politician, one famous artist and a banker constitute the board, reflecting the need for a multidisciplinary approach and the making of the foundation as a complex network of bringing together a diversity of interests, occupations and visions. The board meets four times per year and mainly controls the financial side of the organisation, rather than the agenda. The latter is almost entirely left to the Färgfabriken staff to define.

**„We wanted to build a board to be a supporting body backing Färgfabriken. It's a delicate balance. You can overpower if you have demands, you can kill it. We wanted to avoid that. Could we do something for art and architecture but leave it very open and free for the team to work?"**  
**Elizabeth Hatz**

The **Färgfabriken foundation board** provides Färgfabriken with support, advice and quality control. It assures that the organisation has the necessary resources and independence in making its cultural agenda, a proper separation between the ownership of the building and the organisation's activities. Despite the separation, the board is engaged in a dialogue with the Färgfabriken staff, supporting its programming and networking, and having an external, critical but friendly view over the organisation's operations.

2008 brought an important change in the organisation. The founder Ulf G. Lindén's daughter Jenny Lindén Urnes became owner of Lindéngruppen and chairwoman of the Färgfabriken Foundation. Her background in art helped her to understand the challenges in front of Färgfabriken and take leadership in addressing them. When it turned out that Färgfabriken's director Jan Åman mismanaged the foundation's money, generated financial difficulties within the organisation and created an atmosphere of distrust among his colleagues, he was immediately removed by the board. To stabilise the situation, the relationship between Färgfabriken and Lindéngruppen was formalised.

The building now hosts two organisations, Färgfabriken as the cultural organisation overseen by the foundation and Färgfabriken Events that manages the restaurant and other commercial events. Färgfabriken's everyday tasks as well as the design and the management of the exhibitions happening at the *Kunsthalle*, are made possible by a team of **five employees**. Pernilla Lesse and Joachim Granit share the role of leaders since 2009. A collaborative leadership is very telling of the way in which the team of Färgfabriken has decided to work, one that rejects any strongly hierarchical management structure. The two leaders are supported by project managers, who ensure the monitoring of exhibitions. Karin Englund is the project manager for urban planning exhibitions, Elsa Isaksson works as a project coordinator and Emilia Rosenqvist is in charge of art exhibitions. New additions to the team are slowly made but this strongly depends on the financial resources the foundation disposes of. The communication tasks are equally shared among the members of the team. There is a strong bond among staff members that is based on an inevitable need for collaboration and transparency, especially given the vulnerable and financially dependent situation the foundation has to deal with. Such a bond is not only reflected in the relationship among staff members but also at the board level.

**A workplace like this is a team, and over the years the team acquires skills, abilities and methods that are very strong and creative. We never hired a new director as the knowledge was there in the team."** Elizabeth Hatz



## 11 Impact

Since its creation, Färgfabriken had a strong influence on the **surrounding area's transformation**. The mere presence of a cultural venue meant a lot for the renovation of the surrounding area. At the beginning, when the foundation was launched, the area was a really uncomfortable place to work in as a cultural initiative. During the first exhibitions, people thought it was absurd that such a centre was established in such a far away and disconnected area. However, in little time, the city started having interests to ameliorate the urban context around with streetlights, public transport and even a school opened. Moreover, when some of the neighbouring factories closed, various buildings became incubators for small companies and studios for artists. Many activities in the foundation are in a way or another related to the surrounding neighbourhood, have impacted its recent development and are still playing a crucial role for the design of future plans. In the past decade, Färgfabriken has essentially become a gathering point to discuss the future of the Lövholmen area, taking a position to keep working spaces and cultural venues in the future development besides the inevitable residential complexes.

**"I think the whole area of Lövholmen and more recent industrial buildings offer such incredible opportunity to have another way of living and thinking. Färgfabriken has a role and responsibility to tell the stories of these sites, the topography as well as the negotiation between the building, the city, the water and the climate that such constructions show." Elizabeth Hatz**

Besides its impact on its immediate surroundings, the foundation has influenced the way urban planning dilemmas are discussed in Stockholm. Färgfabriken played an important role by raising awareness of the need for infrastructural development through its debates, and the **Färgfabriken method** brought a lot of different actors to debate on the same topic around the same table. Such a working dynamic is very interesting since it saw collaborations and conversations happening between stakeholders that would have not met otherwise. Moreover, it made people aware of a diversity of working logics and environments.

Färgfabriken staff has been keen on sharing their experiences and contributing to the creation of similar venues. The organisation's model has been reproduced in other contexts as well. Between 2008-2011, the organisation was engaged in creating Färgfabriken Norr (Färgfabriken North) in Östersund, North Sweden, helped by EU funding, but this experience was discontinued after Färgfabriken withdrew from running the venue and wanted to give over the operations to the municipality. Since 2012, through the New Urban Topologies project, another version of the institution has been operating in Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina, built up by Färgfabriken and its local sister organisation.

## 12 Interviewees

Joachim Granit, artistic director of Färgfabriken

Pernilla Lesse, managing director of Färgfabriken

Thomas Lundh, co-founder of Färgfabriken

Elizabeth Hatz, co-founder of Färgfabriken  
Jan Rydén, former curator at Färgfabriken  
Karin Englund, curator at Färgfabriken  
Joachim Björk, board member of Färgfabriken

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## 5. Largo Residências (Lisbon, Portugal)



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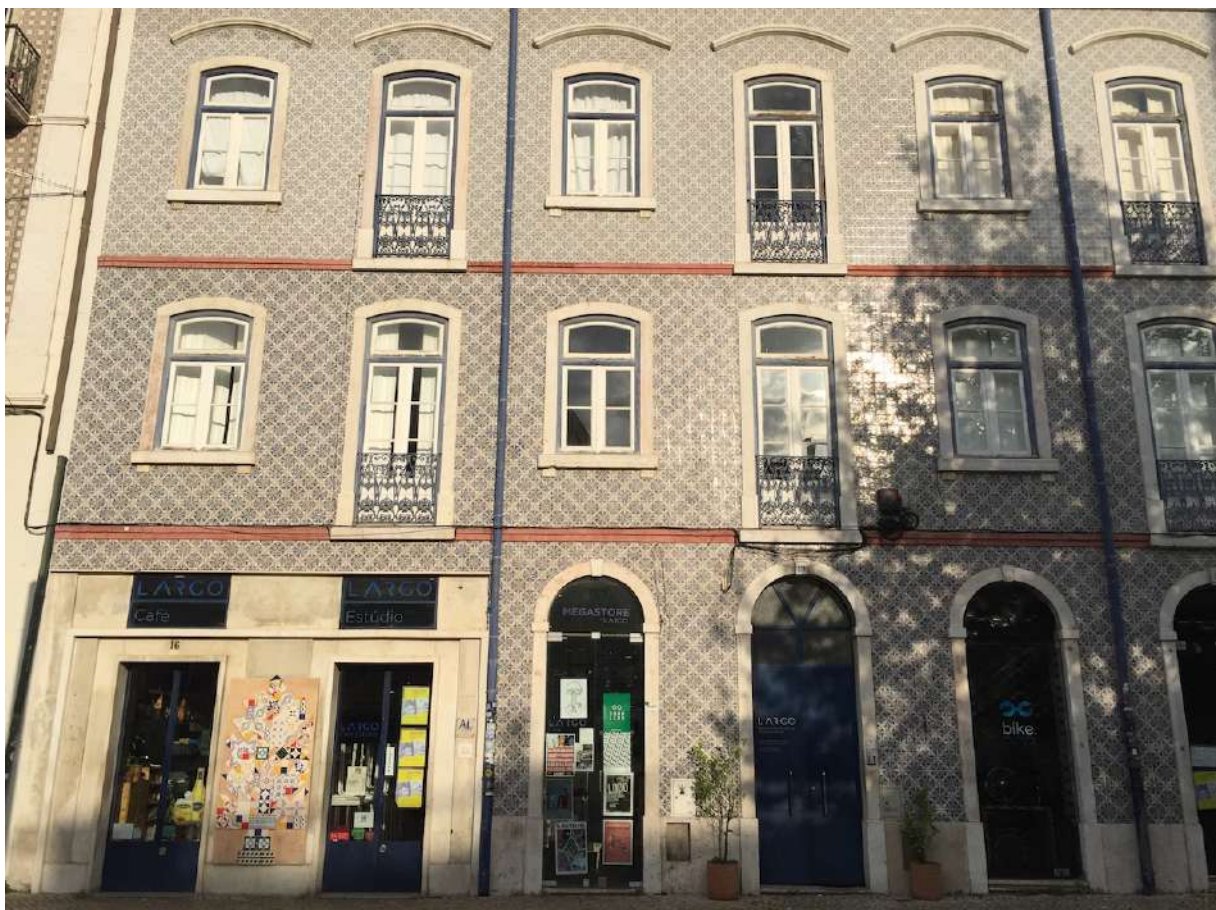


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## Executive summary

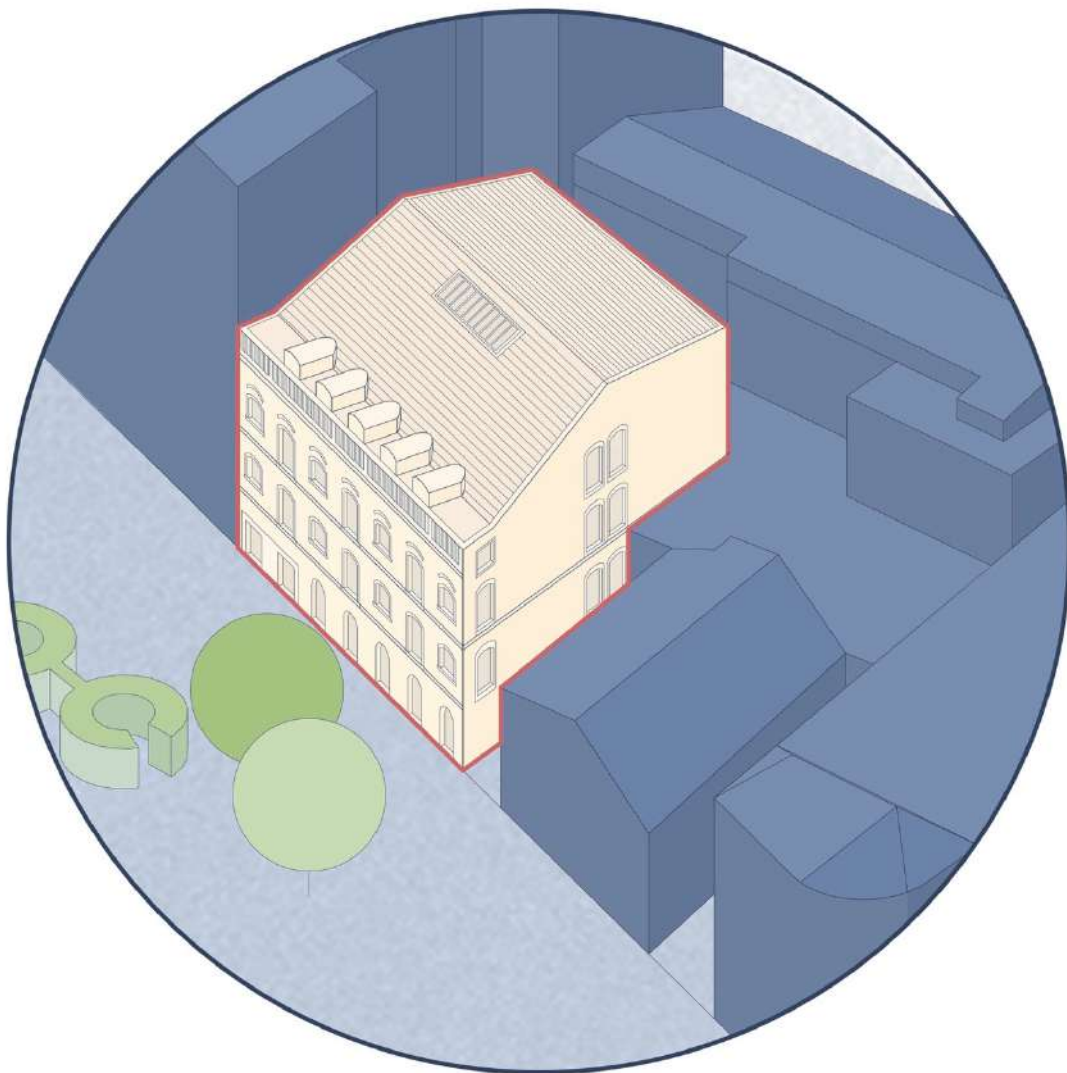
[Largo Residências](#) is a hostel, hotel, artist-in-residence and café in Lisbon's fast-changing Intendente neighbourhood. Largo Residências, run by a cooperative, uses its revenue from tourism and events to develop projects to support the cultural and social inclusion of the most vulnerable groups. In the past years, Largo has become a social net for many of the area's residents and a community as well as a community hub, leading the discussion about Lisbon's touristification and gentrification. Endangered by the tourism-driven real estate development transforming the city's historical areas, Largo has been working on opening new spaces for its activities.



Picture 1. The façade of Largo Residências. Photo (cc) Eutropan

# 1 Timeline

- 1850s – the construction of the building by the Viúva Lamego family
- 2011– Largo Residências rents the building on Largo Intendente
- 2011 – renovation of Largo begins
- 2012 – first residencies are open
- 2013 – the rental contract is revised
- 2013 – the café opens
- 2013 – renovation of Largo is complete
- 2017 – conflicts begin with the landowner who puts the building on sale
- 2018 – Largo breaks even and pays back the cooperative members' loans
- 2019 – Municipal regulation to limit new tourism facilities in historical areas
- 2021 – Largo's rental contract expires



**Picture 2. The building of Largo Residências. Image by Jorge Mosquera**

## 2 The story of the building

Largo Residências is located in a 4-floor building built in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, at Largo Intendente, the central square of the Intendente neighbourhood. Originally built as a ceramic factory, in the past decades it had been used as a pension and brothel: it hosted an illegal sex workers business on the first floor and rented rooms on the upper floors. Because of its illegal operations, the landlord lost the property in a juridical process. The new owner began a renovation including an additional floor at the top of the building, but passed it over to the initiators of Largo Residências who inherited a construction site. In 2011, the building was rented for 10 years by this initiative that renovated it and adapted it to be used for commercial and artistic purposes, creating a hostel, a hotel, an art residency and a café hosting community gatherings. With Largo Residências approaching the end of its 10-year contract, there is increasing pressure on the building's tenants from the owners' side to break up the contract sell the building, probably to become yet another high-end hotel in Central Lisbon.

**"Actually, when we first came here, the sexual workers in the area thought I was a new Madame." Marta Silva**

## 3 The initiative

Largo Residências was initiated by a group of people rotating around the cultural association SOU Cultural Association ([SOU Associação Cultural](#)), set up by the dancer, educator and cultural producer Marta Silva. The association used to have a venue a few streets away from today's Largo, in the Mouraria neighbourhood, organising performing arts classes and cultural programs. With the economic crisis, as participants were less and less able to pay their courses, SOU's activities became insufficient to cover the venue's expenses and their attempts to secure grants were unsuccessful.

The group decided to open an artistic space that could be financially sustainable and thus cover the costs of cultural work and have a positive impact on the community. The goal of Largo Residências was to contribute to the regeneration of a marginalised area in Lisbon. Renting a vacant building facing the Intendente square served this purpose: to combine activities of social inclusion and cultural effervescence with economic sustainability in an environment where public buildings were not available and public grants were limited. Looking around in the area of Intendente, Marta Silva and her associates found a variety of buildings and the one on Largo Intendente was in a better shape than many others and this made renovation less costly and therefore more feasible. The many rooms of the building whose walls were unmoveable gave the idea of an artist residency, focusing on a specific segment of potential visitors as tourism was practically non-existent in the area.

**"I tried to convince my colleagues to do something bigger for the neighbourhood, to start an association and connect art to this area. Ten years ago, we were the only cultural association here. Now this neighbourhood is known as one of the most cultural neighbourhoods in the city." Marta Silva**



Marta Silva's first collaborators in Largo Residências were members of SOU. Each team member was a newcomer in the tourism, commerce and property management sectors: they all took over professional tasks that were new for them and they had to rely on their learning skills and external advice to perform well. Consultations with lawyers and economists helped to develop a legal and economic structure with a social business angle and called for the participation of cooperative members. Architects of the studio [Ateliernob](#), for instance, who originally joined the process to design the renovation, have got involved in the core issues of the project and soon become members of the cooperative. Twelve members joined Largo's cooperative and they contributed with ideas, financial investments and expertise.

**"I had no management experience and my heart was much bigger than my brain. Now we have a good balance between brain and heart: cooperative members were fundamental in the design of the management model and in filtering ideas." Marta Silva**

Developing a working model for Largo Residências was a gradual process that was built with the inputs from friends, family members and from the various cooperative members. In time, the group developed the concept of a studio/artist residency space mixed with a tourist accommodation facility, so that artistic work would be sustained by the revenue from the commercial unit.

Largo launched its cultural and social programming while renovating the building. It also opened the hostel, one room after the other, to balance the renovation expenses with the hostel's revenue. The first two years were financially difficult as the hostel was operating only partially and it remained closed in winter due to big heat loss in some rooms. The café studio opened in 2013, and it was an immediate success. Within 3 years Largo was ready and fully working.

**"We want to build this area and not abandon it. This project only makes sense if it's locally based and if you manage to build the area." Tiago Mota Saraiva**

The rental contract of the building hosting Largo Residências expires in 2021 and the building is expected to be sold for commercial purposes. Largo is searching for an alternative venue where to carry on its activities. In the future location, Largo members plan to implement a similar project but also work on developing a cooperative housing project that would help overcome the housing gap in the neighbourhood.

## 4 Activities

Today Largo Residências is located in a 4-floor building. It is a **multipurpose space** that combines social, cultural and commercial functions. The apartments of the artist residency are situated at the **top floor**. Artists stay in Largo for a period of 2 to 6 months according to their projects. Besides artists, these apartments also host architects, cultural producers and others involved in Largo's programmes and operations including receptionists. Largo Residências gives artists supporting conditions for their work in various arts sectors such as plastic and visual arts, dance, theatre, literature, photography, video, performance, gastronomy and fashion; and it also hosts academic and research projects, as well as professionals from different fields such as anthropology, sociology, psychology, and architecture.

It requires residents' projects to be a contribution to the local community and its territory. Besides the residents' spaces, the top floor also hosts Largo's production office.



**Picture 3. A room in Largo Residências. Photo (cc) Eutropian**

The **1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floors**, about 200 m<sup>2</sup> each are dedicated to the short-term rental and they usually host tourists but also students, journalists and artists. The 1<sup>st</sup> floor has 8 private rooms with connected private bathrooms, while the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor hosts a hostel with 9 rooms, with shared bathrooms, kitchen and living rooms. Largo has established collaborations with other cultural and social institutions such as universities, theatres and festivals, who prefer Largo to a regular hotel. The 2<sup>nd</sup> floor also hosts the reception.

**"Visiting the building and knowing that hairdressers and cafés are the most important meeting points, we thought we should have a café as it would be the meeting point for not only our workers but also our neighbours and local people. We thought, let's see if this place can also serve as an artistic platform or a studio, a small theatre." Marta Silva**

On the **ground floor**, Largo has a cafeteria, a studio and a shop occupying around 150 m<sup>2</sup>. The café contributes to the sustainability of the entire socio-cultural project, it creates a meeting point for the community and it is where most of the cultural programming takes place. The studio is one of the workspaces for artists in residence and a venue for some presentations of their creations. Besides presenting the work of Largo's artists, it also has a regular free-of-charge cultural programme with concerts, exhibitions, book presentations. The studio stays open

to the public to be used for informal gatherings also when their activities are not organized. Besides its own venues, Largo's ground floor also hosts the Bike Pop Shop, a multidisciplinary space dedicated to the promotion of bicycle culture run by a cooperative and the Largo Loja vinyl record store, a social business: they rent ground floor spaces from Largo, thus contributing to the financial sustainability of the building's management.

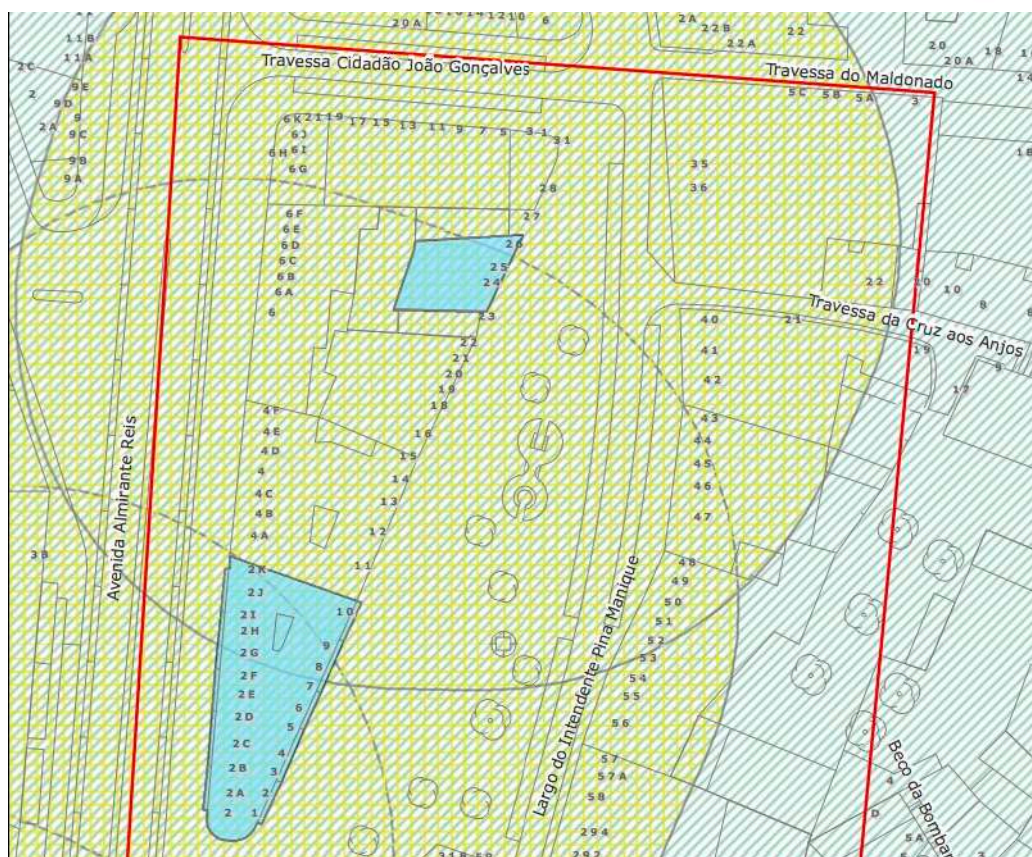


Picture 4. Cafeteria at the ground floor of Largo Residências. Photo (cc) Eutropian

## 5 Renovation and adaptive reuse

Located at the recently renovated Largo Intendente, Largo Residências is part of the historical tissue of Intendente. The building has a typical façade with ceramic tiles that refer to its original function as a ceramic factory and makes it one of the most spectacular landmarks on the square. The building enjoys heritage protection because it is located in the **protection zone around two classified buildings**, the Fábrica de Cerâmica da Viúva Lamego (Viúva Lamego's ceramic factory) and the building located at the corner of Largo do Intendente and Avenida do Almirante Reis. Situated in this buffer zone, the building of Largo Residências, together with all other buildings in the block, are protected by local and national law. This implies that any change in the facades of these buildings needs approval by the Ministry of Culture. In practice, this protection makes any alteration complicated and time-consuming.





**Picture 5. Map of heritage protection in Intendente. Image by Lisbon Municipality**

Before renting the building to Largo Residências, the new landlord started the building's renovation from the 3rd floor down. Largo took over the renovation of the rest of the building: each floor used to be organised into two apartments, and they had to be divided into rooms, while the ground floor was converted into a café and a studio.

**"We did the basic design of the project but we had to reinvent it many times as we found huge structural problems in the building that we did not expect." Tiago Mota Saraiva**

At the moment of signing the rental contract, the structural conditions of the building were not entirely clear for the Largo team. Incongruities are common in Lisbon buildings constructed at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century because of the liberalisation of construction procedures in the 20<sup>th</sup> century that allowed modifying structural and non-structural walls without following a plan. In many buildings modified in the past decades, problems are not seen immediately and they appear only after starting a renovation. In the case of Largo, there were many technical issues to solve, including an electricity system non-compliant with current legal standards and the absence of structural walls.

**"We could not do the conventional process of making a detailed project design and giving it over to the contractor. It did not work like that. We spent a lot of time on the site and in the construction process and re-adapted the design when it was needed." Tiago Mota Saraiva**

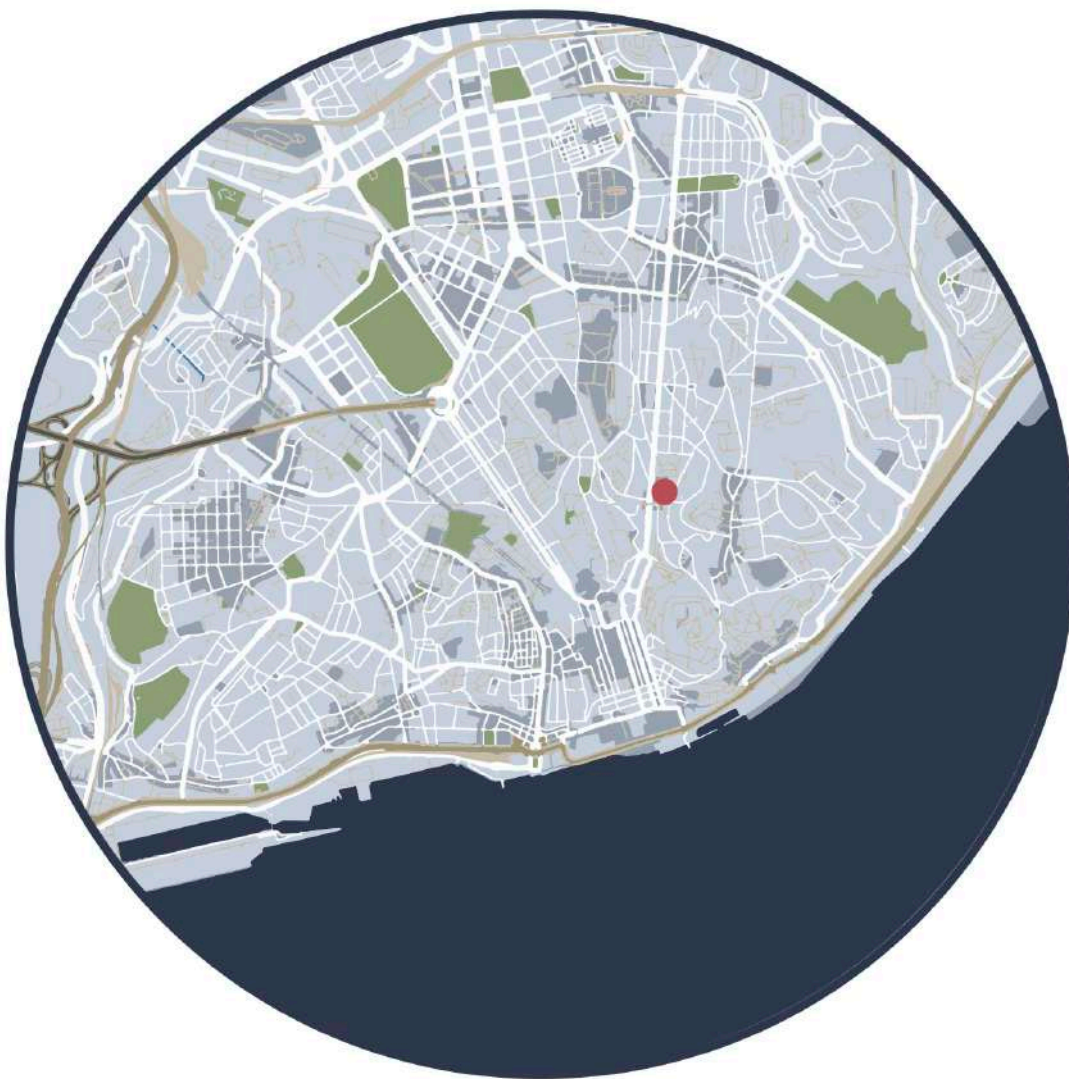
The renovation of the building and its opening coincided with the rehabilitation of the square facing the building, Largo Intendente. The square's renovation created a lot of difficulties for the first period of operating Largo: the whole area was a construction site and this negatively affected both pedestrian traffic and tourism,



while Largo needed revenue to reinvest into the renovation and into the launch of its activities.

**“The first two years were hard in a touristic sense because Intendente was like a construction site with a lot of dust.” Marta Silva**

Largo Residências has been working on embracing both the tangible and intangible heritage of the building and the neighbourhood. Highlighting the building’s past as a ceramic factory, Largo develops a variety of activities related to the ceramic tiles once produced in the building and used across the neighbourhood and the city. Going beyond the building, Largo has been active in mapping the neighbourhood’s social memory, countering the process of forgetting as a consequence of gentrification and touristification.



**Picture 6. The location of Largo Residências in Lisbon. Image by Jorge Mosquera**

## 6 The area and its transition

**"Intendente and Mouraria were always very resistant places in the city, zones of obscurity that stayed for centuries, and decades till now. They were always hard to gentrify." Ana Jara**

Largo Residências is situated on Largo Intendente, the central square of Intendente. Intendente is a historical neighbourhood in Lisbon, about 1,5 kilometres Northeast from the city's central square Praça do Comércio. Despite its central location within the historical tissue of Lisbon, in the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the area has been largely neglected by city councils and developers. In line with this lack of investment, together with the neighbouring area Mouraria, Intendente has become one of the most accessible, cosmopolitan and multicultural areas of the city. In the 1970s, with the demolition of some of the most conflictful neighbourhoods of Lisbon, many families from these areas moved to Intendente, bringing with them drug and sex businesses. As a result, Intendente has become a secluded area with a bad reputation across the city.

**"For 30-40 years, this area was one of the darkest places of the city. The square was psychologically much bigger than the actual space, because of the traffic, the illegal drug trade and prostitution." Marta Silva**

Around 2010, the city council decided to start a process for the revitalization of Mouraria and Intendente, the two neighbourhoods connected by Largo Intendente. The mayor of the time, Antonio Costa, moved his office to Largo Intendente because he believed that working from the inside, for three years, would be an efficient strategy for improving the neighbourhood. A key part of the big urban regeneration plan for the area was the physical renovation of Largo Intendente, which created a clearer, more accessible, more transparent urban square. The mayor's move to Intendente and the regeneration plan has received a lot of attention and involved a variety of local actors, including Largo Residências. The mayor invited Largo to co-organise the 2011 and 2012 editions of the [Festival Todos](#) (Portuguese for "Everyone") which brought many Lisboans to Intendente and gave visibility to the area and Largo Residências.

**"Largo Intendente is a symbolical centre of radical change in Lisbon. This area of the city used to have a flourishing market of drugs and prostitution, it was considered a dark area and many Lisboans would not come here. Things began changing when key community agents started working in this area to create new living conditions, to increase the quality of life, and to attract people here." Roberto Falanga**

Following the renovation, the Intendente area has been radically transformed. In the past years, it has developed into a conflict zone between citizen-led initiatives trying to improve living conditions for the residents of this area, and investors buying up buildings and converting them into hotels and short-term rental apartment complexes. This evolution coincides with tourism assuming a greater role in Lisbon's city economy with many sectors specializing in tourism as well as the long-term housing market shifting towards a short-term apartment rental system, undermining housing provision in the central areas of the city.



**Picture 7. The entrance of Largo do Intendente. Photo (cc) Eutopian**

**"All programs carried in Lisbon in the 2011-2013 period have reinforced the interest of foreign investors in Lisbon. Lisbon was the perfect city to invest: beautiful, sunny, cheap, and with many empty buildings in the city centre. I don't think Largo Residências accelerated the change, but they were in the heart of the change." Roberto Falanga**

Intendente's recent transformation is the result of a combination of local and global processes. One important aspect is the recent **liberalisation of the housing market** in the 2000s. As a residue of the Fascist regime in Portugal, rental prices had been frozen since the 1940s and it had strongly affected Portuguese cities with significant rental markets. The long-term consequence of fixed rent prices was a lack of funds for landlords to maintain their properties and it led to the structural deterioration of buildings in entire neighbourhoods. While poor tenants were protected by the law, landlords did not invest in their properties and many buildings were left abandoned in Central Lisbon areas like Intendente. Since 2004, new policies of the government and municipalities have opened the housing market to private investors. With the economic crisis of 2008-2009, under pressure by the IMF, the European Commission and the European Central Bank, Portugal privatised many public buildings; changed its rent laws and lifted the rent freeze, leading to massive transformation in Portuguese real estate. As landlords no longer had to respect a rent price limit, evictions occurred in massive numbers, altering the demographics of the city and creating a housing gap.

**"We never had massive evictions in our urban history and now we are seeing the consequences of it." Luis Mendes**



Another component of Intendente's transformation is the quick **touristification** of Central Lisbon. Troubled by the economic crisis, Portugal has not only embraced the liberalisation of its housing stock but also the creation of fiscal programs that attract foreign investment – including the so-called Golden Visas. The liberalisation of Lisbon's housing stock went in pairs with growing interest in investing into properties in the city. Real estate investment, produced by international funds, was injected in the housing sector to promote luxury apartments and private condominiums. An increasing part of this investment went into tourism facilities: fearing the spread of global terrorism, many people and investors withdrew their investments from tourism resorts in North Africa and moved them into Portugal, a safe country with low prices and high life standards.

**"The real estate market has been emptied of its social function as housing, to become financial asset for international investors." Luis Mendes**

Besides public investment in public spaces like in the case of Largo Intendente and social housing in peripheral areas of the city, there has been little public investment into the refurbishment of the existing building stock. Cuts in government funding forced the municipality to sell many buildings, also in Intendente. With the privatisation of a part of the remaining public building stock, including buildings on Largo Intendente, even public investment in public spaces ultimately contributes to the increase of the value of private property, thus aggravating the housing situation in central neighbourhoods and leading to gentrification and touristification.

**"From 2016, big investment started to come. All the new shops, all buildings were up for sale and they were quickly sold. And sold again. And sold again. Big speculation came and suddenly this area turned into a completely different atmosphere." Marta Silva**

**Touristification** is the process of adapting the urban realm to tourist needs. It often implies the redistribution of resources from local to touristic uses and it often triggers a gap in rental and a real estate speculation and increases in prices for residents.

**"In some parts of the city we cannot speak of social bonds anymore because many inhabitants have moved out. The social capital and memory that was essential to the resilience of these places is lost. That is a big issue that has to be understood to prevent the worst gentrification and urban transformation yet to come." Luis Mendes**

Lisbon's newly found economic dynamism has created new conflicts, by displacing people from central areas and destroying traditional social and economic tissues. With long delays in regulating short-term rental, homes were turned into Airbnb facilities and traditional economic activities were replaced by tourism-oriented businesses, radically transforming the neighbourhood and its perception. Members of Largo Residências were afraid of becoming just an additional player in the gentrification process, therefore they prioritised the involvement of the local community in neighbourhood activities and worked to maintain and strengthen structures of solidarity, networks of the local commerce and looked for solutions to the housing crisis.

**"I think this very central location helped capital investors consider Largo Intendente as an attractive place to invest. Nevertheless, local associations**



**engaged in neighbourhood initiatives represent the resistance to the cannibalisation of the city.” Roberto Falanga**



Picture 8. Community event in Intendente. Photo (cc) Eutropian

## 7 Community involvement

Until a decade ago, Intendente was perceived as a dangerous and conflicted neighbourhood and most Lisbon residents would avoid the area. The communication work of Largo Residências, therefore, focussed on **changing the bad reputation** of the neighbourhood as well as of the building itself. Largo has reached out to specific groups: the residents of Intendente, artists cultural producers and art institutions active in the area as well as local shopkeepers.

**“In 2012, reconstruction works at the square were finished and Antonio Costa came to us and asked us to make an inauguration party. I said, all right, we can make a festival. You can think about the big names to fill the square but I will propose small things, community projects to engage people, to have the opening with neighbours being part of it.” Marta Silva**

The first step in opening the building was to meet representatives of the local community and to build connections with the groups of artists organised around SOU. In the first year, Largo developed its social business plan but it also invested time in building long-lasting relationships with those living in Intendente, which eventually led to the development of participatory cultural projects involving a wide range of people from the area. In the first two years, from 2011 to 2013,

much effort was also invested into building a relationship also with local institutions. Slowly but steady, Largo Residências has gained the features of a community centre around which people from the neighbourhood have started gathering.

**"My mission is to connect with the people on the streets, to be part of the social processes and cultural programs, and to become the mediator between the citizens and the politicians. Now, I speak to the mayor and the prime minister in the same way that I talk with the drug dealers." Marta Silva**

When moving in the building on Largo Intendente, Largo Residências only had a few neighbours: old bars, sports pubs and an 82-year-old saloon. The square was being under construction and this kept away visitors, and new commercial and socio-cultural uses came to the square only after the constructions finished. The most direct engagement of Largo took place at the street level: the cooperative members spent much time talking to people on the streets, in the squares, frequenting the neighbourhood's bars to get to know the area's residents, gain their trust and invite them to visit and spend time at Largo Residências. This work included collecting local stories countering the mainstream narratives of the neighbourhood, presenting the image of a neighbourhood with strong community ties and solidarity networks.

**"People living in Intendente needed mediation to help restore social bonds and mobilisation to fight for housing and other urban rights." Luis Mendes**

Largo Residências represents a model of **skills and knowledge** production. The most important skills developed by the Largo team in their social business are mediation and non-verbal communication. Largo's work is based on relationships of trust and collaboration and it requires the ability to create relationships and balance one's involvement in partnerships.

**"In partnerships, you give your hand and they take the full body. Now, I am more protective when it comes to creating new partnerships with other institutions." Marta Silva**

The Largo team was aware of the risks of supporting gentrification with their work and they tried to contrast this possibility by favouring local engagement in their activities. A bottom-up approach to urban rehabilitation was sought by mediating between public institutions and the local community and by developing new functions according to the community needs. Largo was also a key actor in building local networks of associations as well as shopkeepers to be able to resist pressure from real estate developers. In time, Largo gained visibility in the city and it strengthened its ability to speak up on the neighbourhood issues and to suggest possible improvements on behalf of the community. It also works as informal mediator among various entities which are connected to Largo Intendente.

**"We were keen on not acting as gentrifiers but to strengthen the networks of local commerce, local shops and help the residents who suffered the most from the crisis and austerity first, and from tourism and real estate speculation afterwards. In a certain way we were trying to reorganise community in the neighbourhood" Tiago Mota Saraiva**





**Picture 9. Cultural festival in Largo do Intendente. Photo (cc) Eutropian**

Besides the regular activities inside the Largo Residências venue, Largo is at the centre of a wide range of initiatives that attempt to connect and strengthen the local community in Largo Intendente. Largo Residências organizes theatre projects, dance workshops, exhibitions featuring the artists in residence, and festivals in Largo Intendente. Moreover, members of Largo's cooperative often act as representatives of the community's needs on the city level, and they are vocal advocates for community rights especially in regards to housing.

**"The projects developed in Largo Residências use art to empower people and to bring a reflexive way of thinking about what is happening in their personal lives as well as in the urban surrounding." Helène Veiga Gomes**

Anthropologists and urbanists have contributed to Largo's better knowledge of the area. The visual anthropologist, Helène Veiga Gomes conducted a participatory ethnography research in the area during the reconstruction of Largo Intendente. She asked residents to document their daily trajectories and collected valuable data about the intangible heritage of the neighbourhood. The project results were exhibited in an abandoned building, which has later been renovated and transformed into a restaurant.

Cultural events and programmes produced in Largo often focus on the life and personal stories of local residents. For example, the theatre project called *Companie Limitade* built a theatre piece starting from the story of the people living in the neighbourhood who were suffering from solitude or dealing with diseases. The final piece included visits to residents' homes to experience their living conditions.

**"Largo's projects aim to develop good practices in the neighbourhood. A lot of them are linked to interculturality and they encourage the better inclusion of people living in the neighbourhood through language and cultural mediation." Helène Veiga Gomes**

Another project, [Escuta](#) aims to describe urban transformation through the experience of Largo Residências and other initiatives in the area. Escuta explores the work of many associations and institutions working in Intendente and Mouraria. In the first phase, a pop-up container was installed in Largo Intendente for one month and it hosted the Escuta radio, interviewing a variety of local actors. The container attracted people in the area because of its position and transparent architectural features and had transmitted a live stream radio show. This container became a meeting point as all kinds of people were stopping to listen. One segment of Escuta covers personal narratives through photographs and texts, and another one is an audio-visual project that will result in a film. Those media are used as cumulative processes, mining data about the neighbourhood and collecting people's voices to build a tool for reflection about the transformation of Central Lisbon.

**"Largo works with the social tissue of the neighbourhood, boosting its social innovation, its urban participation, reinforcing the strength of the neighbourhood's citizens." Luis Mendes**

To support its business model, Largo Residências also had to develop communication with the outside world. In order to reach a wider number of tourists, Largo joined accommodation platforms like Booking.com and Hostelworld, and it became well-known in networks of festivals and art institutions. Despite difficulties to communicate the social aspect of its operations, Largo makes a great effort to explain its mission to first-time visitors and engage them for their further visits.

**"At that time, we were just at the beginning of Lisbon's touristification process. We were one of the first hostels that appeared, in a moment that tourism was beginning to increase. Now Largo is fighting with other accommodation providers that are pushing residents out of Lisbon's centre." Marta Silva**

## 8 Municipal policies and programmes

Intendente and Largo Residências have been in the focus of various municipal policies. The shift of municipal policies from running social and cultural projects to supporting initiatives to run these projects coincided with Largo's ambition to run a space that can secure its economic sustainability. The renovation of Largo Intendente, initiated by the mayor's office in 2011, has rejuvenated the face of the neighbourhood, with upgraded public spaces but also potentially contributing to gentrification and touristification. When the mayor moved his office to Largo Intendente, this proximity favoured various types of collaboration with Largo Residências some of which like festivals and advocacy initiatives continue until today. The mayor's office was also instrumental in connecting the initiators of Largo with the landowner of their building.



**"I always had an impression that this square is amazing, in the city centre, but empty. It looked like a public living room already before it was rebuilt and re-developed." Marta Silva**

In the same period as the beginning of renovations in the area, Intendente and Mouraria were identified by the city council as priority neighbourhoods where specific funding needs to be targeted. The **BIP/ZIP program**, launched in 2010, was created to facilitate targeted seed funding to organisations and initiatives operating in these priority areas.

**"The very central idea of the program is to provide local associations and informal groups of citizens the opportunity to build partnerships and to propose ideas for the regeneration of the city." Roberto Falanga**

**The BIP/ZIP program** was launched by the Lisbon Municipality's Department of Housing and Local Development in 2010 to promote strategic partnerships in the city's priority neighbourhoods. BIP/ZIP created three indexes which mapped social inequalities, infrastructures issues, litter and environmental irregularities in Lisbon. BIP/ZIP called for a citizen's consultations to improve the so-called "BIP/ZIP chart", and it eventually pinpointed 67 priority areas that were considered social territorial fractures, and were spread inhomogeneous in the city centre and in the city periphery. The priority areas include social housing areas, informal settlements as well as historical neighbourhoods. All the selected areas present comparable aspects in terms of the high unemployment rate, insecurity, urban hygiene, lack of services, poor accessibility. The BIP/ZIP program offers seed funding of up to 50.000 euros to initiatives, selected through an open call. An external committee of experts appointed by the municipality evaluates the proposals and distributes the budget to the single initiatives. These allowances allow local organisations to carry out small projects that can act as catalysers of change. The total amount of the budget provided a year is about 1,5-2 million euros.

The funded initiatives are monitored and evaluated by the administrative team: initiatives are required to deliver to the municipality self-monitoring reports and the team of the municipality monitors the implementation of the initiative on the field. The program is also evaluated by a team which measures the quantitative and qualitative results of BIP/ZIP. The evaluation takes into consideration quantitative data (the number of partnerships created, the numbers of activities developed within such partnerships, and the budget allocated) and qualitative data (surveys with the initiatives and with the citizens who benefitted from the programs).

**"The BIP/ZIP programme created a fabric of associations and local practices that were very interesting; the question is why it did not grow in the last eight years. Now urban policies are very focused on another kind of interventions, supporting creative hubs, creating businesses and an economy that comes from big investments." Ana Jara**

Largo Residências has been an active participant in various seasons of the BIP/ZIP programme. A winner of a 50,000 grant in 2011 that contributed to launching the building and its operations, Largo and its partners [Ateliermob](#) and [Working with the 99%](#) later on successfully applied again with their plan of establishing an anti-eviction information office in Central Lisbon.

**"We think it is good to talk to the municipality and see if they still recognise the work we do and if they want to take part in the triangle between the private sector that owns the building, the municipality and us." Tiago Mota Saraiva**

In order to facilitate the best use of this funding locally, in some of the priority areas, the municipality has set up Local Coordination Offices, or GABIPs. GABIPs function as elements of a co-governance framework involving the municipality, local boroughs and all relevant stakeholders and community organisations. They promote an articulated response among the political, administrative and technical dimensions with local organisations and community. Largo Residências had an important place in the local GABIP process and developed a relationship of trust both with local communities and municipal offices. Aware of their work in the neighbourhood, municipal offices were increasingly reaching out to Largo Residências to evaluate urban development, and Largo took the role of mediating between citizens and the offices of the local authorities.

**"From that moment on we didn't have to knock on the door of the municipality; on the contrary, they were asking our opinion and our participation in processes. The relationship has changed." Marta Silva**

**GABIPs** are present in BIP/ZIP neighbourhoods with their local offices, and consist of a coordinator from the municipality and an executive committee with local key stakeholders of the urban regeneration process, local authorities, local associations and other actors. The precise composition of this committee depends on the technical, urban, social, environmental, cultural as well as educational aspects of the related projects: usually elected officials and representatives of the Department of Housing and Local Development are involved, but elected officials from other departments can also take part. The GABIPs allow the municipality to move decision-making to the local scale and share it with local actors.

**"These kinds of participatory processes need to rely on a more robust commitment of public authorities in providing real welfare policies. Without providing citizens with concrete answers on primary needs like housing, education and health, if we do not guarantee and ensure that all citizens have equal access to these goods and services, participatory processes can fail to realise a big part of their potential." Roberto Falanga**

The BIP/ZIP program is an important help to start bottom-up urban innovation and social initiatives as it gives funding to local associations and groups to develop new ideas. Yet, this program does not rely on broader policies that support social innovation and it might be an insufficient tool to strengthen local communities in Lisbon's rapid, market-driven transformation. Many voices claim that the competition model of municipal programmes is not able to keep up with the fast pace of change in the city.

**"What we feel from the last three years is that we want to change scale. We want to be more than just doing some works on the public space and producing some precarious event. When you have a city that is led by private investment that are totally out of control, funded on the Cayman Islands then you have to react fast and cannot wait for competitions." Tiago Mota Saraiva**

Beyond hundreds of interventions at the neighbourhood level, an offspring of the BIP/ZIP programme is Lisbon's Collaborative Platform for Community-Led Local Development (CLLD), an EU-funded governance scheme including over 150 NGOs, private enterprises and the local government that aims to develop a global strategy to BIP/ZIP.

**CLLD (Community-Led Local Development)** is an instrument created by the European Union's Cohesion Policy 2014-2020, which grants CLLD networks access to part of the Structural Funds. CLLDs foresee the management of the funding to be shared between the public administration, private and civic partners, with none of them having the majority of shares and votes. In the case of Lisbon, the CLLD includes over 150 NGOs, private enterprises and local government organisations, and its fund disposes of about 1,5 million euros.

## 9 Financial model

From the moment of visiting buildings on Largo Intendente, the idea of offering accommodation to guests was an integral part of Largo's business model. In the first phase of conceiving Largo Residências, however, its initiators did not have tourism in mind: they were focusing on cultural institutions and events as potential clients, who can bring in Largo their performers or artists. Within a few years, this focus was extended as more and more responsible (if not mainstream) tourists began to visit Intendente and other formerly avoidable areas of Central Lisbon. Nevertheless, Largo also maintained its residency profile: there are more than 20 cultural institutions that regularly book rooms in the hotel.

In order to renovate the building and set up the organisation and pay the rent for the first months, Largo needed significant upfront investment, about 200.000 euros: 150,000 euros were needed to create the cafeteria and the other ground floor spaces, and another 50,000 euros were spent on renovating the first floor. The upper floors were already mostly renovated so there was no significant investment to be made there.

**"We couldn't go to the bank as we were a new cooperative with no history. We had to put money from the cooperative members to invest in the renovation works. It took us five to six years to pay back these investments. By 2017 we paid back everything and are now saving money." Marta Silva**

The cooperative of Largo Residências raised money from various sources: 50,000 euros were invested by the cooperative members (to be paid back six years later with 4% interest) and 50,000 euros came from a municipal funding. The remaining 100,000 euros were already produced by Largo's economic activities. As an important help to the organisation's cash flow, the construction contractor accepted to defer his payment of 50,000 euros until after the hostel's opening. This arrangement functioned as an informal loan and allowed Largo to finish the renovation quickly. In addition, architects of Ateliermob offered their services for free, in exchange for rooms to host the office's interns.

The renovation was organised step-by-step, so that when a floor was ready, it opened and began to generate revenue, and this allowed the renovation to continue on the other floors. Service barter was also an important resource that

was used by Largo Residências in its beginning and which allowed its renovation and opening. For example, Largo Residências hosted people in exchange for their construction services and it managed. Finally, a 50,000 euros grant from the BIP/ZIP programme helped launch Largo's activities but could not be spent of infrastructure or renovation.

By 2017-2018, Largo's revenues allowed the organisation to repay the original cooperative members' investment with interest and to break even. Largo Residências business plan is based on using commercial revenues (hotel and hostel) to support the cultural and artistic projects, to cover the workers' wages and improve their working conditions. While the hotel and hostel are responsible for most of Largo's profit, the cafeteria, despite its initial ambitions, does not generate revenue for cultural activities. Functioning more as a social café, it accommodates people who spend long periods of time without consuming. Nevertheless, due to its community function and the six jobs it maintains, the cafeteria remains an integral part of Largo Residências.

**"Our workers at the café are also social assistants for the neighbours that come with their problems, they speak, they are friends so it's difficult to keep a code and technical way of working there. The café pays the bills but it doesn't give a big profit – but we decided to keep it because it's an open door to the community." Marta Silva**

Largo's main expense is the commercial rent paid to the building's owner. While the rent was originally defined 8000 euros a month, it has been lowered to 6000 euros after a long negotiation, due to the significant structural problems encountered in the building and the renovations needed to be undertaken. The **relationship with the building's owner** has been worsening in the past years. Preparing to put the building for sale, the owner has repeatedly threatened the cooperative with eviction in case of delays with the rent payment, despite various verbal and formal agreements. With a rental contract expiring in 2021, Largo Residências is in the process of finding a new space in the neighbourhood, preferably a building in public ownership.

Aware of Largo's achievements and positive impact in the neighbourhood, at a certain point of the conflict, the municipality came in as a third party to negotiate between Largo and the property owner and to ease the situation. Disposing of a pre-emption right, the municipality has considered buying the building, but the property owner has changed strategy and is now selling the company that owns the building, in order to come around the municipality's pre-emption right and reduce taxes.

## 10 Governance

**"When I asked for legal advice, people told me that we couldn't keep the project in the form of an association because the commercial part would be bigger than the cultural part to finance. Therefore, we needed to create a cooperative, so that we could run the social business and we could still support the non-profit activities." Marta Silva**



Largo Residências has the organisational form of a cooperative. The cooperative model was chosen because it was considered suitable to represent an entity that combines commercial activities with cultural and social activity. It also allowed to include the organisation's workers in Largo's ownership and decision-making, with equal votes.

**"We started as a cooperative because this allowed us to integrate funds from the members and invest them in the renovation of our building." Tiago Mota Saraiva**

The cooperative was founded by 3 members, and it was joined by 10 members. Two of the three founding members are still involved in the project. The founding members were all from the same area: neighbours, friends, co-workers and parents of children in the same schools. They had different backgrounds and professions but shared the desire of developing a social program in the Intendente neighbourhood. Members of the cooperative invested in the organisation financially, with their work and skills. Financial investments were not equal among members but each member maintains equal decision-making power.

**"Since the beginning, we wanted to create a group composed of people experiencing different conditions of life. One of our members put 15 euros in the cooperative, someone else gave 20,000 euros and they had the same vote." Marta Silva**

The cooperative has three sectors, one taking care of cultural activities, another is responsible for accommodation and the third one for the cafeteria, each sector with a coordinator. Some people move between different sectors as their ambitions change. Not all members of the cooperative work daily at Largo Residências. Some of them do not join discussions about the daily operations but longer-term strategies and the mission of the cooperative, the quality of partnerships and networks.

**Cooperatives** are "autonomous associations of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise" (International Cooperative Alliance). In cooperatives, economic benefits are distributed proportionally to each member's level of participation in the cooperative. Democratic decision-making in cooperatives implies each member with one vote, no matter how big their financial contribution. Cooperatives were an important organisational form in the 1970s but in the decades after they lost their relevance and popularity. In the 2010s, cooperatives are increasingly popular again as new, non-speculative and non-extractive forms of economy are sought by community initiatives across the world.

## 11 Impact

Largo Residências has created a variety of **services** in the neighbourhood that benefit local residents. By channelling the revenues of its commercial activities (tourist accommodation and cafeteria) into local **activities and events** that enable artists to share their work and local residents to build networks and join forces around the most pressing issues that are transforming the neighbourhood.

Relying on its local network with residents and other associations created in the past years, Largo has effectively constituted a welfare net that takes care of vulnerable residents when it comes to evictions or other destabilising life situations. For many local residents, joining activities organised by Largo was conceived as an empowerment process, with increasing personal security, as well as new networking and job opportunities.

**"People joined Largo's projects also to improve their self-esteem: as they were from Intendente, they felt the right to be there, they had something to say about their place, and values to share." Helène Veiga Gomes**

Largo's **employment** policies have also contributed to social integration. The organisation has created a variety of employment opportunities for people living in Intendente, mostly in the cafeteria and the hotel. As of today, Largo employs 15 workers, 80-90% of whom live in the neighbourhood, and 30% coming from a highly vulnerable social situation. Out of the 15 employees, 6 and a half people work in the cafeteria, 5 and a half in accommodation and 3 in the cultural department. Additional projects and festivals allow Largo to occasionally employ more people.

By providing training and jobs – and sometimes helping them formalise their residence or citizenship status – Largo Residências has helped several vulnerable people change their lives and welcomed them in a community that treasures equality and personal empowerment.

**"We intend to grow and to involve more people." Marta Silva**

Besides conducting its own activities, Largo Residências has been engaged in **advocating for social inclusion policies**. Some of these activities urge local government to work together with local institutions that come from the social inclusion field and are connected with local needs so that local residents can contribute to decisions about public matters. Through the local GABIP structure, Largo has advanced a law proposal to empower the elderly, people who are isolated and who are often victims of exploitation and fraud. At the local as well as at the national level, Largo has been advocating for housing-related legislation. Largo members are working on a new institution of cooperative housing to design processes of cooperativism in the city centre.

**"Largo is an important connector that can boost and organise people and civil society and can interact with important social movements. They try to put housing rights into the mainstream political and social agenda." Luis Mendes**

Largo Residências also had an impact on municipal policies related to tourism. Approved in October 2019, a new regulation established a **ban on new tourism facilities** in Lisbon's historical areas. However, tourism facilities that reuse a formerly vacant building and accommodate social and cultural projects for local development and housing, are exempt from this ban. Clearly, the regulation has been inspired by Largo Residências, aiming at limiting extractive real estate speculation and promoting a new, more sustainable and responsible logic of tourism.

Locally, Largo Residências has received approval both by the City Hall, with which the organisation has established a channel of continuous open dialogue, and the local community. Occasionally, however, Largo has been criticized for assisting the gentrification of Intendente.

**"Our response to criticism is that gentrification is based on substituting classes. And our project did not substitute classes; it tries to help people who were evicted to stay here." Tiago Mota Saraiva Saraiva**

## 12 The Largo Residências model

Largo Residências has been identified as an example of **good practice connecting the cultural sector and social inclusion**. Largo's cooperative project is considered a vanguard model of economic sustainability because its implementation preserves the harmony with the various dimensions of social sustainability. For this reason, it has been featured in the *"Policy Handbook on Promotion of Creative Partnerships"* published by the European Union.

Using its visibility at the local and international scene, Largo has developed a variety of local and international partnerships that also helped in promoting more inclusive development policies including the right to housing, non-speculative urban development, social economy and responsible tourism. Joining the [re:Kreators](#) and [Placemaking Europe](#) networks helped Largo participate in international policy discussions and have an impact on the European Union's [Urban Agenda discussion](#).

**"Largo is special because it makes the connection between the global forces and external threats or opportunities that come to this part of the city and those forces and the local organisations we already have in Largo." Luis Mendes**

## 13 Interviewees

Jerusa da Costa, receptionist, Largo Residências

Roberto Falanga, Universidade do Lisboa, adviser at the BIP/ZIP program

Ana Jara, activist, politician, elected municipal councillor

Luis Mendes, journalist, Universidade do Lisboa

Tiago Mota Saraiva, architect, Ateliermob

Marta Silva, founder of Largo Residências

Hélène Veiga Gomes, anthropologist, Escuta

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## **6. The Jewish District (Budapest, Hungary)**

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# Introduction

The so-called Jewish District is a historical neighborhood in the center of Budapest. Recently it has also been known as the “Party District” or “Ruin Bar District” referring to a phenomenon that emerged around 2000 when courtyards of dilapidated empty buildings signed for demolition were turned into combined hospitality and cultural venues. Ruin bars bringing life to the run-down district still in need of revitalization a decade after the fall of Socialism became very popular among locals and tourists, and since the 2010s grew into a mass phenomenon. The district is now in the focus of interest of investors, and its economic, social, and cultural profile has changed to a great extent, including problems such as gentrification and overtourism. The preservation, renovation, and uses of the historical building stock lead to questions about heritage values and processes as well as the roles of various stakeholders in this respect. The case study chosen from among the inhabitants of the historical buildings in the Jewish District, Szimpla Kert, is one of the first ruin bars, with a clear vision about the district as a livable place where social diversity, inclusiveness, empowerment, and cultural heritage is respected and sustained.

## 1 Timeline

- From the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century – formation of the Jewish District.
- 1841 – the house under 14 Kazinczy Street, where Szimpla operates now, was built.
- 1944 – a large part of the district, including Kazinczy 14, is part of Budapest Ghetto.
- Between 1945 and 1989 – buildings in the district were deteriorating.
- The 1990s – plans by the local municipality to revitalize the district, demolition of some historical buildings.
- 1996-1999 – the first inventory of the built heritage in the district, the beginning of heritage activism.
- 2001 – The first ruin pubs opened, including Szimpla Kávézó (Simple Café) on Kertész Street.
- 2002 – The Jewish District became the buffer zone of the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Budapest.
- 2002 – Szimpla Kert (Simple Garden) was opened on Király Street.
- 2004 – the ÓVÁS! Civic Association was officially established.
- 2004-2005 – The National Office of Cultural Heritage declared a large part of the 7<sup>th</sup> district (so-called Jewish Quarter) a protected area and several buildings protected monuments.
- 2004 – Szimpla moved to 14 Kazinczy Street.
- 2010 – Tourism in the Jewish District reached a mass scale; a boom of Airbnb and hostels
- 2015 – Szimpla established its Office for Communication.



## 2 Story

### 2.1 History of the Jewish District

The inner part of the 7<sup>th</sup> district of Budapest, also called Jewish District, is the result of a long historical development rooted mostly in the late eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth century. Merchants and artisans who were not allowed to settle down within the city walls of Pest, started to build their dwellings in this area (Perczel 2007, 17). Though it was a multiethnic and multireligious neighborhood, the most significant group was constituted by the Jews: before the second world war, 30% of the population was Jewish (Locsmándi 2011, 184). Many of them built houses that had small workshops or factories in the courtyards and on the ground floors. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the district was a typical commercial neighborhood spotted with characteristic Jewish buildings, such as synagogues, schools, and baths.

During the second world war, a large part of the district was turned into the Jewish Ghetto. Many of the Jews of Pest fell victim to the Holocaust, and from among those who survived, many decided to leave the country after the war. All these events, as well as the Socialist nationalization of the buildings and enterprises, largely damaged Jewish culture, even though one of the largest Jewish communities in Central-Eastern Europe still lives here (Egedy and Smith 2016, 96-97). After the houses became state property, they were not maintained appropriately anymore, and a decline in the inhabitant's social status accompanied the deterioration of the buildings. By the 1980s, the former glory of the district significantly faded.

### 2.2 The Jewish District after 1990

The collapse of Communism in Hungary in 1989 opened the way for the privatization of real estate. In the second half of the 1990s, the local municipality came up with plans to redevelop the district by significantly changing the existing housing stock, including several demolition orders (Polyák 2006). Many new owners were speculators who were not interested in renovating the historical buildings but demolished them and erected new, usually cheap, and low-quality ones instead, which did not match the streetscape (Csanádi et al. 2011, 205).



*Figure 1 Old and modern buildings at the intersection of Kazinczy and Wesselényi Streets. Photo: Dóra Mérai.*

Speculative investors purchased several properties and waited for an increase in real estate prices, and these buildings were left empty for years, even after their privatization (Smith et al. 2018, 535). The general bad condition of the old building stock inhabited by the residents was combined with serious social problems, while, due to the demolishing trend, the district started to lose its former architectural and aesthetic character.

This was noticed by a small group of heritage experts who launched a project to survey and document the historical building stock, and they discovered that Jewish intangible heritage had survived there in a previously unknown and significant extent (Perczel 2005). They turned to the National Office of Cultural Heritage and UNESCO in order to protect, preserve, and present the heritage of the district, and in 2004, they established a civic organization called [ÓVÁS!](#) (the word meaning both Veto and Protection). In 2002, a large part of the area labeled as the Old Jewish Quarter of Pest became the buffer zone of the UNESCO World Heritage site of Andrassy Road. The National Office of Cultural Heritage declared the Jewish Quarter an area of heritage significance in 2004, and 2005, a large set of buildings were certified as protected monuments. However, the protected status did not prevent the demolition or significant reconstruction of buildings either, even if the process slowed down. What is more, the UNESCO World Heritage site status was associated with the rapid development of tourism and fueled speculative expectations. By 2007, almost 40% of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century buildings were destroyed, and, though now there are many more tools in the hand of heritage protectionists, they still do not see the situation as satisfactory (Perczel 2007, 13).

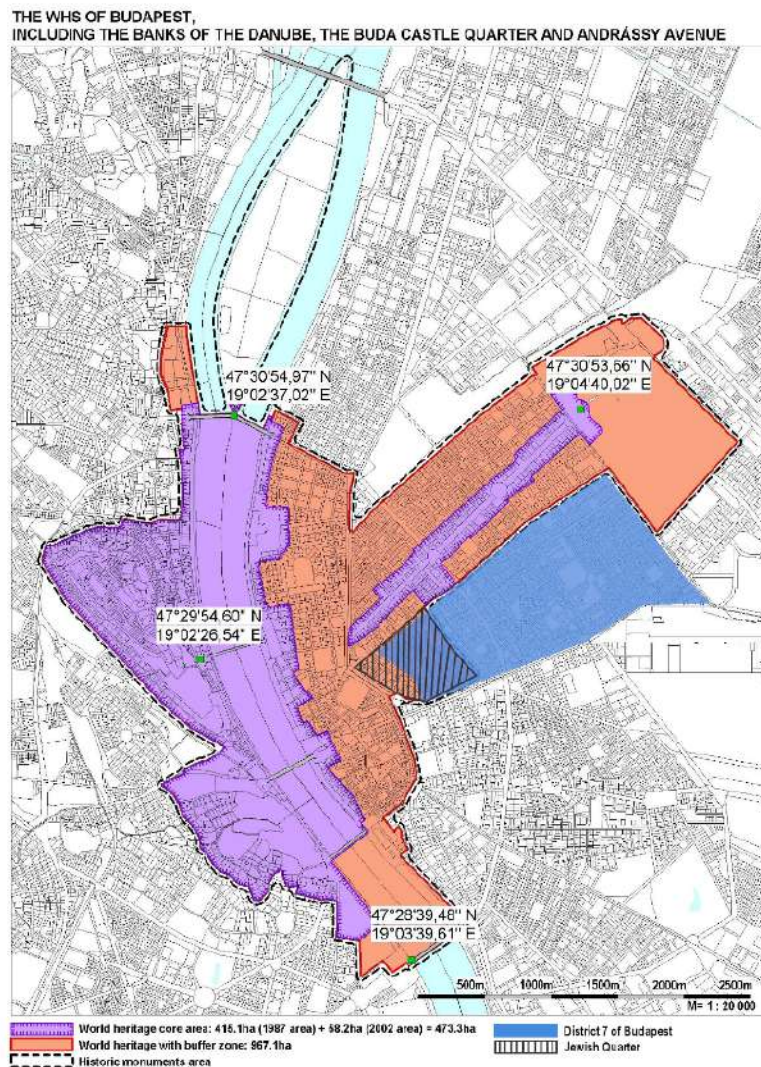


Figure 2 The UNESCO World Heritage Site (purple) and its buffer zone (brown) in Budapest, and its relation to the 7<sup>th</sup> district (blue) and the Jewish District (striped) within.

Source: whc.unesco.org, edited by Kyra Lyublyanovics

## 2.3 From Jewish District to Party District

Parallel with these processes, a new phenomenon emerged that brought international fame for the district and placed it as a “must” to the tourists’ map: the ruin bars.

### RUIN BARS

*Ruin bars emerged after 2000 in the courtyards of dilapidated empty buildings signed for demolition, sometimes even under obscure legal circumstances. They were established by artists and intellectuals based on their private capital, as venues for an alternative, non-conformist, non-consumerist underground culture. Ruin bars, such as Szimpla, Szóda, Sirály, Mumus, became very popular among the locals. They organized concerts, art exhibits, theater plays, literary events, and Sirály even operated a small library.*

A new sub-culture emerged, which also gave space to initiatives connecting to the Jewish culture. Ruin bars brought life to the district and used the special atmosphere of the dilapidated buildings for their benefit: this provided the essence of the aesthetics and atmosphere. Another advantage of the historical buildings was their spatial organization, with wings around inner courtyards, the latter being perfect spaces for small communities to gather (Lugosi et al. 2010).

The first ruin bars rented the places for a nominal cost (Lugosi et al. 2010, 3086; Molnár 2019a). Soon, both the municipality and private real-estate owners recognized the potential in the growing popularity of the bars and the entire district. The municipality pushed out the ruin bars from their properties in order to be able to sell the latter. Renting the buildings to such bars was an easy way to benefit the speculators who had no resources to invest in the renovation or were stopped by the success of monument protectionists (Marques and Richards 2014, 107). This temporary reuse without renovation saved a part of the historical building stock in a period of uncertainty. Buildings occupied by ruin bars were not demolished or altered in the years of most intense speculation, and this was a solution to keep a fair level of maintenance (Perczel 2019).

The ground floors of the buildings were empty. There was no life at all. When the first ruin bars opened, Szimpla and Szóda, we were thrilled, they brought life here. It was good for the district; we felt that these were positive changes. They were able to move into the houses which were not allowed to be demolished any more due to our initiative [ÓVÁS] and the interference by the UNESCO. (Perczel 2019)

Tourists very soon discovered ruin bars, and the district became a target for foreign visitors. Nightlife intensified to an extreme level in the district, and a huge market evolved for tourist accommodation, a new field for developers. Airbnb and hostels became a mass phenomenon in the Jewish District as well as in the nearby areas by the early 2010s (Pinke-Sziva et al. 2019, 6). Property and rental prices skyrocketed, and ruin bars also had to generate substantial revenues to pay the market rents, so they had to switch to a more economically sustainable model. A second wave of the ruin bars appeared in the summer of 2010, and these were more for-profit enterprises compared to the pioneers in this field (Csanádi et al. 2011).





*Figure 3 A cluster of modern pubs in Gozsdu Court. Photo: Dóra Mériai*

The character of the district has changed since then, and it is called by its new name now as the “party district” of Budapest (Smith et al. 2018, 532-533). Overtourism became a serious problem, similarly to other capitals in Europe, and the original inhabitants are moving out because the side-effects of nightlife are unbearable for them. Gentrification seems to be an unstoppable process, and the local municipality is not able to handle efficiently any of these problems (Csanádi, Csizmady, and Olt 2011).

Meanwhile, the concept of ruin bar changed too, and the old ones – even those established around 2010 – are closing one by one year by year. There are only a few places still fighting to keep their original mission and character and to keep the district as a livable place. Among these, Szimpla is the most influential one, a bar successfully operating in a protected monument building for 15 years now, that became a world celebrity and a serious stakeholder in the discussions about the future of this historical district of Budapest.

### 3 Policy context

Right after the end of the Socialist era, the local district municipalities got a significant autonomy within Budapest in terms of urban development. The districts were authorized to develop their planning documents and building codes, and they also received the duty of post-Socialist rehabilitation of the neglected urban space (Polyák 2006; Kovács 2009; Locsmándi 2011, 144; Smith et al. 2018).

It is the policy of the local municipality that determines the level and character of urban regeneration in the district. In contrast with the districts that apply an active strategy or provide limited support, the 7<sup>th</sup> district chose a “hands-off approach” or “non-planning” strategy, which was a passive attitude that relied very much on the market. The local municipality did not think strategically about the development of the district before investors appeared in the late 1990. For about

a decade, the demolition of historical buildings and the erection of new buildings were based on ad hoc decisions, and the legal and planning framework of urban development was missing (Kovács et al. 2013, 26, 31-32; Smith et al. 2018). This was a serious problem in a situation that was chaotic in terms of ownership and responsibilities.

Many buildings quickly got to private ownership, often under questionable circumstances. Developers took over the control soon, and they started to move out of the residents, which paved the way to the process of gentrification (Locsmándi 2011, 171-172, Kovács et al. 2013, 32). The district adopted a local planning and building code, but it was highly open for negotiations (Locsmándi 2011, 146). The local development plan created in 1999 contained several demolition orders (Polyák 2006). This, combined with a high level of corruption, quickly lead to serious damage in the urban fabric and the escalation of social problems.

Changes in the official heritage status of the area and specific buildings from 2002, 2004, and 2005 forced the municipality to deal with the issue but did not stop the demolishing for a while, and neither did it solve the problem of conservation and substandard living conditions in the historical buildings. These later served as the basis of arguments by the municipality on social development and slum-clearing (Polyák 2006, Csanádi et al. 2011, Perczel 2019). Buildings with apartments purchased by their former tenants represent another special problem: the residents should take care of the renovation with the help of city- and district-level financial support programs, which do not prove to provide sufficient help (Kovács et al. 2013, 26; Bodó 2019). As a result of these processes, in the Jewish District, 20-40% of the buildings have been renovated between 1989 and 2013, while in other districts of the city center, this is even more than 75% (Kovács 2013, 26, fig. 2).

In 2015, the district municipality issued a long-term Settlement Development Concept for 2014-2030 and a mid-term Integrated Settlement Development Strategy for 2014-2020 to address all these issues. They defined the vision of the municipality about the district as an area providing high-quality life conditions, urban services, and favorable environmental conditions for various generations, with a touristic offer based on its rich built and intangible heritage. Cooperation, climate consciousness, and solidarity are defined as the main values. To deal with historical building stock, they intend to maintain the financial support framework for renovations and to establish a support program developing suitable technical solutions. The document accentuates the importance of the historical cityscape and the variability in the functions and puts emphasis on keeping the dwelling functions to avoid a "Skansen" effect. Development areas include the elaboration of a methodology for protecting the complex heritage and for the energetical renovation of historical buildings.

The Strategy defined the mid-term goals for development as improving living conditions and reducing the conflicts by respecting the historical architectural environment, promoting tourism and creative economy, and increasing the cohesion of the local society. The planned interventions in the Jewish District include the renovation of public spaces with participatory planning, the renovation of houses, mostly protected monuments, and the rehabilitation of Jewish memorial

sites. The interventions are partly tasks for the municipality, partly require the development of a partnership with the private sector, condominium owners, and cultural and church organizations. The municipality also aims to develop the local identity by educating the new residents and visitors about the history and culture of the district.

The Settlement Image Decree and Settlement Image Manual accepted in 2017, and a new Local Building Code from 2018 regulates the construction activities in the district. The aim is formulated in accordance with the strategic documents: the sustainable and organic development of the historical district and the protection of its values. It is, however, not clear what they define as values besides the legally protected sites and how decisions are made upon them. Owners and developers have a reporting obligation towards the municipality, and in the case of constructions and demolitions, special local permission is needed in addition to the regular permissions, but the actual choices are very much upon the discretion of the designing architect and the chief architect of the municipality.

The local development strategy also recognizes the danger of the domination of low-quality hospitality industry and suggests a strict control over the profile of new businesses in the Jewish District. Ruin bars have been in focus due to their conflicts with the residents since their popularity rose. The Hungarian legislation favors the entrepreneurs in these situations, so the municipality was forced to handle the problem (Smith et al. 2018, 537-539). After several attempts to restrict the opening hours by a municipal decision, finally, a referendum was held in the 7<sup>th</sup> district on the issue in 2019, which, however, was unsuccessful due to the low number of participants (Szabó 2018). Another method tried by the district leadership was to change the profile of the area. The local government initiated the project "The Street of Culture" in 2010 with EU funding aimed to renovate and re-profile Kazinczy Street, one of the core areas of nightlife.

Local elections held in 2019 November created a new situation since the leadership of the district and the capital was taken over by the political opposition after a long period. The expectations towards the new team are to take up an initiating role, to play a more significant role in managing the conflicts, and to move the district closer to the strategic goals by developing strong partnerships between the main stakeholders.

## **4 The social and economic transformation of the Jewish District: a space of multiple conflicts**

Ruin bars emerged and flourished in the niche that appeared due to the tensions between urban decay, protected heritage, and private investment (Lugosi et al. 2010). Starting from the use of dilapidated buildings, the area became a creative hub, now dominated by restaurants, bars, design shops, galleries, museums, and festivals. In the small area of walking distance, there were 180 restaurants, 31 ruin bars, 25 hotels, 15 galleries, 22 design shops according to a survey in 2014 (Marques and Richards 2014, 105), and these numbers have surely increased since

then. The growth of the global tourism industry, especially fast tourism favored by low-cost airlines, contributed to the international success of the hospitality industry in the district, and ruin pubs defined it as a primary target for tourists within Budapest (Smith et al. 2018, 537).



*Figure 4 A shop for tourists on Király Street. Photo: Dóra Mériai*

Urban rehabilitation and the success of the hospitality industry caused rapid demographic and social changes in the district. The increasing economic value of the neighborhood determined the process of gentrification. It forced out low-income residents due to the increased cost of rent and higher cost of goods as well as to the laissez-faire urban development policy of the district municipality. Younger families with a background in creative industries are replacing households with elderly people and from lower social classes. The popularity of the district among tourists led to a boom of short-term rental services. Proliferation of services like Airbnb and Booking.com catalyzed the process. Around 2,000 apartments are rented out in this form in the 7th district, about a fifth part of those in the entire Budapest (Molnár 2019b). Many houses have hardly any registered residents, and even those often stay for a few years only, then move on. Traditional neighborhood communities have been dissolved, social ties damaged, and this process is irreversible now (Settlement Development Concept for 2014-2030, 10; Pinke-Sziva et al. 2019, Smith et al. 2019). As one of the local shop owners says,

Only Airbnb is here; everyone moves away from here... It has a very bad effect on the traditional residents of the street, many who rented here move away... It is a bit painful to see that three or four families move away from this [Kazinczy] street every year because it is impossible to live in these houses due to the Airbnb guests. (Rácz 2019)



Tensions and conflicts have emerged between, but also within the main groups of stakeholders: residents, real-estate developers, hospitality enterprises, heritage protectionists, and the local government.

**Developers versus residents.** In the period of post-Socialist privatization, developers faced problems when evicting the inhabitants, and the process was problematic both in legal and ethical terms. Urban rehabilitation in the district was focused on physical renovation. It was determined by the interests of the real estate developers; the interests of the residents were barely considered. Residents in those buildings which were not sold to developers are not able to finance the renovation of the old buildings; their living conditions are below the modern standards. Inequality increased: the district is a mixture of luxury apartments and slums often within the same streets.



*Figure 5 A former apartment house turned into a hotel and business hub by investors (left) and another one still inhabited by residents who lack the funding to renovate it (right), both on Király Street. Photo: Dóra Mériai*

**Developers versus heritage protectionists.** Developers were not very much interested in heritage values unless they could monetize them; both they and the municipality saw potential in the UNESCO label in this respect. Investors were often speculators who did not buy to develop but to wait for the prices go up and did not spend on maintaining the historical building stock which was quickly deteriorating. They also started to demolish the old buildings and build new houses which did not match the historical streetscape. Damaging the buildings took other forms too, for example, by keeping the façade but demolishing the structure behind it or adding new floors on the top of old buildings. Heritage specialists and civic activists stood up against these trends and were successful in stopping some physical changes in the building stock but not others. There seems to be no compromise between the two parties.

**Hospitality entrepreneurs versus the local government.** Enterprises contribute to the local budget with significant sums, but they are not satisfied with the service they receive in exchange: the cleanliness of public areas, public safety in the streets, and the presence of petty criminals disturb their clientele and employees. They would expect a more pro-active attitude on behalf of the municipality in solving the infrastructural problems too (Molnár 2019a).

**Heritage protectionists versus local government.** The local government has argued for the modernization of the district, and they have seen the construction

of new buildings and the reconstruction of historical ones as a part of that. Heritage activists (lead by the NGO ÓVÁS!) have been fighting against these processes to preserve the values of the area. The protected status achieved by heritage activists was first seen by the municipality as an obstacle to the revitalization endeavors intended to address the social problems in the district and as a factor to alienate developers (Polyák 2006). The “price” for protection was that the local government could not develop some areas, and around 3,000 residents stayed in their comfortless apartments, which indicates a conflict between the **residents versus heritage protectionists** too.

**Residents versus the local government.** The absence of strategy on behalf of the municipality resulted in the unequal development of the district. Many buildings are still dilapidated, and streets are neglected. The local government cannot control the damage of nightlife and overtourism on the quality of life in the district. Residents would expect a more efficient strategy from the municipality in this respect. The civic initiative called Élhető Erzsébetvárosért (For a Livable Elizabeth Town) pushed the district government to organize a referendum on the opening hours in 2018, and they entered the scene of local elections too with their own candidates in 2019 October.

**Residents versus hospitality entrepreneurs.** The biggest problem is the late-night noise, littering, and the misbehavior of visitors (Smith et al. 2018, 535-536). Drugs, prostitution appeared in the streets. Residents in houses with Airbnb flats suffer from the movement of tourists with suitcases. This conflict also appears in terms of locals versus foreigners, even though many foreigners are owners and residents in the area. The residents do not benefit from the success of business in the area in terms of their quality of life.

Aforementioned groups of stakeholders are not homogeneous, but there are conflicts even within them. For example, there is a conflict between the “socially-responsible” (first generation) bars, such as Szimpla, and the new ones that exploit the model to make as much profit as possible with little concerns about the consequences for the neighborhood:

There are many bars which are profit-oriented: they are going for volume, they are going for tourists who drink a lot, who drink to be as drunk as possible. And then the residents of the 7th district have a very negative image about all the bars. It is bad for both the residents and the businesses, and it spoils the reputation of the industry. (Molnár 2019a)

## 5 Heritage in the Jewish District

### 5.1 Built heritage

Discourse on heritage in the Jewish District started in the second half of the 1990s when the first heritage professionals launched an inventory work to act against the demolishing and rebuilding plans of the district government. Research and public discussion focused only on built and tangible heritage. The success of the combined professional and civic campaign also affected these: in 2002, the Jewish District became the buffer zone of the UNESCO World Heritage Site, then, in 2004, became

a heritage area also protected by the Hungarian law (Perczel 2019). Mostly due to the protection campaign in 2004 and 2005, currently 65 buildings in the Jewish District have official monument (műemlék) status: 63 at the national level and 2 within the district (Perczel 2019). One of the latter, a one-story building with a garden at 8 Nagy Diófa Street, was assigned for demolition, but the residents objected, so the district issued a heritage protection decree about this house (Perczel 2019). The civic association ÓVÁS! is an important supporter of such bottom-up initiatives and played a crucial role in achieving protected status for various sites and buildings. Supported by a massive civic basis, they also have an important monitoring role. In 2006 they were the ones who turned to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee and signaled that the developments endanger the built heritage in the district. The Committee sent a mission to examine the situation, and, based on the report, expressed its concern and laid down some suggestions for the local and national government (UNESCO World Heritage Committee 2008).

## 5.2 Jewish heritage

The ÓVÁS! association, had a leading role in recognition of the area as a “Jewish District.” They promote the research and presentation of the intangible heritage as well, which is the target of their more recent projects but focusing only on the Jewish past (Török 2013; “Kik éltek, kik építettek itt?”). Jewish intangible heritage has been explored by other projects as well in the framework of Jewish studies (Frojimovics et al. 1998).

As I went from house to house, the inhabitants told me that only Jews had lived there before [WWII], only the janitor was Christian or the servants. In every third or fourth house, there was a Jewish, kosher slaughterhouse, bakery, meat smoker, and on the upper floors, there were prayer rooms and synagogues. (Perczel 2019)



*Figure 6 The Big Synagogue in Dohány Street. Photo: Dóra Méráí*

## JEWISH BUDAPEST

*From the mid-nineteenth century, the district hosted one of Europe's largest Jewish communities. The bulk of the Jewish inhabitants of Budapest disappeared due to the Holocaust and the emigration afterward, but after 1990, Jewish presence became more visible in the district. Today 45-90,000 Jews live in Hungary, and 80-90% live in Budapest, not exclusively in this district (Egedy and Smith, 2016).*

There is a Jewish religious community today visible through their buildings, practices, cultural institutions, and characteristic representatives in the streets. However, there is another type of Jewish community among the residents, who do not necessarily practice their religion, and who have preserved their identity at a varying level. They are important carriers of local intangible heritage and are being pushed out these years by the new developmental trends.

The third form of defining the Jewishness of the district in terms of heritage is Jewish heritage tourism that emerged after 2000. This process also contributed to the concept of the Jewish District of Pest and fits into the European trend of creation and heritagization of Jewish spaces, such as in Prague or Krakow (Gruber 2009, Gantner 2014, Walkowitz 2018). Jewish thematic guided tours and online applications are offered in this part of Budapest, Jewish cuisine flourishes, and there has been a Jewish Cultural Festival organized every summer since 2015.

Jewish heritage tourism is closely interlinked with the cultivation of Jewish memorial sites and the memory of Holocaust victims and the Ghetto both by the Jewish religious community and by the heritage protectionists, professionals, and activists. The last intact remain of the Ghetto wall located at 15 Király Street was demolished in 2006 despite the protest of the residents. The ÓVÁS! association achieved that in 2010, the wall was rebuilt, and a memorial plaque was placed there in the framework of a ceremony, which has been a target of Jewish heritage tourism ever since then.

## 5.3 Intangible heritage

The problem of built heritage and intangible heritage in the district often appears in an artificial separation, especially in the public discourse, where mostly built heritage is the focus of concern, while layers of intangible heritage other than (old and post-2000) Jewish traditions are not recognized at all. Together with the residents, the intangible heritage of everyday life in the district also disappears, especially those of low-social-status and marginalized groups, but also traditional professions.

Disappearing crafts should be brought back and re-established, such as clockmaking, goldsmith- and leatherwork, and their representatives should be helped to pursue these professions for which there is still a need. People are pushed out from the market because they have the knowledge, but they do not have the management skills to commercialize that... When this district was a Jewish District, it was about professions, and it also had its cultural side. There was a very rich life here. (Bodó 2019)



Since built heritage is more than just the architecture, but includes all kinds of intangible aspects, such as the uses of spaces and buildings, the related practices, communities, and ideas – all of which change together with the ever changing social environment –, the heritage profile of the district has significantly transformed since the 1990s. A new layer of heritage evolved with the appearance of ruin bars, their unique atmosphere, and the related groups and their activities, which is also disappearing now with the process of gentrification in the area. It is not just the original residents of the houses that are pushed out, but also the first, special, local, and unique wave of the 21<sup>st</sup>-century hospitality industry – paradoxically, due to its immense success – as a result of which the area loses its unique appeal. Only a few actors have recognized the danger of this process in the Jewish District and developed a strategic way of thinking and acting about it, and the most visible of whom is Szimpla.

## 6 Szimpla

Szimpla is the oldest ruin bar in the Jewish district now, and it is conscious about the heritage they curate both in tangible and intangible terms. They also have an understanding of how heritage can contribute to creating a better life in the neighborhood, and they connect various groups of stakeholders in the district and beyond who share their vision.

### 6.1 The story of Szimpla

The history of Szimpla started in 2001 when Gábor Bertényi, Márk Gauder, Attila Kiss, and Ábel Zsendovits established a small bar on Kertész Street in the 7<sup>th</sup> district of Budapest. The founders were not professionals in the hospitality industry; they had degrees in social sciences and art. This background brought new aspects to hospitality practices in Budapest: they aimed to establish a cultural and community center with a variety of cultural and social programs (Molnár 2019b).

In 2002 they opened the first Szimpla Kert, an open-air venue in an inner courtyard on Király Street, which in 2004 moved to 14 Kazinczy Street, a dilapidated nineteenth-century house that is now a protected monument (Somlyódy 2007, Molnár 2019b). Step by step, they made their home in the building, which became an iconic feature of the world-famous bar.



*Figure 7 Façade of Szimpla Kert on Kazinczy Street. Photo: Dóra Méri*

Szimpla was very popular among Budapest's residents and tourists from the very beginning at each of its venues, but the real international fame came in 2012 when Lonely Planet included it to the list of best bars in the world (Ruinpubs.com; Velkey 2016). As a result, Szimpla and ruin bars, in general, became a primary target among foreign tourists, and the number of visitors has been growing ever since then (Molnár 2019).

Popularity and economic success had its price. Overcrowdedness, the growing level of noise and garbage, and criminals attracted by tourists damaged the relationships between the ruin bars and the local communities. Szimpla and other ruin bars had to elaborate a new strategy on how to keep their economic sustainability, preserve good relations with the residents, and preserve their core values. As Bence Molnár, the head of the Office for Communication of Szimpla put it:

The original concept was not just a bar. It was opened by people who wanted to have a place for community meetings and cultural programs. Of course, the founders considered making a profit; economic sustainability was part of the concept from the very beginning. However, the idea of having a community place open to everybody was an essential part of the concept as well. The mission has not changed since then. What has changed is the popularity and the number of people who are coming here. (Molnár 2019b)

The owners opened further venues in Budapest and elsewhere in Hungary, but none of these became as successful as Szimpla Kert in Kazinczy Street. The latter inspired a family-oriented café in Vác, a small town north of Budapest, two places in Berlin, and Szimpla Szentgyörgy in Sfântu Gheorghe, Romania.

## 6.2 Values and mission of the enterprise

The vision of Szimpla from the very beginning was to be an organization that gathers creative people, hosts cultural events, welcomes civil movements, and gives space to everyone to meet and share cultural experiences. On its website ([szimpla.hu](http://szimpla.hu)), Szimpla defines itself as a “post-modern culture center,” a “cultural reception space,” and a “civic base.” They also emphasize the importance of social responsibility: “We are committed to local communities, livable cities, and the environment” (Szimpla. Guide to Budapest & Hungary). Bence Molnár communications director explains the priorities of the enterprise as follows:

We organize art; we target people who are interested in new things, original things, creative things in music, fine arts, and any kind of interactive cultural program. With the civil movements and fairs, we are trying to pick directions that we feel are very much needed. (Molnár 2019b)

Though Szimpla is one of the most popular bars in Europe, selling food and drinks for them is only a means to ensure the financial background for their cultural events and community services, and they put the latter on the top in the hierarchy of the enterprise’s values. Their website talks about a “Szimpla lifestyle,” which “...is brought to life by culture, creativity and constant change day by day ...” Szimpla defines its mission as

Shaping our environment, making it more livable and human-friendly by searching for the cultural treasures of Hungary and the world, by introducing and managing creative talents and their products, and by implementing and operating models that help sustainable development in many ways of life. (Molnár 2019b)

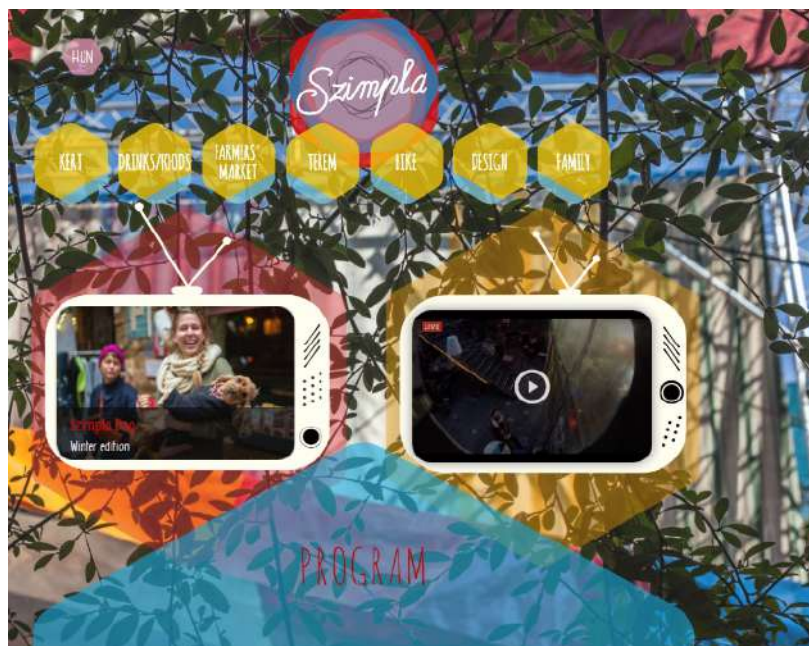


Figure 8 Szimpla's home page. Source: [szimpla.hu](http://szimpla.hu)

However, with economic success and changes in the local urban context – not independent from the former factor – it became a challenge for Szimpla to preserve its core values and mission. The bar started to attract crowds of people thirsty for amusement who do not share Szimpla’s values but go there to see a place on the

tourists' "must visit" list of instagrammable sites. To promote its values more efficiently, the owners established a Communication Office in 2015, which is focused entirely on social and cultural programs and the communication with the public; more than 20 employees work now in this field. Profitability is still essential for Szimpla; it is a for-profit enterprise. However, profit does not always determine the behavior of the organization. Bence Molnár emphasizes their priorities:

Our task is to preserve our core mission. That is why we do not follow the mainstream; we do not always serve the public needs, but rather give what we think is essential to give. We want people visiting Szimpla to go with some valuable experience, something that changed their minds. (Molnár 2019b)

In practice, it means that Szimpla established a face-control at the entrance and refuses inviting guests whose only intention is to get drunk, for example, intoxicated bachelor parties, so that their reputation is not ruined by misbehaving visitors (Molnár 2019a). Szimpla is selective when it is about customers' safety and business ethics, but otherwise, it follows the principle of openness and inclusiveness, even with some proactive elements. They try to attract various layers of the local community, for example, by offering a 50% reduction from the price of every drink to pensioners.

With the art, we are trying to give opportunities to the upcomers, the new ones, the young ones, the creative ones. Target audience does not exist in Szimpla, we are open for everyone, for every age, for every gender, for every financial status, so we do not select specific target audiences for our programs. (Molnár 2019b)

Szimpla is open towards innovations and applies the most advanced technologies in its logistic and financial operations. However, if technologies might damage the image and atmosphere, they sacrifice convenience. They also avoid industrial technologies in interior design and furnishing.

Szimpla is a non-partisan place; it does not host events in support of political parties. At the same time, the place promotes certain social and political values such as individual rights (including civil rights and human rights), democracy, secularism, internationalism, freedom of speech, and orientation towards an open and inclusive society. International culture and livability for everybody is an integral part of the Szimpla identity:

"We are not Jewish or Hungarian; we are international-eclectic. Our vision is a liveable city, and we contribute to it as much as possible." (Molnár 2019a)

## 6.3 Activities

Szimpla Kert implements its core values and mission through a variety of activities which cover three main areas:

**Culture and art** are their essential activities. Szimpla has its own theatre company and movie screenings. It hosts music concerts, art exhibitions, art workshops. There are many regular events, such as Hungarian folk dance every Monday night, free concerts every Tuesday, Szimpla Open Stage every Friday. Szimpla does not only organize its own events but also offers its premises free of



charge to other organizations for educational and cultural events which are aligned with their core values (Molnár 2019a).



*Figure 9 Nighttime and daytime in Szimpla: party and Farmers' Market. Source: Szimpla Facebook and szimpla.hu*

**Sustainability** is promoted by organizing Szimpla Farmers' Market on Sundays, a flea market, and the Szimpla Bicycle workshop. The Farmers' Market connects thousands of urban customers with about 40 farmers offering their products since 2010. The Szimpla Design Shop upcycles products redesigned by Szimpla. Szimpla organizes every month the "Szimpla Bike Circus" where one can buy second-hand and new bikes, spare parts, and equipment. They provide with space the "RideKálmán" bike shop which repairs bikes and donates them to those who cannot afford to buy one. Kálmán Rácz, the owner, explains the nature of this cooperation:

The basis of our cooperation with Szimpla is their moral support that they stand behind this cause. It is also very important that they provide me with this space, in the heart of Budapest, in one of the inner districts. I also give them something: I help them run their bike rental service, I keep their bikes running, and I continuously renovate them. These are bikes built by me, so these are the best bikes to rent in Budapest, or at least the fastest ones. They have such a team... if all Hungary were like this, it would be a cool place. (Kálmán Rácz, 2019)

**Urban activism** includes actions aimed to turn Szimpla's narrow or broader environment into a more livable space. For example, the enterprise spends monthly about 900 euros to clean their street (Molnár 2019a). They promote various causes in the online and social media that relate to the infrastructural development, safety, and heritage of the district. Szimpla also addresses social problems above the local relevance: they initiate programs to integrate homeless people back to society, help children associations and animal shelters (Molnár 2019b).



*Figure 10 Information board outside Szimpla calling people to sign a petition to make Kazinczy Street a car-free zone. Photo: Dóra Méri*

**Supporting civil movements** is one of Szimpla's priorities. Their approach is "to help where our help is needed, and we can make changes." One of their most famous projects is the Kazinczy Living Library initiated in 2015 during the peak of the refugee crisis in Hungary. The Living Library was set up as a space for interaction and debate to promote respect, dialogue, and to challenge stereotypes and discrimination between different social groups. Another example is a meet-up they hosted for non-Hungarian residents of Budapest in 2019 October to inform them about their rights regarding the upcoming local elections.



Figure 11 VOTE - Hungarian municipal elections 2019. Source: @votelocalHungary

Depending on the season, about 100-110 employees keep Szimpla running. About 60 work on the bar, 20 organize events and communicate with the public, and 8 provide the maintenance of the building (Molnár 2019b).

## 6.4 The building, heritage, and adaptive reuse

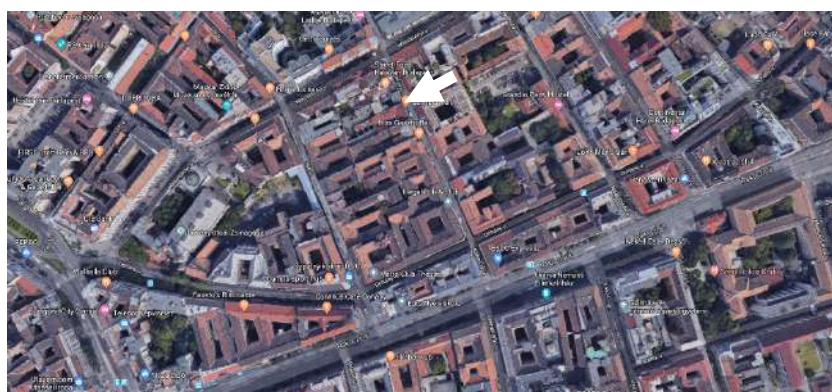
The house where Szimpla is currently located in a typical historical building in the district. It has been repurposed several times since its erection in 1841. It was designed by Mihály Pollack, the most prominent architect of Neo-Classicism in Hungary as a single-story U-shaped urban dwelling house. In 1911 Sándor Héber purchased the house and moved his successful oven factory to the courtyard. He lengthened the wings of the building and covered the courtyard with a glass roof (Perczel 2007, 187-188). The factory operated until the second world war when the Jewish owner was deported, and the building became part of Budapest Ghetto.





*Figure 12 Plaque on the façade of Kazinczy 14. Photo: Dóra Mérai*

The house stood empty from the end of the war, except for about two decades from the 1970s, when it served as an apartment house for a few families. In the 1990s, the local authorities decided to demolish the dilapidated building but postponed the implementation of their plans due to the activity of the ÓVÁS! Civic Association. The building was put under local protection (Perczel 2007, 187-8). It was finally sold to a private investor who turned the yard into a parking lot. When Szimpla made an offer to rent the house, the owner chose this more profitable option, and the ruin bar has used the premises since 2004 (Somlyódy 2007; Molnár 2019b). Szimpla does not renovate the building but takes care of its proper maintenance and safety; it is preserved in the form it survived the Socialist era until the bar is there. In 2005 the National Office of Heritage Protection declared it a listed monument.



*Figure 13 Bird's-eye view of Szimpla and its neighborhood. Source: Google Maps*

Operating an enterprise which accommodates crowds of visitors in an old building purposed for other functions is a challenging endeavor. The managers of Szimpla constantly face the problems related to the peculiarities of the house. However, they appreciate the size and ground plan of the building, which creates a “an adventurous” atmosphere. They apply various technological solutions to counterbalance the disadvantages (Molnár 2019b).



The building is not very convenient and functional for a business like ours, but we must operate here because it is an iconic building. It looks mysterious, and it is easy to fill it with stories. (Molnár 2019a)



Figure 14 Interiors of Szimpla. Photo: Dóra Mérai

The building has become an essential part of corporate history and heritage. Abel Zsendovits, one of the founders of Szimpla, acknowledges, that the location and “spirit” was a crucial element of Szimpla’s success (Egorova 2014). Today Szimpla can host up to 700 visitors at the same time, so thousands go through the place every day. They are served by nine bars with a different profile set up at various points of the courtyard and the former apartments. Guests are seated in the gateway, the inner courtyard, and the rooms on the ground floor and first floor, as well as the space of the former factory. The spatial arrangement of the flats can still be recognized. The staff’s offices are in the attic, while the cellars are the service area for catering. Szimpla also rents spaces in the neighboring building since the operation outgrew the original premises (Molnár 2019b).

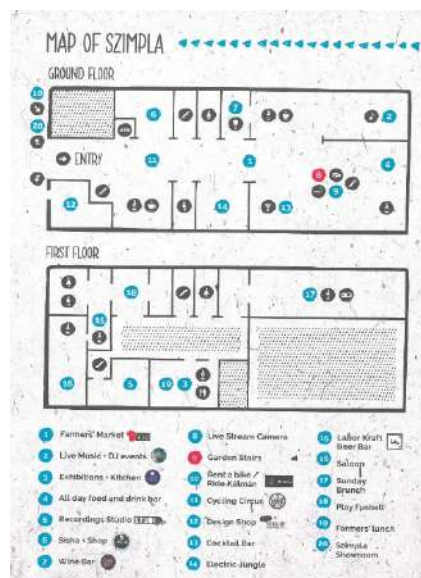


Figure 15 Ground plan of Szimpla: Source: Szimpla. Guide to Budapest&Hungary

The façade of Kazinczy 14 is untouched and dilapidated, but Szimpla made some changes inside with the permission of the chief architect of the district and the Disaster Management Department (Molnár 2019a). These were aimed to ensure the structural and operational safety of the building and the movement of people and goods. However, the added interior constructions and decorations are all mobile, and they can quickly be removed without any trace. The interiors formed gradually, organically, and they are constantly changing. They highlight the beauties of some original details, such as the staircase with its 19<sup>th</sup>-century cast-iron rails featuring winged figures (Perczel 2019). There are many plants in the courtyard and canvas roofs to reduce the outgoing sounds towards the neighborhood.

The furniture matches the building: they used second-hand items and various found objects such as a Trabant car, old computers, lamps, and other trash or treasure-like objects. They also collected some iconic objects from Budapest, and many pieces have their own stories. These are combined with artworks, such as paintings and holograms. It was a conscious choice to give a new life to old furniture from the time of opening the very first Szimpla. The owners found this kind of interior cozier and more attractive; they were dedicated to avoiding conscious design. Soon this style emerged as a design trend favored by an urban professional layer and was followed by many other bars (Gábor Bertényi in Somlyódy 2007).

The whole place is a statement about sustainability because we are reusing the building for a completely different purpose. It is also protecting what we already have, show it in its originality, but giving it a function, which let people perceive other things from the building. The whole thing is about recycling; we recycle the entire building. But within the building, we recycle what we find, and people find us with their things. People like how we reuse things. (Molnár 2019b)

Though the first Szimpla came into being by the temporary reuse of an old building, Kazinczy 14 was occupied and technically modernized already as the long-term home of the enterprise. However, the aesthetics of temporary use were preserved, and all developments and modernization are invisible, behind the curtains. By this, it is not just the building that is preserved and presented as heritage – maintained continuously by an entire technical team – but also the way of use, the intangible heritage of the ruin pub culture in the Jewish District of Budapest and of Szimpla itself. They preserve the tangible heritage of Szimpla as well, e.g., the two original second-hand movie projectors of the former Szimpla Kertmozi. It is used only occasionally, and its maintenance is costly, but they keep it because it is part of the Szimpla heritage (Liptay 2019).

Keeping the ruin aesthetics is, however, problematic from the point of view of the building on the long run since renovations from time to time are part of the normal lifecycle of a building, as it was the case also with Kazinczy 14 before the second world war. Today the façade presents most visibly the risks of Szimpla's approach: large parts of the plaster are missing, and the decorative details also threaten with the danger of disappearing with time. Since careful maintenance takes place in the background, the visual message of the building is also questionable in the perspective of desirable heritage conservation trends in general. Paradoxically, freezing the time from the point of view of built heritage is due to the dynamic

creation of intangible heritage in this case, since keeping the idea of a ruin pub in a long-term home means preserving the building without any renovation.

Szimpla first presented its premises and activities on the European Heritage Days in September 2019. Previously they did research to recover the past of the house from documents and images and the profession of the former inhabitants. They also organized a small pop-up exhibition on the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Szimpla in this building, where they presented materials from the past of both the house and the enterprise. The importance of intangible heritage was also recognized: the guide emphasized that the area was historically characterized by the dense presence of hospitality industry, crafts, and commerce, and placed Szimpla and the ruin bars in that context (Liptay 2019).

## 6.5 Communications and PR

The communication of Szimpla in the first years of its existence relied on personal networks. The personal and online network of the guests and the means of word-of-mouth is still essential. For four years now, however, the enterprise has a team of professionals who organize and communicate the programs towards the visitors, residents in the neighborhood, journalists, and the digital space. They follow Szimpla's appearances on the travel, gastronomy, and other blogs and respond to the praises and complaints. This team includes a manager dealing with clients with special requests (e.g., reserving a separate room for an event). Szimpla has a photographer and video producer, and they make sure that only professional images appear in their communication. The Communication Office does not generate revenues; its task is "to make sure that the social part of the enterprise exists and to keep it vibrant and up to date" (Molnár 2019b).

Szimpla actively uses the online channels of communication, most importantly, the website and social media (Table 1). Social media, especially Facebook, is also used to communicate with the residents. The latter can complain or raise issues there, and the enterprise tries to solve all the reasonable requests (Molnár 2019a, Bodó 2019).

*Table 1 Szimpla's social media channels as of November 14, 2019*

SM channel	Followers	Kind of information
Facebook	108,524	Up-to-date information on the programs and Szimpla in general.
YouTube	1,410	Everything that is Szimpla music. Concerts, live recordings, tunes, videos, Studio, Garden Hits, music fans, and musicians' united forum. It has 744,294 views.
Soundcloud	337	More than 400 records of concerts in Szimpla
Tumblr		Short posts about the events and promotion of new products.
Instagram	17,200	Photos of the events and products
Twitter	760	Mostly copy-pasting from Szimpla Instagram (@szimplakert)
Flickr	2	Over 400 photos from events and everyday life of Szimpla community
Blogspot	108	Images and stories related to Szimpla's activities

## 6.6 Financial model

Szimpla Kert is a private enterprise, owned by Szimplacity Ltd (SzimplaCity Szolgáltató Korlátolt Felelősségű Társaság). It is a financially successful enterprise that can sustain its core mission. Moreover, it is still growing (Molnár 2019b). The enterprise was financially successful from the very beginning, and since then, they multiplied the income. Attila Kiss, one of the founders of Szimpla, recalls the first success:

From a business point of view, the first enterprise far exceeded our expectations. We worked hard; we were there day and night. We expected to make 30 to 40 thousand forints a day so that we can get our investments back in a year. We had 'survival' scenarios, but on the second day, we had to throw them away. We made hundreds of thousands of forints ..." (cit.: Somlyódy, 2007)

The net turnover in 2005 was 95 million forints and grew to around 150 million in 2006 (Somlyódy 2007). In 2018 it reached 1.6 billion, that is c. 4,8 million euros (Céginformáció.hu). The enterprise uses a significant part of the income to support its cultural and civic programs (the entrance is always free) and to reinvest into the building. By 2007, Szimpla spent 11-12 million forints on culture per year (Somlyódy 2007).

The sites of the first two Szimpla were in municipality ownership. The courtyard of 25 Király Street was rented by them for a small amount, but by next year the plot was sold, and the new owner moved out Szimpla. They found a new place in another asset of the same company, in 14 Kazinczy Street (Somlyódy 2007). The advantage of using a privately-owned site is the high level of autonomy and immunity to political changes. The disadvantage is that only a commercially successful organization can pay the high rental prices in the district, but Szimpla has no problem in this respect.

## 6.7 Impact

Ruin pubs multiplied in less than a year after the establishment of the first open-air Szimpla in 2002. The managers of Szimpla organized free courses on how to run such bars (Somlyódy 2007). Since then, Szimpla became a role model for similarly oriented cultural and hospitality innovators. With a few other pioneers, they established a phenomenon which is known now as ruin bars. The district, in addition to the label "Jewish District," developed a new identity as a "ruin bar district" or "party district." Ruin bars contributed to the "creative" atmosphere and increased the number of hospitality venues (Smith at all, 2018, 535). However, the phenomenon also contributed to the emergence of many problems, which were discussed above.

Szimpla did not only establish a model for how to design a ruin bar but set up the standards also for hospitality service. Started by amateurs, Szimpla professionalized the ruin pub industry. Now there is a team of experts in marketing, public relations, information technologies, project management, and, of course, the hospitality industry. The quality of services is paramount. Szimpla also tries to change its environment, and they are a socially responsible enterprise.



Their position is that hospitality services have a responsibility for their clients and their behavior in public spaces:

We have big plans for the district. We want to create an alliance with the other bars. We want to make the neighborhood more livable, more attractive <...> We care about the experience of other customers. We have many guests; we can afford not to keep profit in mind when we turn off the guests. We are lucky because people are listening to us; we are a role model for many. (Molnár 2019a)

## 7 The model

Ruin bars, among those Szimpla, emerged at the turn of the twentieth century in the courtyards of dilapidated empty buildings signed for demolition. The founders of the ruin bars took advantage of the dilapidated housing stock and with minimal investment, turned them into successful hospitality enterprises. They turned the dilapidated character into an aesthetic feature and economic asset.

Ruin bars appeared and flourished in a special environment characterized by multiple conflicting interests of stakeholders, such as developers, the central and local government, heritage protectionists, and the residents. The laissez-faire approach of the government and a deadlock in the urban development created a moment of opportunities for bottom-up initiatives which were able to adapt quickly to the changing environment. It was fueled by the public desire for non-conformist, non-conceptual spaces where culture and entertainment can be combined.

The main characteristic features of ruin pubs are (based on Lugosi et al. 2010):

- Entrepreneurial and opportunistic character
- They relied on personal investment, networks, financing.
- They were temporary and flexible in their manifestation and space (but professionalized later).
- Importance of adaptive reuse of heritage, space, and objects. The reuse of unusual premises and objects adds to the novelty and creativity.
- A strong relationship and organic cooperation between the commercial element and cultural character

Ruin pubs re-appropriated and repurposed disused urban buildings. The spontaneous reuse fits the western European urban trends, but it is unique because it took place in the historical city center of the capital, in urban dwelling houses.

The success of ruin pubs had its disadvantages. It catalyzed gentrification in the district, lead to the mushrooming short-term hospitality services, overtourism, and overcommercialization of the district. It increased the gap between the old cultural traditions (e.g., Jewish heritage) and the modern use (global entertainment).

The bottom-up hospitality process has been developing organically, but its own success can be deadly. Thirsty for authenticity, the flocks of tourists impact the environment, globalize and kill its character (or turn it into a quasi-authentic experience). Bottom-up grassroots initiatives with a social, community, and

cultural mission, such as Szimpla can be engines of urban development even without governmental support. However, now, the local government should take a more active position in securing an economic and socially sustainable development in which heritage protection and reuse are the crucial elements.

The Szimpla case demonstrates that hospitality organizations can be financially sustainable even if they do not focus on profit as their strategic goal but rather on public good and social entrepreneurship. Socially responsible hospitality enterprises pursuing ethical business can build an economically sustainable model and contribute to a better environment.



*Figure 16 Plaster on the wall in Szimpla with the visitor's graffiti notes. Photo: Dóra Mérai*

## 8 List of interviews

Bodó, Zoltán – resident of Kazinczy Street, founder of the Facebook page Színes Erzsébetváros (Colorful Elizabeth Town)

Molnár, Bence – the head of the Communication Office at Szimpla Kert

Perczel, Anna – architect, urbanist, and president of the ÓVÁS! civic association

Rácz, Kálmán – the owner of the bike shop called RideKálmán

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## **7. LaFábrica detodalavida (Los Santos de Maimona, Spain)**



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## Executive summary

[LaFábrica detodalavida](#) (The Factory of a Lifetime) is a participatory cultural space located in an abandoned cement factory in a small municipality in Extremadura, a rural region of western Spain. It is a place of experimentation with various economic, social and cultural processes that strive for inclusive self-management in the region and expanded culture and opportunities in a rural context. LaFábrica detodalavida uses the commons, cooperative production, free culture and DIY construction to develop creative dynamics and methodologies. The heritage site is the host to projects and programmes such as Cine al Fresco, Pecha Kucha, Territorio Komún and Fábrica Komún as well as other entities such as La Fundación Maimona.

### Timeline

- 1952 The Badajoz plan is approved
- 1955 Construction of the cement factory building is completed in Los Santos de Maimona
- 1956 The Asland cement factory is inaugurated
- 1972 The Badajoz plan comes to an end
- 1973 The factory closes
- 2009 LaFábrica detodalavida collective forms and begins to make plans
- 2013 Agreement signed with the town council, crowdfunding campaign on Goteo
- 2014 Renovation begins
- 2015 The new space is inaugurated

# 1. The Extremaduran Context

Extremadura, Spain, located in the west of the country and formed by two of the largest provinces in Spain, Badajoz and Cáceres, covers about 8% of Spain's total area. It is the connecting ground between the two capital cities of the Iberian peninsula, Madrid and Lisbon, and its location on the border of Portugal gives the region the flavour of both Portuguese and Spanish cultures. Spanning roughly 4.2 million square kilometers and containing slightly more than one million inhabitants, it has the lowest population density in the country (25.75 inhabitants/km<sup>2</sup>) and the lowest housing prices per square-meter in Spain.

Extremadura has a wealth of cultural heritage sites, with three UNESCO World Heritage sites in the cities of Cáceres, Mérida and Guadalupe, known as the "World Heritage Triangle", along with many other preserved sites and museums from Roman, Medieval and Renaissance times. It is also popular for its regional gastronomy, with its own designation of origin. Known for traditional Spanish cured ham (jamón), olive oil, cheeses and local wines, it traces the influences of the Arab, Jewish and Roman inhabitants of the past and reflects a long tradition of blending ancestral customs and cultural heritage with forward-looking innovation.

Despite the wealth of cultural history and natural resources, Extremadura has been one of the poorest regions of Spain economically. After the Spanish Civil War, economic policies such as the Badajoz Plan were put into place to try to industrialise and modernise the region. The cement factory and subsequent economic activity and employment around it were part of this endeavour, but when the plan ended it left little lasting effect on the area. The region became once again a region depleted by emigration, losing almost a quarter of the population between 1960 and 1980<sup>1</sup>, mostly to more prosperous regions of Spain in search of work or education. This trend continues to the present day.

Extremadura as a region was not spared by the 2008 economic crisis that shook Spain along with much of Europe, and although Spain is said to have made a remarkable "recovery", Extremadura still has one of the highest unemployment rates and lowest activity rates<sup>2</sup>, leaving it far behind the rest of the country economically speaking.

According to the European Commission, "unemployment is one of the biggest challenges faced by Extremadura. In 2017 the rate was 26.3% (129,900 people), being youth and women the most affected segments of the population. This figure is way above the national and EU average of 17.2% and 7.6%, respectively. At the beginning of 2017 the prospects continued the negative trend, almost reaching an unemployment rate of 30%, but data has shown some improvements in this regard, going back to proportions similar to those registered in 2016 (Eurostat, 2018)."<sup>3</sup>

Nevertheless, Extremadura's natural beauty and cultural heritage may prove to be the region's ticket out of economic depression and unemployment. Innovative and collaborative projects such as LaFábrica detodalavida are already making use of forgotten or overlooked heritage sites to breathe new life into local culture and generate new and beneficial economies around the commons, DIY construction,

collaboration and the arts. As research, development and innovation have been cited<sup>5</sup> as areas in which Extremadura is particularly lagging behind the rest of the country, these kinds of community projects may be just what the region has been needing to create sustainable opportunities for growth, livelihood and community and thereby creating the cultural gravity needed to keep its youth from moving away and to attract new energy, ideas and activity into the area.

## 2. The story of the building and its heritage

As mentioned above, in 1952 the Badajoz Plan was approved by Franco's government in order to modernise and industrialise the Badajoz area of Extremadura, giving special attention to large projects such as the construction of reservoirs, dams, villages and road networks. For all of these projects to be possible, a local source of cement was needed, and that is how the cement factory came to be.



**Picture 1: Alejandro Hernández Renner**

*"There was a direct order coming from Madrid and there was no great debate that you should respect it as a law. You can imagine, in an area where we only had olive trees, pigs walking around, no line bringing electricity at the level that the factory needed – everything had to be done, produced here, even the electricity was produced here with a generation system based on coal. So, this was the reality of how this space was created 50 years ago."* Alejandro Hernández Renner

The cement factory completely changed the economic landscape in the town of Los Santos de Maimona. The rural village, which had previously only engaged in agriculture, was chosen for its location near two major roads and a rail line, as well as for the quality of limestone in the nearby Sierra de San Cristóbal. With experts and professionals brought in from other parts of Spain to construct the facility, the population of Los Santos de Maimona experienced rare growth. Construction was

completed in 1955, and in the following year the Asland Cement Factory opened its doors. The village benefited directly from the increase in employment opportunities, with around 300 families supporting themselves from local cement production. The factory was a success and after only a few years in operation, it expanded its facilities, constructing the tower that would come to be a symbol of the town's industrial dreams.

*"Extremadura is a very rural area, in general terms. This was one of the very, very few industries that was set up in the region – big industries. And this was a very important place, in this sense. There were thousands of people depending on this activity. When it stopped, thousands of people left, and left for good. They never came back. We are talking about a region where six thousand people left. It's like the effect of a war."* Alejandro Hernández Renner

The unfortunate end of the Badajoz Plan came in 1972. With the large scale construction projects complete, there was no longer a local market for mass quantities of cement, and the Asland factory was forced to close its doors in 1973. The result was devastating for the local community, which in only 17 years had begun to thrive and prosper from its industrial dream. The factory remained empty and unused, lying in the shadow of its tower, now a symbol for a faded, failed dream.

*"We don't want to emigrate. We want to continue to enjoy this wealth, which is a right of our town."* Asland factory worker, Hoy newspaper, 19 April 1972

Asland sold the factory and quarries to the town council of Los Santos de Maimona for a symbolic amount of 1 peseta with the pretense that they would soon recommence operations at the site, thereby shirking any duty or responsibility to dismantle the facilities or clean up after themselves. In reality Asland already had plans to modernise other factories with much larger capacities for production. They took advantage of the town's desperate state and left behind a patch of industrial wasteland. This site remained abandoned for the next 40 years, with the exception of one business that used it in the 80s to install and make use of a cement mixer.





**Picture 2 : Asland Cemetery Factory**

<http://historiasdelossantosdemaimona.blogspot.com/2010/10/las-industrias-en-los-santos-de-maimona.html>

The heritage of this particular factory entails a mixture of different emotions for older local residents. On the one hand there are memories of “the good times” that the factory brought and the pride in having contributed to some of Spain’s most important works of infrastructure.

*“We are talking about an industrial site created, from Madrid, serving a bigger project which was creating a whole structure of agricultural land in the whole region. Thousands of hectares are now being watered with the installations that were initially built with cement coming from this factory.”* Alejandro Hernández Renner

On the other hand, the abandoned factory, largely in ruins, represents the false promises of industry made by distant officials who knew little about the lives and needs of the local population. It stands as a symbol of loss, not only of livelihood and dreams of modernity, but also of a significant portion of the population, nowadays encompassing the continued loss of the town’s youth.

*“It has always had a very controversial history because it was only active for 17 years, so for the population itself, it was a dream of industry in a rural world that was not used to population growth, that was not used to having work, that was made up of peasants.”* Siro Santos

Nevertheless, the youth of Los Santos de Maimona, now with a population of just over 8,000, have taken inspiration from the factory site. There is an interest in approaching the space through the lens of industrial archaeology – protecting the ruins, preserving the state of the site, while using DIY construction to repurpose the space and give it new life. Some young people who had left Los Santos de

Maimona have come back to be a part of something new and to work with the raw potential of this post-industrial space.

*"It had been a private place, that means closed to the public for 25 years and well, it evolved into a ruin. So, the idea was, let's turn it into a space where companies, innovative companies, can do things. [...] It was an element of modernity in the 50's and it should for all of us be again an element of modernity in the 21st century."* Alejandro Hernández Renner



**Picture 3: Past and Present Asland Cemetery Factory**  
<https://lafabrikadetodalavida.org/historiacementera/>

### **3. The initiative (objectives, activities and values)**

The initiative of LaFábrika detodalavida began at the end of 2009 with a small collective of people interested in creating something out of the abandoned factory space. The factory had suffered neglect and vandalism and was in a complete state of disrepair. The original idea was to draw a connection between public intervention and the restoration of the space, though with a focus on political, public art. They wanted to turn the cement factory into a factory for social management and leisure in a rural environment and to use it as a starting point for creating an open network of creators, thinkers and social agents throughout the territory.

The Los Santos de Maimona ceded the now public site to the collective in a kind of urban masovería (use of land in exchange for its cultivation or maintenance) arrangement, whereby the collective is guaranteed long-term use of the site in exchange for renovating the space. Over the years different constellations of about 4-5 individuals kept the collective and the project alive until about 2017, when between 20 and 25 people became regularly involved.

*"Those of us who intervened were professionalising our practice a little and we were also collaborating with outside projects. And from 2017 until now, a new and much broader community is intervening, tangibly much closer to the village, with actors and citizens from the local population, especially young people."* Siro Santos

In reclaiming the old factory space, one thing was very important for those involved: to use this as an opportunity to rewrite a history of industrial failure. There was an impetus to take inspiration from cases in northern Europe and rethink what modern, industrial and productive sector spaces look like. What could be done to make this previously flourishing and relevant factory not only once again productive and relevant, but also liveable. The idea arose of creating open and shared green and leisure spaces to provide the setting and inspiration for creative, innovative, collaborative and political productive work. By bringing life into this space, the activists from LaFábrica detodalavida wanted to revive and explore a forgotten heritage and then convert and socialise that heritage into an open space where the community could connect, learn and share.

*"We're changing the associations with the memory of the factory. We're changing the historical associations that my grandmother has and that I have when we think about the factory."* Siro Santos

## 4. Objectives

The objectives of LaFábrica detodalavida are manifold, and this speaks to the openness of the collective to what the community wants and how it decides to use the space. In this vein, the collective aims to:

- promote the cooperative production of commons
- bring this cultural and meeting space into the daily lives of the community
- create proposals and initiatives based on public feedback
- promote reflection on how culture is constructed
- create a space that is multicultural, intercultural and open to other cultures
- strengthen the image of Los Santos de Maimona
- facilitate and support tools for analysing and understanding Extremaduran society
- create concrete programmes for community participation
- establish a public space that is dedicated to its surroundings
- mediate around controversial local issues
- create social and cultural dialogue nationally and internationally from Extremadura
- support free culture as a value and practice

- set up permanent programming based on local needs and concerns

## 5. Values

Though the key players have changed to some degree since back in 2009, the core values of LaFábrika detodalavida have remained relatively consistent and well in line with the objectives of the project. In the agreement signed between LaFábrika detodalavida and the town council of Los Santos de Maimona, the three core values cited are:

1. The promotion of free culture
2. The encouragement of culture created in the countryside such as in villages or towns
3. Contribution to the commons

Siro Santos, one of the founding members of the collective, explains his take on the project's values. First, he mentions the ethic of DIY construction, reuse of materials and zero cost as an act of empowerment and making dreams a reality, the idea of empowerment being particularly important for the community in terms of their connection to and attitudes around the local heritage of the factory.

*"...our position is to keep reusing material and standing in defense of the heritage site with very concrete and visible interventions to continue recovering materials."* Siro Santos

Second, there is the value of taking typically urban practices and bringing them to the countryside. Specifically, this refers to ideas about the commons, imagining futures, sharing knowledge, working with collective intelligence, etc. These ideals are generally developed and given attention in urban centres, though they could be just as helpful and relevant to rural communities. LaFábrika detodalavida works to give rural space to these urban practices.

Finally, the third key value is simply community and giving attention and care towards how to build and practice community in rural contexts. Collaborator and activist Elena Galleiro echoes this sentiment as well.





**Picture 4: Elena Galleiro, an organizer at LaFabrika by Rubén Prieto Fernández**

*"While we (at LaFabrika) follow certain values, which for me are care work, social transformation, integration, inclusion, the reality is that we're in a world where these values are exactly what is missing. Instead, we're (as a society) regressing, we're completely focussing on our differences, on closing ourselves off. We're more and more neoliberal. We work more and more under policies that are destructive for the environment and life in general. We meet this resistance every day and even in a context like this. I mean, you can make very theoretical contributions, but at the end of the day, the practice is your jumping off point for trying to convince other people. Philosophising is great. It's great and we can leave it to academia, but here we focus on daily practices."* Elena Galleiro

## 6. Activities

LaFábrica detodalavida is home to a network of various organisations, projects, initiatives and individuals joined together by their shared passion for the space and dedication to slowly moulding it into the kind of creative cultural space that the region so desperately needs. While not having total carte blanche from the town council over what happens to the old factory site, the activist collective is often left to their own devices in terms of how to proceed with ideas, allowing them to plan independently and with minimal support. Instead of feeling discouraged by the lack of consistent local administrative engagement, though, the collective simply dives further into their DIY ethic.

*"Since we don't hold the power of making a decision over what this [space] could be – even though we do have many ideas – we have presented projects and developed or tried to develop these ideas with the public administration in many negotiations. But our ideas have never been heard or even minimally supported, so we keep doing things in our own way, which means learning as we go and learning as we build."* Siro Santos

The collective's persistence has paid off. Beyond local actions organised to reclaim the public factory space by clearing out previously inaccessible areas and creating parks and renovating the façade of some of the factory buildings, people have been coming to LaFábrica detodalavida from all over the country and the world to teach, explore and even set up businesses.

*"Mostly, people who belong to this project through this process are people who are very related to what we would call 'knowledge economy', intensive in technology, intensive in training. It's well-educated people. And this is the thing, that they mainly share. They do training or they do mentoring, or they organize an event where they can really share what they do and know professionally, with people that can profit from this knowledge."* Alejandro Hernández Renner

Alejandro Hernández Renner has been serving as director at La Fundación Maimona (The Maimona Foundation), an NGO founded by Diego Hidalgo and dedicated to local development through entrepreneurship and innovation. This foundation is one of the organisations that has made LaFábrica detodalavida its home, and Renner is working to grow the innovative community and use the space to its fullest potential.

*"I have been facilitating the constitution of a community of SMEs, NGOs, public administrations and individual people which are interested in the rehabilitation and adaptation of the abandoned industrial site of the old cement factory in Los Santos de Maimona, Extremadura, Spain. Which projects illustrate this? The most visible outcome are the new buildings, the new infrastructures, and The Social Lab.<sup>5</sup>"* Alejandro Hernández Renner

In addition, regular programming at LaFábrica detodalavida has included:

- Los Sábados detodalavida (Saturdays of a lifetime): open house days of lectures, workshops and leisure in a convivial, community atmosphere.
- Fábrica Komún (Communal factory): programmes and processes based on Collaborative Social Management and Communal Social Action and centred around the needs of the local community and online solutions.
- Cine al fresco: open air audiovisual and staged art during the summer months: shorts, documentaries, films and plays.
- PechaKucha: a special kind of event for presenting ideas in a 20-second, 20-slide format.
- Territorio Komún (Common territory): a space of open participation for collaborating on creative, social and cultural content. LaFábrica detodalavida assists in managing, organising and producing related activities within the factory space.

*"For me the most important thing now is to begin to systematise all of the information that we are starting to generate. [...] We're going to experiment. We're going to be the laboratory where we mix together everything that has influenced us."* Elena Galleiro



Picture 5: Photo of LaFábrica detodalavida by Luis Miguel Zapata Luna

## 7. Governance (regulations & policies)

### 7.1. Relationship with the local government

The physical space of the old Asland factory is primarily regulated by an agreement<sup>6</sup>, signed December 27, 2013, between the collective LaFábrica detodalavida and the Town Council of Los Santos de Maimona. The factory site is public property, but the agreement between these two parties cedes use of a portion of this public property to LaFábrica detodalavida in exchange for the renovation of the space and the subsequent management of the space itself as well as all of the activities that occur within it. This agreement calls for mutual support between parties and references the Spanish government's constitutional responsibility to promote access to and youth involvement in political, social, economic and cultural development.

The space ceded to the collective includes two main buildings of the factory and the covered outdoor space that joins them, totalling 473.86 square meters. Upon signing the agreement, the relevant factory spaces were deemed unsuitable and unsafe for occupancy, and the collective had to put in a considerable amount of work to bring the buildings up to code so that they could be frequented by locals and used for the greater social mission.

LaFábrica detodalavida is not required to pay anything for the use of the space, so long as they fulfill their commitment to renovation in accordance with all legal requirements and necessary permits. The initial agreement was valid through

December 31, 2015 and continues to be renewed for periods of four years. Aside from the main task of refurbishing the premises, LaFábrica detodalavida is also responsible for maintaining the heritage site in good condition, promoting local tourism, culture and economy, securing insurance for the buildings, managing the programming of the factory and creating an annual report for the town council.

In exchange for this, the town council provides and covers the costs of water and electricity services, support in seeking out assistance, municipal brick layers, electricians and plumbers, disposal containers and regular rubbish collection services. LaFábrica detodalavida is also given access to public materials stored in one of the factory buildings, as well as materials found nearby on the factory premises.

As for the activities carried out by LaFábrica detodalavida in the factory, all ideas and methodologies generated within the space are not subject to any intellectual property rights, and the project itself is registered under Creative Commons or Move Commons licenses.

Finally, the agreement also calls for a monitoring committee, made up of members of both parties, to stay informed about the progress and needs of the parties and to address any relevant concerns in biannual meetings.

## **7.2. Internal governance**

LaFábrica detodalavida itself is a non-profit organisation. It forms a part of the international network of collectives Arquitecturas Colectivas (Collective Architectures). The collective also collaborates with the work group Mainova Social Lab and Centro Diego Hidalgo de empresas e innovación (Diego Hidalgo centre of enterprises and innovation), all operating out of and equally committed to developing the reclaimed factory space. These entities operate independently, though under the same social principles and ideals, and the latter two are funded by the Fundación Maimona (Maimona Foundation), which also has an office at the factory.

Thus, taking into account the local government, various entities and the townspeople, there are many different groups with an interest in the success of the reclaimed factory space, a space which has a special significance in the mind and collective memory of the community:

*"We have a community of neighbours, so we're not just the public administration, the foundation and LaFábrica detodalavida and the abandoned space of the cement factory, which – to me and to LaFábrica – has its own identity that does not go through the administration or the foundation or LaFábrica, but rather has its own identity."* Siro Santos

Given the variety of stakeholders involved at different levels and to different degrees, as well as the mission to include any interested community member, LaFábrica has chosen to organise itself rather horizontally, focusing governance on individual projects and work groups that are tied together under a common mission. This governance is based on micro-agreements (microconvenios) that are created by and apply to a particular group of individuals or entities working on a specific project together. Micro-agreements facilitate the organisation and



management of these projects, establishing members' capacity, time allotment, commitment and responsibilities. Micro-agreements can be established between any individuals or entities that want to be located in or make use of the factory building.

Beyond this, there are also work groups for issues such as economic sustainability. These groups evolve and change over time and name representatives who take on the responsibility of the work group's function. Work groups display a certain level of independence in that they are responsible for their own actions and the direction that the work group takes is in the hands of its members, but there are periodic assemblies to transparently and horizontally make decisions that affect the whole collective. LaFábrika detodalavida's open and dynamic form of internal governance is based on the idea of (disorganised) society<sup>7</sup>.

**Disorganised society** - refers to organising around specific goals, disorganising and deconstructing and then re-organising around further, newer goals, the collective creates myriad ways of relating to one another and working together, both broadening the spectrum of experience for all those involved but also forming a system based on social equality and closeness. This results in the distribution of power and knowledge and supports the mutual support and well-being of the collective as a whole.

## 8. Challenges

Despite a successful start in transforming this once forgotten space into an important centre of culture, creativity and ideas for a community with few resources, there are still a number of challenges that LaFábrika detodalavida faces in terms of governance and regulations. The biggest challenge is probably the lack of serious engagement and imagination on the part of the town council.

For instance, in 2013 when the town council brought in electric and water services to enable work to begin on the space, they were focused only on the technical, physical process of renovation without giving consideration to important details such as the question and significance of preserving local heritage or the condition of the "public" areas of the factory.



**Picture 6: Siro Santos**

*"More thought was given to opportunities stemming from new constructions than from defending the heritage, playing with softer structures — softer interventions, recovery of spaces, cleaning, giving a little attention to the amount of danger that the cement factory still poses. There is a lot of access to spaces in the cement factory that still aren't fenced in, and I think it's the responsibility of the public [administration] to deal with that. Any person, any child can just climb up a seven-story tower because it's not closed off."* Siro Santos

The town council has also proven to be rather hands-off in terms of continuing to collaborate with LaFábrica detodalavida over the years.

*"For four years, since right when we signed the agreement, we have never even minimally been invited to find out anything about governance and what future the space that we meet in holds."* Siro Santos

LaFábrica detodalavida has persisted in their dedication to making the space operable and implementing year after year of actions, events, exchanges and cultural activity to engage the local community and bring in outside talent and expertise. Many concrete proposals to expand the work of LaFábrica detodalavida have been made to the town council, but they have generally not been agreed upon and have resulted in stalemates.

Aside from a lack of shared vision with the town council, there is also some degree of unity missing among the various groups using the factory space. LaFábrica detodalavida have always maintained transparency as an important value in terms of their own governance but have not found that to be the case with all of the groups sharing the factory space.

*"Governance among the entities, collectives, citizens that frequent and occupy the cement factory has always been pretty unclear, so to speak. On the one*

*hand, from our side, we did an exercise, the little exercise of transparency that we could do, to have our agreement free, open and downloadable on our webpage so that everyone could know the rules that we have and that we have negotiated with the public administration.” Siro Santos*

Alejandro Hernández Renner echoes the sentiment that shared values are not enough – shared and open governance must also drive this project and be a point of engagement for everyone involved:

*“I think that an integrated approach is necessary, a clear governance and strategic open structure with [the] participation of all stakeholders and shareholders, a dynamic emergent planning process which does not exclude future alternatives, openness to global and local trends and circumstances, maintenance of symbolic elements, harmony with nature and surroundings, and connectivity.” Alejandro Hernández Renner*

## 9. The economic model

*“[In the past] the town council used public money to restore certain sections of the cement factory, but it never intervened with public money here. LaFábrika continues to be completely self-run.” Siro Santos*

As mentioned above, LaFábrika detodalavida receives basic services and some raw materials from the town council, but aside from these provisions, the project is entirely self-funded. In 2013, the collective launched a crowdfunding campaign on the Goteo<sup>8</sup> platform for phase one of the project, restoring the “technical office”. The campaign aimed to raise a minimum of 4,500 euros and exceeded this goal, bringing in a total of 6,000 euros from 92 different contributors. LaFábrika detodalavida has also received smaller amounts of money from grants and awards, but in general they have managed to accomplish an impressive amount with a very limited budget and a lot of self-determination.

**crowdfunding** - the means of finding funding for a project by raising money from a large number of people whether it be in large or small amounts, more often than not through the Internet. Crowdfunding is a type of crowdsourcing and alternative means for finance.

This in itself has been a part of the collective’s economic policy. The reliance on DIY construction and sourcing of recycled materials is not an alternative option in the face of scarcity, but rather a consciously chosen strategy to show that it is possible to effectively, safely and collaboratively carry out construction in different ways that actually educate, engage and build community.

With this approach the collective wants to show that social capital is just as important as economic capital. All of the contributions of knowledge, labour and time spent collaborating and problem solving to renovate the factory space together end up yielding usable resources. In this way, the social capital of intangible relationships is converted into tangible resources.

LaFábrica detodalavida, however, does not ignore the fact that monetary funds are also necessary to take things to the next level and create opportunities to continue building the social capital of the project as well. The collective lists P2P loans, ethical banking, microloans, European and national funds as possible approaches to funding moving forward. In fact, most of the other organisations in the factory space have counted on many of these types of funding, including the INTERREG programme and the Fundación Maimona, adding to the diversity of experiences under the factory roof.

*"LaFábrica detodalavida did its own self-building, recycling and renewal process at a very, very low cost with crowdfunding and the help of a lot of people from the whole country. Those processes were happening at the same time. I had visits from colleagues from architecture colleges, that were very interested in seeing all this happening at the time. Now, if you have a look at the space it's got a feeling of patchwork because the result of this is necessarily different, and all these realities coexist in a very harmonious way. You can see the traces of those different management approaches. This floor is clearly one approach, this building on the left is a very organic and handmade approach, and ours is much more techie and oriented to companies which have a different profile. And all this is around us, it's interesting."* Alejandro Hernández Renner



Picture 7: LaFábrica detodalavida Goteo crowdfunding page

## 10. Community engagement

Community engagement has been central to the mission of LaFábrica detodalavida. It is the absence of opportunities to engage, teach and learn from the community that has driven so many young people to seek out broader horizons in big cities around Spain, leaving their home town behind. LaFábrica detodalavida has been conceived of as a way to bring new life and new ideas into this rural community and give it stronger connections to the outside world. As these efforts have mostly been led by younger people, there has naturally been some reluctance and scepticism on the part of the older generations of the town, but LaFábrica detodalavida maintains that the involvement of this older part of the community



is essential to the success of the project and that these relationships must be handled with care and patience.

*"In the big cities it's easy to find yourself more in circles where you can spend all day feeding off of the fact that everyone thinks the same, but here you leave your comfort zone as soon as you step out of your front door ... because this is also your closest community and it hurts much more when the criticism comes from those close to you. But it's another challenge and another way of beginning to transform things locally, in order to later advance bit by bit."* Elena Galleiro

Events such as Heritage Days are opportunities to dialogue with the community and learn about the needs of the neighbours, the foundation, LaFábrika detodalavida collective, the factory space itself as well as the town administration. LaFábrika detodalavida firmly believes that these types of processes must be transparent in order to start to build trust between the community and those managing the factory space that has hurt the town before.

*"It's a very necessary moment to exercise transparency, to get to know what everyone thinks and to start to look for common solutions. Not only this idea of direct action, not only the idea that "they should keep giving to me", not only the idea of making demands, but rather sitting together around a work table with trust and, I think, also with a sense of responsibility. Because in the end the foundation has its responsibilities and works in one way, LaFábrika in another way and the neighbours in yet another way, and I think the thing that is held in common is that we do see a value in the heritage and in the cement factory itself."* Siro Santos

Many people in the town have a personal connection to the Asland factory and its 17 years of booming success. Their family and professional histories are tied to it. It put Los Santos de Maimona on the map, and therefore there is a vested interest in it as a site of local heritage. LaFábrika detodalavida wants to bring this location back to life and make it once again a central hub for the community, where people can feel that they belong and have agency. However, this time the factory should be more than just an employer who packs up and leaves when profits decrease. It should make up for the tainted past by addressing the concerns and needs of the local community and beyond.

*"It is also a great responsibility for this community to link to the worries and the expectations of the rest of the territory and increase its impact, its capacity of helping others to get a better life. Not only yours but also the life of all the other members of your community. So, we have been trying to open up again, to make people aware of the fact that this belongs to them. It belongs to us, it belongs to them. It belongs to all."* Alejandro Hernández Renner

Sharing and finding common purpose for this revived industrial space may not be so easy at first, but members of LaFábrika detodalavida are determined to take the time to find shared experiences and points of overlap with other members of the community. Different topics or formats of discussion introduced by the collective might seem very urban and imported, but that does not mean that they are not relevant to Los Santos de Maimona or that the community has nothing to offer in return. On the contrary, collaboration and shared ideas are the foundation of this project.

*"If we're having a discussion here about feminism, the first ones we have to talk with are probably the women's association. Maybe they don't share the practices that we consider important, but if we believe that we really empower others and that we are all leaders of the processes we carry out, then we have to involve everyone in this area and on the other side of the factory wall and begin to coordinate – not only to facilitate the spaces, but because it's part of our identity: My name is Elena. I'm from Los Santos de Maimona. I'm a woman. I was a migrant for many years, and all of these things intersect in me. Who else shares these intersections? What other identities do we have as we approach this process which is still being created? There is no script and that makes it dynamic, alive. It's a living entity, it's an organism. How amazing that it will continue evolving just as it has evolved up to this point."* Elena Galleiro

In fact, this strategy does bring people together. Members of these various communities enter into discussion with each other and slowly networks begin to emerge. People find out that they share certain concerns or ideas of how to improve life in the town. From this space they can begin to exchange ideas and formulate goals and ultimately work together to create solutions that benefit everyone. This is the work that LaFábrica detodalavida wants to see not only under its own roof but also spreading out into the world via these networks.

*"When there is a talk here and 50 people come, it also opens up the margins of the community and new possibilities arise for the concept to be replicated, free, open, for it to [...] reach a completely different community and have the opportunity to mix and be integrated directly in a laboratory of practice that is collaborative, shared and open just like LaFábrica itself."* Siro Santos

And this is exactly what makes LaFábrica detodalavida relevant on an international level despite its rural and isolated physical location. This is what attracts new people to this space of possibility. The collective encourages people to come from outside, be inspired by what they see, share their insights and skills and give back to the local community, thereby further expanding the town's network. This is the thinking behind the year-long residencies offered at LaFábrica detodalavida.

*"We offer people to stay here for a while once a year, we make an open call for a project, and we get them to be here with us for free – no cost for one year. The only thing we ask them in return is once a week, once a month, you have to give back to the community the way you think is best, but you have to do that. So that we can really connect to the worries and expectations of the members of the surrounding territory. And this kind of responsibility is also a key element that we have to work on in the future."* Alejandro Hernández Renner

Most importantly, the new sense of community around LaFábrica detodalavida is what brings departed, young community members back home to share what they have learned out in the world and learn from what has changed back home. Establishing connections worldwide means that returning back to Los Santos de Maimona is not stepping back in time. The town is not irrelevant and in fact can offer more diversity of experience than ever before.

*"I think that we've been able to get many different experiences to come together here. This has a lot to do with the fact that many of us have always been away, but many of us have also always been here, and these experiences have made*

*us who we are, right? For example, there are many people from this area who have been active in other community centres – either self-managed, leased, occupied or self-employed – in many other places: Seville, Madrid, Barcelona. I think that this is all experience that we have assimilated and been able to pour into LaFábrika's processes and community. Everything that we've managed to accumulate in terms of personal experience influences our networks today. Right now our networks reach both nationally and internationally, which means that anything done here can be carried over to many other spaces."* Elena Galleiro

The process of community engagement involves the creation of a new, expanded community, which requires patience, listening, care and time. This is particularly the case for the factory site in Los Santos de Maimona, which still stands in the shadow of a past tainted by disappointment and injustice. LaFábrika detodalavida remains optimistic, though, and focuses on slowly building trust and relationships with community members one by one.

*"The failure of the cement factory has always had a negative connotation for the village, right? So, opening and socialising this negative history from the perspective of new opportunities for new resources and new public spaces... we don't reach everyone and we know it, but the people that do come end up staying, and that's important."* Siro Santos



**Picture 7: LaFábrika detodalavida by Luis Miguel Zapata Luna**

## **11. Impact and future of the site**

*"Abandoned spaces often generate images of the future, or rather, they make you imagine the future." Siro Santos*

LaFábrika detodalavida has opened up the possibility of something new in an area that has not experienced any kind of cultural, economic or demographic growth in recent generations. This means the possibility of identifying what the community needs and brainstorming in a creative, collaborative and constructive way to bring about change.

*"We want to do something, we think about how to do it, we begin to do it. I think that the Fabrika's biggest impact is this: we create the possibility to believe that there are ways to do new things." Elena Galleiro*

This has a significant impact on how younger people from Los Santos de Maimona feel about their hometown. As cities become more crowded and less livable, some people are realising that there is possibility and opportunity in returning to the countryside, a stark contrast to the dominant narrative.

*"Now is the moment to return home, which is always seen as a failure. You always hear about the 'return to the village' or that 'So and so returned to the village.' It's like a failure because we've always been told that there are no possibilities in the village, no networks, no future." Elena Galleiro*

But Galleiro, who herself has returned to Los Santos de Maimona after many years away, has found the experience transformative. She has learned the importance of making changes locally before globally and that with the right networks, changes and actions in a small community can still be shared and transmitted on a large scale.

*"For me, having returned to the village after so much time, yes, to a large extent it means rethinking how to transform the most mundane and close things, from the communities that are closest to me through small, small changes and how that can eventually affect other realities." Elena Galleiro*

This is an important message that LaFábrika detodalavida hopes to instill in the local youth as they begin to make decisions about their own futures.

*"For me it is fundamental to begin to transmit, especially to the young people from here in the village – well, normally most of them go to study away from here – but then they can return and change things from here. You don't need to stay in the cities. You don't need to go anywhere else. There are opportunities here. Believe in them and create them yourself. Create them and begin to change what you didn't like before. Think about how you connect with your past, in order to create a future in and close to the community that will always be your roots and your history." Elena Galleiro*



## Interviewees

**Siros Santos Garcia** - Long time resident of Santos de Maimona and organizer within the LaFábrika project since 2009

**Elena Galleiro** - Longtime resident of Santos de Maimona where the factor is located and organizer within LaFábrika

**Alejandro Hernández Renner** - Works with non-profit, Fundación de Maimona, that works on promoting and developing local entrepreneurship and innovation and also based within LaFabrika

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## **8. Halele Carol**

### **(Bucharest, Romania)**

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# 1 Introduction

[Halele Carol](#) represents one of the most well-known adaptive re-use projects in Bucharest. The former factory hall is located in a still-running industrial complex with an impressive history. The now - Hesper factory continues its activity in the oldest industrial area in Bucharest next to Carol Park, a former innovation area which drove the city's economy at the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century. Over time, the factory stopped using several of the old halls and moved to the more modern ones, built in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Halele Carol is a project that evolved organically, through the initiative of local cultural actors who wanted to show the potential of industrial heritage and of the area for Bucharest. Through temporary-use functions and small investments, the project opened the old halls gradually to the public through creative events, bringing the creative class of Bucharest towards the southern part of the city, which lacked the same attractiveness as the more-popular center. Nowadays, the main renter of Halele Carol is [Expirat Club](#), one of the preferred leisure places in Bucharest for the young, alternative crowd. The story of Halele Carol is still to be developed, as new initiatives are needed to take the place to the next level.



**Picture 1. Hesper S.A., view from the street**

## 2 Timeline

The timeline of the adaptive re-use process at Halele Carol can be summarized as follows:

<b>1869</b>	The construction of the Filaret train station, first train station in Bucharest
<b>1887</b>	
<b>1906</b>	Construction of the Wolff factory
<b>1948</b>	Construction of the Carol park - opened for the "World Expo" of 1906
	The factory gets nationalized during communism and it is named the Red Star. Various modern buildings are built on site and the production activity moves there.
<b>1989</b>	
<b>2001</b>	The factory gets privatized and renamed to Hesper S.A.
<b>2001-2011</b>	First workshop on industrial heritage in Romania. Occasional discussions with the factory owner, building mutual trust. Many architecture students did diploma work on the site.
<b>2011</b>	Tour organized by Zeppelin on <a href="#">industrial heritage</a> in Romania.
<b>2013</b>	Creative Factories project - workshop with owner, Romanian and Dutch experts; Dutch ambassador visits sites. Defining the methodology and building trust.
<b>2013</b>	Cleaning up the site, making it safe, reparations: done by initiators & factory personnel.
<b>2014</b>	Opening factory to the public – during Romanian Design Week – <a href="#">2000 visitors</a>
<b>2015</b>	Design Post-Industry project – <a href="#">increase attractiveness area</a> ; Architecture interventions by Romanian and Norwegian architects and artists
<b>2015</b>	Various events. Positioning the building as a new cultural hotspot in Bucharest
<b>2015</b>	Hesper factory makes small investments in the garden
<b>2015</b>	The temporary programming of the site stops after a fire takes place in another transformed factory in Bucharest (Colectiv Club)
<b>2016</b>	Expirat Club moves in Halele Carol

## 3 Story of the building

*"The whole place was really great. It is separated from the park by a wall, but you can really feel the connection with the park. And I was amazed that this place was staying empty there. I really saw the potential of the site." Meta van Drunen*

In 1869, the first train station of Romania was opened in Bucharest, on the Filaret hill. Following the train station, several factories and innovation institutes were relocated or constructed on the hill, transforming it into the most important innovation district in Bucharest.

In 1887, the Wolff factory also relocated on the Filaret hill. The factory was already producing bandages since 1877 and it was owned by a swiss engineer, Erhardt Wolff. After the relocation, the factory expended the production activities to include

warfare machines, installations for steam locomotives and brass and bronze foundries. A few years later, in 1906, the Carol Park is opened on the hill adjacent to the factory – an impressive outdoor exhibition space built in the honour of King Carol's 40<sup>th</sup> year of reign. In 1921, the factory was directly connected to the railway station Filaret to provide equipment for the army.

During the communist regime, the factory was nationalized and became state property. The name is changed to 'Red Star' (*Steaua Rosie*) and it started producing heavy machinery for the construction industry and hydraulic equipment.

After the fall of the communist regime, the factory became a joint-stock company (*societate pe actiuni*), however with one majoritarian owner. In the present day, the factory still produces hydraulic pumps and engines under the name of Hesper S.A. It is one of the last active factories in Bucharest and definitely the last one in the area. However, the factory has had drastic personnel cuts and is struggling with the degrading condition of the buildings.

*"We were invited by Zeppelin to have a look at this space that is somewhere in the centre of Bucharest and it is standing empty for some years already. They were searching for some ideas how to renovate or how to revigorate this area. So we went there and we were absolutely impressed by the place and we immediately saw the potential of the rooms, of the big hall, of the smaller rooms underneath the hall..." Joep de Roo*



**Picture 2. Google Earth Satellite view of current factory site.**

The building is a site with industrial heritage value, although not listed as a national monument. In 1921, the terrain had a surface of 15.000 m<sup>2</sup>. Several constructions can be currently found in the site, with different construction years as follows:

- 1899 – various constructions. Only one is still standing, in the South side of the terrain, next to the Filaret Church (Biserica Cuțitul de Argint).
- 1905 – The old factory buildings facing Carol Park
- 1936 – Main hall and the power plant in the North Side
- 1939-1943 – many small extensions. Many will be demolished in 1978
- 1978 - multi-storey hall from reinforced concrete
- End 1980 – a hall made of prefabricated reinforced concrete



The main hall is now used as a storage space for old machinery from the last century. The reinforced concrete building is still used by [Hesper SA](#) to produce hydraulic pumps. The initiators from [Zeppelin](#) and [Eurodite](#) opened the old factory building and Sala Compressoarelor for events in the period of 2014-2016. Currently, Expirat Club functions in Sala Compressoarelor.



**Picture 3. Prism installation at Halele Carol by Zeppelin and Eurodite**

## 4 The initiative

*"The idea was that we would develop it step by step. As you can see, it is a big space, there are a lot of halls that need renovation, so it would need a big investment and there is... at the moment we didn't and we still don't have that amount of money to invest. So the idea was that we do a step by step renovation, trying to program it, having events here and then with the money that we'd earn through the events we could start renovating it. Through kind of an organic model. That was the model that we had in mind when we started in 2011."* Joep de Roo

In 2001, Irina Iamandescu, a heritage expert working at the [Ministry of Culture](#), started introducing the topic of industrial heritage in Bucharest. Before this, there was very little consideration for factories as heritage. She organised a workshop on industrial heritage and also started to get in touch with the owners of the various factories in the Filaret hill area.

*"When I wrote my diploma in '97 on the Filaret Electrical Plant (another industrial site in the area), I was asked by the commission of architects: 'where is this factory? Is this in Bucharest?' So it was sort of like untouched territory."* Irina Iamandescu

In 2011, the architecture magazine Zeppelin, together with Irina Iamandescu organised a guided tour to various industrial heritage sites in Bucharest. Almost 200 people participated. It started a discussion about the possibilities to reintegrate these sites into the city life as cultural and creative centres.

*"I knew that there were funds, or a subsidy available in the Netherlands for the creative industries, and I started to make a project together with Constantin. About*



*how can we arrange a sort of knowledge exchange and share expertise, to improve the factory and to kickstart the process of transformation. In order to make the application, we also involved the Dutch embassy already.” Meta van Drunen*

In 2013, the [Creative Industries Fund NL](#) in the Netherlands opened a call for stimulating knowledge exchange in the creative industries between Dutch experts and international sites. Eurodite and Zeppelin developed a project called [“Creative Factories Bucharest”](#) in 2013. The project obtained funds from the Creative Industries Fund NL to bring Dutch experts to Romania to showcase some best practices and examples of successful transformations of industrial heritage sites. Among them was Liesbeth Jansen, the former director of Westergasfabriek in Amsterdam, a famous example of industrial heritage re-use through temporary functions.

Step by step renovation = to transform and upgrade the buildings gradually on the base of available capacity and funds at that moment. By organising events and subsidies, relatively small amounts of money are raised which can be invested into upgrading the buildings and surrounding spaces.

In a two-day workshop, the owner, together with Romanian and Dutch experts, addressed several transformation scenarios. The team opted to transform the building using an organic transformation process and several temporary functions. This workshop was also a key moment in developing a relationship of trust between the initiators and the owner of the factory.



**Picture 4. Industrial Tour at Hesper Factory, photo by Mihai Petre**

**Trust** turned out to be one of the main challenges for collaboration in the case of Halele Carol, so building trust became a focus of the adaptive re-use process. This was done through international cooperation and diplomacy, by involving the Dutch ambassador and accessing funds. Later on, also other funds were accessed via the Norwegian EEA grants and European cooperation funds. Moreover, the team of initiators involved at the beginning of the process had a hands-on approach, a

'showing by doing' way of dealing with the project and the stakeholders involved, resulting in transparency and trustworthiness.

*"The most important thing was to build the little trust that we built with them [factory owner and his team]. That was essential. They were very reluctant to our age, there is a 20 years difference. They grew up in a totally different culture. So, we wanted to create this bridge of communication and trust. This was the most important thing. This is my prospect, to create trust." Constantin Goagea*

Later on, several small but vital fixes were done with the help of the engineers working at the factory, which changed the course of the project for the better.

*"There was a sort of breakthrough moment, [...] what we did, we made an excel list. Just really pointing out, 'this roof here, the thing there'. They [factory employees] are all engineers! When they get an excel list, then they understand what to do. [...] They started repairing some urgent leakages, and at some point, they were trying to level the floor. [...] Because they were in [economic] crisis, and they had a little bit of a quiet period, they put people from the factory to do all these works." Meta van Drunen*

In 2014, the factory opened to the public under the name of Halele Carol. The launch event attracted 2000 people. Several events were organised until 2015 which established the location as a hotspot in the cultural scene in Bucharest.

In 2015, a fire took place in another factory in the area which was used as a nightclub, which had a huge impact on Bucharest and Romania. Many bars and clubs were closed after this incident, and many event organisers started being more careful about safety regulations. The owner of the factory at Halele Carol decided to stop all activities on site following this incident.

In this context, in 2016, Expirat, one of the oldest clubs in Bucharest, decided to look for a safer location and relocated to Halele Carol. Even though the initiators had bigger plans for the transformation of Halele Carol initially, it was still a victory that they managed to convince the owner to keep the factory open for culture as opposed to some more commercial options.



**Picture 5. Romanian Design Week at Halele Carol, Photo by Roald Aron**

## 5 Actors

The following categories of actors related to the Halele Carol project have been identified:

### Initiators

- *Zeppelin association* was founded in 2008 by three architects (Constantin Goagea, Cosmina Goagea, Ștefan Ghenciulescu). It is a non-profit working as cultural operator in Romania and Europe. It activates in various projects of placemaking and urban development. Main activities are research, cultural management and architecture production. Moreover, Zeppelin edits a monthly architecture magazine ([www.e-zeppelin.ro](http://www.e-zeppelin.ro)) and organizes various events, workshops, competitions and debates.
- *Eurodite* was founded in 2008 by Joep de Roo and Meta van Drunen. With Joep's background in European funding and Meta's background as architect they initiated Eurodite in the belief that creativity and cooperation are basic ingredients for development of European areas and regions. Main activities are European cooperation projects and area development. ([www.eurodite.eu](http://www.eurodite.eu))

### The Hesper Factory

- Owner of the factory (Mircea Pricop), technical director (Cornel Lazar), financial director (Dan Ilisei), staff.

### Experts

- *Irina Iamandescu* – expert industrial heritage (RO) – currently deputy director of the National Institute of Heritage in Romania
- *Liesbeth Jansen* – expert industrial heritage transformation (NL) – known for the transformation of the Westergasfabriek in Amsterdam
- *Doru Frolu* – initiator in the transformation of another factory in the neighbourhood, Vama Antrepozite.
- *Various artists from Norway and Romania*

### Users

- Various *event organizers* such as Rokolektiv, Romanian Design Week, artists and cultural entrepreneurs.
- *Expirat* – one of the oldest and most famous clubs in Bucharest. Following the fire in Colectiv club in 2015, the owner of Expirat decided to find a safer location for the club. It moved to Halele Carol in 2016.

### Public sector

- *Chief architect Bucharest* – involved in various events in 2013-2015
- *Municipality of Bucharest* – currently wants to become more involved
- *ARCUB* – cultural department of the municipality
- *Dutch Embassy in Romania*

### Financiers

- *Ministry of Culture in Romania*
- *Ministry of Culture in Norway*



## 6 Activities



**Picture 6. Post Industrial Design – exhibition at Halele Carol, photo by Vlad Bâscă**

Halele Carol offered a new platform for a wide community of artists and event organisers working with innovative concepts and formats in the city. Very quickly after the opening, Halele Carol became an important venue for event organisers and many were inquiring about renting the space or had several ideas for developing concepts on the location.

Most of the events organised by Zeppelin were concerts, electronic music festivals, design and architecture exhibitions or debates, film nights but also workshops for children on architecture and heritage.

### Organic transformation / step by step adaptive reuse.

Overall, the concept of organic transformation means that small foreseeable steps are taken in the transformation process (as opposite to a blueprint plan). It does not mean that there is no control or no plan. What it means is that the process and activities needed to reach the end objective are not defined in detail. The area is tested 'live' and the process is open to change. Implementation is incremental and through this type of transformation, risks are smaller and there is more flexibility in steering the process. Community involvement is often high because the plans are open and flexible, while ideas of the community can be taken on board during implementation.

The owners showed no interest in renting out the spaces and wanted to have a certain degree of control over the buildings, which made temporary events a good way of working for the first years.

*"The idea was that we would make a collaboration with the owner to start investing in this place through events... so that we would have a step by step funding model. And that this would lead to value creation over the long run. But it proved to be that this is very difficult to explain. That this kind of processes take a long time and that the cost comes before the benefit. And if you realize this or you have a long term view, what you invest now especially in this kind of big places, you will not get a return on investment within 1 or 2 years. It takes 10-15 years at least and then*



*your return on investment can be quite big. You have to have this timeframe to invest your money and efforts. And I think that this was very complex to explain to the Romanian owners. And also regarding the fact that they still have their own factory activities here, so that was the focus of their attention.” Joep de Roo*

The initiators managed to cover some of the operating costs from various funding sources, organising events or renting out the space for events. The event activity also brought some profit to Hesper S.A. However, the two parties did not manage to make a long term agreement on how to invest in the space and how to create a management model that is fair for all actors.

#### Value creation and return on investment in organic transformation

If you do an organic transformation, a lot of time (instead of a large sum of money in one go) is invested in testing and ‘branding’ the space. Organic transformation activities will eventually lead to a suitable programme for the area and subsequent money flows, leading eventually to enough capital to renovate the buildings. (see text box ‘Step by step renovation’).

The ‘programming’, ‘branding’, and putting the location ‘on the mental map’ lead to value increase. The ones doing this (place-makers/community) should be compensated for the value they create. Ideally, they are ‘shareholders’.

This is a complex matter that requires a good discussion between owners, place-makers, communities. and investors on the concepts of ‘ownership’, ‘time’, ‘money’, and ‘risks’.

## 7 Financial resources

As mentioned above, one of the important revenue sources was organising events or renting out spaces to event organisers. Besides this, the initiators have set up two European collaboration projects to kick-start and give an impulse to the project.

The first subsidized initiative was the Creative Factories, which received a grant of 18.000 euro from the Creative Industries Fund NL in 2013. The grant was used to bring some experts in adaptive re-use of industrial heritage from the Netherlands and have a workshop together with the owner in order to analyse various business models for the long-term development of the factory. The initiators also organised a public debate on the transformation of industrial heritage and created three tandem articles that looked at 3 Dutch cases of adaptive re-use of industrial heritage and connected them to Romanian realities.

The initiators regard this activity as the key point that enabled the process of the re-use project. Tapping into the rich Dutch experience on transformation of industrial heritage kick-started the project and provided a great base for a cooperation with the owner of the factory.

### EEA Grants / Norwegian funds

The EEA grants pose nice opportunities for funding heritage related projects, particularly in south-eastern European countries. Besides the appealing EEA regulations, additional rules of the local programme authorities apply. In the case of Romania, the fund is managed by the Ministry of Culture. The ministry applied very tough reporting procedures focussing on processes and paperwork, and not so much on content. The fact that the lead applicant was a private organisation made the reporting process even more difficult.

Secondly, in 2015, the initiators applied for EEA (also known as Norwegian) grants to organise cultural events and cultural education in the less developed south side of Bucharest, while improving the bad shape of iconic historic buildings and enhancing intercultural dialogue between Romania and Norway. Within this project, financed with 200.000 euro and led by Zeppelin, several artists and architects from Norway and Romania developed some installations and interventions at the Halele Carol site. The project contributed to important steps in the transformation process: attracting new audiences and activating and improving the public space on site with the art installations. Looking back, the initiators assessed the administration and reporting procedures as being very bureaucratic.

*"We found out that we spent more than 50% of our time in the administrative part. And what we did as an art project or for community involvement became unimportant compared to how much effort went into keeping up the administration."*  
Constantin Goagea



**Picture 7. Terrace of Expirat Club located in Halele Carol. Photo via Expirat**

At this point, in 2019, the main economic activities taking place at the site are the production of hydraulic pumps in Hesper, and the Expirat club activity in *Sala compresoarelor*.

## 8 Non-financial resources

On the other hand, many non-monetary resources were used for the project, and they were equally important for ensuring the process could happen. These resources were: international expertise in adaptive re-use projects, expertise in writing funding/subsidy applications, having architects involved in the project, the Zeppelin magazine with its community and online presence, design and communication experience of the team members, experience with event organising, the access to property (and its lack of heritage status), a rooted network in Bucharest through the Zeppelin members, and perhaps most importantly, goodwill.

*"[The Zeppelin platform was] indispensable. We couldn't have done anything without it. It would have been impossible. Because if you want to have a temporary phase, then you need to be able to reach a crowd. Especially we, as foreigners, were not able to do that, so you need to actually work with locals. When we were writing the application for the Norwegian funds, Cosmina [Zeppelin] said 'you have to build a community'. And that was quite an original (not yet in fashion) thing to say back then, but she was definitely very right. You have to really build a community from the start." Joep de Roo*

Another important breakthrough moment was when the initiators made an excel list with small but important fixes which could enable the opening of the factory to the public. The spaces were not usable at the moment of arrival as the floor had several holes and there were some leakage issues. After creating the excel, the owner of the factory asked some workers in the factory to work on fixing the issues identified by the architects. This was a very important non-monetary resource as they managed to make a lot of progress in a short amount of time and with relatively low financial investments. This was only made possible because of the trust that was built.

*„A very important moment which meant a lot for the project was when we made an excel list with what could be done in a short amount of time. And the owner, who is an engineer, [...] when he looked at the list and understood that he could change some things and make the space usable for events, by using only own resources and very small financial investments, he rolled up his sleeves, called everyone in the factory, explained what everyone needed to do and said: ‚hereby we begin!’ “ Constantin Goagea.*

## 9 Branding and positioning

Even though the initiative to transform Halele Carol through temporary programming only lasted for about two years, the initiators really managed to create a strong identity and brand of the venue. The name Halele Carol was set when developing the first application for funds.

*"And in that moment the name Halele Carol was born, and somehow everyone immediately accepted it as if it had always been the name of the place. But this is not really the historical truth. The place was called Wolff Factory, then the Red Star, now Hesper. Actually, Halele Carol is just this place at the back which is made of red bricks, bordering the park, it's only this part. [Very soon after the opening], you*

*could ask a taxi driver to take you to Halele Carol and they would know immediately.” Constantin Goagea*

Having Zeppelin Association as the main institution associated with the site was also very beneficial for the branding and positioning. Zeppelin has been editing an architecture magazine with the same name since 2011 and it was a well-known cultural organisation in the Bucharest scene at the moment of the project launch. Associated with high quality design and content, the association already had an important following which was slowly also becoming a community around the Halele Carol location.



**Picture 8. Various posters of events at Halele Carol, design by Zeppelin**

## 10 Heritage

The area in which Hesper S.A. is located has a rich industrial history, having been one of the first innovation areas in Bucharest. The factory represents the industrial pioneering spirit of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Therefore, the industrial innovation identity is a central theme in the adaptive re-use process as well.

*"Formerly a vineyard hill, this area has turned more than 100 years ago into the most avant-garde urban place, reflecting the ambitions for technological advancement and social change of the country. The Carol park built as an international exhibition, the technical museum, the first train station in Bucharest, the astronomical observatory and many other points in the area made this site once a melting pot of innovation, leisure and urban dynamics." Zeppelin Association*

During WW2, military equipment was produced here, whereas in communist times, the industrial heritage was translated into workers' pride, the area becoming a worker neighbourhood. The producer pride is still seen today, when some of the former workers are still living in the area, or even working at Hesper.

*"What we are aiming to do is to open a place of significance for the southwestern area of the city (perhaps not the densest in leisure activities), build a platform to bring diverse cultural programmes and cultural content to both nearby residents and to the active groups in the city. We want to give the place a community, and to give communities a place." Zeppelin Association*



Halele Carol is located in and around some of the buildings of the Hesper factory terrain. Hesper is proud to be one of the oldest, still-working factories of Bucharest, a testament to the city's industrial transformation. The factory has been continuously producing since the 19th century, making it a living piece of history and an important part of Bucharest's heritage.

*"Industrial activity has continued on this location for over 130 years. Currently, Hesper is the most important producer of hydraulic pumps and gear motors in Romania. It is one of the very few factories that are still active in Romania and especially in Bucharest." Mirela Dobre, Hesper SA*

The specific objectives of the project were to stop the degradation of historical buildings and preserve their value; to find new functions for the empty buildings (without hindering the production activities in the used buildings); to open a few access points to the park and the street and facilitate public access, all while keeping a strong connection to the values of the place – "manufacturing and creation" and the local pride connected to manufacturing.

Although Halele Carol is not a listed monument, it is located in an area protected for its heritage value (protected area 6) and borders the Carol park area which also benefits from similar protection (area 82). The owner of Halele Carol does not intend to list the building as heritage, as current Romanian heritage law implies many administrative and bureaucratic burdens for listing a monument. Nevertheless, Halele Carol are still seen by the owner, its users and the wider public as part of Bucharest's industrial heritage. The lack of heritage protection for the buildings means they are more vulnerable in the face of a growing real estate market, as well as have less resources available for their maintenance. On the other side, Halele Carol's lack of heritage status also made its adaptive re-use model more feasible, as less regulations apply.

**Protected area 63**, in which Halele Carol is included, is considered to have the maximum level of protection, meaning that the architectural ensemble of the neighbourhood is protected, and interventions that protect or accentuate the architectural, historical or urban values of the area are allowed. Function changes of buildings are allowed if the original functions do not meet current requirements. Luxury and speciality services (such as art galleries, antique shops or consultancy offices), as well as small bars and restaurants, are also allowed as long as they do not disturb the architectural ensemble, the natural vegetation, or as long as they don't imply the creation of more parking areas. It is forbidden to carry out interventions that would damage the buildings or the area, that would lead to increasing pollution or traffic disturbances, as well as interventions that would disturb the nearby buildings or the water sewage system.

**Protected area 82**, representing the Carol Park, is set as the park representing a location of reference for Bucharest's image and structure. It also benefits from the maximum protection level, as area 63 does. The current function (park) cannot be changed. The only interventions allowed are those for conserving the current natural elements, constructions or spaces.

Nevertheless, interventions onto buildings that are *not* historical monuments, but are places within the protected area surrounding the monuments, often also need the approval of the ministry or of the empowered public services, if applicable.

## 11 Influences

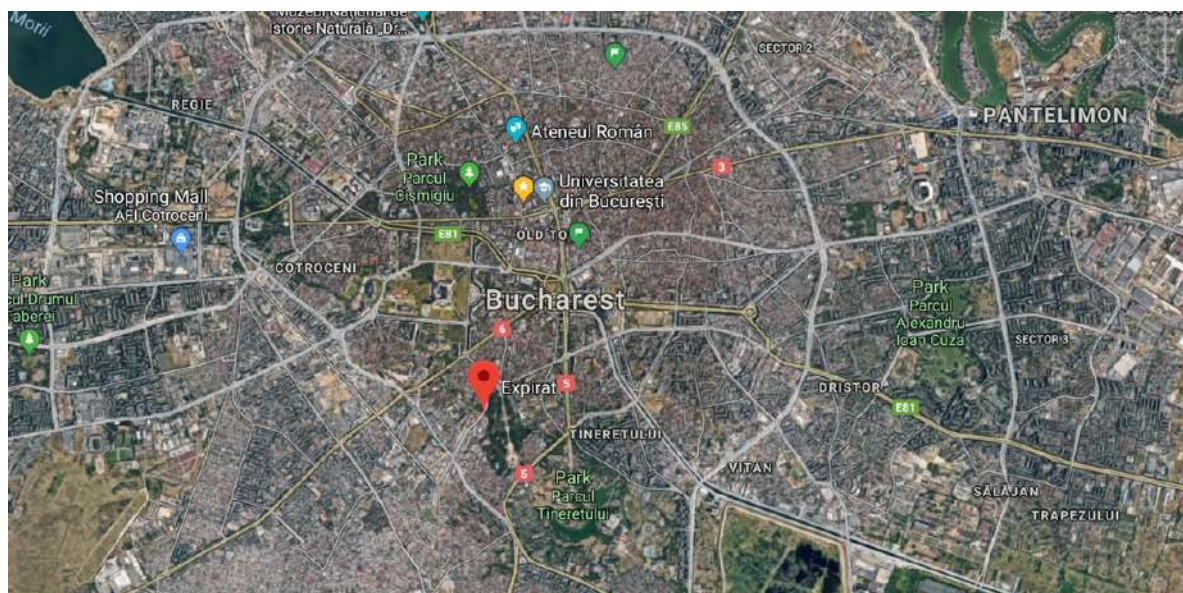
Several themes and projects influenced the process of transformation around Halele Carol. Many important lessons came from the Netherlands and its *experts*: recycling space, applying reversible solutions, starting small and steady instead of creating grand ambitions. *Local projects* like Creative Factories Bucharest, done in collaboration with *international experts*, were also a trigger for Halele Carol. The Carol Factory project was another event done by Zeppelin using Norwegian funds, that activated the area through arts. The *research on industrial heritage as a resource*, done by the [Romanian Architect Association](#) and Zeppelin in 2013, was an important stepping stone in the adaptive re-use direction of Halele Carol.

Several Dutch projects stood at the base for the Halele Carol transformation. The following projects of adaptive re-use of industrial heritage were seen as inspiration:

- [Westergasfabriek](#): example for adaptive re-use of industrial heritage, Westergasfabriek started with its buildings being used for temporary projects, in order to ensure organic growth. Westergasfabriek hosts leisure & cultural events, horeca facilities in a symbiotic relation between innovation and heritage, concrete and nature, or open and intimate spaces. Liesbeth Jansen from Linkeroever, one of the Dutch experts involved in the Halele Carol project, brought Westergasfabriek to the table to inspire the step-by-step area activation process through temporary usage.
- [NDSM](#): An area in the North of Amsterdam formerly used for maritime docks, NDSM has been transformed from a relic of a declining industry into a cultural hotspot for alternative activities. Urban activists and creatives focused on giving new functions to the already existing industrial buildings, which now activate as even spaces, creative industries offices, restaurants, or even a luxury hotel located in a crane. There was no overall project for the transformation. Instead, the transformation happened through small, affordable interventions that organically brought a creative spirit into the area, which is something that Halele Carol implemented as well.
- [Strijp S](#): A symbol of the city's industrial character, Strijp S is a good practice of industrial heritage re-use in Eindhoven, the home of Philips. A former factory, Strijp S transformed into a creative hub of living spaces, businesses, leisure facilities and education institutions through the common efforts of the community and involved policymakers. Similar to other cases in the Netherlands, Strijp S started through temporary usage of the buildings in order to ensure sustainability and an organic growth. The first step was opening one building for Eindhoven's creative community, a measure that Halele Carol also implemented.

Other heritage re-use projects happened in the nearby area of Halele Carol. One of them is the regeneration of the *Vama Antrepozite* – currently known as [The Ark](#) – which took place between 2006 and 2008, where a co-working place and restaurant are now located, after a project started by architect Doru Frolu. The *Bragadiru palace* next door has also undergone transformation, and is now active as event space and hosts one of Bucharest's most renowned restaurants, [Mahala](#), that takes classic Romanian dishes and brings them to high cuisine. Lastly, [Nod Makerspace](#) was set up in 2015 in a former Cotton Factory, also in the vicinity of Halele Carol. The space is still one of the most important cultural hotspots in the South of Bucharest.

## 12 Context



**Picture 9. Map of Bucharest. The red indicator represents Halele Carol**

### 12.1 Socio-geographic description

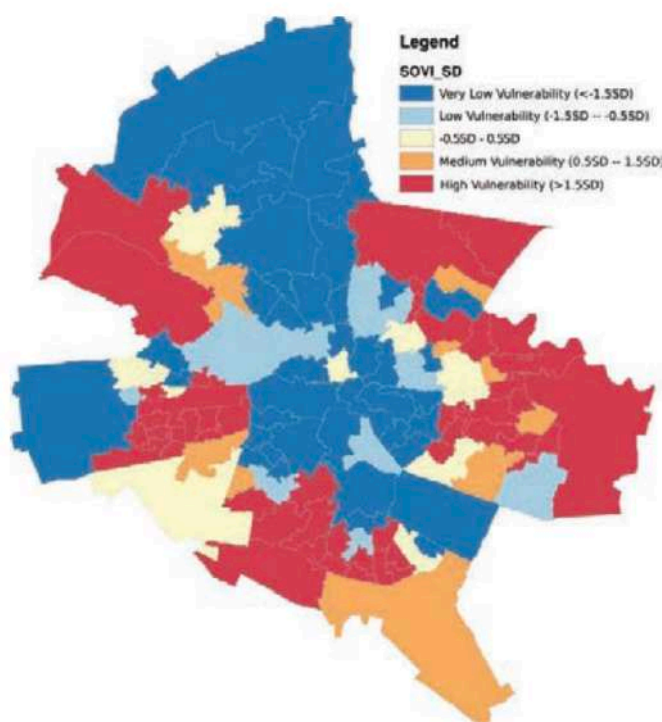
The south of Bucharest is one of the poorer sides of the city, with less infrastructure, more poverty and ethnical segregation than in the other areas. Following the communist urbanism plan in 1980 which reshaped the city, the separation between South and North became more prominent. After 1990, most of the industry which took place in this region stopped, and with them the biggest economic motor of the area.

Nowadays, the North of Bucharest represents the business quarter, with areas like Pipera booming with newly built tower office buildings. The South is generally regarded as a more residential area of Bucharest, including many former workers' neighbourhoods, such as Filaret-Rahova. Many abandoned buildings can be found here as well. The South of Bucharest has some of the largest parks as well, including Carol Park, Tineretului Park, and the newly acknowledged and protected National Park of Vacaresti.

Halele Carol is located in sector 4 of Bucharest, a diverse district with an uneven demographic composition across neighbourhoods. According to the 2011, survey 287,800 people lived in the district. Halele Carol borders sector 5 of Bucharest and is actually closer to the Sector 5 municipality. This can be seen as an example of how the sectors of Bucharest divide the city in slices rather than strategic areas, and sometimes prevent zonal collaboration from happening, as sector management is very politicised and neighbourhoods might fall within two different sectors (e.g. the centre of Bucharest falls partially within all sectors).

Filaret-Rahova is one of the poorest regions in Bucharest with a high social vulnerability, being home to what some regard as one of Bucharest's ghetto

(Amurgului) while Unirii is one of the regions with higher incomes and lower social vulnerability (Armas & Gavris, 2016).



**Picture 10. Map of social vulnerability in Bucharest at 2011 census – red signifying highest vulnerability, light blue lowest (Armas & Gavris, 2016)**

The Filaret Rahova neighbourhood is quite close to the main centre of the city and it is easily accessible from most neighbourhoods. The site is well reachable by car, bus and trams. Three night-bus lines are also passing by the park. The closest metro station is about 2 km away.

## 12.2 Economic description

Many SMEs and service providers are located in Sector 4. The service industry is well-developed, especially the telecommunications, financial services, research and education, transport, tourism and culture, and trade. The industrial heritage of the Carol park area is still visible nowadays, with the Hesper factory still producing hydraulic pumps. Other businesses in the Carol park neighbourhood and Protected Area 63 are restaurants, bars, hotels, co-working spaces, cultural spaces and supermarkets (Primaria Sectorului 4, 2014).

Romania has one of the largest percentages of home owners in the EU, with a country average of 96% of adults (Sisea, 2014). Compared to other countries, there are few housing corporations active in Bucharest. After Sector 1, Sector 4 and 5 are the most expensive ones from Bucharest when it comes to real estate. Although less developed, the areas become more interesting for residential and industrial investments. According to imobiliare.ro, the average price per square meter in the



Carol Park area is around EUR 1550 (the Bucharest average in March 2019 was EUR 1327/sqm) (Imobiliare.ro, 2019).

Most lands in Sector 4 are private property according to the municipal registers. Some public utility services (water, sewage, gas) are also under private ownership. The Carol park area has mixed ownership structures in place: some industrial buildings are private property, such as the Hesper factory or the Match Factory (Fabrica de Chibrituri). Other buildings situated around the Carol Park are owned by public institutions, such as the Astronomic Observatory, the Technical Museum and the Filaret Weather. The Carol park itself is managed by the Municipality of Bucharest (AIR & Zeppelin, 2011).

## 13 Policy

The following laws applies to the activities in the area: Law 422/2001 on historic monuments, Law 6/2008 on technical and industrial heritage, Law 350/2001 on landscaping and urban planning. The Rahova-Filaret area is a protected area nr. 63, and the park represents protected area nr. 82. Both areas and their implications for interventions are described in the Heritage chapter. The General Urban Plan of Bucharest (PUG Bucharest from 2000) and the current Area Urban Plan Carol Park (PUZ Parcul Carol from 2006) apply to the activities in the area surrounding Halele Carol.

The General Urban Plan of Bucharest (PUG), mentions that the Carol Park area is reserved for activities of goods and services production. The Protected Area nr. 63 documentation also implies regulation for the area, albeit mostly for the residential areas and not the industrial buildings. The Area Urban Plan Carol Park (PUZ Parcul Carol) includes Hesper factory in the green area along with other buildings located in the park, meaning they can be converted to spaces for cultural and leisure activities. It was foreseen that the existent constructions of the Hesper factory would be transformed in leisure functions (sport, museums, exhibitions, shows and performances) and integrated into the park. The inclusion of Halele Carol in both the protected area nr. 63 and the Area Urban Plan 'Carol Park' (PUZ Parcul Carol) frame the site for potential repurposing into leisure facilities (sport, events, exhibitions), creating opportunities for the adaptive re-use of the factory's buildings, and making Halele Carol possible.

The Vice Mayor announced that Carol park will be regenerated to become a cultural pole of Bucharest in the next 10 years, after a project for the park's revitalisation was proposed and voted in July 2018. A PUZ (Area Urban Plan) for the new project is [currently being developed](#). Elements of the park such as the Zodiac Fountain or other industrial buildings will be reconditioned and entered into the cultural circuit of the city. The Technical Museum is planned to be taken back under public management and for extension into a Museum of Science and Technology that would include other buildings in the area such as the Electric Factory Filaret. The Bosianu house, currently belonging to the National Institute for Meteorology, would also be renovated and become publicly accessible.



## 14 Impact

Nevertheless, the project did not have a general impact on the local community surrounding Halele Carol, as the community has not been involved from the early stages of the project, except from the workers at Hesper factory who attended the events. This made it difficult to involve it later on, and to make the Halele Carol project also representative for the local users. The Hesper factory represents a constant element in the local history and memory. Therefore, one important learning point is to involve the local community early in the project so that local people become part of the new developments.

The project has been well-received in the creative world, with appreciative comments on the industrial revival of the area, and the re-use of the existing buildings instead on constructing new ones. Most public opinions see Halele Carol as an important point on Bucharest's cultural map. Expirat Club, located here, is regarded mostly positively, as one of the clubs who made safety regulations and interventions a priority after the Colectiv fire in 2015.

The re-use of the space increased a certain attachment to the area from the creative community of Bucharest. The idea of an alternative space, needed for the creative industries in Bucharest, was attractive to the cultural community in the city that constantly looks for new spaces to enrich their activity. Halele Carol also provides a special identity for the young creatives of Bucharest. Although it did not manage to involve the community around it, Halele Carol still has a historical value

for the people around, some of which still work at the Hesper factory, and are holding the place dear.

*"A direct impact of our project is that the name and the place are still very visible. The name and its attractivity for the cultural community in Bucharest, which actually translates to a high impact for Bucharest. There are people who understood that many of the centre equipment for leisure and entertainment could come here and that the park area could become very important for Bucharest. And that would mean a lot for the people living in the South of the city, which is actually the poorest part when it comes to leisure facilities" Constantin Goagea*



**Picture 12. Post Industrial Design – exhibition at Halele Carol, photo by Vlad Bâscă**

In general, the narrative presents Halele Carol as a 'cultural hotspot' or a 'cultural hub' of Bucharest, emerged from the adaptive re-use of the industrial heritage. Halele Carol is placed in the same best practice category as other industrial re-use examples across the country, such as The Ark and Nod Makerspace in Bucharest, or Fabrica de Pensule in Cluj. The 'Nordic vibe' of the new design and architectural elements (such as the wooden constructions) are appreciatively mentioned at times.

The Municipality of Bucharest developed a plan to further develop the Carol park into a cultural centre of Bucharest, as described in the previous chapters. This is based on the value and potential of the area, which the Halele Carol project also highlighted and tapped into. Halele Carol can be considered the project that put Carol park back on the cultural map of Bucharest.

Regarding the impact on the economic life of the area, there have not been any jobs created through the project yet. The project did not directly enable the launch of new initiatives and/or start-ups. Nevertheless, it did open a new leisure and cultural area. As a result, more attention was drawn to the neighbourhood and several new leisure services / facilities opened here. As described previously, the South of Bucharest has been customarily seen as less developed than the North. Therefore, Halele Carol expanded the cultural centre of the city towards the South,



putting the area on the leisure map. As a result, the neighbourhood also saw more people coming here. More leisure activities developed in the area: Expirat Club is a popular nightclub; parties and events have been organised in the buildings of the Astronomic Institute; other bars and restaurants (ex: Ponton, now closed) started to appear and/or see more guests.



**Picture 13. Post Industrial Design – exhibition at Halele Carol, photo by Vlad Bâscă**



## 15. Interviewees

Constantin Goagea – Co-founder Zeppelin

Joep de Roo – Director Eurodite

Meta van Drunen – Partner Eurodite

Irina Iamandescu – Deputy Director National Institute for Heritage

Mirela Dobre - Commercial Manager HESPER SA

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## 9. Stará Tržnica (Bratislava, Slovakia)





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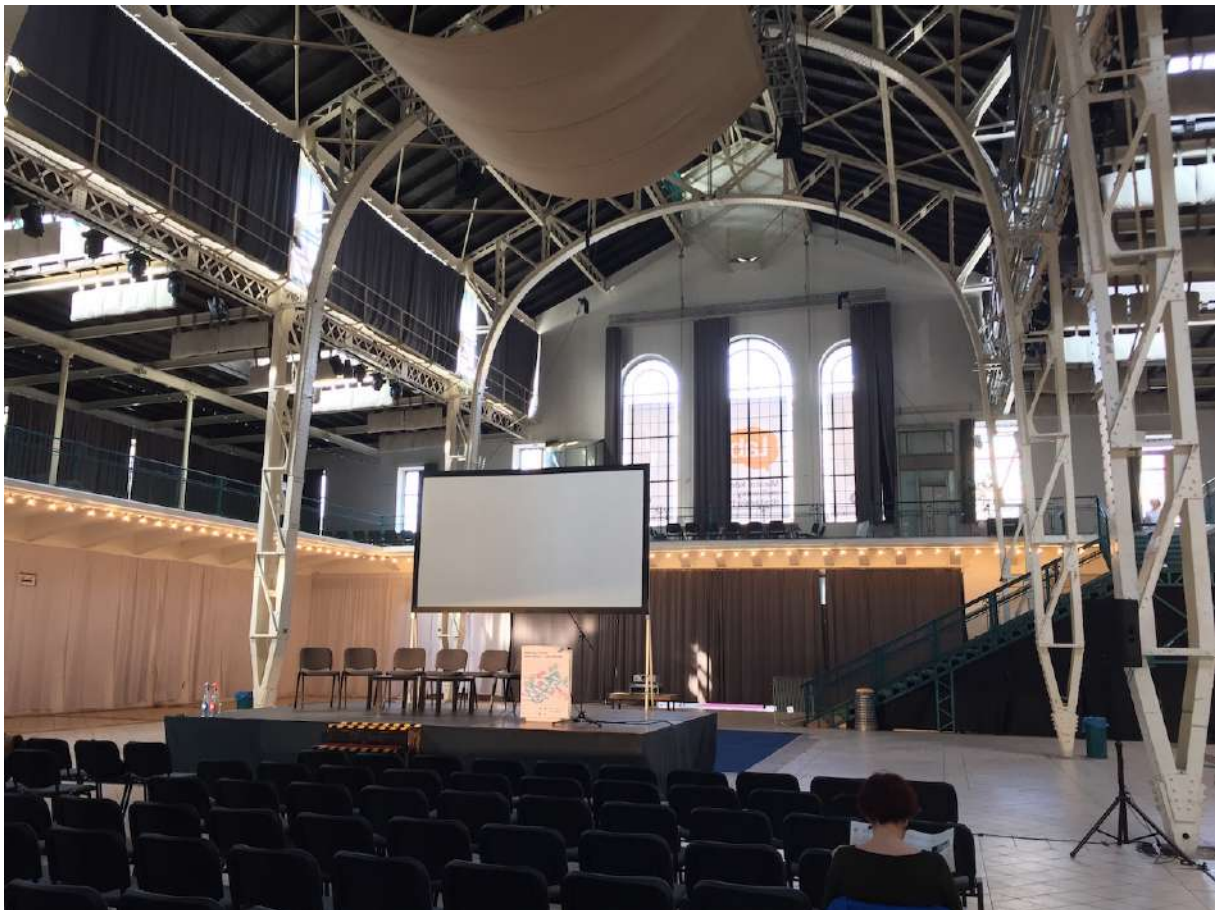
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## Executive summary

[Stará Tržnica](#) (Old Market Hall) is a historical building in the centre of Bratislava. The building closed down after years of unsuccessful attempts by the municipality to keep the market alive. Years later the market hall reopened with a redevelopment plan proposed by the Alianca Stará Tržnica (Old Market Hall Alliance), combining a food market every Saturday with cultural events on other days, as well as two cafés, a grocery shop, a cooking school and a soda water manufacture. Rethinking the opportunities of the Old Market Hall allows the organisation to run the building in an economically sustainable way, while gradually renovating it and creating a new event venue and meeting space in the heart of the city.



**Picture 1. The interior of the Old Market Hall. Photo (cc) Eutropian**

# 1 Timeline

1910 – Construction of the building

1960 – The building ceases to function as a market and it is turned into a TV warehouse and studio

1989 – The building goes empty

1996 – The municipality launches the building's renovation

1998 – The municipality rents out the renovated building that is used as a market

2004 – The market is in decline and underused

2008 – Following a long dispute, the municipality cancels the rental contract and the building goes empty again

2011 – Discussions about a new programme for the building begin

2012 – Establishment of the Old Market Hall Alliance

2012 – Proposal by the Old Market Hall Alliance to run the building

2013 – City Council votes to approve the Old Market Hall Alliance plan

2013 – Signature of the contracts

2013 – Old Market Hall Alliance begins to operate the building

2016 – The Old Market Hall Alliance begins its Living Square programme to revitalise the public spaces around the market

2017 – The Old Market Hall Alliance's investment breaks even

2018 – Matus Vallo, one of the founders of the Alliance becomes mayor of Bratislava. The Living Square programme becomes a key objective of the municipality

# 2 The story of the building

The Old Market Hall of Bratislava, designed by the city engineer Gyula Laubner, was completed on October 31, 1910. The building, situated at the edge of Bratislava's historical centre and built in connection with the old town's wall, was operating as a municipal marketplace until 1960. During the Communist times, the building's market function has gradually deteriorated. Between 1960 and 1989, the building hosted a television warehouse, studio and a variety of cultural productions. Between 1989 and 1996, the building stood empty, until in 1996 the municipality began its renovation. While the renovated building operated as a market between 1998 and 2008, small shops were built along its edges. The municipality's efforts to revive the building as a mono-functional market hall did not succeed: in the last years of the municipal management of the market, only six stalls were left open, all the others were closed. The remaining vendors, failing to compete with supermarkets, hardly provided any revenue for the market hall and the building generated significant losses for the municipality, about 30,000 euros a year. In the years following its closure in 2008, the market



hall was occasionally used as a stage set for TV show shootings and gala events. While it hosted around 15-20 private events a year, the building stood empty for the rest of the year, for around 350 days.

The original spaces of the building have been modified at various moments. In the 1990s, the Municipality renovated the market hall and small shops were built along its edges. In 2013, when the Old Market Hall Alliance gained access to the building, the market hall was fragmented into smaller spaces divided by walls, reminiscent of a badly functioning shopping mall. Besides these divisions, the building's new tenants faced many previously invisible problems. Besides the damaged floors and other surfaces, the building's infrastructure was also in a deteriorated state: the heating, cooling, air distribution functions did not function, neither did electricity work.

**"If you search for a concert hall in the city centre, this would be one of the top choices for you. If you want to make a conference, it is probably the best place in the city centre, especially if you would like to have some kind of community feeling, and don't want to go to a hotel. Practically you are left with no other choices." Jan Mazur**



**Picture 2. The Old Market Hall of Bratislava. Image by Jorge Mosquera**

### 3 The initiative

**“For years, there had been various initiatives that were seeking the support of politically influent groups to get their grip on the market hall. The fact that we made a public proposal and played in an open way made us less vulnerable to attacks and gave us a broad public support.” Gábor Bindics**

The Old Market Hall Alliance, an NGO established in order to elaborate a special programme for the building, was created by a team of experts, eleven people from different disciplines. The team was composed by people with real hands-on experience. One founding member of the Alliance had been running concerts for 20 years and knew everyone in the music fiend as well as all details related to running events; another member had been organising markets for years and was ready to bring this experience into the market hall.

At the time when the idea of rethinking the market hall emerged, Gábor Bindics, one of the founders had been running the cultural centre Dunaj for years. Dunaj was about 50 meters from the Old Market Hall, and Gábor and his colleagues passed by the vacant building every day. In the same time, many people were engaged in discussions about the fate of the market hall on a variety of forums. When the 11 people who later founded the Old Market Hall Alliance met each other, they all nurtured the same ambition to try to find a way to revive the market hall. The original idea was not to take over the management of the building but to create a project that looks into the history of the market hall and explores the reasons of its failure. By 2012, their ambition had gradually changed: they increasingly saw their role not only in creating a study but in developing the project itself. In 2012, the NGO Old Market Hall Alliance was established in order to elaborate a special programme for the building.

**“152 pages of the proposal were letters of interest, from corporations stating that they want to organise private events there, to embassies stating their interest in hiring space for events in the market hall. It gave us a lot of credibility that we could show that many people trust us.” Jan Mazur**

In 2012, the Alliance made a proposal to the Municipality for running the market hall, including a detailed economic offer and supported by many letters of interests from a variety of organisations. The proposal was to organise a weekly market on every Saturday, combined with other events on weekdays and renting out on a permanent basis the smaller spaces of the building to different services related to the market. The proposal also included a rental fee and detailed timing. The Alliance built up a broad public backing for the proposal. Support from various communities in the city helped the association convince the Municipality about the public interest of the proposal.

**“There were hundreds of people watching the assembly online so there was a kind of public pressure on politicians as well. An important part of our legitimacy was that we managed to communicate this project well: the public understood that this is a project that will serve their purpose.” Jan Mazur**

Despite discussions about the need of a public competition the Alliance convinced the Municipality to use a specific clause in the law that allows the municipality to

grant an exemption from competition to a strong proposal if it is approved by a vote in the City Council. The first vote took place in February 2013, but the agreement attracted criticism and legal attacks. Therefore, another City Council vote was needed in the Spring of 2013 that gave the final approval to the Alliance's plan. The Municipal Assembly vote also attracted a significant interest from the side of citizens – it was the most viewed assembly until then – and this pressure resulted in the Municipal Assembly voting in favour of the proposal. Due to the exemption of competition, there was no public procurement process to access the building, but a concession agreement.

**“In general, it is good to have open calls, but in the case of the Market Hall, no one has prepared any process for years, and the idea of public competition came up only when our proposal was put on the table. The place laid dormant for years and it needed initiative.” Illah Van Oljen**

The Old Market Hall Alliance received the keys to the building in September 2013. The first event, a food market was organised on September 22, and it was followed by regular market days, first once a month and twice a month after the first year. In 2014, the various spaces of the market hall were tested through pop-up uses, and these uses informed the renovations of these spaces in the following years. After a trial period and a temporary closure for renovations, the market hall reopened in March 2015. Since September 2015, the weekly Saturday market has been operating continuously, with other events gradually developed to complement it.



**Picture 3. Event in the Old Market Hall of Bratislava. Photo (cc) Eutropian**

## 4 Activities

**“What works is the blend of activities, multi-functionality, to combine functions of those activities that do not generate solid revenue with those that can generate revenue for you: this way you can subsidise the former.”**  
**Jan Mazur**

The Old Market Hall Alliance created a special programme with a flexible forum where one can put any content one wants according to one's needs and functions. During the week, when there is simply not enough critical mass to attend markets, the building is used as a concert hall, a ballroom for companies, a conference hall, or a workshop space. The most precious day, Saturday, when people have time, is reserved for a food market. As the market begins at 8am, this also means that there are no events on Friday night, otherwise there would be no enough time to clean up the hall before the market.

**“This is a really strong message that the most precious day is given to the public.”** Jan Mazur

The process of reviving the food market in the hall also coincided with the moment when people in Slovakia began to be interested in local food and locally produced goods: people were looking for alternatives. The farmers' market opened in the Old Market Hall just before alternative supermarkets selling local produce emerged. Reviving the food market required a lot of community organisation though. As the market organisers did not succeed in bringing back earlier vendors to the market, they had to find new vendors with less experience.

**“As the market hall was to function as a cultural centre and a market in the same time, we felt it was good to start with a monthly market first, to try out the space. The space was being reconstructed and rebuilt at the time: we had to build a whole market in a building that was changing every week.”** Illah van Oljen

The **food market** is at the core of the Old Market Hall. The food market component of the Old Market Hall Alliance came through Illah van Oljen, a Dutch urbanist who began organising local markets in Bratislava in 2011 by closing off streets, inviting producers and inviting neighbours. Together with Slow Food Bratislava, Illah wrote a plan on how to bring back the food market into the Old Market Hall and, emphasising the importance of gradual, organic growth. For the first half year, the market was organised once a month and it allowed the organisers to test different settings. In the following year, markets were organised twice a month, and a year and a half into the project, the market became a weekly event.

The food market was never meant to generate revenue for the Market Hall. It is the ultimate public event in the market hall: its objective was to attract visitors and make the market hall work. It was decided early on that Saturday would be kept for food markets and all other events have to find other days. The Saturday market organises children's theatre every week, there are dedicated spaces for kids and seniors with no obligation to consume anything. Minorities that live in the city are regularly invited to present their food and music in the market hall. The building has a used oil-collecting facility and soon will have a composter. Most transport to and from the building is organised by cargo bikes. There are



many educational events taking place in the building that also function as services.

The food market runs with about 20-30 vendors in the summer, and about 100 in winter. It is often combined a variety of events, pop-up stores, kids' events, design and antique markets, wine events, thematic markets. One of the biggest events of the year is the Christmas market that includes a food market and a street market outside the market hall, uniting the indoor and outdoor spaces. The Christmas market has over 20,000 visitors and more than 350 people apply for stands but the market can only host 116 of them.

The food market has also generated various synergies with other tenants and venues within the market hall: the café has an open door towards the market and plays music the whole morning; restaurants or the cooking school's kitchen buy the remaining vegetables to make sure vendors go home with no produce left. The bike sharing shop offers a courier service to deliver the groceries bought to one's doorstep.

**"It was always our big dream when we got this place, yes the inside is a public space but let's take the inside and outside as one. With the Christmas market we managed to bring this back." Illah van Oljen**

Spaces of the market hall that face the outside, looking at the neighbouring square and streets are rented out to permanent tenants. These are businesses that all contribute to the market hall's operation with their own means, with specific activities, resources or with opening hours and services adapted to the needs of more vulnerable groups. The spaces at the outer parts of the market hall have been used since 2014, first to test various uses and later rented out to regular tenants. The tenant structure has gradually changed in the project's first 5 years, as experiences helped the Alliance to adjust its rental structure.

**"The proportion between market and social projects depends on the price you charge per square meters. If you run a market price, then non-market participants obviously cannot take it if they don't have a subsidy. If there is no grant that could help them operate with market rents, then you have to go down if you want to create social value." Jan Mazur**

Originally, the Alliance began to develop its strategy of renting out spaces as the creation of a "portfolio of services" that members thought the market hall needed. The first open call for tenants of the market hall's spaces envisioned five functions for the building: a family space where we are where families can come and leave kids in the corner and have a coffee, a restaurant and café, a grocery store and a kitchen to be used by members for cooking classes and to cook food to be sold elsewhere. After the failure of some of the tenants from the first round, it took a few years to have all the businesses stabilise themselves.

**Lab** is a cafeteria on the ground floor but also a fabrication lab, a basement workshop with woodcutters, laser cutters, 3D printer and other tools where one can do digital fabrication. It works on a prepaid membership basis and contributes to an emerging community around the Lab. Next to it, there is also a **bike sharing shop** that has been very much in demand since its opening and that also offers delivery service for the market shoppers. Another tenant is **Foodstock**, a restaurant or canteen that composts all its organic waste, thus inspiring a planned waste system for the whole market and the neighbourhood. Foodstock also helps with the community kitchen organised on Saturdays where various minorities present their food and products. There is also a **grocery shop**: the idea was to create a locally sourced store where one can find food and products as local as possible. On the other side of the market, there is a **wine**

**bar** that is open all day long and offers local wines at affordable prices. Inside the market hall, there are other businesses: a **soda producer**, in which the Old Market Hall Alliance is also a small shareholder; and a **brewery** that takes care of the square in front of the market hall, its cleaning, new furniture and all related investments.



**Picture 4. Brewery in the basement of the Old Market Hall. Photo (cc) Eutropian**

**Dobre Dobré** is an organisation that works with homeless people. The Alliance invited the organisation to run a cafeteria inside the market hall building, a place that would connect with the ambiance of the market hall and employ homeless staff. Compared to the other venues inside the market hall, the Alliance estimated the value of the space as 2400 euros per month: given the social focus of the organisation, Dobre Dobré was offered a 560 euros rental fee. Despite this subsidised rent, Dobre Dobré could not develop into a sustainable business. The following business, a winery, received the space at the subsidised rent of 1600 euros, in exchange to have the venue open from the morning, offer authentic wines and allow people to spend time without continuously consuming.

Some tenants could not develop a sustainable economic model: a café operated by a social enterprise employing homeless people ended up producing deficits, and so did a kid's centre where families did not spend enough to help the place survive. Similarly, a cooking school formerly located in the inside of the building, that made food for kindergartens, sold to the neighbouring restaurants and also worked with refugees also left the market hall.

**"When we saw that some social businesses could not maintain themselves, we changed our strategy: instead of looking for a social project and**

**offering space to them, we look for a functioning business that we ask to provide some added value in exchange for lower rent.” Gábor Bindics**



**Picture 5. Dobre Dobré at the side of the Old Market Hall. Photo (cc) Eutropian**

## 5 Renovations

**“When we walked into the building we found many bad solutions, a big part of the technical equipment didn’t work. We knew that we cannot make the building work perfectly from the first day on.” Gábor Bindics**

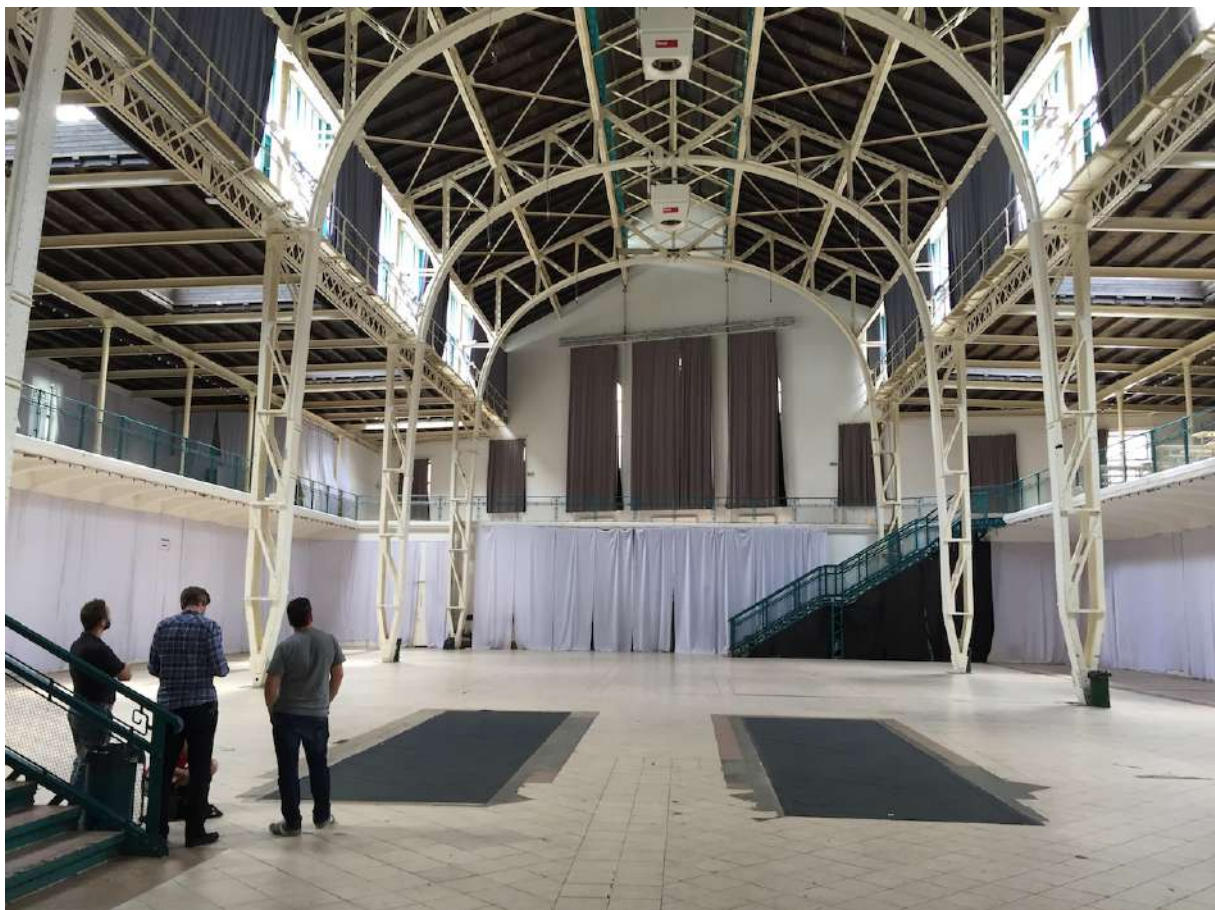
The main concept of rethinking the building was to create a space as multifunctional and flexible as possible, a large open space that can host various kinds of events, ranging from markets and conferences to concerts. In order to help the space adapt to different events, specific, versatile and easy-to-arrange tables were bought to support all these formats.

One of the biggest challenges in the reconstruction process was to coordinate the different phases of the renovation with activities like the market that had to adapt to new circumstances and new parts of the building at each edition. A month after the Alliance took charge of the building, a fire security control revealed 54 security issues. Complying with safety regulations was a costly process: only repainting some surfaces with fireproof paint costed 50,000 euros, while revising the fire safety system, installing a new lightning rod, new doors, fire-extinguishers, fire alarms and a regulated heating system costed around 100-150,000 euros.



After making the spaces secure, the following phase included renovating the shops and other street front spaces, fixing their water and electricity infrastructures so that they can be rented out. This was followed by the renovation of the toilets, the floors, the lights, important details that enable the individual operations. In some cases, the Alliance made an agreement with future tenants who would take care of the renovations and costs would be redacted from the rental fee.

**Sound** is a key challenge in all buildings whose business model depends on large events. When the Alliance took charge of the market hall, they measured the sound insulation of the building's walls and windows and it gave different results than official documents of the building that proved to be misleading. Following complaints from the neighbourhood, the association undertook a large process to insulate further the building's walls and windows facing residential buildings: this operation costed 50,000 euros. After the insulation, the market hall has been capable of accommodating slightly higher volume but cannot host larger concerts. With the limited authorised volume level, concerts are muted by the noise of the public: in the presence of 2000 people, the allowed music volume is not enough to satisfy the concert-goers.



**Picture 6. The Market Hall's internal structure. Photo (cc) Eutropian**



## 6 Heritage

**“When we first entered the market hall, its open space was fragmented by smaller structures, kiosks erected in the 1990s. We declared that our goal is not to build on all the layers that were added to this market hall, but to give back this space to the city. Our goal was to open the space physically and mentally. We also repainted the interiors to the original green colour, erasing the interventions of the 1990s. All our actions fit to the protected status of the building. We benefited from heritage protection: we wanted to make use of the advantages of the building as it was invented in 1910.”**  
**Gábor Bindics**

Bratislava’s Old Market Hall is a nationally protected cultural heritage building. The protection concerns the hall’s columns and the windows, as well as the outer appearance of the building. Therefore, there are no modifications allowed in the building, especially when they impact the outer look of the market hall. Outside the entire look of the building had to be kept, including the colours, doors and materials. For minor interventions, ranging from changing colours at the outside of the building to insulating windows, the Alliance needed permissions from the regional heritage office. In order to better insulate the building, for instance, an expensive solution was implemented: a second, thicker glass layer was built inside the market hall, in order to keep the original look of the building but adapt it to events that require heating in winter. Inside it was enough to maintain the appearance and colours of the skeleton structure but the association enjoyed relative freedom in rearranging the market inside the building.

**“We started by making a study about the market hall’s past. We found that in 1910, there was a soda manufacturer in the building: therefore, we established a new soda manufacturer. There was a grocery shop run by Ernő Dvorák: this is why we call our pub Ernő Dvorák, to point back to the past of the building.”** Gábor Bindics

Reopening the market hall as a food market was easy: building on the history of the building and the legacy of the street markets organised by Alliance members, the association had a significant public support in its endeavour.

**“It happened in the first few markets that people would come into the building, look up and look down and start crying. Overwhelmed with stories and histories around the market. The fact that this was historically for such a long time a market space, and this whole square was a market space basically gave a huge pat in the back for the whole project. We didn’t have to convince anyone.”** Illah van Oljen

## 7 Regulations and policies

**“The relationship with the municipality is good. It’s not always easy to explain or convince them, but the relationship is professional, we don’t argue over small things or even large things.”** Jan Mazur

Regulations concerning the renovation and operating of the building are not optimal. The market hall’s renovation by the association has met some legislative barriers. The previous renovation in 1996-98 carried out by the Municipality for the equivalent of 13 million euros today included many elements like an escalator in the basement that had never been used and did not correspond to the new uses of the building. This escalator was built so expensively in the 1990s

that after two decades, its value was still booked at 30,000 euros in the Municipality's accounts, making it bureaucratically complicated to remove the escalator and turning this into a 2-year procedure.

The Alliance's relationship with the municipality is professional and is based on cooperation. On a regular basis, the Alliance needs approval from the Municipality for the investments. The Alliance needs to communicate towards the Municipality all investments into the building as these investments, including newly purchased equipment will belong to the building owned by the city. Before each expenditure, the association needs to provide an investment plan to be reviewed by a specific body – consisting of three municipal officers and two-three people from the Old Market Hall Alliance – that convenes and goes through each item of the plan, before sending it further to a municipal vote. Besides this committee, there is also another contractual body created between the Alliance and the Municipality, consisting of four people from the Municipal Assembly, that reviews and supervises the activities of the association.

**“Most problems we encountered within the Municipality were not personal but structural. Municipalities are structured in a regulatory way. Municipal departments are not working pro-actively and they have difficulties in dealing with innovative ideas and helping those who come with a proposal to the city. The Market Hall gives a precedent to these structures in how to work with innovative proposals coming from the outside.” Gábor Bindics**

While the building used to be registered as a market hall, for a period starting in the 1960s, its destination of use was changed into cultural space. When the Alliance began to use the building as a market in 2013, the organisers needed permissions and it made the process more complicated. In the first months, markets were organised with specific permits. It took a year for the association to change the building's legal status into a market hall that made it easier to organise markets. In some cases, the market's legal status was not enough to support all the activities needed by a contemporary market. For instance, for cooking food inside a building, a chimney is needed; however, it is complicated to build a chimney without altering a heritage-protected building's appearance. Therefore, for a long period, the street food market was organised outside the market hall, before organisers found a technical solution to lead chimneys out the windows.

**Social enterprises:** despite its structure as an association, members of the Old Market Hall Alliance consider themselves as a social enterprise: they do not pay dividends or take out profit from the association for themselves. A new law about the functioning of social enterprises that includes incentives, investment money, equity and debt instruments is potentially interesting for the Alliance to adapt its organisational form.

## 8 The business model

**“It is important to convince people that we can think at the scale of millions of euros. With upscaling, the potentially available investment also grows. We can help initiatives with insights about what banks like to give money for and how much certain investments would cost.” Gábor Bindics**

Before engaging in the contract with the Municipality, the Alliance made an estimation of the renovation costs with the help of various experts. Without any high-tech equipment, renovating the floors, the windows as well as complying with all fire safety requirements was estimated to cost between 700,000 and 1 million euros, with at least 4-500,000 to make the building operational. After 5 years, a bit more than 1 million euros were spent on the building, making the market hall fully operating in the technical sense. By the second year, the Market Hall began to produce revenues and by the third year the economic model began to work. In March 2019, the initial bank loan was paid back and the Market Hall broke even. After the basic renovation items, the Alliance now begins investing in more value-related equipment like a composter and other extras.

**Rent-to-investment scheme:** the Alliance conceived the new market hall's model to be economically sustainable and financially separated from the Municipality, with no public subsidies involved. The 15-year (10 years + 5 years extension) contract signed between the Alliance and the Municipality states that the Alliance pays a symbolic 1 euro rent per year to the Municipality and has to invest 10.000 euros per month in the renovation of the market hall for the entire duration of the contract: this amounts to 120.000 euros per year and almost 2 million euros by the end of the contract. While the 10.000 euros monthly investment cannot include in-kind work, the investments of the tenants can be calculated as part of it. Each item of investment is overseen by a supervisory board that includes municipal officers and members of the association.

**"At the time, I began working for the Erste Bank as an advisor in the social bank division. From inside, I saw what makes a project suitable for a loan. By then the Market Hall had events, we had numbers, partners and rental contracts. All these helped us to get a loan from the social bank division while a standard bank would have seen us too risky." Gábor Bindics**

The renovations began with a loan from Erste Bank. At the time the bank opened a social banking division with about 10 million euros to support projects that would be considered too risky by traditional loan schemes. The Market Hall Alliance received a loan of about 200,000 euros with 4% interest. As the association was not the owner of the building, they could not put the market hall as a collateral to the loan: therefore members of the association needed to offer their own personal properties as a collateral to the bank.

**"Most banks have no other motivation than putting your organisation in their risk model and see how much interest they can give you. Social banks put their margins lower to allow more possibilities." Jan Mazur**

The Market Hall produces a variety of revenues. The marketing cooperations provide about 1/3 of the total revenue. Volkswagen and Orange contribute with about 50-60,000 euros annually, in cash or in services. With Orange, for instance, the financial support is minimal but the services have a high value that account to about 100,000 euros in the past years. Orange provided machines (worth 70,000 euros) for the FabLab, and installed internet in the whole building (worth 20,000 euros). Orange also provided big data to the association about people passing by the market hall, in order to understand better their needs.

Volkswagen contributes in a similar way, the company paid in part for the renovation of the square in front of the market hall.

Rental fees contribute to another third of the revenues. Besides the market hall's large open space, the building contains a variety of smaller venues, accessible from the neighbouring streets, that are rented out to a variety of tenants on a regular basis. The selection of tenants in the market hall is based on open calls, thematic connections, potential cooperation with other tenants as well as the social value created.

The last third of the revenues is provided by large events. Big part of the Market Hall's revenue comes from about 16 solely private events per year, which, combined with privately-organised public events, adds up to 60-70% of the total revenue. This revenue is distributed in a year quite unevenly: the top season is October to December, with many Christmas events, while there are practically no events in July and August. The rent for a private event can run into several thousands of euros, up to 6.000 euros for a day – for this the association provides many services, including setting up the space. The great demand for the space is due to a specific situation in Bratislava that does not have many event venues of this kind: The Old Market Hall is possibly the only event venue in the centre that is so large and well-positioned, with an easy access for cars and public transportation alike. On the other hand, with all the events and the community support around the Old Market Hall, it has become one of the hippest places for private events. The interruption of this revenue stream by noise limits imposed on the venue in 2017 forced the Alliance to seek for new kinds of events, daytime conferences and other functions that correspond to the building's dramaturgy and values. The success of this shift remains to be evaluated, together with other potential directions like attracting more marketing-related revenue or developing applications for funding.

With the great success of the Old Market Hall, more revenues were collected than expected. With these revenues, the Alliance has already invested 6 or 7 years upfront in the building's renovation. This is also justified by the uneven needs of the market hall where more investment was needed in the beginning of the building's use in order to make it suitable for events and other activities. Despite the early investments, the renovation is an ongoing process: a bank loan was taken to reconstruct the floor and renovate all the windows. Besides the renovation, the association also bought a variety of sound and light equipment, tables for the market and a podium to build the stage.

**“When we apply for cultural funding, everyone asks why we need money after investing a million euros into the building. We need such funding for the ‘dramaturgy’ we would like to reach, with an ideal constellation of public and private events.” Gábor Bindics**

Most of the market hall's operations can be maintained with the help of its revenues. Extra expenses can be financed by loans, as the Alliance by now has a good track record with banks, although funding of approximately 14,000 euros coming from EEA Grants also helped to make some investments in the building. Nevertheless, the organisation needs specific funding for specific projects like reorganising public spaces around the building. Although the Old Market Hall Alliance is not very successful in applying for public subsidies, the association took part in a Creative Europe project that helped the organisation with 120,000 euros to activate 700,000 euros from private investors and the city.



**"It's a rare cultural heritage building and should be serving cultural functions. Increasing the rent beyond 10,000 euros a month would compromise the building's public function." Jan Mazur**

## 9 Governance and community

**"I always took it as my personal mission to conserve this community - based content and functioning of this building. I always designed it this way. Even the market is inside and technically it is private space, we will always set it up as a public space. Nobody has to buy anything. Homeless, travellers who are lost, we had travellers falling asleep on the bench, we were always open to any group of people who have the same right to sit inside as outside." Illah van Oljen**

The Old Market Hall Alliance has been from the beginning an NGO, an association founded by 11 civic persons who joined to revive the market hall. The association since then has been expanded and now has active and advisory members. The Alliance is the main tenant of the market hall and has the 10+5 years contract with the Municipality, and in turn, it also rents out the building's various spaces to businesses and events. The association has also invested in some of the activities in the building: for instance, it has 50% shares in one of the businesses in the Market Hall building, the soda manufacturer.

Volunteering work played an important role in building up the new market hall. Bringing forward their own initiative, members of the Old Market Hall Alliance had offered weeks and weeks of unpaid work, also supported by various forms of community involvement and institutional support. A diversity of cultural institutions and embassies also assured the Alliance about their support and this proved to be an important, if symbolic resource in gaining approval from the Municipality.

Some activities in the market hall do not generate much income but contribute to tying together the community: a regularly organised bazaar allows people to donate and sell things and the revenues go into the reconstruction of the building.

Although there is no formalised structure to **bring together the tenants** besides one-to-one contracts, the Old Market Hall Alliance organises regular meetings with the tenants to focus on how they can cooperate with one another in a mutually beneficial way. Some tenants began to cooperate without any matchmaking: the soda manufacturer provides soda to all the bars and restaurants, so does the brewery; the events communicate with the venues and the grocery store sources from our market vendors. Besides one-to-one cooperation, many tenants are also connected by joint projects. The new composting machine bought by the association will compost the organic waste of all tenants. The Alliance is also planning to establish a new association focusing on the public spaces around the market hall: the association, to be joined by all tenants of the market hall, will safeguard the public spaces and provide specific services such as cultural events. Furthermore, the new association will act as a platform to organise competitions and channel ideas and proposals towards the municipality.

## 10 Public space

Before being converted into TV and cultural production studios, Bratislava's Old Market Hall had always been a public space, connected to a large public square outside the building. After the 1960s, with the building converted into TV production studios, the square gradually lost its public role and was increasingly occupied by parking cars. For the Old Market Hall Alliance, opening the square and reconnecting it to the market hall creates public value and contributes to the building's economic model as well.

**"We started working with the square outside the market hall to bring it back into use: it was not inventing a new function but try to bring people back doing what they used to do before." Illah van Oljen**

The Old Market Hall Alliance has been engaged with the revitalisation of the neighbouring public spaces. Investment in the surrounding public spaces has created an important impact: with small interventions like 5000 euros invested in chairs and serving drinks, the square in front of the market hall has been filled with life, especially in Summer and Autumn, with hundreds of people. Allowing the Market Hall to use the public square in front of it required some legal arrangements. As it is not legal to drink alcohol in public spaces in the centre of Bratislava, except on terraces of bars, the Alliance made an agreement with the municipality that allows the association to create a public space and assure its maintenance and cleaning every day; in exchange the municipality tolerates people consuming alcohol on the square.

**"As we started to revitalise this small square which is right in front of the old market hall we wanted be involved also further as it connects us with other communities in the city." Veronika Hlinicanova**

In order to expand its impact on public spaces, the association began to work with various communities living in or using the area through events and focus groups, inquiring about their needs and barriers. The focus groups were followed by interviews with experts who gave their insights about the public spaces from the viewpoints of the green surfaces, mobility, lighting and other issues. Based on these inputs, the Alliance prepared a series of temporary interventions to make the spaces functional, lively and enjoyable. These events have all fed into the preparation of design competitions for the public spaces in the vicinity of the market hall. Besides the envisioned international design competition, the Alliance also plans to establish a new association with the participation of all the tenants of the market hall, with a focus on improving public spaces in the neighbouring area.

**"After two years, when the market hall began to be full of events, we understood that the impact of our events in the market is much smaller if the environment doesn't change. Therefore, we moved our focus to the surrounding area and think about how to create added values through our spaces. This focus on surrounding public spaces became the second foot of the Old Market hall Alliance." Gábor Bindics**

## 11 Impact

**"This constellation brings a direct benefit for the City, as it basically gets 10.000 euros of new investment into the building every month. Another**

**benefit for the City is that we created space for seven new businesses inside the Market Hall, and several more entrepreneurs benefit from the building in a way or another.” Jan Mazur**

When the Old Market Hall Alliance was founded, the market hall’s area was relatively neglected, with many closed shops and dead facades. Bringing new activities into the market hall had a strong impact on its surroundings: there are much more people using the area, small commerce has been flourishing in the neighbouring streets and the bars that used to serve only elderly men have also become popular with young people.

The Market Hall immediately enjoyed a high visibility and support: this is what enabled it to gain the approval of the City Council. This support was due to the founders’ credibility, reputation and track record: they were all trusted professionals known in the city. Social media, relatively fresh at the time of the market’s relaunch, were contributing to the high visibility of the Market Hall endeavour. In the same time, the need for a public venue organised in a different way was increasingly tangible: many services offered by the Market Hall were immediately embraced and used by the broader community.

**“The impact it has is that for many families going to the market has become a social activity, a fun activity, to be together and meet people which I think is very important. To create a social cohesion around food.” Illah van Oljen**

On a daily basis, the market hall accommodates about 90-100 people: that means a lot of workplaces, many of them new jobs that were born with the reopening of the building. In some cases, the market hall works as an incubator: a baker who rented a stall in the market later went on to open a bakery across the street. In others, the market, especially with its street food events, competes with other restaurants in the centre and takes away some of their clientele.

**“The market hall kicked off very quickly – as soon as we could equip the market hall, it was immediately populated with the market and other events. According to our calculations, around 40,000 people pass by the market hall every day. When the building was closed, it was perceived by people as a coulisse; once we opened it, people really enjoyed to have access to it and turned into a public space.” Gábor Bindics**

The Alliance, reassured about the positive effects of their intervention, went on to create proposals to the Municipality about how to develop, program, manage and administer the neighbouring areas and public spaces. In the meanwhile, the Alliance helped revitalising premises in the neighbouring streets, bringing in new tenants – shops for design, bikes and books – in the ground floor of a quite ruined building adjacent to the market hall.

The market hall has brought social impact to the city in a variety of ways. The Alliance developed a tool to measure social impact in a monetary way. According to the association’s calculations beyond the 10,000 euros monthly revenue required to be invested in the building, another 16-20,000 euros could be earned with purely commercial activities: the difference can be conceived as the social investment amount within the building’s balance sheet.

## 12 The model

The model of Stara Trznica is constituted by the reuse of an abandoned or underused building by the means of transparent communication, cooperation

between different professionals, multifunctional use with social benefits and the investment into the building deducted from the rental fee.

The contract developed between the Old Market Hall Alliance and the Municipality has created a precedent that is seen as an example by other initiatives, including projects run by developers. The model was first reused in the vicinity of the Market Hall: the previous owner of a neighbouring, long-time vacant building invited the Alliance to implement the same model used in the market building: to invite tenants who do not need to pay a commercial rent and who can act as catalysts for the area or for the building. Here the Alliance developed a mixed function for the building, including offices in the upper floors and small bookstores and designer shops in the ground floor – but only part of it was realised before a new owner with a different vision took charge of the building.

**“In some buildings around the market, we used the same principles: tenants invested themselves in the reconstruction and that was deducted from their rent. But it was a model for us to move towards a kind of a niche development: if there is a building where you need to put strong social value, community value, not only economic value, we can provide this.”**  
**Jan Mazur**

On a broader scale, the Stara Trznica model has been hugely inspiring for a variety of other initiatives across Slovakia. Recognising the value of the Stara Trznica model, the Alliance has been supporting a variety of organisations to build up their models: they helped with advice the team regenerating the Rožno Monastery as well and initiators of Nova Cvernovka in Bratislava. The Alliance has also been involved in establishing Lucerna terrace in Prague as well as in the regeneration of the Cloister in Brno. These places have been also building a network based on the exchange of experiences.

Politically, the model of the Old Market Hall serves as an example that proves that the civic-led management of publicly owned properties can be beneficial both to the municipality and the city’s communities: it is instrumental in convincing politicians and property owners to open up their buildings for civic uses. This model paved the way for several initiatives, from Nova Cvernovka in Bratislava to Kino Usmev in Kosice.

**“We don’t like being involved as advisors: once we leave a process and another team takes over, the risk that the overall concept changes and becomes too commercial is too high. It works better when we create a mechanism, find people who are active, build up a team and this team can organically lead the process and activate the building themselves: this is the key to success. Normally a municipality or an investor treats active people as a necessary bad thing that costs money. Instead, active people need to be part of the process from the beginning on as they can be the real engines of the transformation. Our role in this can be to accompany this process of negotiations.”** Gábor Bindics

## 13 Interviewees

Gábor Bindics, co-founder of the Old Market Hall Alliance

Veronika Hliničanová, responsible for the Old Market Hall Alliance’s public spaces programme



Jan Mazur, legal expert of the Old Market Hall Alliance

Illah van Oljen, co-founder of the Old Market Hall Alliance, formerly responsible for the food market

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# **10. The Potocki Palace**

## **(Radzyń Podlaski, Poland)**

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# 1 Summary of the project

The revitalization project of the Potocki Palace, a Rococo residence in a county town called Radzyń Podlaski in eastern Poland has been planned since 2015. In 2015, Radzyń City Hall received the palace from the Polish state. The first renovation works after the handover begun in 2017. The municipality aims to transform the palace into a cultural facility to attract tourists, integrate the local community, and boost the cultural and social life of the town and surrounding areas. Obtaining funds to execute a feasible and sustainable management plan which can bolster the revitalization of the complex, remains a challenge. Likewise, establishing an appropriate governance model is the key issue to solve.

## 2 Timeline

1464 – the Kazanowski family built a fortress near the Białka River; the Radzyń Podlaski town was found.

1685–1709 – architect August Locci rebuilt the castle into a *palazzo in Fortezza* type residence.

1749 – 1759 Eustachy Potocki commissioned a royal architect Jakub Fontana to reconstruct the palace into a Rococo mansion.

1752 – 1756 Johann Chrisostomus Redler created the sculptural decoration of the palace.

1920 – the last private owner of the palace, Bronisław Korwin Szlubowski, donates his property to the Polish state

1950– the beginning of reconstruction of the palace severely damaged in 1944

2015 – Radzyń City Hall acquired the palace and started the process of transforming it into a cultural facility and community space.

2017 – Radzyń City Hall launched a heritage-based urban revitalization program, including the adaptive heritage reuse of the Potocki Palace.

2019 – the town received a grant worth 22 million PLN (5.1 million euros) from the state to restore the palace and build “Museum of Sarmatian Culture”

### 3 The History of the Potocki Palace

The Potocki Palace is a Rococo palace and garden complex, the main tourist attraction and the cultural center in a county town called Radzyń Podlaski in eastern Poland. The fifteenth-century fortress was re-designed as a Baroque residence, which received its



*Figure 1 Western wing of the Potocki palace. Photo: Dóra Mérai*

present Rococo shape in the mid-eighteenth century on the model of Louis XIV's Versailles. It is surrounded by a large park with artificial lakes ponds. In addition to the architectural and artistic values, the complex has a historical significance: it played an essential role in events of the following centuries as a social,

administrative, and intellectual center of the region. Since its erection in the fifteenth century, the entire building or some of its rooms have changed its function many times: fortress, aristocratic residence, school, court and prison, army headquarters, national archives, or a cultural center (Kowalik-Bylicka 2019). After 1960s, the state kept the Palace in a fairly good physical state. However, despite its central location in the town, the palace complex has not been the meeting point for the community in Radzyń Podlaski. As the director of Lublin National Archives branch Radzyń Podlaski Joanna Kowalik-Bylicka pointed out:

"If we look at the town <...> there is no main square, no space for residents to meet. The palace, therefore, is a perfect place to become a 'center' of the town. <...> It would be a perfect place to meet and socialize <...> It could also house some institutions, like NGOs." (Kowalik-Bylicka 2019).



*Figure 2 The ground plan of the building (the 1920s). Photo: Dóra Mérai*

In the 2000s, the state wanted to sell the palace to a private investor. However, the municipality opposed, as it would be against the will of the last private owners who donated it to the state treasury in 1920. They reserved that the palace should be used for public purposes.<sup>1</sup> The same condition accompanied the municipality's handover of the palace from the national ownership, it has become a local public good (Wasak 2019c).

On July 2, 2015, Radzyń City Hall received the Potocki Palace from the Lublin Voivodeship authorities. The municipality aims to revitalize the palace, and turn it into a significant cultural, educational, and social center. According to the municipality's vision, the revitalization project should boost the citizens' creativity, attract tourists, and make the region more attractive to potential investors (Wasak 2019b, c). Revitalizing of the palace and its adaptation to new functions such as a modern museum and a community space should not only attract tourists but may also contribute to the return of Radzyń's former inhabitants (who leave in pursuit of careers in bigger cities) by creating work opportunities and creating a tourist market (Wrana 2018, 43).

To protect the palace in Radzyń Podlaski as a common heritage and a local historical treasure accessible by everyone, City Hall insisted upon finding a management concept which would benefit all citizens. Therefore, they refused to sell or lease any part of the palace complex to private enterprises.<sup>2</sup> However, it has become the municipality's responsibility to find funds for the renovation of the palace and to secure the operational costs. The estimated costs of the renovation are nearly seven million euros, and the town authorities cannot afford to fully cover it from the town's budget. Since 2015 the municipality has been trying to obtain financial support from the Polish state and EU funds. In the meantime, valuable Johann Redler's eighteen-century sculptures and the palace's back façade have been renovated owing to a substantial grant from Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage (Wasak 2019c).

Currently, there are four permanent and active institutions in the palace complex: a state music school, the Radzyń Music Society, the Cultural Centre of Radzyń, and the tourist information center. Occasionally, the building is used for public

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<sup>1</sup> The strife to prevent from selling the palace to a private owner was a part of the 2014 and 2018 election campaigns of the current mayor Jerzy Rębek. He declared that the palace is a national treasure and it should belong to the society. He argues that if the palace is sold to a private investor, it will limit its accessibility. An average resident of the town will no longer benefit from the monument, which in fact, is the central and most impressive building in the area. (Wasak 2019b).

<sup>2</sup> According to Anna Wasak, the spokesperson of the Mayor of Radzyń Podlaski, there was a private entrepreneur willing to buy the palace and turn it into a hotel. The public opinion was against it, because the residents thought that the intention of the entrepreneur was to restrict public access to the palace complex. Around 1,500 citizens (that is c. 10 percent of the entire population of Radzyń) signed a petition against selling the palace to private owners. Therefore, the municipality rejected the deal (Wasak 2019b). Katarzyna Krupska-Grudzień, a founder of the Local Group of Action "Zapiecek", believes that the municipality presented the situation to the locals in a somewhat simplified way: that the Palace can either be sold to a private owner who would limit access for the public, or to keep it in public ownership. Krupska-Grudzień thinks that it is unfortunate that no other alternatives were considered and presented to the residents of the town (Krupska-Grudzień 2019a).

performances and exhibitions. However, the palace's premises are usually not accessible by external visitors.

Obtaining funds to execute a feasible and sustainable management plan which can bolster the revitalization of the complex, remains a challenge. Likewise, establishing an appropriate governance model is the key issue to solve. Without it the heritage might be misused or damaged and will keep producing costs instead of generating profit. Moreover, the residents may lose the last thread of emotional attachment to the palace. The monument is too important on the regional scale to mishandle the opportunity to renovate it and use as a source of social empowerment and economic revitalization.

## 4 Context and infrastructure

Radzyń Podlaski is a middle-sized town located near the Białka River in the Lublin voivodeship. It covers an area of 19 square kilometers. Radzyń Podlaski is located 145 kilometers from Warsaw and 73 kilometers from Lublin; it is the capital of the voivodeship. A few critical communication routes intersect in Radzyń Podlaski: national road 19 constituting the European transport corridor leading from the Baltic countries towards Slovakia and national road 63 crossing Poland from the border with Belarus in the east and with Kaliningrad Oblast' (Russia) in the north.<sup>3</sup>



Figure 3 Radzyń Podlaski in Lublin Voivodeship. Source: <http://bit.do/e3rae>

Radzyń Podlaski has 16,400 residents (2018) and a fairly developed social infrastructure: it has four kindergartens, three primary schools, three junior secondary schools, two high schools, six vocational schools, one high school for adults, and one public music school. Although there are no higher educational institutions, 11 percent of residents hold a higher education diploma (Cwik 2018, 3). In 2018, the town had 16 artistic groups, nine cultural centers and clubs, which altogether organized 190 cultural events (Table 1). There is no museum in the

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<sup>3</sup> Radzyń City Hall sees the possible connection of the revitalization of Potocki Palace with another ambitious infrastructural project, the establishment of "Via Carpathia," a transnational highway network connecting Klaipėda in Lithuania with Thessaloniki in Greece. It is currently planned to open in 2025. Radzyń Podlaski authorities consider the road, which will cross the town, as a significant investment for the local economic advancement.



town, but the municipality plans to build the Museum of Genocide Victims in the former Gestapo prison of Radzyń by the end of 2019 (Burda 2019b).

*Table 1 Cultural and tourist infrastructure of Radzyń Podlaski in 2014–18 (Central Statistical Office 2019)*

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Artistic groups	5	5	8	8	16
Members of these artistic groups	89	89	113	136	208
Cultural centers and clubs	0	5	6	7	9
Members of these centers and clubs	0	110	117	134	204
Cultural events	117	123	104	313	190
Participants in these events	19,849	15,953	16,230	14,960	13,550
Tourist accommodation establishments	2	2	2	2	3
Tourists total	3,939	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Foreign tourists	240	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nights spent by tourists	4,645				
Nights spent by foreign tourists	270				

The infrastructure of the hospitality industry is poorly developed. Radzyń is not a tourist destination yet, hence, investing in this specific type of infrastructure has not been a priority nor a need for the local authorities and entrepreneurs.<sup>4</sup> There are three bed and breakfast facilities in Radzyń Podlaski. The majority of tourists stay for one night. There are a few restaurants. As Katarzyna Krupska-Grudzień, founder of the Local Group of Action “Zapiecek” (and a resident of Radzyń) pointed out, “tourists cannot spend money in Radzyń Podlaski even if they want to” (Krupska-Grudzień 2019a).

Working age population constitutes 66 percent of the town’s population, and post-working age is 16 percent (Central Statistical Office 2019).

The main manufacturing employers in the town are a large dairy factory, a factory which produces mining tools, a factory of medical appliances, a confectionery, and a fruit processing factory. Most of the employable population works in the service sector. Joanna Kowalik-Bylicka noted that “in the past, people used to joke that in Radzyń you can only work in administration or in the hospital.” She thinks that the situation is changing now, and the labor market is getting more diverse. However, in Kowalik-Bylicka’s opinion, a lot still has to be done “to make young people stay [in Radzyń]” (Kowalik-Bylicka 2019).

<sup>4</sup> Radzyń Podlaski county has a great potential to develop tourism, especially heritage tourism and academic tourism. Every year since 2017, a small village Sobole, 16 kilometers from Radzyń, hosts the prestigious international Holis summer school. In 2018 it had 24 participants, in 2019 already 45 participants from all around the world.

## 5 Description of the Complex



Figure 4 The main building of the palace, View from the courtyard. Photo: Dóra Mérai

The Potocki Palace complex is a large (c. 44,000 square meter) Rococo residence, with four water ponds and a courtyard in the front, and an Italian style strolling garden at the back. The complex includes a Rococo orangery, which is probably the best-preserved building of this kind in Poland. By the time of the handover from the district to municipal authorities (2015), the palace was in a dire state. A turbulent history of the building resulted in decaying façades,

a crumbled courtyard, and utterly desecrated interiors.

Radzyń Podlaski began to develop already in the fifteenth century when it was strategically situated on a trail between Kraków and Vilnius. In the late seventeenth century, architect August Locci rebuilt the castle into a *palazzo in Fortezza* type residence. In the period between 1749 and 1759, the building's owner Eustachy Potocki commissioned a royal architect Jakub Fontana to reconstruct the palace into a Rococo mansion. Johann Chrisostomus Redler, perhaps the most prominent Austrian Rococo sculptor, created the sculptural decoration of the palace. This shape of the building has been preserved



Figure 5 Johann Redler's sculpture on the roof of the palace. Photo: Dóra Mérai

until now. The subsequent owners continued to develop the palace. Over the centuries, Radzyń palace was the most noticeable and the largest building in the town, the prestige of which grew thanks to the complex. However, in the nineteenth century, the importance of the palace complex declined (Wrana 2018, 45).

In 1920, Bronisław Korwin Szlubowski, the last private owner of the palace, donated the palace complex to the state treasury (Kowalik-Bylicka 2019). Since then, the palace has been adapted to many purposes, such as a shelter for war veterans or later, state administration offices. In the first half of the 1940s, the building was occupied by Nazi Germans, who put it on fire in June 1944. The entire original Rococo interior furnishing and decoration perished in flames (Wasak 2019c). The first reconstruction of the palace began in 1950 and was finished in 1960 when the town transformed it to serve administrative purposes again. Reconstruction works included only the façade, while the interiors were readjusted according to the contemporary fashion. Since then the palace has accommodated the regional court, a branch of the national archives, a music school, and several state administrative offices.



*Figure 6 The interior of the palace.  
Photo: Dóra Mérai*

The state kept the palace in a good technical condition. However, it was not inclined to develop the palace's potential as public space (Wrana 2018, 45). In July 2015, the state handed the residence over to Radzyń Podlaski City Hall. The mayor of Radzyń Podlaski announced that as the new owner of the palace, the City Hall would ensure that the large historical building is utilized only for the common good of the community (Wasak 2019b).

Now the palace is in a relatively good technical shape. Its foundations were fortified, a new copper roof was laid, the facades are intact, and it is heated in winter (Wasak 2019c). However, there is no interior decoration in the building.

The site does not have regular opening hours. Nevertheless, there is moderate traffic of tourists. The tourist information office, which is located on the premises of the palace, welcomes around ten visitors per day. Most visitors come between April and September. People arrive from the neighboring counties, the more distant regions of Poland, as well as from abroad (Kulpa 2019).



*Figure 7 The Potocki palace and the park on Google Maps*

## 6 Heritage values

The name “Potocki Palace” refers to an entire building complex of a rococo residence and its park. The complex represents the French type *entre cour et jardin*, which means “between the courtyard and the garden,” the most recognized



Figure 8 The northern site of the Palace. Photo: Dóra Mérai

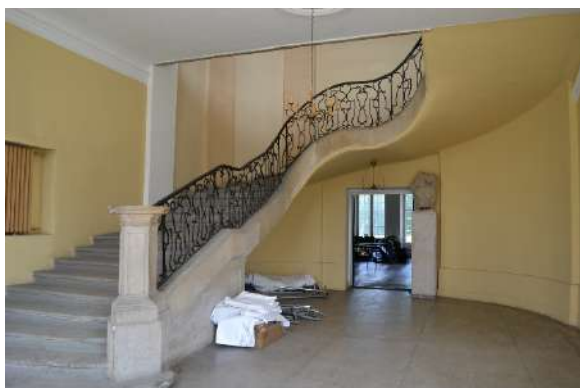


Figure 9 The interior of the palace. Photo: Dóra Mérai

example of which is in Versailles. The Potocki Palace belongs to the short list of only ten building complexes of this kind in Europe. It is one of the most valuable built heritage sites in eastern Poland, which has been compared to such monuments as Versailles, the Zwinger in Dresden, the Sanssouci in Potsdam, and the Branicki Palace in Białystok (Cwik 2018, 28-30).

Due to the rich history of the palace, there are also a few practices which count as intangible cultural heritage connected to the site. The most prominent pre-Chopin era composer – Karol Józef Lipiński – was born in this palace. Today, the palace hosts a state music school named after Lipiński. There is a Karol Lipiński society which every year organizes the Days of Karol Lipiński – an event which attracts many renowned musicians. The accordion orchestra “Arti Sentemo” performs successfully in Poland and abroad (Wasak 2019c).

## 7 Adaptive Reuse

Currently, there are four institutions active in the palace complex: the Cultural Centre of Radzyń Podlaski (in the Orangery building<sup>5</sup>), the music school, Radzyń Music Society, and the Tourist Information Point.

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<sup>5</sup> The construction of the Orangery was finished by 1759. It was still used as an orangery before the nationalization of the palace complex in 1920 (Wasak 2019b).





Figure 10 The entrance to the offices of the Music Society and the Senior club. Photo: Dóra Mérai

The main building of the palace is closed (except for the part which hosts the music school and the Radzyń Music Society). However, occasionally, it is used for exhibitions and other cultural events.<sup>6</sup> There is no full-time personnel to open the palace and guide tourists, hence only appointed visitors can get in. They can find a phone number of the Mayor's spokesperson Anna Wasak on the website of the palace (palac-potockich.pl), and she can let them in (Wasak 2019b). The interior has not been adapted to mass visits yet.

Two professionals can do guided tours by demand; visitors can book them via the Tourist Information Point. The visitors can get some information there or use a mobile application "Spacerem po Radzyniu

Podlaskim" [Walking through Radzyń Podlaski] launched in September 2018. This application offers an audio guided tour (in Polish) around the town, including the Potocki Palace and the park (Niewęglowski 2018).

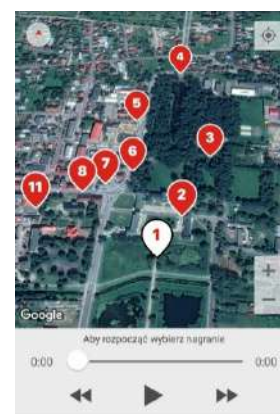


Figure 11 Mobile application (audio guide)



Figure 12 The Orangery (Cultural Center). Photo: Dóra Mérai

Most events and exhibitions take place in the Orangery building, occupied by the Cultural Centre of Radzyń Podlaski. This center organizes most cultural events in the town, such as musical performances and fine arts exhibitions.<sup>7</sup> The Orangery has a cinema hall which can host around 250 people and where medium-size events are organized. Apart from projecting movies, the cinema hall welcomes musical performances, theatre plays, and other public cultural events.

<sup>6</sup> In July 2019 there were three photo exhibitions organized by The Radzyń photography club "Klatka [Frame]". URL: <https://pl-pl.facebook.com/rkfklatka/>

<sup>7</sup> In Katarzyna Krupska-Grudzień's opinion, the Orangery is not attractive for young people. There is a need for a new cultural center which is modern, attractive for the youngsters, and disabled friendly (Krupska-Grudzień 2019a).



Figure 13 The cinema hall in the Orangery can host up to 250 guests. Photo: Dóra Mérai

There is an art gallery in the cellar of the Orangery where the Cultural Center organizes exhibitions. On average, every two weeks a new artist presents in the gallery (Wasak 2019c). The residents are welcome to approach the administration of the Cultural Center with their initiative and organize events in cooperation with the municipality (Wasak 2019b).



Figure 14 The art gallery in the cellar of the Orangery. Photo: Dóra Mérai



Figure 15 Historical picnic at the Palace's garden. Source: <https://tinyurl.com/y24htd22>

The park of the palace complex is permanently open. People use it as recreation space, for walking and cycling. It is also used to organize outdoor cultural activities, mostly by the Cultural Centre of Radzyń Podlaski. On the rear side of the main body, there is a summer stage where local artists present their work every Sunday: they sing, play music, theatre groups perform. Every Thursday, there is a screening of a movie which residents choose before the event via a special Facebook page. During large scale festivals, children can use temporary playgrounds in the site (Wasak 2019c).

During the past few years, the Cultural Center and the



Figure 16 A photo exposition on the Palace. Photo: Dóra Mérai

municipality organized various events such as the *Oranżeria: Polish Encounters with Original Polish Songs*, the *Rockowisko* Guitar Workshops, the *Kolędobranie* Christmas carols festival, or/and an international theatre workshop *Dialogi*. In July 2017 the municipality organized a unique competition called *Palace Game Jam*. Contestants from all over Poland came together to design a computer game within 48 hours on a topic announced right before the timer started. Many events are financed by

external commercial sponsors like big manufacturing companies or banks, or by local authorities like Radzyń City Hall and the head of the county (Wasak 2019b).

On September 1, 2019 the municipality announce new plans for creating the “Museum of Sarmatian Culture” with the support of Ministry of Culture and National Heritage (Wasak 2019d). No details about the project been revealed yet.

The Radzyń Cultural Center organizes around 20 to 30 events per year. Usually, these are concerts or performances, two or three picnics, local crafts fairs, and movie screenings. The fairs usually precede holidays, Christmas and Easter, they are outdoors – even in winter, unless weather conditions are unfavorable and the fair is shifted to the palace (Kulpa 2019). The abovementioned events find it relatively easy to use building complex originally constructed for other purposes, perhaps, because the palace used to be the center of the cultural and social life in Radzyń for a long time.

Jakub Jakubowski, the resident of Radzyń Podlaski and the owner of the art cafe Kofi & Ti:

“The palace is a big building; there is much space for everybody. Moreover, it would be enough space not only for all active people from Radzyń Podlaski but also for people from outside. They should have an opportunity to come here and show their art, open exhibitions, organize public performances. We should think big; we should engage people into working on the [revitalization] project together so that we can use the palace in the future for our common good” (Jakubowski 2019).

## 8 Development plan

The first meeting of the “revitalization team” took place on August 20, 2015. The meeting was inclusive, and fifty people – Radzyń Podlaski residents – came. The Mayor promised to design a revitalization concept within two months from the meeting (Wasak 2015). Later Radzyń City Hall presented the plan for the revitalization of the Potocki Palace in several interrelated documents:

**The 2009-20 Radzyń Podlaski Local Development Strategy** was prepared by the “Local Initiatives Support Agency (*Agencja Wspierania Inicjatyw Lokalnych*)”

and adopted by City Hall in 2009. The document presents the analysis of economic, social and cultural infrastructure of the town as well as the strategy of its development. The document positions the Potocki palace complex as a local resource for cultural development of the town (Cwik 2018, 36).

**The 2016-23 Radzyń Podlaski Urban Revitalization Programme.** The document was prepared by a team of specialists from various disciplines and companies under the leadership of Piotr Janczarek from "Lublin Foundation of Ecological Initiatives (*Lubelska Fundacja Inicjatyw Ekologicznych*). The Orangery, the main market square situated next to the Potocki Palace, the Potocki Palace with its courtyard, and the historical strolling garden at the back of the palace, are among the subjects of the major revitalization plans (Janczarek et al. 2017, 194-206).

Radzyń City Hall engaged different experts to the planning process of the palace's development. In summer 2017, Dr. Michał Kapczyński from the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw prepared "A Sketch of the Concept of the Adaptation of the Potocki Palace in Radzyń Podlaski to Serve Cultural and Social Needs (*Szkic koncepcji adaptacji Pałacu Potocki w Radzyniu na potrzeby kulturalne i społeczne*). Later in the same year, a team from the Lublin University of Technology was engaged in creating a design which would be based on the previously submitted concept (Wrana 2018, 46). Jan Wrana, a head of the team from the Lublin University of Technology, explained the purpose of the project in the following way:

"A modern, multidisciplinary center bringing together several functions: a museum with the preserved historical interior, historical photography and classical films lab, senior people's club, cafe, youth organizations headquarter and the Polish Scouting Association [ZHP]. It is a place for meetings and activity but also a place for cherishing the memory of the multicultural nature of this region of Poland" (Wrana 2018, 46).

The Revitalization Programme (2016-23) set up three strategic goals. The first goal of the town's center revitalization is to foster social engagement of the residents and to integrate the local community. The second goal is to create favorable conditions for the economic development of the town. The third goal is to create a modern public space in the center of the town in order to improve the quality of life of the residents and to enhance livability of the town (Cwik 2018, 34).

According to the development plan (Figure 16), the central part of the palace shall be kept in a style close to the original. The space on the first floor will be dedicated to exhibitions and conferences. A café with a music corner, cloakroom, and toilets will be located on the ground floor in the former concert hall. An entrance to the café will lead through a terrace which will face the rear strolling garden. The western part of the main body will be entirely dedicated to multimedia: photography and film labs, a sound production studio, a photo gallery, and a cinema. All the creative work rooms are envisioned to provide professional facilities for visual and IT education through extracurricular activities for the youth, public workshops, and special events. Both floors of the eastern part of the main body will play important roles. The first floor – with a chess studio, fine arts studio, and a computer lab – will be designed for the youth. The ground floor with a "senior's club" and a "room of the senior's creative work" will attract the elderly members of the community. The national archives will occupy



the west wing of the palace. The eastern wing, which until now has hosted a public elementary music school and a public library, will be entirely dedicated to the music school. The management plan includes all necessary accessibility aids as well as modern maintenance systems. The building will be adjusted to the needs of citizens with physical disabilities (Wasak 2017, 2018, 2019c). It seems like the ideas on how to use space in the revitalized palace were invented by the municipality rather than come from the public discussions.

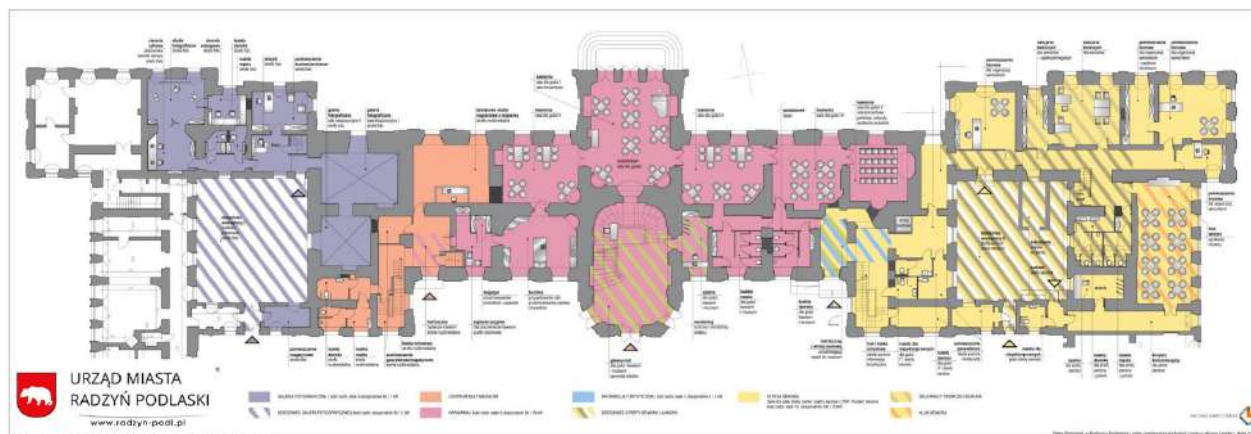


Figure 17 The management plan of the Potocki palace's main wing, ground floor (Wasak 2017).

Anna Wasak explains that the municipality will offer place in the renovated palace to people and organizations “who are already running some activities.” She adds that “the essence of the activities [in the revitalized palace] will not change, it is only the aesthetics and architectural assets of the surroundings that will be transformed. It will be even better, even more beautiful [for the clubs to work in the palace].” (Wasak 2019c).

However, not all residents of the town agree with this plan. Katarzyna Krupska-Grudzień believes that if the town allows only cultural institutions in the renovated palace, it “will not take advantage of the added value of its historical importance.” In her opinion, the archives, the seniors’ club, or the music school “can find their place in any other modern! building”. Krupska-Grudzień thinks that in addition to the cultural institutions, the palace can host a conference center with a high-standard hotel nearby. She explains: “I think it would be more in the direction of using the palace as a beautiful building of a high artistic value” (Krupska-Grudzień 2019b).

Anna Wasak acknowledges that the municipality did not engage experts with economic or business background. The Lublin University of Technology developed the technical part of the project. The concept was developed by the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw. However, there is no business plan for the palace (Wasak 2019c).

**Development plane.** *The municipality sticks to a “path dependence” principle. The Mayor believes that the adaptive reuse of the revitalized palace should be based on the current trend, but in a larger scale. An alternative approach would be to take a riskier role of a leading innovator and to apply some disruptive conceptual and managerial approaches which will bring a “Bilbao effect” (The Economist 2018).*

## 9 Actors

The owner of the palace and the decision-maker is Radzyń City Hall. The current Mayor Jerzy Rębek and his spokesperson Anna Wasak have particularly prominent roles. They make the strategic decisions, communicate them personally to the public, and outsource preparing project proposals. The municipality commissioned some institutions to develop the project, such as The Lublin University of Technology and The Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw.

Radzyń City Hall supervises the Cultural Centre of Radzyń Podlaski (located in the Orangery). The center organizes most of the cultural events in the palace premises and beyond.

All significant reconstructions of the palace should be coordinated with the Lublin Voivodeship Monument Conservation Conservator or Conservation Office. The organization approves the projects of monument reconstruction.

The Lublin Voivodeship Marshal's office distributes resources from the Regional Operational Programme allotted to the Lublin Voivodeship by the European Union through the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund. The relationship with the previous marshal was characterized by conflicts. However, the current marshal (Jarosław Stawiarski) is more cooperative in relation to the current City Hall which represents the same political fraction (Wasak 2019a).

The municipality claims that they engaged the local civic organizations to discuss the project. Anna Wasak says that the town authorities invited local public opinion to express concerns and share suggestions regarding the palace's revitalization project through a specially designated "team." Wasak emphasizes: "Every citizen could submit his or her suggestion. Some were submitted on behalf of certain civic societies and associations <...> Social consultations did take place, and the authors of the project did consider the results." (Wasak 2019c)

However, some socially engaged residents believe that their opinion (especially that from out-groups<sup>8</sup>) was not considered. Some of our interviewees pointed out that the municipality should have had chosen independent experts. Katarzyna Krupska-Grudzień thinks that the consultations with the community were not enough. She thinks that many qualified residents would be happy to be involved in the management, if they had been invited (Krupska-Grudzień 2019a).

Katarzyna Krupska-Grudzień doubts that the town alone has enough capacity to implement the project. Radzyń Podlaski has around 50 registered civic organizations, and about 15 are active (Krupska-Grudzień 2019a). However, none of them is strong enough "to take responsibility to manage the palace by its own." Krupska-Grudzień also thinks that engaging independent experts can broaden the perspective of the decision-making team: "And an outsider can have a fresh look <...> A discussion, a debate would be the best solution. Each of us has different opinions, emotions, views, experience, and that is why we would also need an

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<sup>8</sup> Out-group members refers to those individuals in a group or an organization who do not identify themselves as part of the larger group. They are individuals who are disconnected and not fully engaged in working toward the goals of the group (Northouse 2017, 351).

outsider with a fresh perspective, and together we could come up with innovatory ideas.” (Krupska-Grudzień 2019b).

During the interview, Katarzyna Krupska-Grudzień raised an important question of the heritage ownership. She said that “the region is the real community for the palace, not just the town <...> It is a national asset; there should be national level consultations.” (Krupska-Grudzień 2019a).

**Leadership and inclusion.** *The municipality encouraged the local community to share their vision of the palace’s future. It contacted experts to develop the technical plan. The position of the towns’ leadership is that the best experts are those who know the most about the palace and the society of Radzyń Podlaski. They claim to know “what people want” and act accordingly to their best knowledge. The lack of an outsider’s perspective is the main flaw of this approach. More out-group members among Radzyń residents as well as outsiders could be engaged in the decision-making. The municipality emphasizes that the palace is not only Radzyń Podlaski’s, but a national heritage asset. Therefore, people from outside the town should also be involved in decision-making and creating the future of the palace.*

## 10 Communications

Concerning the revitalization project, the decision-makers communicate with the public via websites, social media, and the local newspaper.

The palace’s website (palac-potockich.pl) offers some general information about the history and historical and artistic value of the palace, as well as shares news about events. There is no special social media page of the palace, but the Radzyń Cultural Center has a website (rokradzyn.pl) and a Facebook page @rokradzyn where materials about the cultural life around the palace are shared. The center also runs a website (kochamradzyn.pl) and a Facebook page @kochamradzynpodlaski “Kocham Radzyń Podlaski” [I love Radzyń Podlaski] with 4,460 followers, which updates its followers about the cultural repertoire in the town. It is via this Facebook page where residents can choose a movie to watch on the following Thursday at the outdoor cinema in the palace’s courtyard.

City Hall is obliged to publish all updates related to development of the revitalization project online via its website (radzyn-podl.pl) as well as in a printed version as “Biuletyn Informacyjny Miasta Radzyń.” The only social media platform run by City Hall is again a Facebook page @UrządMiastaRadzynPodlaski.



Figure 18 Books and souvenirs to buy in the Tourist Information Point. Photo: Dóra Mérai

The Tourist Information Point which belongs to the county administration, runs a website “Radzyńska Kraina Sedeczności” (krainaserdecznosci.pl), which offers some information about the palace in Polish, English, and Russian. The point is located on the palace’s premises and is open for tourists daily. Apart from buying a book about Radzyń

Podlaski, visitors can get some free-of-charge booklets or download an audio guide application.

## 11 Values and identity

The historical narrative of the town is built around the palace and its image represents the town in all mass media (Figure 14). The municipality emphasizes the importance of the palace on a national scale, which legitimizes Radzyń Podlaski's ambition to be the cultural capital of the region. As Anna Wasak underlined, "...the palace used to be important not only for Radzyń county or Lublin voivodeship, or even for Poland... Radzyń was a significant point on the cultural map of Europe." (Wasak 2019c).

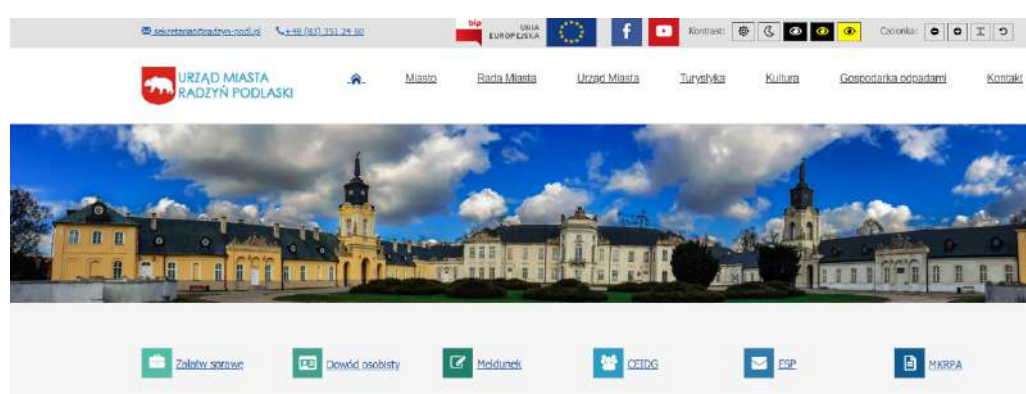


Figure 19 A fragment of the Radzyń municipality homepage (<https://www.radzyn-podl.pl/>)

Katarzyna Krupska-Grudzień also agrees that the palace plays a crucial role in the life and identity of the residents: "...the palace is a part of us, the citizens of Radzyń. It has been here since we were born, so it has always been present in our lives." (Krupska-Grudzień 2019b). Another interviewee, Jakub Jakubowski agrees in principle about the importance of the palace; however, he pointed out that some residents still struggle with accepting the idea of the palace as their own asset:

"Over decades, people treated this place as something they do not possess. It was the palace of aristocrats and the state representatives. The poor people who lived around looked at that important person and thought that they could only serve by his table. And some people still think this way, so we need to change this. In order to change this attitude, people should be more engaged in the process of the palace revitalization." (Jakubowski 2019).

## 12 Protection of Heritage

The Potocki palace has a status of the national monument. In 2016 Radzyń City Hall applied to the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage to recognize the palace as a Monument of History, the highest status of a heritage object in



Poland.<sup>9</sup> The application was accepted, but no decisions have been announced by July 2019.

Current owners have taken steps which would grant the status of the highest national monument protection, known as the Monument of History status, to the palace. The idea, however, may lead to controversies. On one hand, it can provide a new opportunity of public resources for the restoration of the palace complex. On the other hand, the status implies more restraints on spatial and compositional changes of the palace complex. Therefore, it can be more difficult to introduce innovative ideas for the utilization of the palace's rooms (Cwik 2018, 46).

## 13 Financial plan

The estimated costs for the revitalization of the palace is c. 25 million PLN, that is 5.7 million € (Burda 2019a). This includes renovation costs of the palace's interiors and of the park complex. Since the beginning of the project, Radzyń City Hall has been struggling to obtain financial resources for the revitalization of the palace. It aimed at obtaining funds from the state budget. In April 2018, Radzyń City Hall received 1.6 million PLN, that is c. 375,000 €, for the renovation works of the building's western façade and 25,400 PLN, that is c. 6,000 €, to renovate one of the Redler's statues (Cwik 2018, 51). Later, the same year, City Hall applied for another 10 million PLN (c. 4.6 million euros), which was supposed to cover the rest of the revitalization. The application was rejected with an option to resubmit. However, the Mayor withdrew the application. In 2019, Radzyń City Hall applied for 20 million PLN (4.6 million euros) and in September 2019 received confirmation about 22 million PLN grant for developing revitalizing the palace and establishing "Museum of Sarmatian Culture" (Wasak 2019d). The rest of the will be covered from the town's budget (Wasak 2019b).

Applying for state funding seems reasonable, as the primary source of the monument protection funding in Poland is the state budget which distributes allocated resources directly from the national treasury or through local governments (Cwik 2018, 47). However, the municipality could have considered seeking funds from other sources as well, like crowdfunding.

Radzyń City Hall has no intention to turn the revitalized palace into a self-financing institution. There is no plan to have any for-profit entities in the palace complex. The café on the ground floor is supposed to generate revenue (even though there is no clear business plan for this enterprise either). The municipality's position is that the Potocki Palace should "serve the public good", which in their understanding is equivalent to "provide services for free". It should provide space to the archives, music school, host cultural events and educational activities. The town's budget should cover the operational and maintenance costs. Therefore, Radzyń City Hall does not consider activities for-profit (Wasak 2019b). The principle of the town's authorities is that the palace "cannot be used for commercial purposes; it cannot be for-profit" (Wasak 2019c). Anna Wasak explains that the

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<sup>9</sup> This status refers only to non-movable monuments and is granted by the President of the Republic of Poland after a motion of the Minister of Culture and National Heritage.

municipality expects that the palace will be economically benefiting in an indirect way:

"I think that the palace by itself will not bring big profits <...> It is not about earning money by us as City Hall, but maybe it will foster the promotion and development of the town. [Radzyń] is a small town with small industry, so we are looking for sources of revenue for the residents to keep people in the town or maybe encourage someone to come back. But [the revitalization of the Palace] will serve for the general development of the town, not only for City Hall, not only for the town's budget but for all citizens." (Wasak 2019c).

The municipality expects that the state will indirectly cover most of the operational costs of the palace. The Ministry of Culture and National Heritage is in charge of the music school and the National Archives; hence, the rent they pay means a permanent and stable income in the future (Wasak 2019b). Currently, local businesses, such as the dairy factory "SM Spomlek" or banks (so mostly large enterprises), financially support many cultural events in the palace complex. The municipality counts on their contribution in the future as well (Wasak 2019b) but it seems they do not try to reach out to smaller-scale enterprises.

Some interviewees think that there are better management models, alternative to the Mayor's project. Katarzyna Krupska-Grudzień believes that the current management concept is not economically sustainable. She thinks that the palace "is too big; the town cannot afford it." Moreover, the current municipal leadership is not competent enough to design and execute an economically sustainable model (Krupska-Grudzień 2019a). She believes that experts in social entrepreneurship should manage the palace:

"My vision is that an object like this palace is economically balanced and that the town does not have to contribute to its maintenance with money, because this is the money of all of the citizens. I believe the palace should be handed over to people from the world of business or people from NGOs, or big European institutions, who are able to come up with a financially sustainable idea and can obtain finances to pursue their activities, which will bring revenue." (Krupska-Grudzień 2019b).

Jakub Jakubowski, who owns art cafe *Kofi & Ti* and has a vast experience in organizing cultural events in the town, agrees that at least a part of the palace could be managed by a private business. In Jakubowski's opinion, half of the palace could be turned into a conference hall and a hotel, which could generate revenue to secure funds for the cultural initiatives hosted by the other (publicly-managed) half of the palace (Jakubowski 2019).

**Business model.** *The municipality chose the model which prioritizes public goods versus economic sustainability and does not consider economic and ownership diversification. The principal position of the owner and the decision-maker is that the site should be a public good, it should not generate profit, but instead, the town should cover all expenses from its budget. An alternative solution might be pursuing an economically sustainable model. "Non-profit" status does not mean that the organization should not generate any profit which otherwise can be used to cover the operational costs. Moreover, creating a long-term cash flow can enable developing new projects for the public good. Revenues can be tied to socially-oriented goals.*

## 14 General recommendations and conclusions

Based on the analysis of the case, we suggest two steps:

1. Inviting independent experts in social entrepreneurship to develop a business plan of economically sustainable development of the palace's revitalization project.
2. Applying an inclusive approach towards the out-group members. The municipal leaders should listen to out-group members, recognize their unique contributions, help them become included, give them a voice, and empower them to act. True empowerment requires that the leaders relinquish some control, giving more control to out-group members.

The town of Radzyń Podlaski boasts a rich history and unique cultural heritage. The revitalization process of its preeminent monument, the Potocki Palace, is an excellent opportunity to create platforms to promote the local heritage and build a long-term strategy with a clear vision of the effects of the town's transformations.

## 15 Interviews

Jakubowski, Jakub – owner of the art cafe "Kofi & Ti" @kawiarnia.kofiti, a local cultural activist, deputy in the council of the county.

Kowalik-Bylicka, Joanna – director of Lublin National Archives branch Radzyń Podlaski.

Krupska-Grudzień, Katarzyna – founder of the Local Group of Action "Zapiecek" <http://lgdzapiecek.pl/>.

Kulpa, Arkadiusz – manager at an art gallery "Oranzeria [Orangery]," Radzyński Ośrodek Kultury [Cultural Center of Radzyń].

Rygalik, Gosia – designer, the (co)founder of Sobole Foundation <http://sobole.info>

Wasak, Anna the Radzyń Mayor's spokesperson. She runs the town's website and is the chief editor of the local newspaper "Biuletyn Informacyjny Miasta Radzyń."

Short conversations with the locals: owners and employees at the hotels "Niedźwiadek," "Gościnny," visitors of "Kofi & Ti" café and other residents.

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# 11. ExRotaprint (Berlin, Germany)



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## Executive summary

[ExRotaprint](#) was founded in 2007 by tenants of the former Rotaprint industrial complex located in Wedding, a traditional working-class district in central Berlin. ExRotaprint set up a legal configuration comprising a heritable building right and non-profit status in order to buy the complex put up for sale by the Berlin Municipality's Real Estate Fund. Established by the tenants ExRotaprint became owner of the 10,000 m<sup>2</sup> complex and started a non-profit real estate development project setting a precedent in Berlin that inspired many experiments in cooperative ownership and a campaign to change the city's privatisation policy. ExRotaprint offers affordable rents to small businesses, artists and social projects.



Picture 1. There is no profit to be make here. Photo © ExRotaprint



# 1 Timeline

- 1904 – the Deutsche Maschinenbau- und Vertriebsgesellschaft (German Machinery Manufacturing and Distribution Company) is founded
- 1916 – the company moves its production to Wedding, at Reinickendorfer Straße 46
- 1925 – the company is renamed into Rotaprint
- 1945 – 80% of the production sites are destroyed by air raids
- 1951 – low-rise buildings are constructed on Gottschedstraße
- 1953 – additional parcels inside the block are bought to build new production halls
- 1958 – a modern identity was given to the compound by new, architecturally ambitious structures (by architect Klaus Kirsten)
- 1968 – the company receives an award for its international achievements
- 1980s – the company is in debt
- 1988 – an American investor purchases the Rotaprint AG
- 1989 – Rotaprint goes bankrupt and the complex is transferred over to state ownership
- 1991 – the main parts of the compound are placed under strict historical monument protection
- 1992 – production halls exempted from monument status in the interior of the site are demolished
- 2002 – the property is transferred from the district of Wedding over to Liegenschaftsfonds Berlin (LiFo)
- 2005 August – ExRotaprint Association is founded by tenants
- 2005 October – ExRotaprint makes an unsuccessful bid of 1 euro for the Rotaprint site
- 2006 – a Lidl supermarket is built adjacent to the Rotaprint site
- 2007 July – the non-profit company ExRotaprint gGmbH is founded by tenants
- 2007 September – after successful negotiations by ExRotaprint the site is sold to Stiftung trias and Stiftung Edith Maryon in order to sign a 99-years heritable building right with ExRotaprint

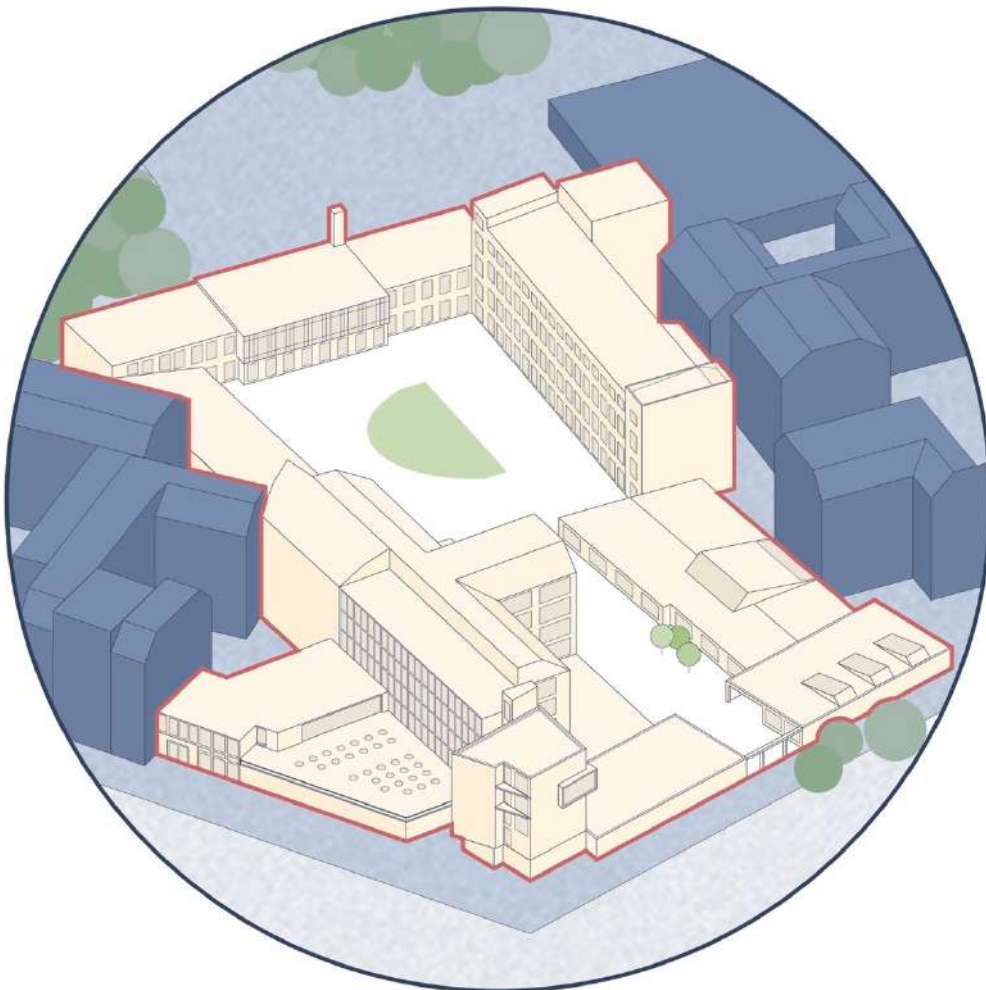
# 2 The story of the building complex

ExRotaprint is located on the former site of the Rotaprint printing machine manufacturer, a German company that operated in Berlin-Wedding for 80 years

and gave employment to many families in the area. Rotaprint significantly shaped the area and its society: it hired the compound's architect to build its production facilities, later expanded the complex, had some guest apartments in the vicinity, and a workers' holiday home in Berlin-Wannsee. The complex was largely destroyed during the Second World War but it was reconstructed in the post-war years following the design of the architect Klaus Kirsten. The factory produced small printing machines and was very successful until electronic technology began to threaten the small-format offset printer. In 1989 the Rotaprint company went bankrupt. Because of outstanding debts, ownership of the complex was transferred over to the City of Berlin.

Since the 1990s, the Wedding district administration rented the empty spaces of the Rotaprint compound to temporary occupants: small businesses and artists moved in the complex, occupying half of the site. In 2002, the property was transferred to the assets of the Liegenschaftsfonds GmbH (Real Estate Fund), a trustee of the State of Berlin to sell it at the biggest possible price. At the time, the City of Berlin was trying to recover from debt by selling packages of its buildings.

**"We felt that the spirit of Rotaprint was still here, this is why we named the compound ExRotaprint. It is also to honour the achievement because we think they left fantastic buildings." Daniela Brahm**



**Picture 2. The ExRotaprint compound. Image by Jorge Mosquera**

### 3 The policy context

The Rotaprint complex was public property: it belonged to the Berlin state that rented it out for short term uses for artists, manufacturers and other activities, mostly from the neighbourhood. In 2001, the city's real estate policy changed: selling off properties in order to balance the municipal budget became the priority, and the city created a new in-house company, the Liegenschaftsfonds (German for Property Funds), to orchestrate the privatisation process. The activities of the Liegenschaftsfonds, selling out public properties, was seen with an increasing criticism that saw an irreversible damage happening to the city.

The city's policy of prioritising privatisation was rooted in Berlin's banking scandal where Berlin accumulated a large amount of debt: the bailout of the Bankgesellschaft costed the city over 30 billion euros. Therefore, Berlin's policy priority from the mid-1990s on was to keep a balanced budget. On one hand, this fiscal policy had a heavy impact on the city's welfare services: the public budget cuts made a significant pressure on wages in the public sector and reduced the resources of many public facilities like schools, hospitals and kindergartens. This also meant that Berlin was facing a situation that many cities only encountered years later: "The transition to 'austerity urbanism' in Berlin did not have to wait for a global financial crisis." (Bernt et al 2013:17) On the other hand, fiscal austerity also implied a major privatisation campaign: under pressure for balancing its budgets, the public administration had begun to look into ways to discharge the disaffected real estate stock, including housing and facilities, industrial areas and unbuilt land in various parts of the city, through large scale sales, "as a conveniently quick means of reducing deficits and downsizing government within an urban politics framed by crisis." (Beveridge and Naumann 2013:190).

In 2001, the Berlin Senate established the city's Liegenschaftsfonds (German for Real estate Fund), a private company owned by the Land of Berlin, dedicated to sell publicly owned sites and properties that have lost their functions. Like in many cities during times of financial crisis, the privatisation of public assets proved to be an uneven and opaque process, where the "new forms of cooperation occur in an 'institutional void' where rules are mostly hidden from the public" and where "bypassing building and planning laws, these [so-called urban development] contracts allowed for investor-friendly agreements, including the allocation of public subsidies" and have "largely remained unknown to the public." (Dohnke 2013: 262) The government's strategy to sell properties for the highest bid and en bloc gave significant advantages to institutional investors over tenants and cooperatives: large investors could both provide the necessary equity for en bloc purchases and negotiate discount prices for individual units, bought in "packages" (Uffer 2013:157). These advantages also meant that "urban politics and policy-making centred on social equity has increasingly retreated to the background." (Dohnke 2013: 262)

The privatisation process was facilitated by the global financial markets. The stock market crash of 2000 and the growing distrust in the previously favoured IT stocks pushed investors towards the supposedly safe real estate market. In the same time, interest rates were substantially reduced by the central banks who wanted to prevent a recession (Uffer 2013:157). The cheap capital that flooded international markets found an easy way into real estate, and in

particular, into Berlin real estate. This created a new situation in the city: while in the 1990s, investment in Berlin properties was mainly coming from German investment firms, they were joined in the early 2000s by large international firms (Uffer 2013:159). The presence of cheap money prompted investors into real estate development projects that corresponded to no real demand. This speculative real estate boom had a strong impact on the city and its spaces.

## 4 The initiative

The Rotaprint complex was no exception from the privatisation plan: the buildings were separated from the adjacent wastelands and these latter were put up for sale. The neighbouring parcels were sold to Lidl to open a supermarket. ExRotaprint founders Daniela Brahm and Les Schliesser were alarmed by the neighbourhood's transformation.

**"We were up here, and saw this development, which was kind of a warning shot for us. We thought, 'we have better ideas.'" Les Schliesser**

The fact that investors at the time were not interested in the Wedding district, a then working-class area, helped the tenants to gain some time. Artists Daniela Brahm and Les Schliesser developed a concept for the complex and approached other tenants with the idea of making the ExRotaprint project together. In 2005 they founded the tenants' association called ExRotaprint e.V. The association allowed the tenants to pursue a concept for the area from the perspective of the tenants, and to begin negotiations with the Liegenschaftsfonds about buying the property. The key challenge for the tenants was to make themselves seen as legitimate partners by the Liegenschaftsfonds.

After the association's first meeting with the Liegenschaftsfonds, the tenants decided to make a symbolic bid of one euro, to be part of the game. ExRotaprint was the only bidder, but the Liegenschaftsfonds did not sell the compound for one euro. The Liegenschaftsfonds calculated a price of 2.4 million euros for the compound, which the association found too high, considering the bad shape of the building. In the following discussions, the Liegenschaftsfonds offered a heritable building right (Erbbaurecht) contract that gave a new direction to the negotiations. In the meanwhile, however, the Liegenschaftsfonds began to arrange a deal with an Icelandic investor who was preparing to buy many public properties in Berlin at once - the Rotaprint compound was part of the package.

After the package sale failed in February 2007 and due to political pressure mounted by ExRotaprint with the help of the press, the Liegenschaftsfonds restarted negotiations with the board of ExRotaprint. Knowing that the price of the compound in the package for the islandic investor was – the very low – 600.000 euros, ExRotaprint was able to buy the premises. 600.000 euros for the 10.000 m2 compound was way cheaper than ExRotaprint expected, the spectre of individual profit began to haunt the group again. In order to safeguard the purchase price against speculative gains and to ensure their work on the ExRotaprint project, the group decided to split the ownership of the land and the buildings and negotiated a heritable building right with the trias and Edith Maryon foundations.

ExRotaprint was born from a variety of motivations. First, ExRotaprint members wanted to create **a different idea of ownership** and find a solution for **affordable rent**. Second, they wanted to keep the space open for the people in



Wedding and to contribute to the area by **generating social, economic and cultural capital**. Third, they wanted to **preserve the heritage buildings** of the Rotaprint compound and prevent their sale and future speculation in the area.



**Picture 3. ExRotaprint in Berlin. Image by Jorge Mosquera**

## 5 The area

ExRotaprint is located in the former workers' district Wedding. Historically, the river close-by was used to supply water for the area's production facilities and the factories created a polluted environment. With West-Berlin's isolation and city planners' desire to eliminate the industrial past and create a modern city, many of these factories had vanished and with them, many jobs disappeared leaving behind high levels of unemployment.

When two artists, Daniela Brahm and Les Schliesser began to rent a studio space in the Rotaprint complex in 2000, the compound was in the middle of a wasteland, following the demolition of all the adjacent production halls. With little interest from investors, Wedding kept its traditional working-class character longer than many other Berlin districts.

In the following decade, however, with rising prices in Berlin's more central neighbourhoods and the construction of the city's new Hauptbahnhof, Wedding has gradually "moved closer to the centre." The arrival of new, younger populations priced out of former "creative" neighbourhoods brought a process of gentrification to Wedding, with potential conflicts between newcomers and earlier residents, and with rising pressure on housing prices. In order to limit its contribution to gentrification and to resist homogenisation, ExRotaprint's rental policy assures a mix of functions, providing opportunities to a great variety of users.

## 6 The buildings and their adaptive reuse

**"The architecture was the motor driving us here and giving us energy."  
Daniela Brahm**

ExRotaprint is a 10000 m<sup>2</sup> complex, an ensemble of 11 buildings located in Wedding. Following the destructions of the war, it was partially renovated in the early 1950s: at first Hans Heinze redesigned the existing buildings to appear more modern.

**"The architects added larger windows, put white plaster on the façade and elevated the outer wall to make it look like it had a flat roof and not a steep one. These were very small interventions but showed the intentions of the architects." Oliver Clemens**

In the second half of the 1950s, the renovated buildings were complemented with new buildings designed in a post-war modernist architecture style by Klaus Kirsten. In 1955-56, Rotaprint's elegant Technical Office is built, with a 185 m<sup>2</sup> main room surrounded by characteristic glass windows that today serves as an event venue. In 1957-58, another office building was built at the Gottschedstraße and Bornemannstraße corner. The bare concrete "brutalist by accident" Corner Tower is unique in Berlin with its rough concrete surface. The tower remained unfinished: the architect wanted to have two more stories and then a final façade, but it was never completed. In 1957-59, the Carpentry and Training Workshop Building was added to the complex.

**"Many people think of heritage buildings being more expensive and holding you back from new ideas, but we never felt it as a restriction, it was an interesting and encouraging aspect for us." Daniela Brahm**

With the last act of a retiring heritage protection officer, the ensemble of buildings at Gottschedstraße 4, Bornemannstraße 9-10, and Wiesenstraße 29 became **listed monument in 1991**; the decision infuriated the city administration owning the compound as it prevented it from demolishing the building. The protected buildings became the centre of identity for the area: an important part of the ExRotaprint compound's attractiveness is its unique architectural appearance. The concrete towers had an important role in the artists' choice to start renting a space in the complex first, and to protect the buildings from speculation later. Years later, the tower remains an icon for the ExRotaprint project.



**Picture 4. ExRotaprint's concrete tower. Photo (cc) Eutropian**

Driven by their curiosity of the ExRotaprint's peculiar architecture, its founders started to research for more information about the buildings. Realising that their architect, Klaus Kirsten is virtually unknown, Daniela Brahm and Les Schliesser began an inquiry into his work and have published a [book](#) on the architect.

When ExRotaprint took over the buildings, they had been neglected for almost 20 years. The former production company, struggling to keep its production running and to avoid bankruptcy, did not invest in its maintenance. The municipality, taking over the building's ownership and ignoring its heritage value, only did rough interventions in the buildings. The buildings did no longer respect current building codes. Some rooftops and the floors were partly covered with vinyl and tiles containing asbestos, the buildings did not match fire protection standards; moreover, they required insulation that would allow preventing energy lost and environmental sustainability. Two types of intervention were immediately required. Firstly, it was important to secure the buildings so they do not deteriorate any longer. Secondly, it was important to clean it from toxic materials and try to adjust the buildings to the current building code and safety regulations.

**"The renovation will never stop, there is no point where it's finished. Something a developer wouldn't do. They would put in money, work for a few years and then they would say 'now it's finished for the next 30 years.' But it's different here, it allows you to make more experiments." Oliver Clemens**

Most of the renovation work focused on **adapting the building to the needs of the renters**. From the tenants' perspective, the most important thing is to keep



the rents low, so following a strict budget plan was fundamental. Instead of moving out all tenants and have a complete renovation, the idea was to **renovate the building step-by-step**, in a process, keeping 85-90% of the building rented and around 10% under renovation. This process, defined by the limited budget available for the renovation, allowed the organisation to continue generating revenue from the rents to finance a mortgage and to adjust the renovation plans when needed. The renovation has taken over ten years up to now, tenants had to adapt and accept the noise and dirt of a construction site and to accept relocating from room to room when necessary.

**“For us it is important to follow the viewpoint of the renters in all development aspects: financially, the weight of the construction work, and the depth of the renovation.” Les Schliesser**

The ExRotaprint planning team consisting of Daniela Brahm, Les Schliesser and architects Oliver Clemens and Bernhard Hummel, try to preserve the original architectural features of the complex as much as possible and to avoid to simply replace old elements with new ones. The hardest part of the renovation was finding original materials for the interiors, like ceramic tiles, as well as craftsmen capable of dealing with particular architectural elements, like the concrete façade. For instance, steel frame windows usually are not suitable any longer, and larger companies would have preferred to build them anew; but a small local steel company accepted to install steel windows by hand, fixing the existing frames room by room.

**“The design process depends very much on the people who do the work here. You can’t describe the job and then make a tender with 50 bidders and take the cheapest. These are very specific tasks.” Oliver Clemens**

The windows have been renovated and walls have been insulated to reduce the heat loss: this change reduced heating costs from 1,80 euros per square metre per month for heating to 1,20 that corresponds to an important saving in ExRotaprint’s budget. Moreover, work has been done to open roof lights, to enlarge some spaces by tearing down the walls of smaller rooms and office spaces were created on the rooftop. Further improvements inside the units were organised mostly by the tenants according to their needs.

**“We are aware of the special details, materials, and how valuable they are. We were always looking for a solution for the renovation with much higher protection that is usually done. The municipality is pretty happy with the result because it's more than what they usually get.” Oliver Clemens**

## 7 Activities

As established in its founding documents, ExRotaprint rents spaces for various uses and to a **heterogeneous group of tenants**. One third of the compound’s square meters is dedicated to social projects. For instance, ExRotaprint hosts a variety of language classes, a social outreach organisation which works with unemployed, and a school that works with local teenagers who left school. Another third of the area is dedicated to productive activities, workshops, production companies that create regular jobs. The last third of the compound is used by artists, designers, musicians and other creatives. ExRotaprint did define



this proportion in the heritable building right contract with the foundations trias and Maryon in order to make it obligatory in perpetuity.

**“We have this fantastic architecture, a very inspiring place, but we think it should not be for artists and creatives alone. There are designers and unemployed, and there are migrants and craftsmen and small factories; and this comes together in a really heterogeneous picture.” Les Schliesser**

Besides accommodating its tenants, ExRotaprint **opens to the neighbourhood and the city** in a variety of ways. Its [canteen](#), situated at the entrance of the compound, offers affordable breakfast, lunch, coffee and cakes, and is frequented by not only tenants of ExRotaprint but also residents from the neighbourhood. The [Glass Box](#), ExRotaprint’s 185 m2 Project Room situated at the centre of the compound, welcomes events of various types, with a rental fee dependent on the type and scope of the project.

**“We don’t want to be a happy island of the creative class, we want to make something that makes sense here. If you have space you should do something for the people that directly shape the area. We want people to work here, we don’t want representation, we want production here.” Daniela Brahm**



**Picture 5. A diversity of users in ExRotaprint. Photo (cc) Eutropian**

## 8 Governance

ExRotaprint was initiated by two artists, Les Schliesser and Daniela Brahm, who had been renting space at the former Rotaprint premises since 2000. They were joined by other tenants and created the ExRotaprint e.V. Association in August 2005. The association served as a platform to discuss the long-term perspective and legal structure of the tenants' organisation. Following the decision of the association to establish a non-profit company to take over the site, the ExRotaprint gGmbH was created in July 2017 by seven tenants, two other associates and the association itself: each tenant could decide if they wanted to join the gGmbH as well.

**“We accepted that not so many people wanted to participate in the non-profit company. Making participation a duty would have been exclusive: a lot of people that are working here are not interested in being involved in community matters.” Daniela Brahm**

A **gemeinnützige GmbH (gGmbH)** is a charitable company with limited liability under German law. The purpose of charitable companies is to benefit the common good: in Germany, many hospitals, kindergartens and museums are managed as charitable companies. gGmbHs combine the benefits of non-profit organisations and for-profit companies and enable organisations to conduct economic activities while pursuing charitable goals. In gGmbHs, profits cannot be distributed among shareholders, but must be redirected towards the company objective. Salaries are connected to work performance. gGmbHs are exempted from certain taxes as long as they comply with charitable law. ExRotaprint's founders chose the gGmbH format to allow economic activities but exclude profit extraction from the organisation.

**“We choose a non-profit limited company to exclude the possibility of individual profit and speculation, and to ensure that we will never have the same problem again with the compound being sold.” Les Schliesser**

The structure of both the association and the non-profit company imply an **inclusive, participatory decision-making structure**. Even tenants who chose not to be involved in the gGmbH, can be represented through the association's membership in the company. The company partners, including the board of the association, meet once a month. Tenants who are affected by renovation are continuously consulted. The planning team, consisting of founders Daniela Brahm and Les Schliesser as well as the two architects Oliver Clemens and Bernhard Hummel, meets once a week to manage the renovation progress. Decisions on major interventions and the general direction of the company are taken within the gGmbH.

## 9 Legal instruments

**“We realised that in the future when the compound is renovated, its value would increase immensely and we feared the group would fall apart because of individual interests.” Daniela Brahm**

From the beginning, the perspective of personal profit or an individual investment return was conceived as a significant threat for the project, potentially damaging for the community and the future use of the compound. In order to avoid the possibility of speculation, ExRotaprint brought in two foundations whose core mission is to prevent speculation with land. According to the arrangement with the anti-speculation foundations, the ground on which the complex is located is owned by Stiftung trias and Stiftung Edith Maryon and the buildings are owned by the ExRotaprint gGmbH. As a result of this split ownership, none of the owners can sell the buildings and make a profit out of the changing value of the complex; therefore, speculation with the buildings is legally excluded from the owners' choices.

**“It was important for us to show that a new and different way to deal with property is possible and to make sure that the people who make up the district can continue to use the space.” Les Schliesser**

**Heritable building right (Erbbaurecht)** is a form of long-term lease established in Germany more than 100 years ago to lease land to cooperatives building affordable housing or to enable poor families to build a house. This instrument allows tenants to pay an annual interest or lease fee instead of buying the land with an initial capital. In the case of ExRotaprint, the gGmbH pays the land lease fee to the foundations trias and Maryon. The long-term lease enables tenants to invest significantly in the site, building new structures or renovating old ones, therefore in practice it equals to ownership rights, except for the right of selling the properties. In fact, heritable building right is frequently used today to keep land in public ownership but encourage tenants to invest in the properties, or to keep land out of the speculation market. The heritable building right contract also includes restrictions for the use of the properties, thus creating a mandatory framework for the future.

**“We wrote down in our preamble that we rent out to work, art and community in equal parts, it's in our heritable building right, so also future generations also have to fulfil it. The contracts build the framework for the future. We can do anything within this framework, and there are so many possibilities, but we are non-profit.” Daniela Brahm**

Both the German Stiftung trias and the Swiss Stiftung Edith Maryon are engaged in taking land off the market in a way that it cannot be sold again. It also includes “liberating” the land by gradually freeing it from debt. The foundations usually work with heritable building right (Erbbaurecht) contracts of 99 years, allowing them to prevent the sale of the land or radical changes in the land use, but enabling their partners to develop long-term projects on the land, corresponding to the initially agreed, socially and environmentally responsible goals. The barrier these foundations represented to selling the compound and making profit from it was exactly the kind of limitation the ExRotaprint members

were looking for. Establishing a heritable building right contract with the foundations was considered as a good tool to avoid future speculation and the possibility of individual profit.

**“With this construction the ground is separated from the buildings. The ground is now owned by the foundations and we own the buildings. So we can decide everything, what ExRotaprint should be, how we finance the renovation of the buildings, and we decide who should rent there and we put up the whole thing. We are in an ownership-similar situation. But the only thing we can never do, we can never sell ExRotaprint to anybody.” Les Schliesser**

**Stiftung trias** is a foundation that helps community groups and co-housing projects access financing and move properties out of the speculation market. Engaged in disseminating knowledge about non-profit real estate development, trias collects and shares knowledge about co-housing projects and supports initiatives with relevant literature, network and financial resources. To receive financing from trias, initiatives undergo a 6-months-to-2-years process through which trias examines the liability of the initiatives. A non-profit-orientated profile is key to work with trias, moreover, the foundation evaluates the proposed initiatives, their goals, their members and organisational structure, and it checks their economic sustainability. Trias invests personnel capacity in the initiatives they collaborate with: they can join them in crucial situations, like meetings with the municipality or the mayor, with banks, help them with their financing sheet, help to find their legal form and to define their financial instruments. Moreover, trias looks at the evolution of their finances and if possible, it can adjust its land lease fee to make their first years easier for the initiatives. They also expect support from the initiatives once they have stabilized their projects. Trias ensures that over the years, the initiatives preserve their core goals and it that they keep functions agreed on in the contract, yet trias does not give directives to the management of single initiatives nor it influences its renovation, rental charges, and activities.

**“When we buy properties, our goal is to secure spaces of freedom. Prices are getting higher, international capital looks for good investments and finds it in real estate.” Rolf Novy-Huy**

## 10 Financial resources

When ExRotaprint began to negotiate with Stiftung trias, the foundation was still very small: it could not afford the 600.000 euros purchase price. They brought in the Maryon Foundation, disposing of a larger capital, and together they bought the compound for 600.000 euros which was even back in 2007 less than the standard land price. According to the agreement, ExRotaprint pays a yearly 5.5% interest rate of the purchase price, a sum that does not threaten the existence of the project but which creates a revenue for the foundations that they can later reinvest in other initiatives that are preparing to purchase their land. In the final setup, secured for decades, the foundations own the land and ExRotaprint owns the buildings.



**“For us it was interesting because it’s a kind of circulating money. We pay money back to foundations that have no other goal than to prevent real estate speculation at other places again, so they make money with the existing heritable building right contracts to work further.” Daniela Brahm**

**Solidarity fund:** The organisations that work with Stiftung trias agree on paying a land lease fee of 4%, which often appears less preferable than a bank mortgage, as it is a lifelong security-contract with the foundation. In reality, these fees constitute a solidarity fund. Trias invests the revenues and the donations received by private donors in other similar initiatives and the purchase of land, and it works as a watchdog over the initiatives, regularly controlling that they remain faithful to their original ideal. The organisations who decided to collaborate with trias do so because of their interest in supporting a fund which advocates for non-profit land use.

**“To work with us is an act of solidarity: after 30 years when they repaid all their bank loans and don’t have any debts anymore, they continue paying the land lease fee into a solidarity fund.” Rolf Novy-Huy**

Besides paying the yearly rate to the foundations, ExRotaprint is also responsible for the gradual **renovation** of the buildings, a much more significant cost. In order to manage this, ExRotaprint took a mortgage of 2.3 million euros (with 4% interest) in 2009, to cover the total renovation costs estimated to reach 3.2-3.3 million euros, the rest of which is to be paid from the compound’s revenues. The mortgage was also taken from a very specific financial actor, a Swiss pension trust called [CoOpera Sammelstiftung PUK](#), specialised on sustainable real estate projects with a strong local social or cultural dimension. With rules prohibiting it from putting their money on the stock market, CoOpera has to work with existing projects.

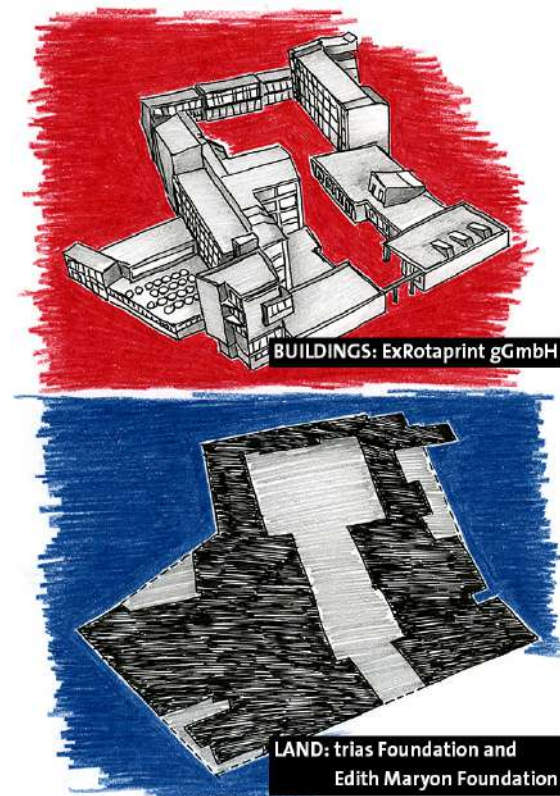
**“For a normal bank we would have been a high-risk project. CoOpera met us and said ‘For us meeting you and seeing your will to get this project through is the greatest guarantee.’ Besides this, we had a reliable economic calculation, with a different approach than other banks.” Les Schliesser**

In 2017, ExRotaprint received 500,000 euros grant from the [Berlin LOTTO Foundation](#) for the renovation. To cover the renovation costs beyond the loan and the grant, the surplus from the rental income is always reinvested into the renovations. As of 2019, ExRotaprint has spent around 4.2 million euros for the restoration and maintenance of the compound.

**Our role as an architect is much wider than usually. It’s all about money and we have a very tight corridor, we have very little money and we can’t just start something and say ‘well, let’s look how much it costs’; we have to be sure we can solve it with the money we have.” Oliver Clemens**

ExRotaprint’s revenue relies completely on the income from rents. In the past years, its annual rental income totals 370,000 euros per year. According to the heritable building right contract ExRotaprint pays an annual ground rent equal to 10% of net rental income or a minimum of at least 5.5% of the initial land value. ExRotaprint’s unique organisational structure and financial model allows it to operate almost completely independently from the real estate market, but not without significant pressure from the mortgage payments: all rates and conditions

have to be fulfilled. On the other hand, nobody in the organisation receives a personal investment return but everyone shares the benefit of an affordable rent and autonomy in the decision making. Without pressing financial burdens, ExRotaprint can accommodate a real diversity of tenants, faithful to its original mission.



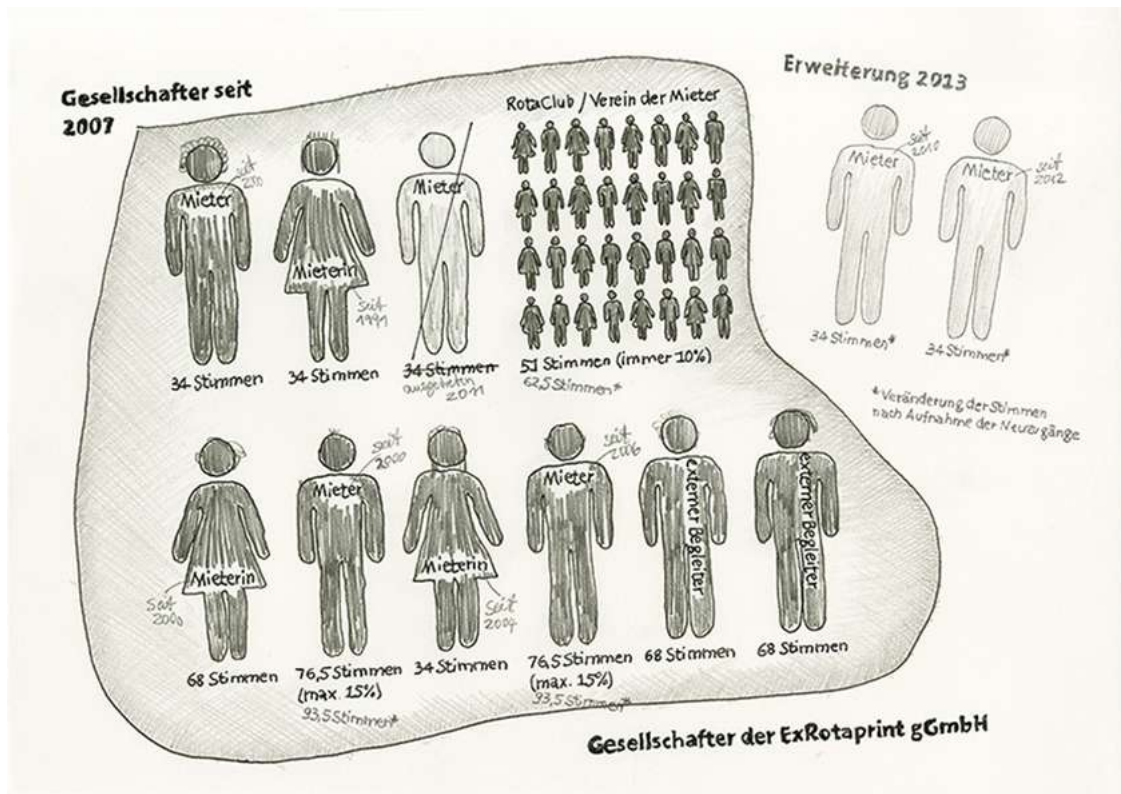
Picture 6. The separated ownership of land and buildings. Image © ExRotaprint

## 11 Community involvement

Since the beginning of the development of ExRotaprint, community involvement has had an important role. The first step in gathering support to protect the complex from being sold to investors was to **involve tenants** on the compound and build a tenants' association. At the time of this mobilisation, tenants did not know one another, despite working within the same buildings. Daniela Brahm and Les Schliesser began to approach the various tenants, documenting their use of the compound's spaces. They took photographs of the spaces and made interviews with tenants to discover the value of their investments and to explore their activities. This research resulted in a document where the desire of preserving and expanding this local structure was expressed.

From its foundation, ExRotaprint was strongly engaged with its neighbourhood and the broader Wedding district. The way ExRotaprint's rental policy was designed reflects a strong commitment to work with local communities, provide spaces, services and workplaces for local residents. Through a variety of social activities, community outreach projects, the canteen and events, ExRotaprint has been communicating intensely with people living in the neighbourhood. Inspired by ExRotaprint's success in moving a 10,000 post-industrial complex out of the real

estate market, an entire community was born to advocate for alternative approaches to real estate and city development.



Picture 7. The organisational scheme of ExRotaprint. Image © ExRotaprint

## 12 Impact

One of the main impacts of ExRotaprint is to provide **affordable working spaces** among rising prices all across Berlin. This affordability is enabled by the low land lease fees paid to the foundations trias and Maryon, due to the low purchasing price of the complex in 2007. Real estate prices have literally increased tenfold in the area in the past 12 years and this transformation highlights the importance of ExRotaprint's financial stability.

**"The goal is to have low rents, in Berlin rents are rising immensely. In this respect Berlin is normalising, it's becoming a normal capital."**  
**Daniela Brahm**

The rent prices in ExRotaprint are between 3-5.4 euros per m2. While rents in the compound were at an average level at the time of the purchase of the site, today they are considered very low, compared to other spaces in the area of other neighbourhoods of Berlin. With rising rents and profits made from real estate development across Berlin, many of the tenants would not necessarily have another choice of location. ExRotaprint has played an active role in offering new opportunities for those who are usually the victims of gentrification: besides accommodating affordable work spaces for companies that would need to move outside the city otherwise, it became an open area also creatives, artists, drop-out teenagers, immigrants, refugees, newcomers and the unemployed.

The compound's **diversity** corresponds to its rental policy: instead of following a regular investor's logic, the calculation of the renovation costs, for instance, is based on the tenants' needs. Diversity can only be maintained if expenses are kept low, and there is no profit made on the owners' side.

**"There is a lot of social capital, a lot of possibilities created here, but no profit on the owners' side but on the users' side." Les Schliesser**

With its successful model, ExRotaprint has gained influence both in the neighbourhood and in the city. The organisation's engagement helped a series of initiatives gain access to shared ownership of buildings with the help of heritable building right contracts. Even corporate neighbours like the Lidl adjacent to the ExRotaprint site agreed to cooperate about the future development of the block.

**"With this project you have the credibility to ask for more influence. We do something here which is unique, we offer space for workshops, people are working here, just consider the situation not only from the profit point of view." Daniela Brahm**

At the city level, ExRotaprint's strategy to oppose investor-led privatisation and create a community-driven civic space has proven highly inspiring for many initiatives across the city and beyond as they were facing similar threats from the side of the city's real estate policy and large institutional investors and developers.

**"We can show how it works to take speculation out of the real estate sector. We have renovated the buildings and the rent is still low, which nobody believes. Most people think there is some kind of subsidy but there is not, simply the rent pays the credit." Les Schliesser**

Inspired by the ExRotaprint and other initiatives, in the early 2010s many initiatives recognised this impact and began to mobilise the public opinion against privatisation, or in certain cases, for more controlled privatisation. While the community-led purchase of the ExRotaprint compound was a key factor in revealing the possibilities of alternative finance, many people were simply alarmed by the lack of transparency in the privatisation process.

**"In the last decade, Berlin progressively stopped having easy accessibility of space with low rents and land prices have raised quickly. We interfere on different levels politically to spread our ideas of an open city with chances for all inhabitants." Daniela Brahm**

One of the key forums of this discussion was the initiative [Stadt Neudenken](#). Stadt Neudenken was founded in 2011 in order to channel the voices of citizen initiatives and founders of civic spaces into a **public discussion about the Berlin's real estate policy**. Grounding the initiative was motivated by the lack of participation in issues of public real estate management.

Stadt Neudenken in 2012 managed to establish a roundtable on real estate policy in Berlin organised once in every three months, bringing together actors with very different positions, from representatives of civic society and the cultural fields to politicians and administration. The goal of the meetings was to shape the city's new real estate policy and a sort of a real estate board or panel, that could be a body consisting of stakeholders from civil society that possesses the expertise and perhaps even indicate the spectrum of different existing interests in real estate properties. The main focus of the roundtable was to



develop an alternative to the regular privatisation process where the highest bid wins the tender.

Based on these considerations, on November 3, 2011, the Stadt Neudenken initiative issued a position paper and founding manifesto. The manifesto, calling for an immediate moratorium on public property sales, also created a list of recommendations for property management. In the same period, the City Council had also been working on its Neue Liegenschaftspolitik, following the approval of its need by the city council in 2010 and the governing coalition in 2011. While Ulrich Nussbaum, the city's financial senator, who was under pressure because of the unpopularity of the privatisation process, quit his office within a few weeks after the publication of Stadt Neudenken's manifesto, he also came up with the idea of a "Neue Liegenschaftspolitik" as his last move before departure.

In the core of the new Real Estate Policy proposed by Stadt Neudenken was a different set of criteria for privatisation processes: a "concept method" that gave priority to the "best concept" instead of the highest bid. The first, informal concept-based process was organised at the Blumengrossmarkt, an area that was originally the starting point for the founding of Initiative Stadt Neudenken. The experience of ExRotaprint and the initiatives it inspired has altered the discussion about potential development schemes in Berlin. With the emergence of a city-wide discourse on real estate policies and with events like the [Experimentdays](#), notions of community ownership and non-speculative real estate development have gained significant influence across Europe and beyond.

## 13 Interviewees

Daniela Brahm, co-founder of ExRotaprint

Oliver Clemens, architect of the ExRotaprint complex

Rolf Novy-Huy, Stiftung trias

Les Schliesser, co-founder of ExRotaprint

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# **12. London Community Land Trust (London, United Kingdom)**



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## Executive summary

[London CLT](#) is London's first Community Land Trust established in the former psychiatric hospital of St Clements, in the Mile End area. The CLT provides affordable housing, allowing long-term residents who would be priced out to stay in the area, countering the tendencies of displacement and housing unaffordability. Supported by the Greater London Authority to work with a private developer and a social housing association, the CLT was allocated 23 homes that are dispersed throughout alongside privately owned and social housing units. Besides these homes, the CLT also promotes community engagement and is actively working on the creation of a community centre at the St Clements site.



**Picture 1. The Clocktower of St Clements under renovation. Photo (cc) Eutropian**

# 1 Timeline

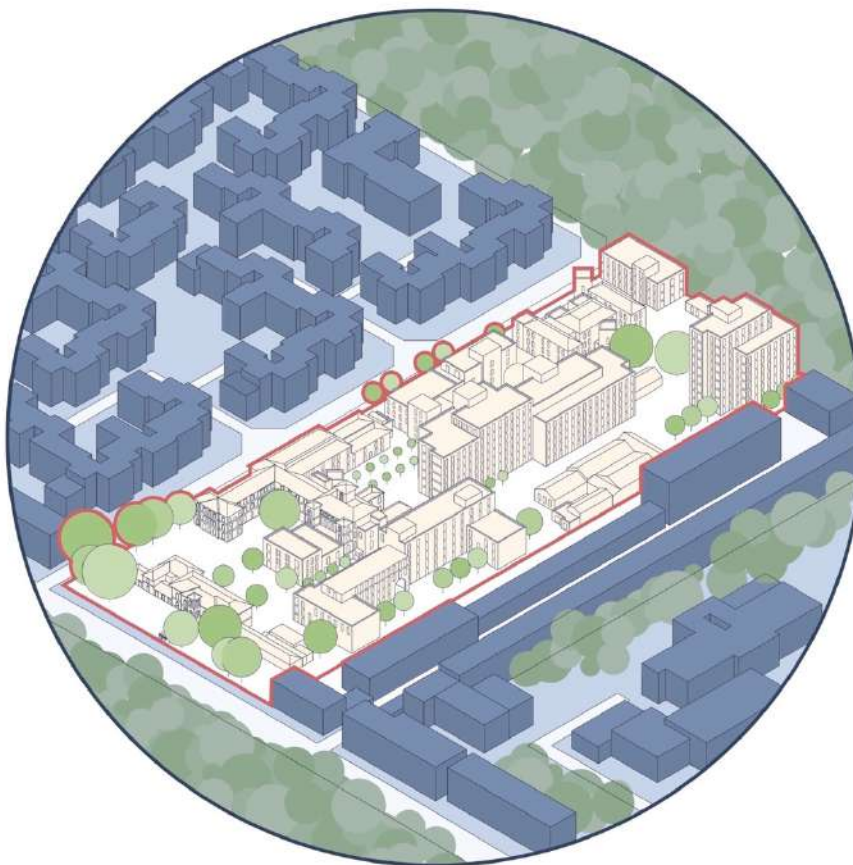
- 1848 – A workhouse is constructed at the St Clemens site
- 1849 – The workhouse opens
- 1909 – The workhouse closes
- 1912 – The complex reopens as a hospital run by the London County Council
- 1944 – A part of the complex is destroyed during WWII
- 1948 – The complex reopens as a hospital run by the NHS
- 1959 – The complex becomes a psychiatric hospital
- 2005 – The St Clements site is closed in a deteriorated state
- 2005 – The Mayor's Office asks Citizens UK to support the city's Olympic Bid
- 2007 – East London CLT (later London CLT) is established to bid for a site in Tower Hamlets
- 2009 – The St Clemens site becomes the focus of London CLT
- 2010 – London CLT, as part of a consortium with Igloo Regeneration, bids for the site
- 2011 – The bid for St Clements is won by Linden Homes, Galliford Try and architects John, Thompson and Partner (JTP)
- 2012 – Community consultation events with JTP Architects (November)
- 2012 – The Meanwhile Mixed-Use working group is formed within the CLT
- 2013 – Shuffle Festivals take place at St Clements
- 2013 – Planning applications for the site submitted
- 2014 – Shuffle's exhibition is organised at St Clemens (January) and Shuffle moves the festival to the adjacent Cemetery Park
- 2014 – Planning applications for the site are approved and construction begins
- 2015 – Unsuccessful application to the National Lottery Fund to fund the renovation of the John Denham building
- 2016 – Community share offer
- 2016 – CLT residents scheduled to move in
- 2017 – First CLT residents move in
- 2017 – Last Shuffle Festival at the Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park
- 2019 – Last CLT residents move in
- 2020 – Construction is scheduled to finish

## 2 The story of the building complex

Located on an important road connecting the City of London with East Anglia, St Clements was built in 1848 and opened in 1849 as a workhouse: a place where poor people were sent who had no means of supporting themselves. The establishment of the Bow Workhouse was prompted by the parliament's Poor Law Amendment of 1848 that required areas to institutionalise their relief efforts towards the poor: St Clements was built by the City of London but outside the City itself.

Many of the people put here to work were too young, too old or sick, therefore they could not work as planned. As a result, in the 1860s, the workhouse's function shifted towards being an infirmary. In 1909, the workhouse closed and reopened in 1912 as a place run by the London County Council, hosting over 600 people who were chronically ill – a hospital in today's terminology. During WWII, a part of the site was destroyed, and after the war it became a fully-fledged hospital. In 1959, the complex became a psychiatric hospital under the NHS and was closed down in 2005, staying empty for about ten years, reaching a derelict state.

**“When we were doing a listening campaign around the area looking for sites, St Clements was a large derelict site in a fairly central area but it also had a lot of stories connect it to the local residents.” Hannah Emery-Wright**



**Picture 2. The St Clements complex. Image by Jorge Mosquera**



### 3 The initiative

In 2005, the Olympic Park Legacy Company (later [London Legacy Development Corporation](#)) of the London Mayor's Office asked [Citizens UK](#) to support the city's Olympic Bid. Citizens UK agreed to work with the Mayor's Office but asked for a series of promises, including building Community Land Trust homes on the Olympics site after the Games. Before this promise could be delivered, the Mayor's Office wanted to see the CLT model working in practice, and asked for a test project. Community organisers at Citizens UK began a listening campaign across Tower Hamlets and identified housing as a key priority and St Clements as a potential site for a CLT. Once the site defined, Citizens UK ran a political campaign to secure it and established London CLT in 2007 in order to bid for the site. In 2009 St. Clements was chosen by a unanimous vote by members to be the focus of the campaign for London's first CLT.

In 2010, the site was opened up for competitive bidding by the Mayor's Office. London CLT presented a bid with [Igloo Regeneration](#), an ethical real estate company, proposing a community-led design process. London CLT's consortium was outbid by [Linden Homes](#), a brand of [Galliford Try](#), a leading construction company, and [Peabody](#), a social housing association. Despite the failure of the bid, there was significant political support from successive mayors (Ken Livingstone and Boris Johnson) for the CLT model and London CLT was brought into the winning project with the agreement of all parties. As part of the agreement with the GLA on winning the land, Linden Homes were required to enter the agreement on including the CLT, as well as passing the land ownership on to a specially established community-led charity, the [Ricardo Community Foundation](#) after the development is ready. In this way, St Clements was chosen as a pilot project to test the CLT model in an urban setting.

**"A key thing to come out of the consultation process was the desire to ensure that St. Clements remains at the heart of the community. As a prominent site with such a rich local heritage, it's important that it remains accessible and resident-led." Hannah Emery-Wright**

Once the new alliance with Linden Homes was formed, London CLT began working with the architecture office JTP to develop ideas and a vision for the site that could serve as a basis for the planning applications. This included a series of community consultation events and meanwhile use organised by the CLT's Meanwhile Mixed-Use working group that later gave birth to the not-for-profit organisation [Shuffle](#).

Starting in 2013, Shuffle, with support from various cultural institutions and film director Danny Boyle, organised a series of festivals in and around the St Clements site, inviting people to experience the area differently, to share their memories and feelings about the site as well as to explore its potentials. Despite all the difficulties of acquiring permissions for cultural events at the site, Shuffle's events became a great success.

**"That sort of awareness about how a site fits in to the community and how it can have functions even before it's redeveloped is really important."**  
**Charles Campion**

In 2014, planning applications for the site were approved, and demolitions began on the site. Plans were later amended to include the John Denham building as a

community centre. Since 2015, London CLT has been working on finding way to renovate the building and converting it into a community venue.



**Picture 3. St Clements in London. Image by Jorge Mosquera**

## 4 The site and the area

The St Clements site includes 19 buildings and building parts, a combination of old and new. The site reveals a distinct progression of buildings, starting with a reception block at Northern part of the site, followed by a chapel and two major wings for the wards, then the kitchens and the workshops, the infirmary and the fever ward. At the Southern end of the site there is the mortuary on a little alley now called Hamlet's Way, and beyond this, the cemetery. St Clements occupies a long site stretching from a major road (Mile End Road) to the Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park. Originally the complex was built to face the street, while today it is better connected with the cemetery.

**“St Clements reveals a very symmetrical and orderly way to dealing with the poor. Almost an industrial process where you enter off the main Bow road into the reception wards and then move into the site with the chapel, the workshops and then the fever wards, the mortuary and the cemetery. Some people see it as a trajectory.” Nicola de Quincey**

St Clements is situated in East London, 5 kilometres from the City of London, a very central location within the London agglomeration. The neighbourhood has witnessed radical transformations in the past decades. From being a relatively deprived area with working class families, it became a centre of immigration in the 20th century. In the past decade, the financialisation of real estate also reached East London, raising housing prices and pushing out less affluent residents. The gentrification and affordability problem of East London has been one of the main motivations to develop a CLT in the area.

## 5 Activities in the complex

The renewed St Clements site has 252 homes, 53 of which are social rent homes provided by the Peabody social housing association. Corresponding to the idea of integrating the CLT in the community and avoiding the separation of social and private housing units, the CLT's 23 homes are dispersed throughout the site: 13 homes are in the central blocks that also have private units, 5 homes in a block with social housing units and 5 in stand-alone duplexes.

**“The idea was to integrate into the community, we didn't want a social housing/private housing dichotomy.” Hannah Emery-Wright**

Besides securing affordable homes, the CLT has been active also in creating a community centre. For the past years, the CLT has been leading a campaign to turn the John Denham building, a listed building at the front of the St Clements site, into a community space. This is a building with many constraints and large spaces that limited its potential use for residential units. The building was also listed as an [“Asset of Community Value,”](#) referring to its significance to the wider community, giving the community additional time to raise funds and purchase the building.

**Asset of community value** is land or property of importance to a local community. Under the Localism Act of 2011, assets of community value (ACV) are subject to additional protection from development. When the owner of an ACV wants to sell the property, they have to inform the local authority and if a community group wants to buy the asset, they can trigger a moratorium for 6 months, allowing them to raise funds to purchase the asset. The ACV status can be used by the local planning authority as a factor to refuse planning permission for full or partial change or demolition, or can force the local authority to buy the asset if it is under threat of long-term loss to the community. ACVs across the UK include over 800 pubs, sport facilities and stadiums as well as parks.

The campaign has involved setting up a formal residents' commission and lobbying towards politicians for funding to purchase the building, as well as to explore the needs and opinions of local residents in relation with the site. As for



the commercial space below, there have been talks with [Poplar Harca](#), an East London-based Housing and Regeneration Community Association to potentially run the café. Reusing the John Denham building as a community space would allow the area to have a focal point where all the different types of people who live in the area could meet.

**“Originally the whole site was planned to be residential, then we applied for a change of planning, to set aside a part of the John Denham building at the front for community use and the bungalow for commercial use. The idea was that there are so many people on site, there really needs to be something for them.” Nicola de Quincey**



Picture 4. The John Denham building under renovation. Photo (cc) Eutropian

## 6 The renovation

### 6.1 The role of heritage

In the new urban design proposal by JTP Architects, **heritage research** played a significant role. This research, conducted by Nicola de Quincey, aimed at establishing not only the different phases of the evolution of the complex, but also to understand the significance of each historical layer and addition to the complex. The findings of this research informed the decisions on which buildings to keep and which buildings to demolish to open space for new volumes, as well



as on where to place new structures to correspond to the original layout of the site.

**“There are many ways to look at the buildings on the site. They could be studied in terms of the changing medical history, or their place in East London and the needs of the local area, determining their historical significance and value. Besides the individual buildings, the historic pattern of the complex was respected when we tried to think of opportunities for new build between the old buildings.” Nicola de Quincey**

The original St Clements site consisted of listed Victorian buildings and ancillary buildings of a more recent era. Many buildings at the northern part of the site, organised around the Clocktower, are original designs. There were many alterations between the original construction of the complex and the moment when it closed down in 2005. When the workhouse closed in 1909, its main building reopened in 1912 with additional shafts and altered windows. In 1920, adjusting the complex to its new role as a hospital, sanitary extensions, designed at 45 degrees to the blocks in order to maximise light penetration, were linked by narrow passages to the North and South Blocks. By the 1930s, when the London County Council was running the hospital, responding to the challenges of respiratory diseases like tuberculosis, two extensions were built on the side, with metal horizontal shaped windows that allowed more sun and light in the interiors. During the WWII bombing, the Women’s Block and the Chapel were destroyed. In the 1960s, under the auspices of the National Health Service, a series of low-grade buildings were built between the historical buildings, some of which had been later demolished.



**Picture 5. The interior of the John Denham building. Photo (cc) Eutropian**

The indoor spaces of the community facilities were designed with brick, painted below waist height. In the 1930s, the London County Council started to put plaster on and NHS has put dropped ceilings: these alterations are revealed by the different layers in these spaces. In the John Denham building, a paint analysis is done to understand the original paint scheme, before a complete restoration or evocation of the original is done.

Research into the layers of demolitions and additions at the site was conducted to inform decisions about which structures to prioritise, what to save and where to open space for new constructions. Erecting new volumes of buildings were necessary to cover the renovation costs on one hand, and to save some other structures, on the other. In the urban design scheme proposed by JTP, there was an intention to give back the symmetry to the site and build on the precedents of previously existent but demolished buildings: therefore, a new building was designed to fill the gap created by the WWII bombings.

The **heritage protection structure** of the St Clements site is complex. Three structures of the site (the Boundary Wall, the John Denham building and the Administration building) are Grade 2 listed monuments. The whole site is curtilage listed, meaning that every single building on the site is protected. In addition, the site is located within the Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park conservation area that means that any demolition has to be approved and special attention has to be given by the local authority. These layers of protection signify that every single structure on the site had to be treated as though it was a listed building. The organisations Historic England (Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England) and English Heritage (English Heritage Trust) demonstrated a keen interest in the site and worked closely with the architects, the developers and the council's conservation officer. There is a monthly meeting organised with the participation of these stakeholders.

**"The key thing for the authorities was that we really studied the historic nature of the site, worked out what we thought is the most significant and then worked with them on a shared vision." Nicola de Quincey**

## **6.2 Design concept for adaptive reuse**

Designing the adaptive reuse of St Clements was done by JTP Architects, part of the original bidding consortium with Linden Homes. The focus of the reuse process was to create a predominantly residential-led development to provide over 230 homes: most buildings were turned into apartment complexes except the John Denham building at the front. The main design challenge was to decide which buildings to keep, which ones to demolish and where to place the new buildings. Besides historical research, the design decisions were also based on studies of the view of the Clocktower from different parts of the site. Moreover, there were a series of other regulations in play when designing the adaptive reuse of the St Clements site. Some of them are of logistic nature, like how to get fire engines in, and how to get the waste out, significant challenges for a long, thin site, only accessible by vehicles at the Northern end. Despite efforts by Historic England to keep as many workshops as possible, some of them had to be sacrificed in order to assure emergency access. Another key aspect of the

urban design of the site was to allow free access to the site through Mile End Road in the North and the Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park in the South. As for the design of the housing blocks, it was important to not distinguish between CLT homes, privately owned apartments or social housing units.

**“An important thing was that this site was closed, and we wanted to make it more open. People wanted to use St Clements as a route through to the park without having to use the sidewalks. We worked very hard to get consent to lower one of the walls. That was an important gain for the local community.” Nicola de Quincey**

JTP’s approach to the bid for the site was to run a charrette or community planning process, inviting local stakeholders to “come, co-design St Clements” with them. Understanding the importance of local attachments to and stories about the site, the architects joined the local research conducted by the CLT and Shuffle in involving the community in the design process. Preceded by a campaign inviting the press, local stakeholders, schools and community groups, the charrette was organised in November 2012, including an exhibition with historical materials, dialogue workshops, hands-on planning workshops and walkabouts. The ideas collected and the consensus developed during the workshops by over 350 participants led the design team to create a vision for the area, feeding into a planning application that got unanimous approval at the Tower Hamlets Planning Committee about a year after the planning weekend.

**“We were working through co-designing with the community and a lot of consensus emerged quite quickly through the workshops which we took away, analysed, distilled and created a vision. We reported it back to the community a few days later, we took them through the history of the site, the co-design process and that led us to create the vision. Instead of designing something and then asking people what they think of it, we get a lot of extra social and economic value by involving communities who have a great knowledge and expertise.” Charles Campion**

About a third of the site today consists of existing, retained buildings, and two-thirds of new built, resulting in a variety of building styles, combined with open spaces, some of them semi-private gardens, others publicly accessible.

### 6.3 The construction process

The construction process began in 2014 by clearing the site: getting rid of asbestos and other kinds of contamination. During the construction process, the CLT has experienced significant delays, ranging from one to three years. While residents were originally scheduled to move in in 2016, the first residents could only move in in June 2017 and some residents were still waiting for their turn in 2019. Some residents had to drop out of the programme, others had to be reallocated, causing significant stress for the concerned families.

**“From our side it seemed like there was one issue after another in the building process. Lots of delays. I think this was partly due to the complexity of the site and the heritage elements, as well as the priorities of the developer.” Hannah Emery-Wright**

## 7 Regulations and policies

British cities, especially London, have experienced high pressure on land prices that led to a chronic unaffordability crisis and housing emergency. This has a strong impact on the feasibility of not-for-profit, community-led initiatives and especially on their **access to land ownership or lease**. The property industry in the UK is highly centralised: more than half of the homes in the UK are built by ten companies, therefore it is very hard for any new entrant to the housing market to succeed. **Accessing finance**, whether subsidy or loans, equity or investment is crucial to help these projects to succeed. In the 1970s and 80s, there was significant public support to housing cooperatives, a large part of today's housing stock was built then. Many of these cooperatives continue to exist but they have been completely professionalised, their direction has no longer contact with local communities, no participation among their residents, and they have no influence on the wider property market, nor do they interact with their broader neighbourhoods. The ambition of CLTs is to operate differently, and not close themselves into islands of affordability.

**"The main issue in London remains land, as it is an incredibly expensive city. Public landowners have a potential to provide sites and consider the social value, when they think about the price they sell the land for. They also suffer terrible cuts from central government so they want to sell land for as much as possible. So there are lot of challenges for communities in getting ownership of land in London."** Tom Chance

The St Clements site is a field where real estate pressure as well as various public policies are in play, regarding the sale of public land, housing provision, heritage protection as well as natural ecosystems. One of the key dimensions of public policy at St Clements is related to **housing**. The St Clemens site is subject to a Section 106 agreement that means that new developments should have 30% affordable housing. In such cases, the developer is obliged to build affordable homes as well, and then looks for a housing association or similar organisation to take on those housing units. The CLT homes are part of this 30% that could otherwise be shared ownership homes.

**Section 106 agreements** are planning obligations based on the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act. They are private agreements made between local authorities and developers and can be attached to a planning permission to make acceptable development which would otherwise be unacceptable in planning terms. The land itself, rather than the person or organisation that develops the land, is bound by a Section 106 Agreement, something any future owners will need to take into account. Section 106 agreements are drafted when it is considered that a development will have significant impacts on the local area that cannot be moderated by means of conditions attached to a planning decision.

The London CLT, providing a part of the obligatory affordable homes, has been established following the model of **Community Land Trusts** (see at Governance). Similarly to the US, London CLT was born with the help of community organising, more than supporting policies. As a result of community



organising and campaigning mostly by Citizens UK, there has been a growing ambition to give frameworks to local governments and other public landowners to engage and strategically think about their opportunities to provide land for affordable and community-led housing.

**“In the US, a lot of the earlier CLTs came out of community organising and part of the ethos is that it’s not just about affordable housing but organising the community assets. Giving them power, getting them become empowered to give them the feeling they have the opportunity to shape their local area.” Tom Chance**

Ideally, municipalities can play a more active role in the creation of CLTs. They can help with their own land or through their planning policy that can release sites for CLTs. Many of the sites offered to CLTs are awkward, complicated sites, often in sensible areas that councils do not expect to sell to commercial developers for the market price; but most CLTs come up with very innovative uses for these sites. The GLA created the [Small Sites, Small Builders](#) programme to dispose of land owned by Transport for London with specific conditions like 100% affordable housing and limited price, in a way to make it accessible to community-led organisations and to small and medium size enterprises. The programme lists sites open for bidding at its website, with a lot of useful information that helps smaller actors to prepare a bid that have no resources for land surveys. Besides offering land, municipalities can also provide policy support and small amounts of funding. Despite all this potential from the side of public administrations, many CLTs have succeeded without significant public support.

**“The particularity of heritage sites is that local communities might feel very strongly about how a particular building is used, and a community-led approach can deal with that.” Tom Chance**

The regulatory environment determines to a large extent what is feasible for CLTs. In the UK, unlike in other European countries (like in Germany) it is impossible to separate the ownership of land from that of buildings, that would help a landowner community to **assure the affordability** of the properties on it. Therefore, a leasehold structure is used for a similar purpose, but such arrangements were often abused by mainstream developers to make their clients pay increasing ground rents after buying properties. In order to prevent such abuses, the government banned leasehold for houses, endangering the CLT model. In June 2019, as a result of lobbying by the National Community Land Trust Network, the government gave exemption to CLTs. Similarly, the NCLTN has also campaigned against policies to enable tenants of social housing providers to buy their homes, or for CLTs’ exemption from leasehold disenfranchisement, the leaseholders’ right to buy the freehold of their property, both policies undermining CLTs.

The emergence of CLTs also corresponds to **efforts of decentralisation**: to devolve control from the state to local governments and to local communities. The [Localism Act](#), introduced in 2011 by the Tory government to support devolution towards communities had no significant impact on CLTs. For instance, the Localism Act introduced the *community right to bid*, meaning that communities can campaign for a particular building to be designated as an asset of community value. This designation means that if the building is sold, the community has a window of six months to make its own bid. However, six months are a very short time for a community to mobilise itself and put it a

credible bid. As the property owner has no obligation to sell the building to the community, the community's offer has to be competitive.

**"The Localism act was brought in, it has all these interesting ideas and powers most of which have been no help at all for CLTs because they misunderstand what the barriers are for CLTs. It would be interesting to see if we can mobilise interest for a more effectively second Localism Act."**

**Tom Chance**

In the past years, several policy items have been introduced to help CLTs: the National Community Land Trust Network had campaigned for the creation of a **Community Housing Fund** before the 2015 elections and now campaigns for its extension to give initiatives longer term certainty and a perspective for the sector to grow. In the past years, demand for CLT homes has exponentially grown, increasing the number of potentially deliverable homes with the fund from 5,000 in 2016 to 15,000 in 2019.

## 8 The financial model

In general, there are different ways to **fund CLTs**. In the most typical case, CLTs act like normal developers, they go to a charity or a socially minded bank that lends money at a low interest rate. In addition, CLTs get subsidies or grants from the government for affordable housing. Afterwards the CLT builds the homes and sells or rents them, using these revenues to refinance the mortgage. In other cases, more classical housing providers like housing associations develop homes in partnership with CLTs: the housing association in these cases finances and builds the homes and then transfers the freehold to the CLT and leases back the homes from the CLT. In some cases, public finance in the form of affordable housing subsidies can lower the costs of establishing a CLT.

In the atypical case of the London CLT, the developer is granted planning permission according to the Section 106 policy, and is required to deliver a certain amount of affordable housing, and look for organisations like CLTs to take on these units. According to the requirements of the GLA, London CLT has a turnkey arrangement with Linden Homes. London CLT purchases the properties from Linden, however not with London CLT's own money but with the money of the residents who will move in. It is a **back-to-back payment scheme** where the resident pays London CLT and London CLT pays Linden.

The main costs of the CLT are construction finance that should normally come through social investment from large donors or community shares. The London CLT's first revenues came in 2016 from a **community share** offer with [Ethex](#), a not-for-profit Positive Investing organisation. The minimum investment was £100 each with a return on investment of about 5%. About 130 investors – some of them from the surrounding communities, some of them big donors – participated with £450,000, used to pay architects and planning preparations for London CLT's Lewisham site. These investments have to be paid back after a few years, until then they allow the CLT to gain time and raise additional funds.

The most important source of revenue for the London CLT was from the **sales of the first homes** at St Clements. Due to the changing property prices, a margin between the purchase price paid to Linden Homes at a time of lower home values

and the price paid by the homeowners later allowed the CLT to have some income. CLT home prices at the beginning of the process were about half the market prices, now they're about one third. On the long term, however, such profit margins will not likely to be a source of income.

**Mortgages** are another important source of funding for CLTs, on the buyers' side. Initially, in the case of the St Clements site, it was difficult for prospective CLT homeowners to build relationships with the right mortgage lenders. London CLT managed to engage lenders who understand the specificity of a CLT: the [Ecology Building Society](#) and [Triodos Bank](#) were the first to offer mortgages. In the meanwhile, the NCLTN was working on getting on board other mainstream lenders. Usually, such lenders want to see that the value of the property bought with mortgage is a percentage of the open market, so even in the case of shared ownership or affordable property, they base their evaluation on that percentage of the market. CLT homes, with their value connected to the median income cannot demonstrate its relation with values on the open property market. In order to assure lenders, the CLT added a mortgagee-in-possession clause to the mortgage contracts, that elaborates that if a CLT homeowner wants to sell a home, the CLT has 6 months to find a new tenant, after which the council has 7 months to find a tenant, and in case both attempts were unsuccessful, the property can go back to the open market.

**"As a network, we have been pretty successful in growing the numbers of banks and social investors that are interested in the sector and are able to invest. There is a lot of debt finance now available for communities to develop housing or to renovate an existing house. Our aim is to break into more mainstream, larger scale equity finance so that CLTs can deliver at scale." Tom Chance**

Unlike other Community Land Trusts, land at the St Clements is not community owned by CLT residents, however the freehold is held by a charity whose trustees are a number of local stakeholders. Nevertheless, with the CLT having a 250-year lease on the property, it is protected from speculation. CLT owns the head lease for these properties and it can sell and underlease to the residents. The CLT sells properties at prices that are linked to the medium income rate of the borough. When a resident wants to move on, they have to sell their property back to London CLT at a rate that is linked to medium wages in the borough.

**"The idea behind this model is that wages are the best way to determine if something is affordable for the people living in the area. Our houses are affordable in perpetuity." Hannah Emery-Wright**

Besides funding the planning and construction process, in order to set up a CLT, a core team also needs to **establish and finance the work of an organisation** that can carry out the project. In the case of the London CLT, its parent organisation Citizens UK initially invested some staff time in the CLT's work, some of which was covered by Oak Foundation grants. In addition, the National CLT Network gave the London CLT a £10,000 catalyst grant for capacity building.

Besides financing the CLT homes, the quest to turn the John Denham building into a **community space** has also presented a financial challenge for the CLT. In 2015, London CLT made an unsuccessful application to the National Lottery Fund to finance the renovation of the John Denham building as a community venue. In the meanwhile, although expected to give the building to the CLT for free, Linden

Homes turned around and made a demand of £1.5 million for the building. In the past years, the CLT, residents and local communities have been lobbying the GLA and the Tower Hamlet council for funding with a series of public campaigns.

## 9 Community involvement

Despite being derelict for a long period, the St Clements site had a strong presence in the community, and a strong role in local memory. Many people in the area would know it from visiting their relatives in the psychiatric hospital, but an author also collected memories of children growing up in the workhouse, through the recollections of their children and grandchildren. Similarly, St Clements played an important role in defining East London identities. According to some local mythologies, one is a Cockney if one grew up hearing either the bells of Whitechapel or of the St Clements Clocktower.

**“A lot of people on the board were church leaders or local parents; we needed to make sure that this site is for the community. Not just as housing but also as facilities and the place. It needs to be not just about housing but a place you want to live in, that represents the kind of place we should be building.” Lizzy Daish**

After years of vacancy and decay, one of the ways to reconnect the site with the neighbouring communities was to open the site for various activities. This idea was implemented by the CLT’s Meanwhile Mixed-Use working group established in 2012, aiming at bringing events to the site before and during some phases of the construction. When the events and festivals organised at St Clements grew out of their original scale, the not for profit community enterprise Shuffle was established in 2013 to carry out the activities. Members of Shuffle began speaking with ex-patients of the hospital about their experiences and the things they wanted to do at the site to reclaim their stories. Shuffle’s focus was on a mixture of high calibre art and film and serious community programming and curation, always based on themes around mental health.

**“There was a lot of interest because we had this big old psychiatric hospital but we also wanted to make sure whatever we did on the site set the tone for the community housing. St Clements a lot of stories and a lot of those weren’t good stories. It was a very important place for generations. We wanted to do something that would involve people.” Lizzy Daish**

Culture had an important role in building relationships and support for the St Clements redevelopment project. The film director Danny Boyle, who grew up in a tower block overlooking St Clements, and was chosen to design the opening ceremony of the London Olympics. Boyle became very interested in the CLT, and helped create a series of festivals, promoted by the organisation Shuffle, with film screenings and other events at the St Clements site and the adjacent Cemetery Park.

In order to place its events in the St Clements site, Shuffle cleaned a variety of spaces of the site, organising cinema screenings in the old patients’ social club and outside, working with gardeners to plant a flower garden from seeds donated from the Cemetery Park and with edible plants to be used in the café opening on



the site. Shuffle organised two large events at St Clements in 2013, a several-month summer festival and a 10-day winter festival in November.

**“That kind of small-scale development was really important for us, it was what we had taken from the community planning sessions to try things that could happen in the long run, different ways of using the buildings.”**  
**Lizzy Daish**

Shuffle also conducted an oral history research among the local communities, concentrating on the last iteration of the complex as a psychiatric hospital, including the testimonies of people who had been patients of the old institution: the last user group of the building still living around. The oral history recollection was organised into an exhibition in January 2014, using the gardens and the John Denham building. Soon after the exhibition, demolitions began at the site and Shuffle moved its festival to the Cemetery Park where it organised four seasons.

**“We started off at St Clements with a rumour which we heard that people would always say to their children, ‘if you don’t eat your greens you would go to St Clements.’ And we then met people who were service providers and their stories about being in St Clements were very nuanced. For us It was about changing the narratives, hearing those stories. I constantly had to turn down all those ghost tours: that was not going to happen here as we were looking at the human aspect of all this.”** Lizzy Daish

While the site is up and running, and the CLT has achieved its goal of providing affordable housing in perpetuity, not all the results of the community involvement activities were used to shape the site. Some people are concerned with the site turning into a gated community, the direct opposite of what the community was aiming for. The envisioned community space in the John Denham building can be key in opening the site for the neighbouring communities.

**“We always saw that everything we did at St Clements is an example of what can happen in a community space once the site is redeveloped. We constantly fed in to the GLA, developers, architects, landscape architects and back to the CLT all the findings. Unfortunately, we weren’t really taken seriously. Maybe people just took a while to see the value in it. While it’s all about money and assets, it’s difficult to be at the forefront. I think there are more opportunities now that the CLT is working hard on securing the front building for a community space.”** Lizzy Daish

Besides its connections with the neighbourhood and its communities, the London CLT keeps its closest ties with the residents of the CLT homes. The CLT’s **communities manager** continues to work with residents through allocations and supports them in the process of accessing their new homes. She also develops specific training for the residents and campaigners about what being a CLT resident means. Once the new residents are in their homes, the communities manager works with them to look at ways to transform the neighbourhood, by building up community leaders, developing community spaces or by other means.

**“We want our residents to be involved in the governance of London CLT.”**  
**Hannah Emery-Wright**

## 10 Governance

The St Clements site is governed by a cooperation between a variety of actors. From the viewpoint of non-speculative, community-led heritage reuse, the most relevant actor is the London Community Land Trust. The London CLT follows the format first developed in the US, where community organisations had been engaged with safeguarding community assets and housing from gentrification and financialisation. Triggered by dissatisfaction with traditional housing providers in the UK, CLTs have gained a lot of popularity and recognition in the past years. The first CLT in England was established in 1983 in Oxfordshire. In the following decades, many CLTs were created and also many initiatives that – with their community ownership of land and properties – could match the definition of CLTs but do not consider themselves as one.

**“Communities often feel that traditional housing providers have lost touch with their communities, they tend to trample over them. Many people feel they are being ignored or do not have control over their housing assets. Many local communities have a desire to get involved and to do something positive, and CLTs are a way they can do it.” Tom Chance**

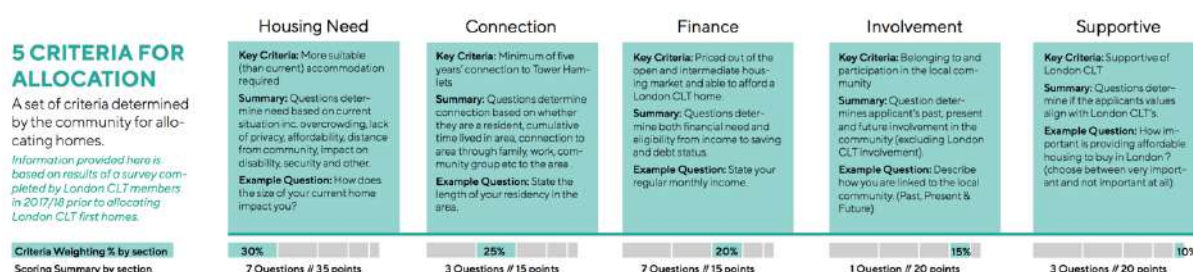
**Community Land Trusts** are a model of community-led development, where local organisations develop and manage homes and other assets important to their communities, such as community enterprises, food growing or workspaces. In the Anglo-Saxon context, and spreading to the European continent through Belgium, France and the Netherlands, the format of Community Land Trusts (CLTs) has been instrumental in helping residents create inclusive economic ecosystems and sustainable development models. By owning land (or leasing it from public owners) and leasing apartments, entire buildings or other types of properties to individuals, families or community groups, CLTs can control the use and price of such properties. CLTs therefore can use this leverage to guarantee that spaces in their management remain affordable, based on the income level of the locals living in the area. Each CLT has a different governance system but they all share some characteristics: they are controlled by local residents in a democratic fashion. CLTs are described in the Housing Regeneration Act of 2008: any legal format that complies with that act can be considered as a CLT. The first CLTs were set up as companies limited by guarantee, and their members added to their rules how their assets can be used: they have to be locked for the use of the company. Some other CLTs are set up as charities. Nowadays most CLTs are established as community benefit societies, a legal format updated in 2014 that refers to membership organisations open to anyone in the local community just for the benefit of that community and that matches best the CLTs’ ethos. The National CLT Network has developed a set of rules: most CLTs use these rules and it is up to their own decisions to define how their board should function and how they should involve their members and residents.

Until recently, CLTs have been predominantly established in rural areas where land prices are cheaper and real estate pressure is lower: the CLT operating at

the St Clements site, London CLT is one of the first urban CLTs. **London CLT** is a community benefit society, a not for profit limited company – a model widely used by community land trusts. People join the CLT as members either because they are interested in buying a home on the long term, or because they like the project and would like to support it. Others have an academic or professional interest in the project. The London CLT has about 3000 members made up of residents who own CLT homes, the communities and campaigners from areas around CLT sites and stakeholders who might invest their expertise in the CLT. These membership classes are all represented in the board of trustees consisting of 15 people. Besides the board, the CLT also has subcommittees, focusing on Finance and Risk, Development, Human Resources, Impact Measurement and allowing more in-depth discussions about these issues. Members have the right to vote and stand for elections. Membership requires the payment of a nominal sum of £1.

**“Lots of people ask us if we would consider doing social rent as well, but the priority right now is to focus on getting our sale model right first.”**  
**Hannah Emery-Wright**

Positioning the CLT in the housing market is a sensible issue: there are various different social groups in urgent need of housing. There is discussion about CLTs potentially offering social rent but this would risk to make the organisation move towards the role of a housing association, with a more profit-oriented profile. Moreover, the CLT’s focus now is on middle/low income earners that have no access to social housing rents or people who are not on the priority list for social housing but are being priced out of their neighbourhoods. As due to the housing shortage in London, there is a great demand for affordable housing, London CLT developed a well-designed **selection procedure** for its homes. CLT homes are allocated to local residents with a deep connection to the area (worked in the area for at least 5 years); unstable housing situation (in risk of losing their homes); financial eligibility (not catered for by social housing programmes); local involvement (social connections in the area); supportive attitude towards the CLT’s values and mission (potential future CLT advocates).



**Picture 6. Allocation criteria at the London CLT. Image © London CLT**

London CLT is member of the **National CLT Network**, a nation-wide network representing the interests of CLTs across the UK. In 2007-2008, as a result of some interest among funders, some research into CLTs was done by Bob Patterson at Lancaster University, and three charitable foundations, the Tudor Trust, Carnegie and Esmée Fairbairn Foundation began to fund programmes to help communities set up CLTs. The need for a national body to promote the

concept of CLTs gave birth to the NCLTN in 2010 that became incorporated into a charity in 2014.

**“We want to support regional organisations that have the capacity and knowledge to develop relationships with the different local governments, developers, housing associations, and creating more strategic opportunities for communities. Our role is to ensure they have adequate funding and we take policy lessons from and feed is back to the central government.” Tom Chance**

The National Community Land Trust Network today represents all 330 CLTs operating in England and Wales. The network helps CLTs incorporate, supports its members and is engaged in creating a policy and finance environment that makes it possible for communities to implement new CLTs. The NCLTN also works with municipal authorities that are interested in offering sites for affordable housing or community-led initiatives, linking them with good practices and introducing them to successful policies. The NCLTN is less and less involved with individual CLTs and more focused on supporting regional organisations that can help local groups.

**“As the CLT movement become more established, government policy has had more impact on us so we have lobbied either specifically against what governments do that damage CLTs or in favour of things that might help them.” Tom Chance**

**Establishing a CLT:** Developing new sites begins with Citizens UK organising local communities and building campaigns that demonstrate that significant groundwork has been made in these areas. Such groundwork is the basis for the engagement of London CLT that can support building relationships, finding land and acquiring funding. While at the St Clemens site, London CLT is representative of the local community, at other sites its role is more of a technical advisor that supports communities developed by Citizens UK. London CLT’s work on these sites begins with walking around with local community institutions in the identified neighbourhoods, looking for possible sites. This is followed by running a local campaign and building relationships with a local decision-maker, prompting public commitments. Then the local community group would build relationships with the neighbours around the site, identifying stakeholders and setting up a committee or a steering group to discuss how to put in a bid for the land. The local CLT boards include community leaders, thus assuring that CLTs are embedded in local relationships and community dynamics.

After establishing the first CLT in London where residents have already moved in, London CLT is now in the process of developing new projects outside the St Clements site. The next project in Lewisham will consist of 11 CLT homes, with the construction to start in 2019. Two Transport for London sites in Shadwell and Lambeth, to have around 40 and 30 homes respectively , are in consultation stage with local community groups. Further sites in Croydon and Redbridge are to be identified together with local communities. All CLTs have their own identity and are focusing on their own neighbourhood and local stakeholders. However, relationships across the different CLT sites are being developed. An important



part of these relationships is sharing resources, especially expertise and experiences: campaign groups of prospective developments often visit St Clements to learn about how the CLT works there. Annual meetings allow all CLT stakeholders from different campaign groups to come together and collectively make key decisions.

## 11 Relationships on site

The CLT's leverage at the St Clements site is mostly political. **Political engagement** from the side of Ken Livingstone and later Boris Johnson was a response to the pressure built up by Citizens UK that held the mayors accountable for the St Clements site. In 2007, for instance, there was a camp outside City Hall highlighting the dramatic housing situation, and events like that were used to pressure politicians to engage with affordable housing plans. As a member of Citizens UK, London CLT has been building on such political pressure.

**"London CLT didn't have any capital when we made this agreement, we weren't bringing anything financially to the project, it was a political commitment because of the amount support we had through community organising and the pressure we put on decision makers to make this project happen." Hannah Emery-Wright**

CLT projects in different boroughs have different relationships with the borough councils. The initial support of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets was not followed by financial subsidies during the process, allowing the CLT to keep its relative independence and mobility, without additional strings attached to public funding. In some cases, like in Lewisham, the site offered for a CLT is rather difficult, but still a show of public support.

**"Since CLTs aren't prioritised, we are given sites that people don't necessarily want. As CLTs become more mainstream maybe we'll have more a choice over the sites we can choose." Hannah Emery-Wright**

At the St Clements site, London CLT found itself in a cooperation with **Linden Homes**, a commercial entity, with a fundamentally different working culture. The different priorities of the developer caused significant delays in delivering homes, which forced the CLT to continuously reallocate the homes as struggling would-be residents were forced to drop out of the process. Changing positions concerning the John Denham building from the side of the developer and incomplete legal protection on the CLT side have meant additional fundraising tasks for the CLT.

**"Working with Linden Homes has been difficult as we have fundamentally different working cultures: they are about making profit and turnover, and we are a non-profit organisation providing affordable homes." Hannah Emery-Wright**

Important relationships with groups around the St Clements site and Mile End were formed already during the meanwhile use activities led by Shuffle. A key alliance was built with neighbouring site, the **Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park** by Shuffle when organising its meanwhile use events. The Cemetery Park is a nature reserve with knowledge in biodiversity and development and with the experience of building gardens also for housing associations: they also prepared

a biodiversity plan for St Clements. The Cemetery Park also hosted many of the events Shuffle organised.

At the St Clements site, London CLT supported residents to establish **residents' association** to include CLT residents as well as private and social housing residents to participate in the decision-making related to the site. This organisation has already been formed with a representative from each building, but will be formally constituted in 2020 as a resident management company to take over from the management company appointed by Linden Homes once the developers have left. Some of the residents constituting the association are also part of the Tower Hamlet Leadership Committee run by Citizens UK, organising a broader discussion about the issues of the borough. As Linden Homes have no long-term interest in the project, they will relinquish their stake in the site once they are no longer developing it. Once the development is finished, the site will be handed over to a freeholder, the Ricardo Community Foundation (named after the famous economist David Ricardo whose family lived in the area) made up of different stakeholders on the site, including Peabody, the CLT, the local council, the Greater London Authority, Linden Homes, Galliford Try and the residents' management company.

## 12 Impact

The impact of the London CLT on the St.Clements site, its neighbourhood and on the city is manifold. By opening the St Clements site from Bow Road through to Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park the built environment facilitated the rebuilding of social fabric also, making its heritage buildings and public spaces accessible for all surrounding neighbours and not just those on site.

By offering affordable housing to people involved in the neighbourhood, CLT homes are contributing to easing the effects of London's housing crisis. With its temporary use events and participatory governance model, the London CLT has engaged local communities to share their memories of the site, on one hand, and shape its future, on the other. The involvement of local residents in the CLT board and subcommittees, as well as their participation in local campaigns contributes to improving their skills and capacities of mobilisation and self-determination.

**"It's not enough just to build affordable homes but we want to have a lasting impact in the areas we work in: developing our residents as individuals or leaders of the community." Hannah Emery-Wright**

At the city level, London CLT has created a precedent to showcase how CLTs can work in an urban setting, under strong real estate pressure. While previous CLTs had worked predominantly in rural areas where local communities came together to buy land, London CLT has opened the way for urban CLTs and showed how to apply political pressure in order to secure land. Reaching beyond the St Clements site, London CLT is involved in setting up other CLTs across London, and provides peer learning opportunities for other initiatives from across the country. With the help of the [SHICC](#) project, its resources relating to its experiences are also available for initiatives on the continent.

## 13 Interviewees

Charles Campion, architect at JTP

Tom Chance, president of the National CLT Network

Lizzy Daish, co-founder of Shuffle, former board member of London CLT

Hannah Emery-Wright, Communities Manager at London CLT

Nicola de Quincey, architect and heritage specialist at JTP

Rosy Smith, resident at St Clements, member of the residents' association and former board member of London CLT

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## **13. Jam Factory**

### **(Lviv, Ukraine)**



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# 1 Introduction

[Jam Factory Art Center](#) is an organization that is committed to implement its vision - opening an interdisciplinary center of contemporary art in the revitalized space of the Jam Factory premises, which through its educational activities, exhibitions and research will reflect current processes in Ukrainian and international art and culture, and will open opportunities for public dialogue. The impressive neo-Gothic building, as well as several adjacent buildings from later periods, is located in the historical industrial district of Lviv called Pidzamche. From 1872, the alcohol factory owned by Kronik and Son company was operating there. It changed a number of functions and stood vacant from 2008, when the vegetable processing unit producing jam was closed. Several grass-root artistic and cultural initiatives temporarily used the building in the following years.

In 2015, the Austrian historian and private donor Harald Binder, well-known in Lviv as a founder of the [Center for Urban History of East Central Europe](#), institution of research and public history, bought the Jam Factory site and initiated its revitalization through the [Harald Binder Cultural Enterprises](#) (HBCE).

In the international competition in 2015, the project of the Austrian bureau of Stefan Rindler was selected. The long process of consolidation of the land plots, getting permissions, and adaptation of the Austrian project to the Ukrainian laws and regulations, with the help of the local "[AVR Development](#)" bureau, started. In the meantime, the team of the project is working on institution-building, with [grant program](#), educational lecture series, exhibitions, and art fellowship residences, functioning in the temporary locations nearby.

In October 2019, the implementation of the revitalization project started. It includes restoration and adaptation of the 2 buildings listed as monuments of local significance, as well as construction of new additional premises, to produce and host theatre plays and performances, exhibitions, workshops, event hall, offices, restaurant, and open public space. In the future the Jam Factory Art Center is seen as a mixed model, getting support both from the owner, from external grants, and generating income through the building itself. The complete renovation of the complex is planned for 2021.

# 2 Timeline

1850 - Moses Kronik, the resident of the village of Znesinnia (Zniesienie) in close proximity to Lviv (Lemberg, Lwów), got the permission from the village's owner Franciszka Laszkowska to develop a distillery in his private house located just behind the checking and customs point on the border of the village and Lviv.

1869 – the railroad Lviv – Brody and Pidzamche station was constructed nearby.

1872 - start of production at the alcohol factory of Joseph Kronik (the grandson of Moses). His son Leib developed his independent enterprise, also producing alcohol, next to father's till 1898.

1870s – Jozef Kronik settles the commercial ties with Vienna, the capital of the Habsburg Empire.

1878 - the synagogue was constructed on the neighboring plot, Kronik family among the donors. It did not survive until today.

Approx. 1898 – two enterprises (by Josef Kronik and his son Leib) merged, and company got the name “Josef Kronik and Son”.

1912 – the “Kronik and son” enterprise received a privilege to deliver to the court of the Austrian-Hungarian empire (K&K Hoflieferand status).

1914 – Kronik family escaped Russian occupation of Galicia to Vienna. Part of the family stayed there during the interwar period.

1915 – the “Kronik and Son” factory was damaged because of fire caused by the military operations.

1921 – Jozef Kronik renewed the production at the factory.

1926 – Moritz Kronik, next in the dynasty, gained full ownership of the factory and lived both in Lviv and Vienna in the interwar period.

1939 – Moritz Kronik escaped the Soviet occupation of Lviv to Warsaw, where he probably perished.

1939-1945 – the members of Kronik family perished in the Holocaust in Warsaw (?) and death camps in Bielzec, Teresienstadt and Auschwitz.

After 1945 – the former “Kronik and Son” factory was nationalized by the Soviet authorities and was subordinated to the trust “Ukrholovvyno” (“All-Ukrainian Vine Trust”). The production and distribution of the imported vines from Moldova and Alger took place there.

1970s - the building started to function as a vegetable processing unit, where the vegetable preserves, jams, honeys, and mushrooms were made.

2008 – the production stopped on site, and the buildings were sold to Oleksiy Kurylyshyn, Lviv real estate developer who welcomed temporary uses of the site by artists and activists.

2011 – the revitalization of the Jam Factory was included in the program of Pidzamche district revitalization developed by Lviv (City Institute) and Krakow (Institute of Urban and Regional Development). Even though no practical steps followed on the side of municipality, it was a symbolic recognition of the importance of the project for the future of the district.

2014 – Bozhena Zakaliuzhna (Pelenska), Lviv art curator and activist, organized the international [workshop “Regeneration of Industrial Buildings in Ukraine”](#), where the invited experts shared their experience and also drafted some initial ideas for the Jam Factory.

2015 - [Harald Binder Cultural Enterprises](#) (HBCE) was created with the aim to revitalize the site into the Jam Factory Art Center. Austrian historian and cultural entrepreneur Harald Binder purchased the main building. Bozhena Zakaliuzhna joined the initiative as a director of the Jam Factory Art Center.

2015-2017 – the consolidation of the 6 different plots into one continued. The architectural competition took place, and the Austrian bureau of [Stefan Rindler](#) was selected for the architectural project design. On the Ukrainian side, the “[AVR Development](#)” bureau was selected to help to adapt the Austrian project to the local laws and regulations.

2016 - Strategy and Interim strategy was developed by Bozhena Zakaliuzhna.



2016 - first public events took place: "Dreams of Pidzamcze" - Swedish-Belorus-Ukrainian project focused on children's dreams of public spaces.

2017 - HBCE [web-site](#) was launched.

2017, September - new permanent staff joined the team (2 project managers); temporary Infopoint building (for events and communication) was repaired; [Tell Your Story](#) oral history project started, and grants program launched.

2018 - strategy session with core team and external experts took place, where the institutional and architectural design were settled.

2018 - public events started in the temporary Infopoint building.

Late 2018 - branding for the Jam Factory ready.

2019 - expertise of the project in the municipal organs was prepared. In January the new office in the building located nearby, 3/2 Mekhanichna Str., was renovated, and in June - October - the temporary exhibition, event and art workshops space at 5 Mekhanichna Str. was renovated, with the purpose to use it before the opening of the main building. The core team moved to Infopoint temporary building, and the new permanent staff (accountant, office manager and assistant, communication manager, grant manager, design and construction director) joined the team. In April, the [Black Box](#) public and free of charge educational program (on contemporary theatre) in the Infopoint building was launched. In October, the public competition for general contractor took place, and preparatory works started on site which turned into construction site. In November, the first exhibition, ["Let's Talk About Modernity"](#), was opened in the temporary building.

2019, October - 2020, February - working drawings of the project are prepared, the permissions from the State Architecture and Construction Inspection are received.

2020 - 2021 - construction and renovation works.

2021 - opening of the Jam Factory Art Center planned.

### 3 The story of the building

In 1850, Moses Kronik, the Jewish resident of the village of Znesinnia (Zniesienie) in close proximity to Lviv (Lemberg, Lwów), got the permission from the village's owner Franciszka Laszkowska to develop a distillery in his private house located just behind the checking and customs point on the border of the village and Lviv. The decision to develop a distillery was determined both by the restrictions of alcohol production in the city because of fire safety reasons, the lower taxes outside of the city and the available infrastructure - the road of national significance was constructed in 1770s and went through the village, and in 1869, the railroad Lviv - Brody with Pidzamche station. It was a part of booming industries in the area, mostly oriented towards processing of agricultural products, Baczewski alcohol factory being one of the most well-known in the Habsburg Empire. The first known mention of the building on Kronik's plot is from 1850 land cadastre, and in 1872 another production building was added next to it. The year 1872 is also mentioned on the label as a start of production of rums and rosolios at the alcohol factory of Joseph Kronik (the grandson of Moses), see picture 1.



**Picture 1. Label of a kosher liqueur produced by “Kronik and Son”, approx. 1920s – 1930s. Source: Jam Factory Art Center collection.**

Somewhere around the same time the synagogue was constructed in the neighboring plot (it did not survive until today). Some researchers, such as Roman Mohytych, also suppose that the neo-Gothic tower was added into the building later, supposedly in 1908, after the fire in the building. Another somewhat similar tower is also located on the building just next to the customs checkpoint at Lychakiv road, so this stylish addition could be interpreted as a mark of the symbolical gateway to the city. On the other hand, the romantic and historicist style of the building could be interpreted as an advertisement of the enterprise and a sign of the upward mobility of the Jewish family, which grew from small local entrepreneurs to higher bourgeois and literate class. As an indicator of this social and professional advancement, the “Kronik and son” enterprise received a privilege to deliver to the court of the Austrian-Hungarian empire (K&K Hoflieferant status) in 1912.

Jewish owners of the factory were active members of the local Jewish community and generously donated for the establishment of local synagogue, hospital, and Jewish cemetery. In the interwar period, the next in the owner’s dynasty, Moritz Kronik, donated also for the colonizers of Palestine, thus signaling about his political views. The enterprise produced spirits and traded vines, first imported from Hungary, and later from Palestine. Before gaining the full ownership of the factory (1926), Moritz lived mainly in Vienna where he managed his own chemical firm. Kronik family members were traveling between Lviv and Vienna in the interwar period. The enterprise developed quite well in this time, as a part of lively industrial and multinational (and especially Jewish) part of the city (see picture 2).



**Picture 2. General view of Zolkiewska Str. (now Bohdana Khmelnytskoho Str.), 1930s. Source: Narodowe Archiwum Cyfrowe, 1-U-3584-6**

The Second World War put a tragic end to the Kroniks dynasty in Lviv. No testimonies on exact history of the factory in this period were found, but it is known that all the Jews were resettled to the Lviv ghetto in November – December 1941, and later died both on site and in the neighboring village Lysynychi killing site, or were deported, mostly to death camp in Belzec. The factory itself was located outside the ghetto. Part of Kronik family members also died in Warsaw, and in the death camps of Teresienstadt and Auschwitz.

After the end of the war, Lviv became the part of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, and all the enterprises, including small and medium, were nationalized. The trust "Ukrholovvyno" ("All-Ukrainian Vine Trust") became the administrative force responsible for the building, and the factory continued as a site for production, as well as distribution of the imported vines from Moldova and Alger. The romantic look of the building inspired photographers also in the Soviet period (see picture 3).



**Picture 3. View of the Factory in 1950s – 1960s. Private collection of Dmytro Dakhno, Media Archive of the Center for Urban History of East Central Europe.**

In 1970s, the building functioned as a vegetable processing unit, where the vegetable preserves, jams, honeys, and mushrooms were made and sold in the small adjacent shop. In comparison to the other big plants and factories, developed as a part of Soviet industrialization of Lviv, especially numerous at Pidzamche, the vegetable processing base was a tiny enterprise, with smaller salaries, which stood somehow outside the mainstream “industrial pride of giant plants” discourse. In some periods, the salaries were paid by the vegetable products which later were used in the informal exchange practices at the market located nearby; also, some half-rotten or fresh vegetables were given to the workers as a bonus which was an advantage in the deficit economy. Importantly, the factory’s workers, many of them female but also male, were commuting to work from the villages around Lviv, thus continuing the story of the factory as a point of connection between the city and agricultural vicinity. The products were sent to many destinations in the USSR, including western and central Ukraine, Moscow, Far East, Belarus etc. The main building was declared a monument of local significance in 1990.

After 1991, the period of economy restructuring started, and in the late 1990s the factory was reorganized into the company “Vitacons” which continued to produce jams and vegetable preserves. In 2008, the production stopped on site, and the building was sold to Oleksiy Kurylyshyn, private owner and real estate developer from Lviv, who was interested in the adaptive reuse of the building but had no sufficient funds to cover the renovations. Instead he allowed different grass-root cultural initiatives to have their events in the building. From among most important there were [Contemporary Art Week](#) (from 2008) and [Lviv Fashion Week](#), theatre performances, [Urban Exploration Fest](#) (see also Prokopenko 2015; Jam Factory 2019).





**Picture 4. Contemporary Art Week poster, 2009. Source: Jam Factory Art Center Collection.**

After the decline of the industrial production in the post-Soviet period, the district of Pidzamche where the complex is situated gradually became perceived as neglected part of the city, physically isolated by the railway and located (mentally) far away from the touristically attractive downtown. The district is a very rich heritage area, but many buildings are deteriorating because of the lack of maintenance. A number of post-industrial buildings in this formerly industrial and multinational area of the city are waiting for revitalization or demolition and redevelopment, as it happened in other parts of Lviv.

## 4 The initiative

In 2015, Dr. Harald Binder, professional historian and cultural entrepreneur from Vienna, bought the building with the idea to develop a revitalization project for the future art center. By that moment Dr. Binder had been a well-known public figure in Lviv and Ukraine, primarily because of [the Center for Urban History of East Central Europe](#) founded by him in Lviv in 2004. The Center acts as a research and public history institution which engages different audiences in dialogue on unknown and challenging aspects of the past and serves as a space for discussions on urban and cultural policies. It is also a successful case of adaptive reuse of the historical resident building at Bohomoltsia Str. into an office, exhibition space, accommodation for the research fellows, conference hall, and café. Having this background, Dr. Binder decided to develop a new project, this time more challenging one, serving for the critical reassessment of contemporary Ukrainian and international art, and combining research, art production, and educational programs. His idea was supported by Bozhena Zakaliuzhna, cultural manager and independent art activist who has been previously engaged in the temporary uses of the site.

The motivation behind the decision to purchase the site and to start the revitalization project was multifold. First of all, due to the temporary uses in 2008-2014, the site firmly became associated with the idea of the art center. The previous owner, Oleksiy Kurylyshyn, positioned it as a revitalization project, but had no sufficient funds to cover the renovation, especially after the major economy crisis of 2008-2009. The very name of "Jam Factory" was invented by temporary users and became common among Lviv residents. The building was also mentioned in the media as a place of cultural life, "second life" of the factory. Bozhena Zakaliuzhna, who was involved in the temporary uses of the site, also contributed to the promotion of the idea of the art center in the building, especially by organizing the international [workshop "Regeneration of Industrial Buildings in Ukraine"](#) in 2014, where the invited experts shared their experience and also drafted some ideas for the Jam Factory.

Secondly, the start of another project in Lviv was seen by Harald Binder as reasonable because there is no other institution of contemporary art in the city and few of them in Ukraine, and its possible impact could be much bigger than, for example, another art center in Vienna (Bozhena Zakaliuzhna 2018). What made this project especially ambitious was the location of the building in the historically rich district, but also district perceived as depressive and postindustrial. This initiative differed significantly from the very common strategy of the investors to redevelop historical properties in the downtown Lviv, the closer to the Market Square, the better. The idea of the Jam Factory as being a trigger of revitalization of Pidzamche has been already present in the discourse, but no one took practical steps to implement it.

*"Neighborhood development and extending of the imagined boundaries outwards the city center to the areas which are not included, and in many minds, are peripheral. It is not only periphery in territorial sense, but also in a social sense, for many. And that gives it [the Jam Factory project] this special touch"* (Harald Binder 2019).

Importantly, the amount of investment to realize the revitalization project in Lviv is still significantly lower than in Vienna. Thirdly, the very building of the factory looked inspiring and very suitable for the art center, also because of its paradoxical combination of decorative neo-gothic style and former industrial function (picture 5).

*"The encounter with the building, I think, is a very good term, because it is something which is essential in such a project – how do you relate to the object where you want to do something. It was on the market for sale, and I was introduced to the owner, and I was fascinated by this extraordinary strangeness of this Neo-Gothic style of the building in half decay in the district of the city which was not in my focus of everyday experience... So, I saw this building and I found that it screams that someone does something with it. And I immediately thought that it would be a great place for a cultural centre. Obviously, it is a "western" tradition of industrial sites transforming into cultural spaces"* (Harald Binder 2019).



**Picture 5.** The contemporary look of the Jam Factory, photo by Volodymyr Paliy, 2015.

## 5 Activities

*"A lot of very cool projects which people poured vast sums of money into failed for the reason that people were bound to the building, not to the institution. They made a beautiful building, they created the whole infrastructure in the best way but had nothing to fill it with... That's why, now paying attention to creating institution is the main task for me." (Bozhena Zakaliuzhna 2018-2019).*

In 2015-2017, the Jam Factory Art Center existed rather as an architectural project, and in 2018 the team became much more concerned with institution building.

*Starting the development of the renovation project without a definite programme was a part of longer process of searching for the identity of the future Center. The institutions of contemporary art are few in Ukraine and non-existent in Lviv. Therefore it was important to have the period of creative improvising about the future and brainstorming with different specialists who were invited to give advice. The Stefan Rindler bureau initially thought of a contemporary art museum, but in the process of discussions, the concept of the institution evolved into the "Center" which is not so much focused on collections but on public programs. Obviously, this searching for identity also contributed into the delays in the project timeline.*

In 2017, Bozhena Zakaliuzhna, as a director of the Jam Factory, prepared a strategic roadmap on provisional activities in a situation of delay with renovation of

the buildings. As a result, the activities of the Center started much earlier than the actual renovation works.

*Testing uses before the renovation became one of the tools for the Jam Factory team. Initially thinking of the future Center as an art cluster with several resident organizations and independent artists, the Jam Factory team invited other actors to have their events in the temporary building, in many cases for free. In the process the team came to the idea that to implement its aim of promotion and stronger public outreach of contemporary art, the single institution with strong educational agenda is more relevant for the local context than just a cluster of independent actors with their own agendas.*

From 2017, it became clear that the Center will not be a kind of gallery collecting and representing most fashionable and expensive international art pieces, as it is the case, for example, with [Pinchuk Art Center](#) in Kyiv, which is oriented towards international fashion and much less rooted into the local context. It is impossible because of financial reasons, but also because this kind of “rootlessness” is criticized in Ukraine. Instead, the Jam Factory is seen as an institution combining research, education, and production of contemporary art, in international cooperation, but with focus on local context and needs of local publics.

The most important activities in 2017-2019 were:

**Communication** with the residents and broader audiences about the architectural project and the initiative.

**Research.** The information on the history of the building, its owners and production was initially very scarce. There are still many undiscovered parts of it – not only related to the distant past, but also in the post-war decades and post-1991 period, when the building was privatized and radical economic transformations started. The historical research was carried out in the archives and libraries of Lviv, Kyiv, Warsaw, and Vienna. To learn more about the Soviet and post-Soviet periods and to engage the local residents and former employees of the Jam Factory, the [oral history and mapping project "Tell Your Story"](#) was launched. Students from the universities were also involved as part of their educational activities.

**Working with the neighbourhood** – in 2017-2019, there were several partner projects with contemporary artists, including those for children living in the neighbourhood. The artists supported by the SWAP, British-Ukrainian exchange program, are coming annually to Jam Factory as visiting fellows and develop their projects, also in cooperation with the locals. One of such projects is Dana Venecia's [film project](#) which involved children from Pidzamche as actors (see picture 6).





**Picture 6. Screening of the draft video by Dana Venecia (SWAP UK/UA residences) in the temporary Infopoint building, October 2018. Source: Jam Factory Art Center.**

**Building partnerships** in Ukraine and internationally was very helpful in terms of gradual development of the institutional design and becoming more self-aware. In 2018, several applications were submitted for international partnerships and joint projects. Jam Factory also became a member of the [Trans Europe Halles](#) network.

*"Ukraine became a focus of interest more after 2014 [the Maidan Revolution]. We stopped being some kind of blank space for many organizations because we started talking about ourselves in a different way. This self-awareness, this change, this feeling that we as people living in this country have to change and stop waiting that someone from the top will change it for us. This awareness... of democratic transformations won't be made down from the top, only bottom-up... And this understanding that we can change something, it affects people from other countries, and it gets interesting... A lot of people understand that they will reinforce and make their influence felt with the help of that cooperation" (Bozhena Zakaliuzhna 2018).*

**Infopoint** (temporary building for the educational activities and presentations) was renovated in 2017. Cultural events started there, and the building was also rented (in many cases for free) to other cultural initiatives. The main aim of these activities is a gradual change in the neighborhood and more sensitive and organic development.

[Harald Binder Cultural Enterprises annual grant program](#) started in 2018, with Jam Factory team as an operator. The non-governmental organizations from Ukraine and abroad are encouraged to apply with art and educational projects.

*"This is a way of building partnerships and to support both beginners and those having already a name. It is also a way to see how other institutions work, what these institutions are in whole Ukraine and abroad... For us, it is a chance to try different formats and search for priorities" (Bozhena Zakaliuzhna 2019).*



**Picture 7.** Wiz-Art Film School, one of the projects supported by the grant program of the HBCE, had its results presented at the screening in August 2018.

**Educational events and educational theatre program [Black Box](#)** started in 2018. It grew out of the feeling that there is a great lack of understanding what contemporary art is in Ukrainian context. The state-supported cultural institutions remain quite conservative and closed environments, as well as the educational system for creative arts. The contemporary Ukrainian artists are much more known in the “west” and are not fully a part of the local context. Therefore the educational programs for children and adults are priority, so this situation could be gradually and organically changed.

The Black box is a lecture and practical program, which includes lectures, discussions and workshops with professionals from different Ukrainian regions – Kharkiv, Kyiv, Lviv - and international specialists. The lecture program is public and free of charge, while the practical one is only for the selected applicants who are engaged in contemporary art or theater and are ready to work deeper.

**Exhibitions.** In October and November 2019, the first exhibitions were hosted in the temporary exhibition and event space at Mekhanichna Str. (renovated in 2019 especially for this temporary use).



**Picture 8. Bozhena Zakaliuzhna (Pelenska), on the right, is talking at the opening of Maciej Bogdanowicz's exhibition "Gardens of Pleasures", November 2019.**

*"Naturally, there were pretty many different mistakes but it's so important that we have an opportunity to have them before the institution opening. This period is so important because we try, think something through, set certain tasks and start to implement them... Needless to say, we are very eager to plan and open exhibitions, invite and work with contemporary curators and so on right away. However, this time when we had some smaller projects in a smaller number was very significant" (Bozhena Zakaliuzhna 2019).*

## 6 Renovations

*"This is a European manner in project development: not 3 weeks of planning and start of construction, but to linger over it for two years!... How Harald [Binder] reflects himself over the scenarios of the future use, what kind of experts he invites, how he changes his mind, how he changes the project requirements! There was a big polemics at the consultative council, because there is a factory [monument] building and a new building. And the council was quarreling over the façades. And the Austrian [architect] Stefan Rindler proposed to add the cube [building] there instead of the building which is not a monument. And the activists started to shout that "it is absurd, it is impossible, you go too far!"... And I think this is a great case, a separate book should be written about how many people were involved, how they thought, what discussions were there. And this, in fact, small building can become a methodological guide for the revitalization of other objects. We should bring there all the rich oligarchs and show them: look, it is not a posh restaurant with sharks, but culture, media, library, actors and artists" (Yulian Chaplinskyi 2019).*

The main building of the Jam Factory was bought by Harald Binder in 2015, but this was only the first step in consolidating 6 adjacent plots with other factory buildings owned by different legal entities which took two additional years (Kateryna Kovalchuk 2019). In general, the chaotic situation with land cadaster and low quality of the land use documents in a pressing issue in Ukraine.

*In many adaptive reuse and industrial zones revitalization projects in Ukraine the **major challenge** is the legal status of the land plots. In the official documents, the adjacent plots can have different and not coinciding borders, and unclear ownership; many plots are under court investigations, also as a result of shadow practices of privatization in the post-Soviet period. The State Land Registry is not complete and not publicly accessible, and was a subject of corrupt manipulations in the past. Therefore, the work of lawyers is long and demanding.*

One of the complicated issues in the process of adaptive reuse in Ukraine is very personalized approach among the officials, when the decisions could be taken on the basis of personal relations, tastes, and some hidden personal agendas:

*"This is very hard to understand from the European perspective, because here things are just different and sometimes things which seem to be very complicated, suddenly are just resolved, because somebody was hired for a position and just said how it's gonna be, and another person is not that important. Or things which seem to be very easy somehow become very complicated (laughs) and we don't understand why... That is a problem here that processes, which should be easy, sometimes become complicated because either it is overregulated or there are people sitting somewhere who just obstruct it" (Harald Binder 2019).*

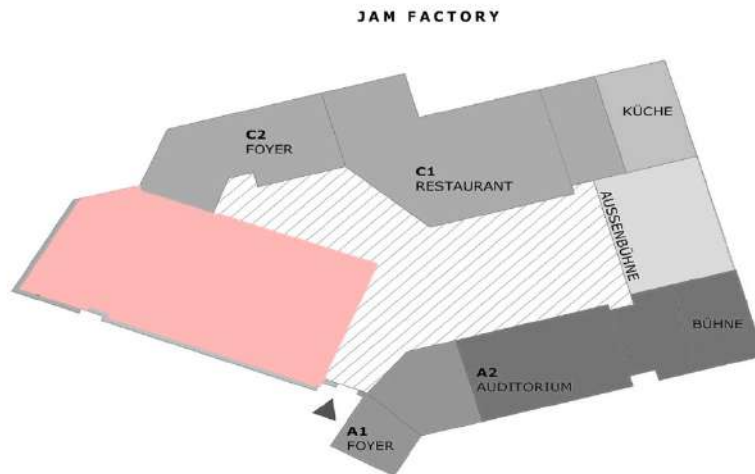
*One of the major **challenges** for the project is the inefficiency of bureaucracy and absence of established schemes of adaptive reuse. More traditional restoration projects which adapt historical buildings into hotels and restaurants are common in Lviv, but not the revitalization of the complex of buildings and plots with addition of the new buildings next to historical monuments. The solution of the Jam Factory team was to strictly follow all the official rules and to promote the understanding of importance of the project for the city. No informal connections, very common for the local context, were used. Good reputation of Harald Binder and his previous projects in Lviv, media coverage and acknowledgement of the Jam Factory project among the urban activists in Ukraine, as well as positive attitude from the municipality, were helpful for going through the bureaucratic procedures. But in spite of this, adaptation of the project to local conditions and getting permissions took much longer than initially expected.*

While the plots were consolidating in 2015-2017, the architectural project was gradually developed. First there was a closed competition among 5 bureaus selected by Harald Binder and Bozhena Zakaliuzhna on the basis of professional advice. All the projects were very interesting, but not any of them was completely fitting the idea and the place. The decision was taken to continue searching for the right approach. Finally, the project by Austrian bureau "[Stefan Rindler](#)" was selected as a basis – "most



interesting decision, probably the most challenging, combining modern architecture and the old” (Zakaliuzhna 2018). However, it turned out it is impossible to fully implement the Austrian project in the Ukrainian conditions because of too different building regulations. Therefore, the local bureau “[AVR Development](#)” was contracted to cooperate with the Austrian side.

There are 3 most important functions in the future complex: exhibition, theatre, and public zone with commercial function (restaurant) (see picture 9).



**Picture 9. Plan of the future Jam Factory Art Center.**

These spaces are planned as flexible and adaptable for very different projects and needs. All the buildings are connected by the basement level into one complex, and different technical and engineering communications will be located there. One of the advantages of the historical complex is a comfortable and human-scale courtyard which is inviting and will be used for events as well. The neo-Gothic tower will have a rather limited use because in accordance with the regulations it is too narrow to organize a public space there.

When the building was bought it has been already in quite a deteriorated condition, and necessary works were done to fix the most important things and prevent further decline. But major works on the historical monuments will be quite complicated: the foundation and the basic structure of the building should be reinforced using the special technology of injections into the historical material of the walls. The façades facing the main street (Khmelnysky Str.) are under threat of collapse, but they should be preserved completely and require especially sensitive approach, and the team of specialists will be needed to work with this. The special research was done to figure out what kind of materials were used in the building, and it is planned that respective materials – plaster and tiles - will be produced from natural components to restore the façade. The historical wooden steps will be preserved and restored as well. In the exhibition space, some internal walls will be removed to make the space bigger, but the historical walls will be marked on the floors, and the hints of the walls will remain in

place so the building could be read as historical. There should be also digital tools to help the visitor to “read” the historical building (Kateryna Kovalchuk 2019).

In 2018, the first permission was received from among the “city-planning terms and limitations”. It means the general acceptance of the project by the municipality. In order to apply further to get other permissions for the construction start, it is necessary to meet so called technical specifications. Since January 2019, the team has begun submitting requests for these technical specifications (from the companies dealing with lightning, electricity, gas, water, drainage and sewage). These are private enterprises with a very small share of public sector, and at the same time very complex monopolistic structures which try to get as many financial resources as possible. Therefore the negotiations with them are not easy. As the stage of meeting technical specifications is almost finished, the team is going to sign an agreement with the architectural bureau “AVR Development” basically on the practical implementation of the project. In April 2020, the general contractor is to be selected and an agreement signed. Therefore, the main construction process will start no earlier than summer 2020. But the first preparatory activities have already started on site in October 2019.

Practically, the process of getting permissions and legal documents for the site turned out to be very slow and complicated, but the project is developing in quite a gradual and “organic” way, trying to set the example of the adaptive reuse which is not engaged in any informal deals with the officials and services and creates new practices of transparent development and communication.

*“I see it has a chance to test the Ukrainian ability to do something efficiently without bribery”* (Harald Binder 2019).

## 7 Heritage

The Jam Factory complex consists of several buildings from different epochs. The oldest one, from mid-XIX century, is the main building in Neo-Gothic style which is a listed monument of local significance. Some buildings are from the interwar period, and some from the Soviet epoch. Because of the close proximity to the listed monument, the limits on the height of the new buildings (23.6 m) apply to the project and a special “historical and urban planning feasibility study” had to be approved.



**Picture 10. Model of the future Jam Factory Art Center complex, with listed buildings marked in red. Source: AVR Development.**

Harald Binder, being a professional historian himself, and several other researchers - historians Yevhen Poliakov and Joseph Gelston and architectural historian Roman Mohytych, developed a multi-layered understanding of the heritage values of the complex. Firstly, the architectural heritage values are defined by the neo-Gothic style applied to the industrial building which is a unique case for Lviv. Secondly, the building is a witness of the industrial boom and rapid growth of population in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the district performed production and transportation functions, and served as a link to agricultural areas, with its numerous distilleries processing grain into different types of alcoholic beverages. Thirdly, the enterprise represents the multinational history of Lviv, and the history of the Jewish family of the owners is a part of bigger history of Jewish businesses thriving in the Habsburg Empire and interwar period, also with broad connections to other geographical localities. The disruption of the family history in the Holocaust is also a part of dark heritage of Europe in the XX century, as well as the silencing and non-remembering of the factory's past and Jewish ownership in the Soviet period. Fourthly, the living memories of those who worked at the factory in Soviet period are also part of intangible heritage, revived in the oral history and mental mapping project "Tell Your Story". Fifthly, the temporary uses of the factory after the end of production and before the purchase of the building in 2015 is another heritage layer because it is connected to the development of independent art initiatives in Lviv, such as Contemporary Art Week which resulted in many further fruitful initiatives.

With so many heritage layers, it was not easy to decide how to harmoniously develop the complex. One of challenges is that the exact uses of some plots and buildings are not known, because too few documents have survived. Especially disruptive was the Second World War, with tremendous change of population not only due to the Holocaust, but also because of the postwar population exchanges (including resettlement of Poles to Poland in its new borders and influx of Ukrainians from other regions of Ukraine and from the Lviv rural vicinity; see more in Amar 2015). Being a small industrial complex, it did not get any attention from the historians in the Soviet period, and, as far as we know, there was no company museum or cultural center to

take care of its history documentation, on the contrary to bigger enterprises. On the other hand, due to this smaller scale of the complex and the character of production (no heavy industry and no contamination of the site) the buildings were relatively well preserved up to 2008. After that, unfortunately, the buildings started to quickly deteriorate because they stood vacant (Kateryna Kovalchuk 2019). Another challenge of the adaptive reuse of the industrial building as an art center is the need to maximize the adaptability of the premises for the variety of different uses, such as exhibition space, theatre and performance, workshops, offices, and event halls. The project is aimed at preservation of the structure of the whole complex, which is nicely arranged around the comfortable courtyard, and the use of temporary walls and moving stage inside the building to make the space more flexible.

Formally, there are buildings which are considered to be not historically valuable and they could be demolished. Several specialists advised to demolish some non-monuments facing the main street (Khmelnysky Str., formerly Zolkiewska) in order to make a radical statement about the new function of the building as a contemporary art center. But after a longer reflection Harald Binder took a decision not to demolish them because they are uniting two other monuments and are perceived as one complex in mind of the local people. Importantly, this decision is also taken in a situation where objects from imperial period, especially decorated historicist buildings, are prioritized as valuable heritage, whereas modernist heritage from Polish and Soviet periods is in many cases neglected. For Binder, it was important to challenge this traditional division and to demonstrate more delicate approach. The new “black box” building will be added from another side and will be facing the back street and not the main street. Personally for Harald Binder, it is important to develop the understanding of heritage that includes the opinion of the local residents and those who can be called a “heritage community” (those who had connections to the site in the past, either former factory workers or artists and activists).

*In Ukraine, the understanding of heritage is still very much expert-centered: there are officially recognized criteria of a “monument” in the legislation, and the opinion of the community is most often not so crucial. For the Jam Factory project, it is important that the listed and non-listed buildings facing the main street are perceived as one complex by the community. Therefore they are left intact, in spite of the advice of professional architects.*





**Picture 11. Visualization of the future complex, AVR Development.**



**Picture 12. Visualization of the future complex, front side facing the main street, and cube added in the back. Source: AVR Development.**

Two monument buildings of the complex will undergo restoration, and other buildings – reconstruction, and a new “black box” building will be added (see pictures 11 and 12). Also, Binder is the owner of the plot which is behind the complex and where the synagogue had been located. There is no clear project of the use of this adjacent territory, but one of the main ideas is to mark symbolically the plan of the non-existing synagogue. As one of the first temporary marks, in October 2018, the artist Taras Pastushchuk made a [performance](#) on that spot, marking the plan of the synagogue by salt and quoting the Bible (Ackermann 2018).

*"The practice of our Lviv architects is that you always can find some means to build [on the monument], to add an extension and so on. But our bureau from the very beginning understood this is not our way. Our way is to maximize the delicateness of approach to what is already there" (Kateryna Kovalchuk 2019).*

## 8 Regulations and policies

The national regulations and legal framework of the adaptive reuse in Ukraine is quite complicated and cannot be called enabling and supportive for the adaptive reuse projects. In general, the heritage protection, urban revitalization, and creative industries are different spheres and there is no comprehensive strategy of their interrelated development. After 1991, there were no national programs of heritage revitalization in Ukraine. One of the major problems is absence of the strict vertical system of heritage protection and unclear division of responsibilities between the Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Regional Development and Territories, as well as lack of trained cadres on the national and local levels. The heritage protection in general is understaffed and underfunded. In its essential approaches, the Heritage Protection Law is oriented towards conservation of heritage, with emphasis on its material aspect, and not towards adaptive reuse and revitalization. The approval of the Ministry of Culture is needed also in case of listing the local monuments, such as Jam Factory building, but the Ministry has no capacity to process the documents quickly and efficiently, and in many cases does not react to the reported cases of damage or threat, but also makes the development impossible because of centralized bureaucracy. Therefore, many specialists are sure some kind of decentralization is needed in this sphere, and the local monuments are to be given solely under management of local heritage protection organs, similarly to Polish model:

*"You [the Ministry] have to get your priorities straight. You have to pick national landmarks, the most important landmarks in Ukraine, national treasure, and worry about those exclusively. The rest, hand it over to local bodies. Don't worry that people will ruin them, because people aren't stupid: these are their treasures" (Lilia Onyshchenko 2018).*

In fact, the decentralization reform in Ukraine is under way now, and many local communities already identified heritage as the backbone of their economic and cultural development. Much more funding now is accumulated on the local level, thus giving a chance for better heritage management.

Also, some national institutions and services related to adaptive reuse (such as those dealing with building regulations, fire safety, land cadastre, labor rights protection) are very slow in processing documents, require much time and effort, and are perceived as engaged in corruptive activity. The building code is very outdated and prevents from implementing innovative solutions in the buildings, and now the need to change it is much discussed in Ukraine. The Jam Factory project initially was intended to be completed in 2018, but now it is planned only for 2021 – among other things, because of the delays in documents processing (especially in the process of consolidation of the land plot consisting of 6 different parts owned by different owners).

As for the municipal level policies, in general the municipal officials are very supportive for the Jam Factory project and often mention it in media as a positive example. In contrast to other cities in Ukraine, Lviv is strictly oriented towards service economy, and successful HoReCa projects are creating the image of the city in Ukraine and internationally. Starting from 2008, the city is following the strategy of prioritizing of tourism (especially heritage tourism), IT and creative industries as pillars of the local economy. The Department of the Protection of Historical Environment is attached to the Department of Urban Development and has qualified staff, positively oriented towards adaptive reuse, quite open-minded and cooperative. In the last years, they managed to gain positive reputation and communicate proactively with the monuments' owners. In general, Lviv seems to be quite special in comparison to other cities in Ukraine because in this city heritage is understood as priority, both for business class and municipality.

The officials in Lviv are quite helpful in solving particular problems and explaining of existing regulations.

*"I've heard that he [the city mayor Andriy Sadovyi] has, from his side, encouraged things to go, he is supporting personally this project... The same with the city architect [Yulian Chaplinskyi], he is also involved. We are in contact, so he also tries to help. We had a person dedicated specifically to the project in the city council, which was also helpful... [but] not everything depends also on the city" (Harald Binder 2019).*

However, it is important to mention that beyond the personal positive attitude to the project by the key officials and very good reputation of Jam Factory in the city, there are many deficiencies in the urban policies of Lviv and there are no clear rules or established routes to follow if one is interested in revitalization of the historical building. What is present is rather several pilot programs and attempts aimed at heritage revitalization, participatory planning and community engagement, but the complex revitalization of historical heritage and especially industrial zones still remains the task for the future. The development of the city is still quite chaotic, and private investors in many cases are acting much more proactively than the municipality. The Master Plan of Lviv from 2008 is very outdated and was developed mostly by experts, without much public discussion and stakeholder integration.

One of the few attempts to deal in comprehensive way with the revitalization of the industrial zones of Lviv took place in 2017-2018. Back then, the IT Department, inspired by the urban activists, decided to [promote the revitalization](#) of 15 industrial zones and objects (mostly those neglected but also some developing, such as Jam Factory and Lem Station) as future creative clusters (Viktoria Olishevskaya 2019). The municipality started documentation of their condition and negotiations with their owners. It turned out that only one land plot is in the municipal ownership - former XIX-century tram depo where the initiative of "creative district" called [Lem Station](#) is successfully developing now, after the municipality rented it to the group of private investors for 50 years. All other plots turned out to be private, and in the most cases the owners were not cooperative and reluctant about the creative industries and revitalization. The specific culture of privatism – the concentration of power in hands of the owner and lack of cooperation and even a dialogue – is very widespread problem in Ukraine:

*"We proposed [to the owner of the "Rema" factory]: let's create some joint management organ..., maybe you will share the part of responsibility with us, and maybe some rights to decide on things. But no one is going to share their private property [in Ukraine] – we clearly understood this" (Viktoria Olishevskaya 2019).*

By 2019, many of the industrial zones mentioned in this municipal initiative, have been already built up by very conventional high-rise commercial housing, with no preservation of industrial heritage. Even though there are creative communities in some of the buildings, welcomed by the owners (such as grass-root creative industries NGO uniting several dozens of small businesses called [Re:Zavod](#) at former "Rema" factory (see Vitaliy Kuryliv 2019; Krasovska 2017), most often there are no major renovation works and creative people have no clear status or contract with the buildings' owners. So this initiative of the municipality had only limited impact, namely, stimulation of public discussions on revitalization, and promotion for the promising and already developing projects like Jam Factory and Lem Station. As for the Lem Station, it is important to mention that it is the only case of successful public-private partnership in adaptive reuse in Lviv, and it will partially start functioning in 2 years and fully in 4 years, at least in accordance with the plan.

It is also notable that the Lviv municipality is definitely among the leaders in Ukraine in the international cooperation, also in the sphere of urban policies, and several international programs significantly impacted the development of the Pidzamche district as well.

In 2011, the "Program of Revitalization Lviv-Pidzamche 2012-2025" was developed (mostly by researchers) from Krakow ([Institute of Urban and Regional Development](#)) and Lviv ([City Institute](#) - research, planning and advisory institution attached to the municipality). In accordance with the program, special accent is made on architectural heritage as driver of tourist development and service-oriented economy, and reuse of old buildings next to construction of new housing and office spaces. One of the central ideas is "contemporary authenticity" – Pidzamche as being most "atmospheric" and "authentic" district, but its authenticity should be revitalized. The Jam Factory was high on the agenda of the program back in 2011 and was described as a place of the future "cultural and entertainment center", but no practical steps were taken by the municipality to realize it in practice. In 2013, the grant from the Polish Development Aid made it possible to start implementing of some of the directions outlined in the program: competitions among the projects for the renovation of the courtyards in historical houses and public spaces, research and preparation of the tourist guide along Pidzamche, and renovation of water sources and recreation spaces (see more: Jarczewski et al. 2013; Yaryna Melnyk 2019). These events were implemented successfully in 2013-2014.

This program significantly activated the local community, they become much more engaged into participatory planning and much more aware of the heritage values of the district, and the local activists continued in the frameworks of other programs, including participatory budgeting and co-financing of the renovations of historical buildings (see Yaryna Melnyk 2019).

After the end of the Polish Development Aid project, the "Program of Revitalization of Pidzamche" remains important document for the municipality and City Institute, but rather as a general idea/direction of development and not as a comprehensive practical program with defined steps and strict monitoring (Yaryna Melnyk 2019). Some initiatives are continued in the framework of the City Institute



programs, there is some co-funding from the city for the implementation of particular measures related to the program, but the program is not implemented as a whole (Yaryna Melnyk 2019; Oleksandr Kobzarev 2019). The municipality is not so much focused on Pidzamche heritage revitalization and invests into more pressing issues instead, such as roads reconstruction and transport improvement. In this situation, it is not the municipality but other actors (such as real estate developers) became much more active in changing the district.

The activists from among the locals continued to be engaged in the framework of another program – “[Communities in Action](#)” (conducted by the City Institute in 2015-2017) and supported by the EU program “Neighbourhood Civil Society Facility 2012 and Non-State Actors and Local Authorities in Development (NSA&LA) 2012 and 2013”. In the framework of the project the micro-communities were identified and engaged in participatory budgeting, research on communities’ needs was done, and several small projects of revitalization of public places implemented.

Another program of international cooperation, very important for the revitalization of Pidzamche heritage, was “[Municipal Development and Rehabilitation of the Old City of Lviv](#)” (2009-2018), carried out by the Lviv municipality (specifically the Department of Protection of the Historical Environment) and GIZ - Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit. This project helped to draft new plans of urban development and heritage revitalization, educate new generations of experts and practitioners for renovation works. GIZ experts act as mediators in the making of the dialogue between different stakeholders, such as owners, tenants, municipality, and investors. GIZ is especially well-known for the ordinary locals of Lviv for their program of co-financing the renovation of historical windows, doors, gates and courtyards in the residence houses, as well as for free educational events, workshops and meetings with the residents (see more: Off the Beaten Track 2011). This program was funded by GIZ and municipality, and the renovations were co-financed together with the residents. After the end of the program, the Lviv municipality continues (on a smaller scale) to co-finance the renovation of windows, doors, and gates.

Overall, it is fully legitimate to underline that the Jam Factory project is developing in the situation where there are no established and systematic urban policies related to revitalization and adaptive reuse, but there are several successful projects, some enthusiastic heritage community, lively international cooperation, and positive personal attitude of the key members of the current mayor’s team to the ideas of adaptive reuse and creative industries. Adaptive reuse is definitely a fashion and is present in public speeches by the officials, as well as in the communication of the residents, especially of younger generations. But every case of adaptive reuse in Lviv is developing mostly by the trial and error method, and the municipality does not have enough instruments and resources to foster adaptive reuse.

## 9 The economic model

*"It is some kind of mixed model between private non-profit investment, without expectation of return, some kind of generated income through the complex itself, and external funds from other institutions" (Harald Binder 2019).*

At the moment the Jam Factory is looking for an appropriate business model. Now it has full support from the donor, but becoming self-sufficient is one of the important tasks. The project includes a restaurant and a small bar that should bring a profit, as well as space lease, tickets or books. At the moment the idea is that it would be good to cover costs of building maintenance out of all this income. Applying for grants and fund raising via crowdfunding platforms is also planned. As Ukraine is a non-EU member, the Jam Factory is not eligible for many of the EU programs, but it can apply in partnership with other institutions in the EU countries. The Jam Factory has already applied for the support from Swedish Institute (European Commission) and Visegrad Fund in cooperation with other institutions from the EU.

## 10 Governance and community

Initially, the Jam Factory developed as a private initiative. Dr. Harald Binder and Bozhena Zakaliuzhna are the core team who are responsible for drafting the idea and the strategic roadmap both for the institutional development and adaptive reuse of the site. Till 2018, most tasks were outsourced to the temporary engaged specialists: accounting, land issues, detailed plan, law expertise, land surveying documentation, and architectural project design.

In 2018, the Jam Factory started to move from the stage of giving all the processes to a contractor to the stage of having a regular team. 2 project managers were hired in 2018 (one of them still working - Bohdan Hrytsiuk who worked with ["Tell Your Story"](#) and with other local projects, he has a theatre background), from 2019 - visual art manager Oksana Karpovets who had previously worked and studied at the Fulbright Program in New York for three years. Communication manager position was announced in late 2019 as well.

*"Harald always has the last word [as for the architectural project] but he also has this trust and always listens to different parties. And there's Herbert Pasterk [architect and designer] who is looking at that from the technical point of view... So we have corresponding discussions... Actually, Harald worships history and has his own visions. All of us have a chance to express our own opinion but the final decision belongs to Harald. He always listens to everyone. This is the way the decisions are made" (Bozhena Zakaliuzhna 2019).*

At the moment it is planned that the team will stay small, up to 5 people, during the process of renovations, and after the complex will be fully launched, the team will become bigger, and some more formal structures of decision-making (such as advisory boards) will appear.

There are also volunteers engaged into some of the activities, especially bigger events, but they are not numerous at the moment. There is also a new idea of engaging interns who study and already try working. At the moment, there is one female intern and there may be one more in the future. They can become a part of the team later.

## 11 Impact

1. The discussions on the architectural project of Jam Factory impacted considerably on the thinking about contemporary architecture in the historical context. The discussions at the Lviv city council and gatherings of the Commission on architecture, urban planning, and protection of historical environment (especially the black box as an addition to the complex of historical buildings) were heated and focused on possible ways of combination of old and new. For the very conservative milieu of professional architects and preservationists of Lviv who are very suspicious against the new construction next to the monuments, this case became groundbreaking and contributes to changing opinions.

2. The Jam Factory team shares their experience in Ukraine at forums and meetings related to revitalization in Ukraine and internationally in the framework of [Trans Europe Halles](#). If the first successful initiatives of adaptive reuse in Ukraine were almost exclusively commercially oriented and included only mass culture events and festivals (such institutions as "[Art Zavod Platforma](#)" in Kyiv and "[Art Factory Mekhanika](#)" in Kharkiv), now there are several initiatives with special focus on socially critical art and contemporary art, such as early-stage initiative [Contemporary Art Center in Dnipro](#). Jam Factory was one of the first initiatives (along with the platform for cultural initiatives "[Izolyatsia](#)", opened in Donetsk in the east of Ukraine in 2012) with special focus on socially critical art, and the references to Jam Factory are present in the narratives of other similar initiatives. As Yulian Chaplinskyi notes, the Jam Factory can become a "methodological guide" for other initiatives in Ukraine.

3. The previous uses of Jam Factory building as a space for informal art initiatives and especially for the Days of Contemporary Art and Lviv Fashion Week resulted in the idea of Pidzamche district as a future "creative hub" of Lviv which became a discursive cliché (Olishevskia 2019). It also had some impact on the decision of the municipality to select the Pidzamche district for the pilot project of regeneration carried out in cooperation with Krakow Urban Development Institute and Lviv City Institute and aimed at improvement of urban management through the local residents' participation and increasing tourist attractiveness of the district (see more in: Janas&Jarczewski 2014).

4. Even though the Jam Factory does not operate in full at the moment, still its ambitions and public outreach attracted new investment into the district of Pidzamche (see Yulian Chaplinskyi 2019; Bozhena Zakaliuzhna 2018-2019; Harald Binder 2019). Recently the renovation of the historical house into co-housing project has started just next to the Jam Factory and adjacent former "Almazinstrument" factory. This initiative is connected to the owner of Bank Hotel – another case of adaptive reuse located in the downtown. The owner decided to locate his next project not in the city center, but next to Jam Factory.

*"The emergence of this cool architectural and cultural object always has an amazing impact on the district, it becomes a magnet for people and their mobility" (Yulian Chaplinskyi 2019).*

Another case in mind, of much bigger scale, is the project "[Pidzamche Town](#)" recently proposed by "Real" company. The real estate development project on the territory of the former "Almazinstrument" plant will be located in close proximity to the Jam Factory. The plan proposes to transform the historical part of the plant (with several monument objects) into open public spaces and commercial public spaces, cafes and restaurants. On the second stage, the project proposes to connect this part of the city with the High Castle (hill in the downtown) with the aerial cableway. This project was awarded in the "Ukrainian Urban Award" competition in the category "City Planning", and the motivation was "contemporary architecture fitting into historical built environment, "low-rise buildings harmoniously neighboring with historical monuments", "developed infrastructure", and cableway. In the opinion of the Lviv chief architect Yulian Chaplinskyi, it will considerably improve the connections and will break the isolation of the district, and will be one of the best examples of combination of historical and contemporary. This location of this project and its design is obviously impacted by the discussions going on around Jam Factory project. However, at the moment the "Real" Company only has documents for land use of the plot, but it will require long time to get other permissions, and, in fact, at the moment it is unclear how the project can be changed in the future and if it really will be a positive case of new development in the historical environment. At the same time, there are also other real estate initiatives, implemented earlier in the district, which are much more convenient for Lviv context, such as high-rise blocks with no sensitivity to the environment or decorated buildings of fake historicist styles. So there is an obvious impact of Jam Factory project on the approaches to the development of the district, but at the moment it is unclear to which extent the new practices will become dominating.

## 12 The model

Jam Factory is the only adaptive reuse initiative in Ukraine which is focused solely on art and education and aims at combining very different forms of contemporary art. This idea of maximum adaptability of the space for different kinds of visual and performative arts is unique for Ukraine where still the division into disciplines is strong. As an institution, it combines the efforts of private foundation and NGO to pursue its goals.

Most importantly, the Jam Factory is a case of gradual and "organic" development of the adaptive reuse project, with engagement of local community and a number of experts, established relations with municipality and the Department of the Protection of the Historical Environment. The project strictly follows all the rules and regulations and is very strict about non-involvement into any informal deals with the officials or services which is quite common in Ukrainian context. Its implementation lasts much longer than expected in the beginning, but it helps the team to gradually change the setting, work for the reputation, and implement cultural changes in the environment in a more natural way.



The Jam Factory model is a challenge to the neoliberal discourse in the sphere of adaptive heritage reuse. This discourse emphasizes the financial self-sufficiency and community engagement, but is also a part of the gradual removal of the state and richer classes from the support of culture and social sphere. The Jam Factory is supported by the private donor who does not necessarily expect the return of money and is motivated by the possibility to foster social and cultural change.

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## **14. The Grünmetropole**

**(Belgium – Dutch – German  
border region)**



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# 1 Introduction

This observatory case analysis report presents the result of the analysis of the project 'Grünmetropole'. This project – implemented in the Belgian-Dutch-German border region in 2008 – aimed at rehabilitating the shared mining past of this region. The industrial mining past was of major influence in shaping the physical appearance and the social and cultural life in this region. Hence, the end of the mining industry in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century created many challenges concerning the conversion of the region, which strongly resonate with heritage management issues. The Grünmetropole project aimed at addressing these issues. Its objectives were to renew the post-industrial landscape, to strengthen the common identity of the region, and to create a touristic impulse. This was done by implementing two touristic routes along relicts of the mining past, one for cars and one for bicycles, connecting 72 points of interest in the region.

## 1.1 The area of the Grünmetropole

The area of the Grünmetropole stretches along a former coal basin, ranging from Beringen in Belgium, via Heerlen in the Netherlands, to Düren which is located in Germany (see Picture 2). It's an urban area consisting of about 2200 square kilometre and about 1.6 million inhabitants (Heinrichs et al., 2008), located in the centre of North-West Europe in between several other metropolitan areas: the Ruhr Metropolis in Germany, the Randstad region in the Netherlands and the Flemish cities (see Picture 1). It is a tri-national, cross-border area not corresponding to any legislative or governmental institution and without direct political power. Within the same region as the area of the Grünmetropole we also find the Meuse-Rhine Euroregion, and the Tri-Country Park. The Euroregion Meuse-Rhine is an Euroregion created in 1976, with judicial status achieved in 1991. This transnational co-operation structure between territories located in three different European countries is composed of the city-corridor of Aachen-Maastricht-Hasselt-Liège (see Picture 1) and aims to promote cross-border cooperation around common and shared interests. The Tri-Country Park is the name of nature park in the tri-national, cross-border area which forms a connection to various other natural area's such as the Eifel Park, the Ardennes, and the natural region Campine. The area of the Grünmetropole is however slightly different in terms of size and location as it for example only covers a small part of the Euroregion.

Although the area of the Grünmetropole is divided by three national borders, it has a strong common denominator in the industrial mining past. The presence of a major coal basin triggered a long history of mining activities (see Picture 3). Hence, the area of the Grünmetropole has a shared economic and cultural history based on winning coal as a natural resource. Yet there are differences between the three countries.



**Picture 1: The location of the Euroregion Meuse-Rhine in Europe.**



**Picture 2: The area of the Grünmetropole.**





**Picture 3: Coal field locations (in grey) in the southern part of the Netherlands and adjacent mining districts in Belgian Limburg and near Aachen (Germany), after Van Bergen et al. (2007).**

## 1.2 Conversion and restructuring

The decrease of coal exploitation, which started in the 1970s, meant de-industrialization, unemployment, and again changed the socio-demographic characteristics of the region. The mining regions faced a difficult physical and environmental legacy in the form of unused mining shafts and buildings, and polluted coal heaps. The mining regions in all three countries, once more faced enormous challenges to their economic, social and environmental future. A process of conversion and restructuring set in. Here again we can identify differences and similarities in the three countries with regard to the process of conversion and restructuring.

### **The Netherlands**

In the Netherlands, the decision to close the mines was taken in 1965. The Dutch mining region in the southern part of the province of Limburg was characterized at that time by a pronounced monoculture in the form of the mining industry. The social consequences of the decision to close the mines upon those directly affected and upon the region can thus not be ignored (Toonen, 1972). Yet, since the mines were largely state owned, it was up to the Dutch government to decide about the mines, and they decided to adopt a policy aimed at closing all the mines as rapidly as possible. The reconversion policy, as outlined in Dutch government documents focused on several aspects (for an overview see also Toonen, 1972). Focusing on for instance economic measures related to retraining for miners, and measures for encouraging the establishment of substitute employment (Kasper et al., 2013). Economic conversion was done by transforming the Dutch state mines into a large chemical enterprise (DSM, net sales 8.6 billion euros in 2017) (Hassink et al., 1995). Despite this focus on economic conversion, the former mining region has had struggles in terms of unemployment until several decades after the closing of the mines (Kasper et al., 2013).

A second pillar of the conversion measures focused on branding the region in order to attract new employees and to keep workers and citizens in the region. For this goal a close cooperation between various governmental bodies, such as municipalities, and other organizations such as the Limburg Investment and Development Fund (LIOF), was set up. Also with regard to the physical environment and the relicts of the mining industry, the conversion policy has had a major impact. On the one hand new industrial landscapes (for example for the DSM enterprise) were laid out, and new infrastructure was constructed in the form of regional roads, and highways (Kasper et al., 2013; Toonen, 1972). On the other hand, the industrial landscapes that became obsolete after the closing of the mines were restructured and reallocated. This restructuring policy, often referred to as '*van zwart naar groen*' (black to green)- referring to the transition from dusty black mining relicts, to a green park-like setting, post-industrial landscape - resulted in the destruction of many landmarks referring to the mining past. In fact, this happened with striking speed, and nearly all references to the extraction of coal were removed from the landscape. As an example, the last coal mine, i.e. the *Oranje-Nassau I*, ceased production in 1974 and already in 1978 there was not a single place left where one could come across a coherent whole of slag heaps,

mine structures and miners' cottages (van Veldhoven, 2015). Dutch reconversion policy and practice thus aimed at removing the obsolete mining landscape and transforming it into a post-mining landscape. The strong focus on physical reconversion however meant that other aspect did not get full attention, in particular social aspects and the recognition of industrial heritage.

With regard to the social aspects, it should be noted that miners who lost their jobs also lost status in society. Their self-esteem deteriorated, and social isolation occurred—the mines were no longer guiding the social infrastructure of society (Kasper, 2012). Together with the upcoming secularization, the closing of the mines caused insecurity among the miners and unrest in families (Kasper, 2012). Moreover, the large-scale demolishment of mining relicts did also lead to the situation that former miners felt deceived; they saw and felt their world collapse around them (GM13: former miner, 2019; van Veldhoven, 2015). This frustration can still be noted at present day: "The Dutch government is not interested in Limburg's most southern region and this region itself is characterized by the perils of village politics, this doesn't help for taking care of heritage. This also differs from Belgium where they treat the past with respects and accordingly look after their heritage" (GM13: former miner, 2019). With regard to the heritage management policy were this interviewee refers to, it should however be noted that at the time of the closing of the mines, the public opinion about mining heritage was rather negative. Many of the former miners suffered from severe forms of silicosis, felt deceived, and their status had evaporated. At that time, due to the social trauma of the closures of the mines, there seemed to be first and foremost a 'need to forget' as van Veldhoven (2015) calls it. This is underlined by a guide from the Dutch mining museum:

*"One wanted to demolish all objects that reminded of the mining period, this was called 'van zwart naar groen', only later on, one started to reject this since everything was gone" (GM15: guide museum, 2019).*

Only from the 1990s onwards, public opinion changed as people once again started to show interest in the mining past and related heritage. At that time, also heritage organizations started to recognize industrial heritage (van Veldhoven, 2015).

In Belgium, the mining industry had been the central, and until after the 1945, the only industrial sector of any significance in the Flemish Province of Limburg. Since this mining industry was dominated by Walloon capital - both in terms of investment capital flows and destination of coal production - there was almost no regional capitalist-entrepreneurial tradition in this region (Swyngedouw, 1996). Already during the 1950's the mining industry showed signs of stagnation and new industry - notably Ford and Philips- were attracted to generate new employment opportunities. Yet, by the time the closure was announced, 17000 miners were still employed in the sector, while the region was suffering from higher than average unemployment (Hassink et al., 1995). Therefore, together with the closure, the national state decided to initiate the most gigantic project of urban and regional development ever undertaken in Belgium (van den Panhuyzen, 1989). The state embarked 100b Belgian Francs (about 2.5b euros) for both redundancy payments and to support and co-finance investment in the socio-economic and spatial reconversion and restructuring of the region (Swyngedouw, 1996). The reconversion plans were outlined in a document called 'Future contract

for Limburg' (*Toekomstcontract voor Limburg*) aiming at the production of a new region, based on erasing the old physical landscape, the socio-cultural fabric and the mental image of the region and the construction of a new urban landscape (Swyngedouw, 1996; Vlaamse Overheid, 1987).

Next to the focus on creating a new labour profile, there was thus also a strong tendency to get rid of the mining landscape. This strong focus on creating a new urban landscape is underlined by one of the interviewees: "In this region however, everything had to disappear, because one thought that these buildings were negative reminders of a negative past" (GM21: tour guide, 2019). The large-scale demolition works however also lead to protests from heritage organizations and from local citizens, herewith illustrating the love-hate relationship with the mining past. An example of the city of Eisden:

*"Here in Eisden, there were 56 buildings from the mining period on one site. Almost nothing is left now. We made plans for the protection of this former mining site, we even protested, but without much success. Even former miners came to us, asking us what we were doing. They told us to get rid of all the buildings because it reminded them of a very negative, unhealthy past. But as soon as they started to demolish things, the same persons came to us, worried about the scale of the demolition works. This shows the love-hate relationship; the mining past is not a romantic story" (GM21: tour guide, 2019)*

Amongst other reasons (such as financial scandals) these protest led to the establishment of a new conversion agency for the Flemish Province of Limburg. This, so called LRM (*Limburgse Reconversiematschapij*) then became responsible for the remaining buildings and relicts from the mining period. Also citizens started to organize themselves as they established local associations for the protection of the mining buildings and relicts. It was at this time that people started to see the value of these buildings and even started to see it as potential heritage objects (Delarbre et al., 2009; van Veldhoven, 2015). Focus then shifted towards protection of the still remaining mining buildings. Redevelopment and re-use of these buildings by giving them a new function (e.g. for tourism or living) has been done more and more over the past decades. Although these redevelopment are (financially) supported by the conversion agency LRM, it are still very expensive, complicated processes (Delarbre et al., 2009). Mainly because there is a lack of support and of financial means:

*"Dealing with mining heritage is not easy, no one is supporting you and there are no funds, this is not like taking care of castles. You never get support for this" (GM21: tour guide, 2019).*

In short, the story of the physical conversion of the mining landscape in Belgium is a dynamic one. At first a policy focusing on demolishment was initiated, but citizens and politicians then started to embrace their once denied mining past as they started to protect and redevelop former mining buildings.



## **Germany**

Conversion of the mining landscapes in Germany took place more gradually, meaning that time was taken in order to think about a post-mining economy and landscape (Soete et al., 2000). Conversion in the former mining district in the region Aachen, aimed at creating industries related to technological expertise. Indeed, Aachen is building its conversion on the presence of one of the largest European technical universities which already led to the establishment of hundreds of small engineering and consultancy firms (Hassink et al., 1995). Besides, a strong focus was put on the establishment of research- and consultancy firm in the domain of energy and sustainability. In the German city of Jülich for example, a technology park was founded with the support of the German government which funded this technology park for about 90% (Soete et al., 2000).

Next to the economic conversion, the physical conversion of the mining landscape was quite impactful in Germany. In fact, alike the Netherlands, in the former mining district in the region Aachen hardly any of the industrial buildings such as offices, cooling towers, coal bunkers, washing plants and so forth have been preserved (van Veldhoven, 2015). The city landscape of the town of Alsdorf (Germany) still shows the reminders of this conversion policy. For over decades, the cityscape of Alsdorf has been dominated by the mines which were located in the hearth of the town. Hence, the town depended on its mining industry. In 1992 however, it was announced that mines had to close in Alsdorf as well. At that time, a large conversion plan was set up which focused on the demolishment of the mining buildings. Accordingly, the large mining complex in the town's middle has been demolished and for the largest part transferred into an urban green park in the period 1992-1995 (GM14: guide museum, 2019; Heinrichs et al., 2008). Some buildings remained and serve as a landmark nowadays (e.g. the water tower, and the shaft tower), whereas some other buildings are re-used as new functions are added (e.g. a high school and a museum). Most parts have however been demolished leaving a wide open area. Some parts of this area then were transformed into for example a residential area or a shopping centre, but the largest part was transformed into an urban green park (Heinrichs et al., 2008). Also in Alsdorf, a link was made with the post-mining story related to technological expertise and energy. The museum focuses for example on 'experiencing energy', and throughout the park a so called '*Weg der Energie*' can be followed, which leads you along various stops which inform you about energy and technology (GM14: guide museum, 2019).

In all three countries the removal of these industrial activities left marks in the three countries' history. Besides, for a long time, the heritage of the mining era was not recognized. In The Netherlands, most explicit mining relicts (such as the shafts) were demolished and are not visible anymore in today's landscape. In Germany, closed mining areas were partly demolished and partly kept as natural and historical monuments. In Belgium, the policies aimed at erasing most relicts of the mining past were only partly implemented, and many relicts remained intact though severely deteriorated. Thus, all three mining regions have followed a different conversion process. But despite these differences, many scars of the industrial past still characterize today's cultural landscape of the region.

## 2 The Grünmetropole-project

The area of the Grünmetropole is thus characterized by a common denominator of the industrial past and the mining activities shaped the physical landscape in the region. Mining industry in this region however has a dynamic history of industrial production, decline, and reconversion. Indeed, the removal and reconversion of these industrial sites left marks in the three countries' history and moreover the scars of the industrial in many cases still characterize the present-day landscape. Only more recently mining heritage started to be recognized (as explained above). Public opinion changed as people once again started to show interest in the mining past and related heritage. One interviewee states:

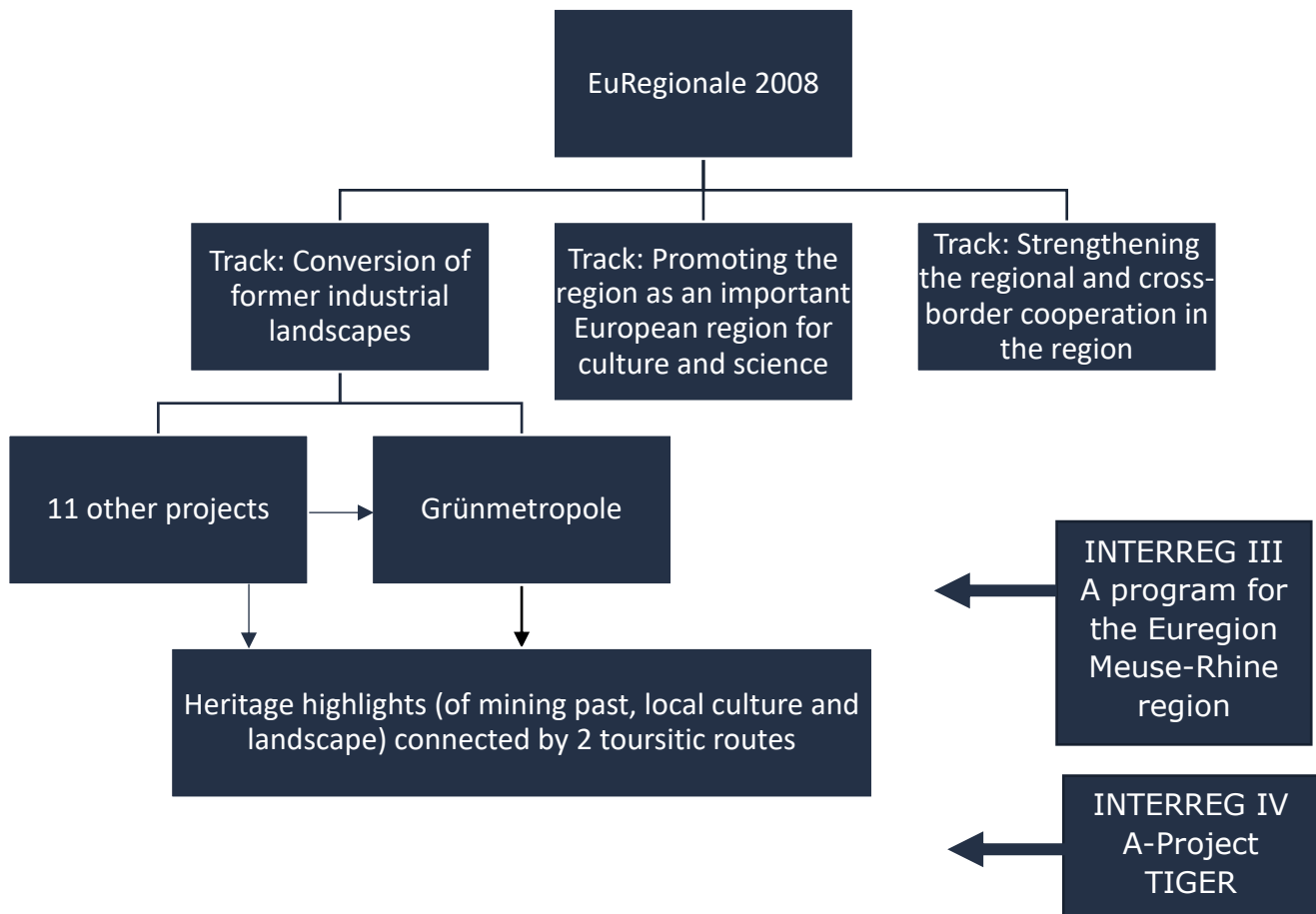
*"First people used to see the mining past as a negative history, but at the same time it is just part of our collective memory" (GM21: tour guide, 2019).*

This is further explained by a Dutch municipal policy officer who explains:

*"There is now a generation who is not familiar with the region's mining past, but who is nevertheless looking for their roots in order to understand developments in their living environment" (GM3: policy officer, 2019).*

Also (local) heritage organization started to recognize industrial heritage, listed them as classified buildings, or made plans for redevelopment of these former mining buildings. These redevelopments were linked to other domains like tourism, leisure, living, nature development, or shopping (GM19: policy officer, 2019).

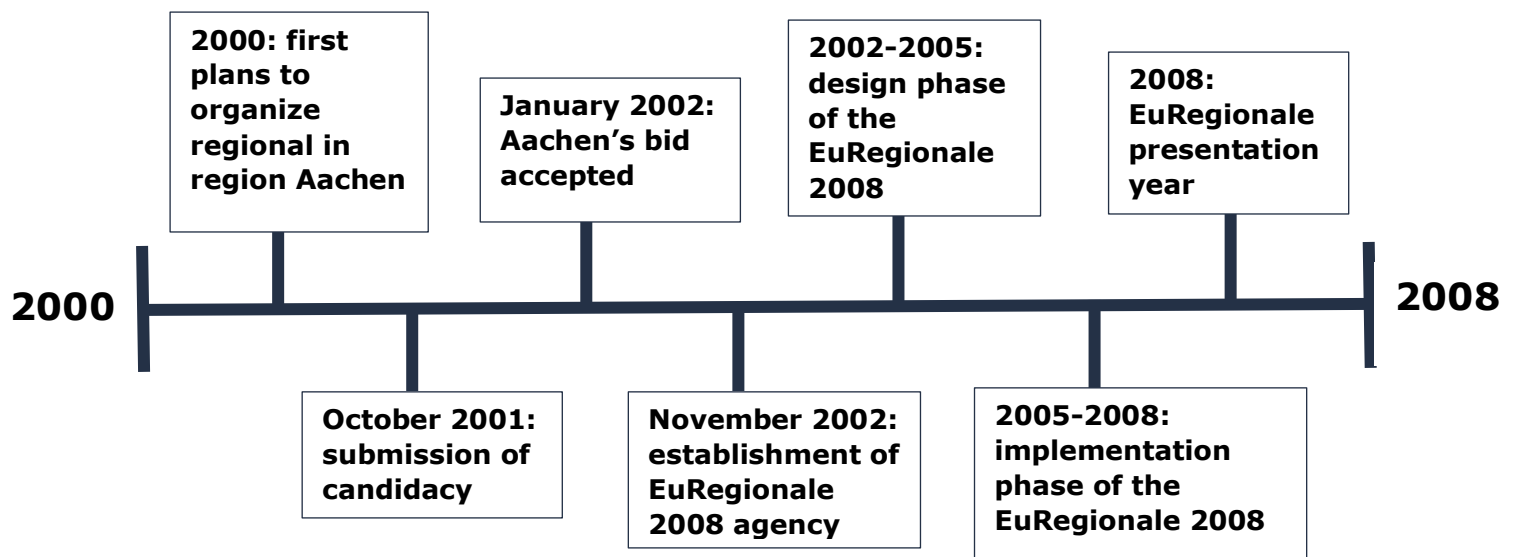
It is against this backdrop that the Grünmetropole project was conceived. Aiming at rehabilitating mining heritage by connecting local projects and mining relicts with touristic routes. The Grünmetropole as a project followed from a German regional initiative called "EuRegionale 2008". The Grünmetropole was a flagship design project within the EuRegionale 2008s' track "Conversion of former industrial landscapes".



**Table 1: overview of the relation between various aspects of the set-up of the Grünmetropole project**

## 2.1 Die EuRegionale 2008 – Grenzen Überschreiten

In order to explain the origin of the project the Grünmetropole, the concept of the 'Regionale' and more specifically the 2008 EuRegionale project needs to be explained first. The Regionale is a design instrument used by the German federal state North-Rhine-Westphalia. North-Rhine-Westphalia is a state in western Germany covering an area of 34,084 square kilometres. This state – the most densely populated state of Germany – is divided into 31 districts (*Kreise*) and 23 urban districts (*kreisfreie Städte*). The Regionale is a tool for regional development initiated by the state. The Regionale can be seen as a design instrument that aims at co-operation between various stakeholders, such as districts and municipalities (Dembski, 2006), hereby focusing on one or several (urban) district. Although the Regionale is (financially) supported by the state government, it is up to the region (i.e. district(s)) and the regional governments to co-operate in order to implement the Regionale (Dembski, 2006). Moreover, the design instrument is used to strengthen the identity of a certain region (i.e. one or several (urban) district) and to promote the region to the outside world (Dembski, 2006; Kuss et al., 2010). The outcome of the Regionale was the development of various projects focusing on topics such as landscape, heritage, tourism, and culture. The first Regionale was organized in 2000 and from then on organized bi-annually.



Picture 4: timeline of the set-up of the 2008 EuRegionale, after (Vos & Gottschalk, 2009).

## 2.2 Track: Conversion of former industrial landscapes

One of the three tracks within the EuRegionale 2008 was 'conversion of former industrial landscapes'. A track aiming at using the German-Dutch-Belgian border



region's industrial past as a driver for future development, mainly by linking industrial heritage to tourism. It is within this EuRegionale-track that the project Grünmetropole was developed and implemented.

The design process of the EuRegionale projects took from 2002 to 2005, already during this design process a strong focus was put on historical links in the cross-border region. In 2002 for example, a Aachen-based' foundation called [Kathy Beys](#) for instance already proposed to link elements of the industrial past in order to use them as a resource for the future (Vos & Gottschalk, 2009). The *Kathy Beys* foundation has supported the EuRegionale and the development of the Grünmetropole throughout the years that followed (till 2008). Within the track conversion of former industrial landscapes, a call for projects, called *Industrielle Folgelandschaft*, was launched in January 2004. The design teams taking part in this competition were encouraged to take into account various aspect related to cross-border cooperation in order to enhance the profile of the German-Dutch-Belgian border region. Eight international teams of architects and designers took part in the design competition.

An international team under the direction of the French landscape architect Henri Bava (in corporation with other designers: Alex Wall, Stephen Craig and Erik Behrens) also took part in this design competition and proposed a design masterplan title "Grünmetropole" (Heinrichs et al., 2008). At the end of 2004, the design plans were reviewed by the EuRegionale agency and the concept of a "Grünmetropole" was selected as winner of this design competition. This was followed by the presentation of the design masterplan in spring 2005 (Vos & Gottschalk, 2009).

In this same period of time (2005-2008), supporting organizations and finance had to be found in order to implement the Grünmetropole design. With regard to the latter, half of the needed resources (3.8 million euros) came from the participating stakeholders<sup>1</sup>, such as municipalities, and from the EuRegionale 2008 agency itself which in turn was funded by the German federal state North-Rhine-Westphalia. Besides, funding came available by linking the Grünmetropole project to an existing INTERREG-program. This INTERREG-program, called 'INTERREG III A program for the Euregio Meuse-Rhine region', focused on the development of cross-border cooperation between Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands. Application for this INTERREG-program, which run in the period 2000-2006, was done by the 'Stichting Euregio Maas-Rijn', a foundation based in Maastricht. Within this INTERREG-program, the European Commission co-financed projects with a structural funds assistance of a total budget of 211 million euros<sup>2</sup>. One subproject within this INTERREG-program was called *Industrielle Folgelandschaft* (conversion of former industrial landscapes). It is within this subproject that the Grünmetropole-project, as well as one other project called *Pays des Terrils* (a project in the former mining region in the Belgian Walloon region, focusing on ecological research, and conversion of the coal mines' spoil heaps by transforming

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<sup>1</sup> A participating small municipality, like the municipality of As, for example had to contribute about 12.000 euros for placing of signs and one information panel at the train station in the city of As (Het Nieuwsblad/Limburg, 2008).

<sup>2</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/en/atlas/programmes/2000-2006/european/interreg-iii-a-euregio-meuse-rhine](https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/atlas/programmes/2000-2006/european/interreg-iii-a-euregio-meuse-rhine)

them into a nature area), was funded. In total 3.8 million euros INTERREG-funding was made available for the Grünmetropole-project (Eibler et al., 2014; Vos & Gottschalk, 2009).

## 2.3 The project Grünmetropole

The concept of the Grünmetropole thus was the centerpiece of the track conversion of former industrial landscapes. Indeed the Grünmetropole concept fitted well into the overall concept of the EuRegionale 2008 to unify the region and create a new identity. This becomes apparent as we review and analyze the 2005' Grünmetropole masterplan (Bava et al., 2005). The Grünmetropole was intended to reframe the area as a sub-region with the Western-European network of metropolis (like Berlin and Paris). This sub-region would then be characterized by a combination of urban centers and nature and culture as connecting elements in-between urban areas. It was argued that such a framing as sub-region functioning as one entity would give the region a strong economic impulse, and would encourage closer cooperation among stakeholders (Bava et al., 2005). To underline the connectivity within the area of the Grünmetropole, the Master Plan identified three main goals (Bava et al., 2005):

- renewal of the landscape in order to give the region a socio-economic impulse;
- strengthen the common storyline and identity of the former mining area;
- creation of impulses for a touristic future by creating new touristic routes.

Although named differently, these goals are also mentioned by a Dutch policy officer:

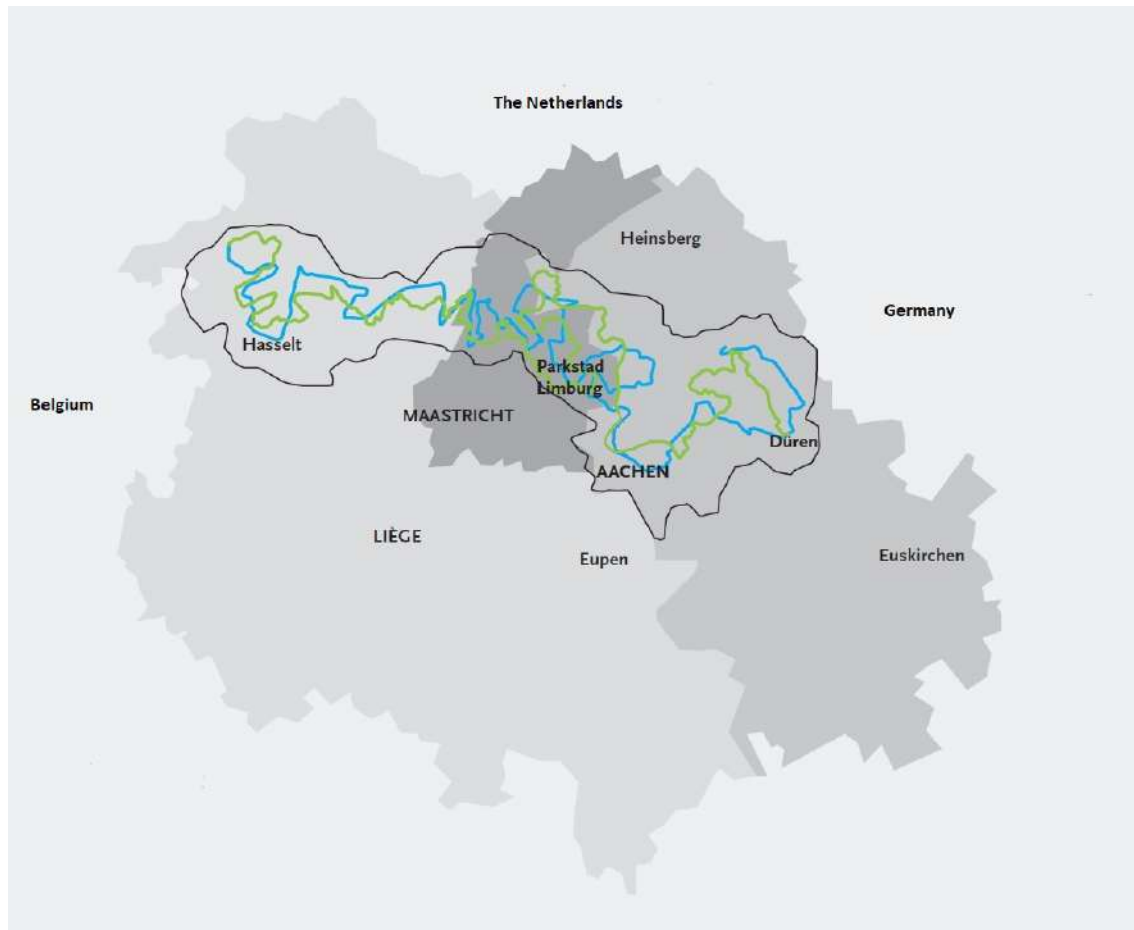
*"The three main objectives of the Grünmetropole were: connecting people and places, to enhance a regional identity, and to stimulate tourism"* (GM2: policy officer, 2019).

He clarifies that this latter point was especially important. Moreover, the overall goals of the EuRegionale (cross-border cooperation), and of the track (conversion of former mining areas) were taken into account (Heinrichs et al., 2008). This is also underlined by one of the interviewees:

*"The initial aim of this project was to present the mining history of the region, and to stimulate cross-border cooperation"* (GM1: tourist officer, 2019).

In order to reach these goals, two cross-border tourist routes through the landscape, and along the relicts of the mining past in the landscape were designed. These routes were designed to link the post-industrial landscapes in the German, Dutch and Belgian border region, and to encourage residents and tourists to explore the region (Bava et al., 2005). The two routes are: the 'Green Route' for cyclists and the 'Metropolisroute' for motorists (see map Picture 6). The Green Route takes cyclist through some of the natural areas of the region. The Metropolisroute focuses on the industrial heritage of the more urban areas. This route is set up for discovering the region by car. Both routes have a length of about 250 kilometres, and connect about 70 touristic highlights related to the mining

past, but also local culture and nature (Bava et al., 2005; Heinrichs et al., 2008; van der Heyden, 2008).



**Picture 5: The two routes of the Grünmetropole: the 'Green Route' for cyclists (in Green) and the 'Metropolisroute' for motorists (in blue) in the area of the Grünmetropole (after Vos and Gottschalk (2009)).**

Both routes were designed as part of a umbrella structure called 'Urban DNA' which was designed to form a green equivalent of metropolis in Europe. A clear defined and promoted 'Urban DNA', it was argued, would also help to strengthen the identity of the region (Bava et al., 2005; Heinrichs et al., 2008) making the region 'more readable'. The Master Plan defined six main elements of this 'Urban DNA': 1) the cities, 2) natural and rural areas, 3) the former spoils heaps of the coal mines, 4) the neighborhoods where the miners used to live, 5) the former mining shafts and other industrial buildings, and 6) other landscape features which are linked to the mining past (Bava et al., 2005). For all these six elements of the 'Urban DNA' specific development goals were identified in line with the overall objectives of the Grünmetropole plan.

Part of the design was to connect about 70 touristic highlights related to the mining past, but also local culture and nature, to the two designed routes (for an overview of all projects which were connected to the routes see **Error! Reference source**

**not found.** in **Error! Reference source not found.**, and see van der Heyden (2008)). These highlights include some of the other projects within the track conversion of former industrial landscapes such as the aforementioned project Wormdal, which is about nature and tourism. Besides, also former mining sites, cities, nature areas, former miner's neighbourhoods and so on and so forth were mentioned as a stop on the routes. Selection of these stops was initially done by the designers (see the masterplan: Bava et al., 2005), but these stops have been adjusted during the implementation phase of the Grünmetropole (2005-2008). One interviewee explains:

*"Initially, the points of interest were chosen in such a way that they represented the mining history. Later on they added also different locations, but initially it was focused on the mining history. However, because some entrepreneurs along the route complained that only some locations were selected, they changed their mind, and some other locations were added"* (GM1: tourist officer, 2019).

In order to implement the Grünmetropole, chosen as the winner of the design competition in 2005, an organizational structure was set up. A working group led by the EuRegionale 2008 Agency, and in the case of the Grünmetropole more precisely Kreis Aachen, Parkstad Limburg/NL en Toerisme Limburg/B, held regular meeting with the 25 organizations involved in the Grünmetropole project (among other district governments, municipalities, and tourist organizations) to ensure concrete implementation. This working group for instance assisted in the search for locations for information panels and routing signage, application for permits, distribution of information leaflets etc. (Eibler et al., 2014; Vos & Gottschalk, 2009). It is also noted in the Master Plan that all interested stakeholders in the region could have their say in order to make the Grünmetropole effective in terms of cooperation and development in the region (Bava et al., 2005). The roles of the various stakeholders however varied, ranging from designing and implementing the routes, to an advisory role to reflect on the designed routes. One interviewee who works at a Dutch touristic organization explains:

*"Selecting stops along a route was done in cooperation with municipalities and other organizations. They asked us to think about potential locations, so called 'points of interest', but not for designing the routes. Besides, we could made proposals, like did you consider this, or this, or this? I think we just had an advisory role as organization at that time"* (GM1: tourist officer, 2019).

Also local (heritage) organizations had a supporting role in the design process:

*"Local non-professional history clubs were asked to get involved in the Grünmetropole project. Those who did participate could then propose historic objects, landscapes, or sites that could be interesting to make them part of the Grünmetropole' touristic routes"* (GM2: policy officer, 2019).

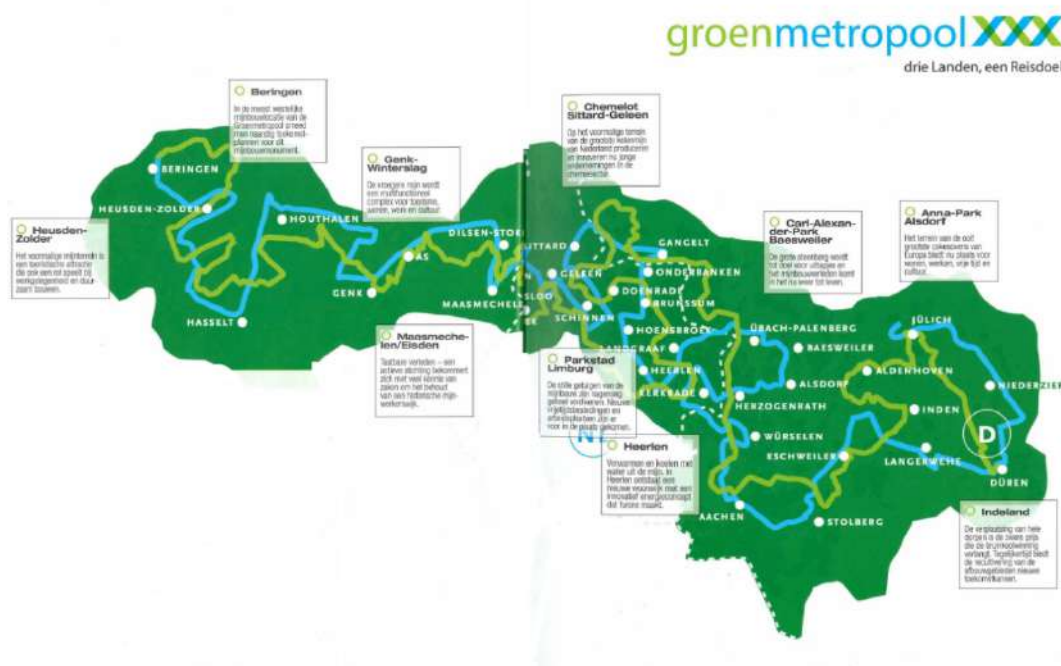
This person however notes that these local history clubs only had a supporting role, they had no decisive say in the design phase of the project (GM2: policy officer, 2019). In short, although the local (heritage) organizations, entrepreneurs, and communities had only an advisory role, they were able to influence the



selection of points of interest, and there with the route design of the Grünmetropole (GM1: tourist officer, 2019; GM2: policy officer, 2019).

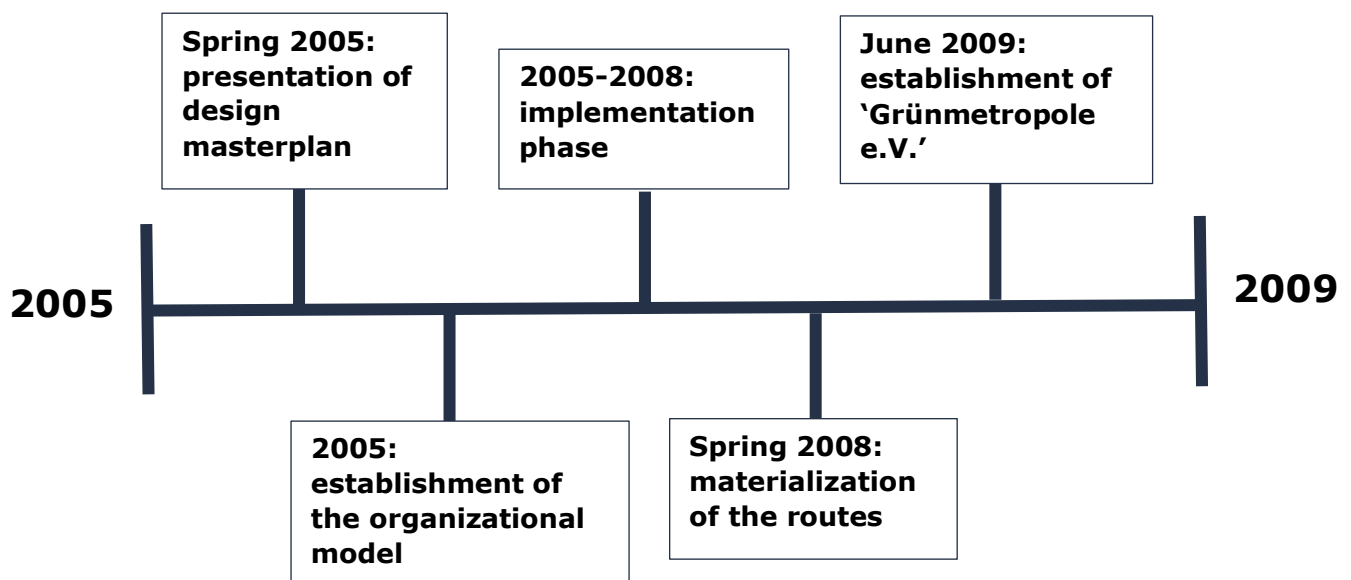
The resulting 70 touristic highlights were thus both selected by the designers of the Grünmetropole (see the masterplan: Bava et al., 2005), as well as by entrepreneurs, local (heritage) groups and citizens who were consulted on potential stops as well. Hence, there were some small differences between the initial design and the implemented project. The list of about 70 touristic stops along the Grünmetropole route is thus very divers, including sites related to former mining activities, nature areas, cities, but also shopping malls and even recreational sites like a theme park. 29 sites are located in the Netherlands, 23 sites in Germany and 20 sites in Belgium. We found 16 sites that are nature areas located on former industrial (and thus converted) landscapes, and 7 other nature areas that did not link to the mining history. We found 16 museums along the route, of which only 3 were directly related to the mining history. We found 7 heritage sites that did not link at all to the mining history, but were either a watermill, castle or abbey. We found 10 recreational sites with a commercial use (event center, wellness, sports facilities etc.), some of them located on former mining sites (such as a slope of a former spoil heap hosting a ski centre). We found 3 information points, of which 2 were linked to mining. We found 6 sites that were restaurant/pub/hotel, often located at a (non-mining related) heritage site. We found 4 social/cultural centers, and 3 city/shopping centers are listed. Of all these sites, we could only link 27 directly or indirectly to the mining history of the region (see for a full overview Appendix 3).

The link between these stops, the two routes, and the overall Grünmetropole project is thus often equivocal. Some projects, like the aforementioned project 'Wormdal' were part of the EuRegionale 2008 and for that reason linked to the Grünmetropole project by making it a stop on the routes. The development of these projects was directly linked to the Grünmetropole plan (Vos & Gottschalk, 2009). Other stops on the route were selected since local entrepreneurs for example proposed their location (e.g. a pub or recreational area) to become part of the Grünmetropole route. These stops were then listed as a stop and got a sign to put on their façade to indicate that this was a stop on the Grünmetropole route. Besides that, these stops (or projects/buildings) had no organizational, financial or thematic link with the Grünmetropole. This also accounts to some of the stops on former mining sites, who perhaps relate to the overall thematic focus of the Grünmetropole, but had no organizational or financial link to the project. Moreover, the conversion and redevelopment of many projects and places along the Grünmetropole route took place fully independently from the Grünmetropole project. The supervision by the EuRegionale 2008 Agency only related to the implementation of the route signage and information panels, and all, 25 cooperation organizations were each individually responsible for the final implementation (Bava et al., 2005).



**Picture 7: Overview of the routes and some of the 'points of interest' (Heinrichs et al., 2008).**

The Grünmetropole project was implemented in spring 2008 by the placement of the route signage, information panels, and traffic signs (for a complete chronological overview see Picture ). The "Metropolisroute" was opened in May 2008; the 'Green route' in June 2008 (Vos & Gottschalk, 2009)(see map Picture 6 and map **Error! Reference source not found.**). The routes only use existing roads, since this made it easier to design the route and it was more about creating a connection rather than designing roads (GM1: tourist officer, 2019; GM19: policy officer, 2019). Supporting information about the routes including maps were disturbed through existing touristic infrastructure like tourist offices in the region. Information leaflets and route maps were made available in different languages.



**Picture 8: timeline of the set-up of the Grünmetropole project (two routes) after Vos and Gottschalk (2009)**

After implementation yet another organizational model and funding scheme were set-up in order to keep information about the Grünmetropole routes available, and to further strengthen and promote the touristic services within the tri-national cross-border region, especially with regard to regional culture, industrial heritage and nature. The new organization, called 'Grünmetropole e.V.' was founded in June 2009 (Vos & Gottschalk, 2009). This organization aimed at maintenance and further development of the touristic routes in the region Aachen, including the Grünmetropole routes. 14 German organizations are part of 'Grünmetropole e.V.', mainly governments of cities in the region Aachen, as well as governments of the districts<sup>3</sup>. Funding for these activities was available because of yet another INTERREG-programme. This INTERREG-programme, called INTERREG IV A-Project TIGER (Touristic Valorisation of the cross-border European Region), aimed at enhancing the touristic profile of the German-Dutch-Belgian border region (Eibler et al., 2014). From 2008 till 2013 funding was available through this INTERREG-programme. For this INTERREG-programme, the organization 'Grünmetropole e.V.' cooperated with several other organizations namely: tourist office Zuid-Limburg (Netherlands), *Toerisme Limburg* (Belgium), Parkstad Limburg (i.e. a regional cooperative between 8 Dutch municipalities), and the *Fédération du Tourisme de la Province de Liège* (i.e. Belgian tourist office). Although these organizations were thus also involved in maintaining the Grünmetropole routes, it were mainly the German organizations (e.g. 'Grünmetropole e.V.') which put most effort in keeping the Grünmetropole routes up to date. One interviewee who works at the tourist office Zuid-Limburg, explains:

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.gruenmetropole.eu/ueber\\_uns.html](https://www.gruenmetropole.eu/ueber_uns.html)

*"In Germany a better marketing strategy resulted in the situation that the Grünmetropole is still up to date there. In the Netherlands, we decided to only maintain the routes without further marketing. Belgium is comparable to the Netherlands, they do maintain the route, although they do not really know what this route is about" (GM1: tourist officer, 2019).*

It appears that the 'Grünmetropole e.V.' is not well known:

*"It would be good if there would be an organization responsible for the Grünmetropole nowadays, but I have no idea who that could be" (GM16: heritage officer, 2019).*

A policy officer working at a Dutch municipality adds to this that maintenance of the Grünmetropole routes was dependent on funding:

*"When funding stops, the project also stops, since no one is responsible any longer" (GM3: policy officer, 2019)*

and

*"Maintenance is an issue. There is funding for just three of four years, and afterwards no money is available anymore" (GM1: tourist officer, 2019).*

Another person highlights the importance of political support:

*"They made nice maps, and information leaflets, but there was no political support, thus not the projects' soul is absent" (GM13: former miner, 2019).*

Thus, although a special organization was set up in order to maintain the route, a lack of responsibility, funding, and political support resulted in degradation of the Grünmetropole routes. At present day both touristic routes are badly maintained and consequently barely used (GM1: tourist officer, 2019; GM11: tour guide, 2019; GM19: policy officer, 2019; GM21: tour guide, 2019).

*"You can see that it is just barely used by cyclists, they choose either the existing cycling network (Knoopuntenroute), or a route that is better marketed. This route is marketed 10 years ago, so people just don't know about it: they see the signs but wonder what it is about" (GM1: tourist officer, 2019).*

Another person adds to this:

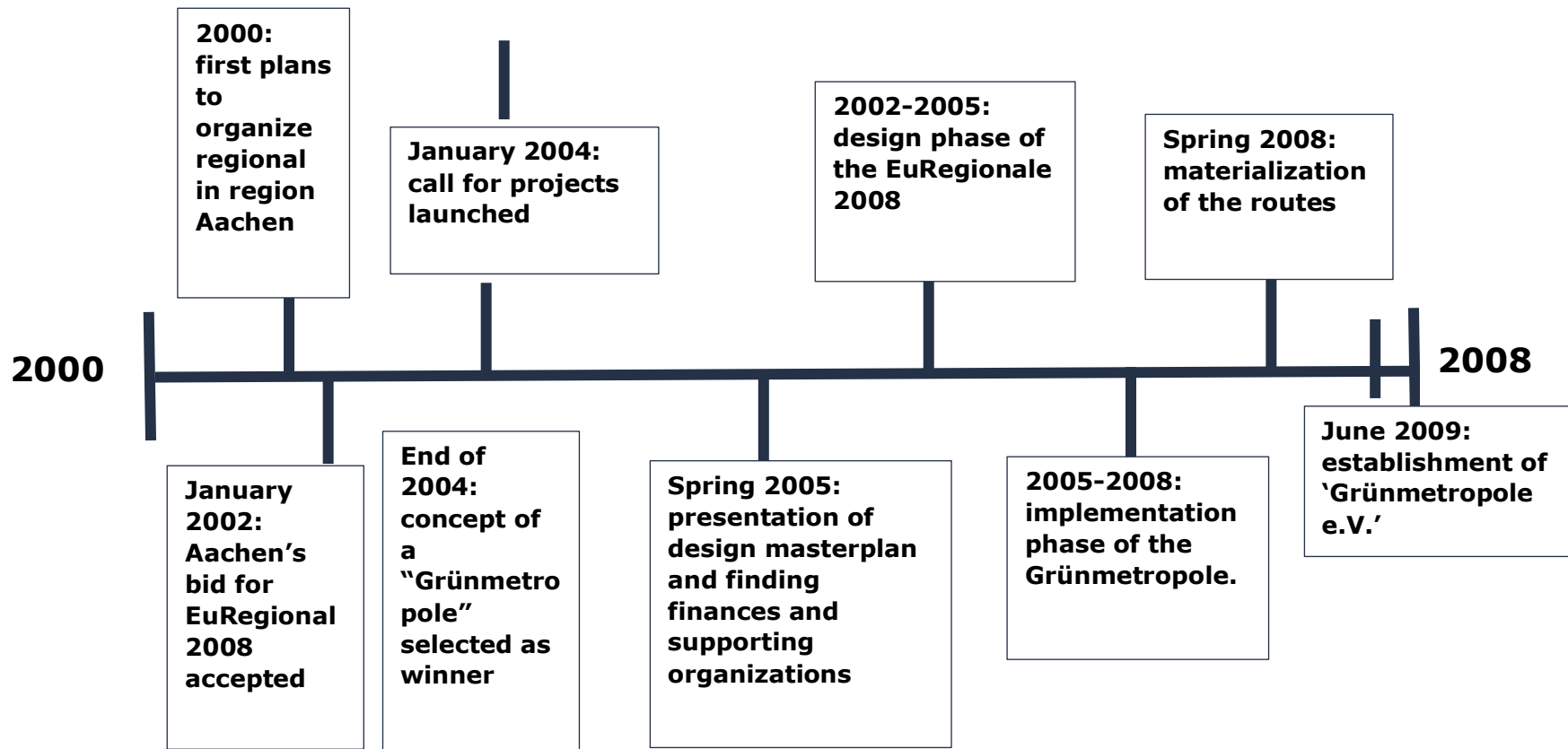
*"I was surprised when I read that you are interested in the Grünmetropole, I didn't expect that anyone would still be interested in the Grünmetropole" (GM21: tour guide, 2019).*





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## 2.4 Example: Beringen

Part of the Grünmetropole design was the idea to connect about 70 touristic highlights related to the mining past to the two designed routes. These highlights were designed as a stop along the route, where tourists could stop to visit a site and to get more information. Selection of these stops was initially done by the designers (see the masterplan: Bava et al., 2005), but these stops have been adjusted during the implementation phase of the Grünmetropole as also entrepreneurs, local (heritage) groups and citizens shared their ideas for potential stops along the route. This resulted in a varied collection of touristic highlights. The list of about 70 touristic stops along the Grünmetropole route is thus very diverse, these stops include sites related to former mining activities, nature areas, cities, but also shopping malls and even recreational sites like a theme park. The link between these stops, the two routes, and the overall Grünmetropole project is however equivocal. Many projects and places, including former mining sites, had no organizational or financial link with the Grünmetropole project besides that they were listed as a stop. The developments and heritage re-use processes on those projects and places thus took place independently from the Grünmetropole project. To explain especially this later group of stops, a closer look into the example of the city of Beringen (Belgium) is useful.



**Picture 6: overview of the site in Beringen. The diving centre in the former sewage treatment plant can be seen in the front (picture made by author).**

As a city, Beringen is inextricably linked to its mining past. In Beringen the mining past is still very present as the relicts of the former mining settlement have been preserved comprehensively. This means that next to the mining site itself (with the shafts, sewage plants, offices and so on) also the coal heap can be found, the former residential areas (i.e. a garden city), the former recreational buildings, churches, and other community buildings, and the properties of the different migrant worker communities such as a mosque, a clubhouse of the Polish community, and a Greek orthodox church, can still be seen in present day landscape (GM11: tour guide, 2019). Various of these sites are included as stop on the Grünmetropole route, this includes: the coal heap, the Flemish museum of mining which is housed in a former mining office building, and the former residential areas (i.e. a garden city) (van der Heyden, 2008). Since many of the mining relicts have been preserved, Beringen almost feels like an 'open-air museum' (Heinrichs et al., 2008). Indeed in Beringen, different from other Belgian cities, Beringen chose to focus on experiencing the mining past:

*"At the time of the closing of the mines, people were stuck with these buildings, they were wondering what to do with them, in some cases, such as 'Zwartberg' (city of Genk, Belgium), they demolisshed everything. In some other cases they did 'beatiful things' with these buildings, for example in Eisden, where they opened a shopping mall on the former mining grounds. In other cases, they made different choises with regard to the re-use of these buildings, such as here in Beringen where we focus on 'mijnbeleving' (i.e. the mining experience)" (GM11: tour guide, 2019).*

This decision to protect the minin site of Beringen was made by the national government:

*"It was a conscious decision by the Flemish government to protect at least one former mining site, as complete as possible. The decision was made in favor for Beringen, that is why you can read the story so clear here. Only a few years after the closure of the mines, the minister decided to protect as much as possible here in Beringen, this was in the year 1994" (GM20: policy officer, 2019).*

Although many mining relicts have been preserved, and Beringen feels like a museum, many developments took place, especially with regard to the mining site itself.

The mining site has been, and still is, being redeveloped, hereby partly re-using former mining buildings. The coal heap has for example been transformed into a, so called 'adventure park', which means that there is a playground, mountain bike trail, hiking trail, and viewing platform developed. The sewage treatment plant is for instance transformed in an aquarium with diving activities taking place (see Picture 6). One of the former offices has been transformed into the Flemish mining museum, and the former power plant has been transformed into an indoor climbing centre. Some other buildings, like the shaft towers, has been renovated and are preserved as a listed monument. Next, there are some new buildings added to the site, a couple of houses, a swimming pool, and a shopping mall are built on the site. Finally, there are also some buildings which have neither been renovated, nor been developed into a new function. Hence it is still unclear what will happen to

the coal washery complex on the site (GM10: heritage officer, 2019). Alike, there are plans for new developments, like building a mining experience centre, and a hotel (GM17: tourist officer, 2019; GM18: tourist officer, 2019).

The developments on the former mining site in Beringen are clustered under the name 'Be-Mine'. This developments on Be-Mine were however a

*"difficult, complicated, and long lasting process"* (GM20: policy officer, 2019)

since the start. "When we started, there was even a kind of aversion against protection; one did not understand why the minister decided to protect so much here in Beringen. So people ignored it, and just weren't interested. This sentiment was there from the start, people thought, it is rather useless to protect all this, whose gone pay for this. So the lack of vision, the lack of interest, has always been there" (GM20: policy officer, 2019). First it was only the government who was responsible for the developments in Beringen. However, some other projects initiated by the government failed and consequently the government was hesitant to join. For a short period of time, the government relied on a private investor, but this also appeared to be unsuccessful.

*"Then this lead to some new insights for the government; they couldn't just not care, but had to take a central role and had to take the responsibility. For a small scale municipality like Beringen, however, we didn't have the power, money, or ideas to develop this site or lead the redevelopment process. At a certain moment, the province, the municipality and the Flemish government came together and took their responsibilities to develop this site. A cooperation agreement was signed in 2009 and the Beringen project was recognized as a Flemish key development project. Then consistently more and more funding was available. Yet, the government realized that they needed private and commercial investors, so they had to allow functions like living, leisure and tourism. So they opted for a public-private-partnership, so that governmental funding's were doubled by private partners within this public-private-partnership. Then we had to find a private investor, to set up the 'Be-Mine-agency'. A consortium with the LRM (Investment company Limburg) and 2 private developers was founded and they developed a masterplan, and started to develop. The easiest parts were developed as first, than some opportunistic developments took place"* (GM20: policy officer, 2019).

Developments focused on various function as commercial developments were allowed on this site.

*"When the minister started to protect this site in 1994, we decided to not transform this site into a museum, but we chose for a more mixed, urban, development including a museum. Yet, this was not the main function, it had to be more than just leisure and tourism. Therefore we decided to include also commercial functions, like shops, and room for living"* (GM20: policy officer, 2019).

However, this led to additional difficulties. The idea was that developing houses and commercial buildings would generate financial resources which in turn could



be invested in heritage re-use projects. This economic model however failed, since the houses appeared to be difficult to sell. So

*"all in all it was a very difficult process, because people ignored it, governments who did first not cooperate, and because we were always searching for funds for a huge project like this"* (GM20: policy officer, 2019).

Moreover, it was a difficult process since an overall vision for the site lacked and the developer converted the site in a rather opportunistic way and developments depended on coincidence (GM19: policy officer, 2019):

*"The development of the diving center is a good heritage re-use example. But this was by chance, two entrepreneurs came to the development company and told them that they wanted to develop such a diving center, they were looking for a location. Here was the perfect location for that. So this is very dependent on coincidence and some local entrepreneurs who want to develop something. The same goes for the climbing center, which was initiated by an enthusiastic hobby climber who looked for a suitable location, which appeared to be the former electricity factory. These are nice developments, which came here coincidentally, but however fit well to the overall story"* (GM20: policy officer, 2019).

That's according to two policy officers of the municipality of Beringen also the main strength of the development process: that they didn't choose to focus on one function, but that various functions were allowed that fitted next to each other (GM19: policy officer, 2019; GM20: policy officer, 2019). Overall, it was a rather dynamic and adaptive process of development:

*"The swimming pool was an important first development, it started to attract people again to this site. Then the shopping mall came here, the diving center, the climbing center; all pieces of this puzzle. It is a very dynamic growing process"* (GM20: policy officer, 2019).

The development process in Beringen is a good example of re-use

*"since the existing infrastructure of buildings and objects is integrated in the re-use plans, and former mining buildings get a second live as new functions are added"* (GM11: tour guide, 2019).

At the same time, this interviewee however notes that there is still some potential with regard to this project as there are still some buildings left that need restauration works, or that need to get a new function. The interviewee explains that:

*"There are still some buildings which need renovation. These restauration works however will need a serious investment. Thus the investment company needs to make a decision about the amount of money he can invest, versus the amount of cost of the restauration works. In some cases, demolishing an old building, and built something new will be more efficient, economically speaking. The investment company however needs to think about the heritage value of a certain object, and about the impact of a new building on a historical site"* (GM11: tour guide, 2019).

The developments on Be-Mine are not yet integrated in the broader urban context, so this is a challenge for the future (GM19: policy officer, 2019).

This section provided an overview of the development process in Beringen. As described in this section, the developments and heritage re-use processes in Beringen took place independently from the Grünmetropole project. This is also mentioned during the interviews:

*"The Grünmetropole project didn't play a role at all in this process"*

and

*"I don't think that the Grünmetropole project was a stimulator for further development in this region"* (GM20: policy officer, 2019).

### 3 Case evaluations

The mining past influenced the identity and physical landscape of the area of the Grünmetropole. The end of the mining industry brought challenges with regard to conversion policy and the relicts of the mining past. The Grünmetropole project aimed to contribute to a rehabilitation of this mining past by focusing on tourism and recreation. As part of the interviews and field work, we could construct an evaluation of the project Grünmetropole from the perspective of the stakeholders. The results of these evaluations are clustered around the themes "overall concept", "cross border cooperation", "activities" and "impact".

#### 3.1 Grünmetropole concept

The concept of the Grünmetropole was to improve organizational connectivity within the region, and rehabilitate the mining past. A threefold goal was set up: renewal of the landscape, strengthening identity, and stimulating tourism and recreation (Bava et al., 2005). The selected goals as such seem to be valued by (at least several of the interviewed) stakeholders involved in the implementation of the project. One interviewee especially likes the idea to overcome cultural differences in the cross-border region:

*"I appreciate the overall intentions of this project: to connect the region. In that regard it's a pity that the project failed"* (GM2: policy officer, 2019).

Other interviewees (e.g. GM1: tourist officer, 2019; GM3: policy officer, 2019) value about the project that it focused on one central topic, namely the region's mining past:

*"The Grünmetropole was one of the first projects which really put attention to a part of history which we tended to ignore until then. Until then we never paid attention to this part of our history, the Grünmetropole project tried to shift focus to this period in history"* (GM3: policy officer, 2019).

Another interviewee however questions whether the mining history is framed in a 'good way':

*"I can't hear people say what a 'cool history' because this history wasn't cool at all: people died because of 'miner's lungs', this story is unknown to the wider public"* (GM13: former miner, 2019).

The broad focus and the regional, cross-border scale however appeared to be one of the pitfalls of the project. This is stated in no uncertain terms by one of the interviewees:

*"The project was too big, too complex. Historically speaking there is no connection, cooperation was contrived, and it was too comprehensive"* (GM21: tour guide, 2019).

Also with regard to the routes itself, this interviewee thinks that this route was too complicated:

*"The route was just not well designed; I think it was too comprehensive and not well considered"* (GM21: tour guide, 2019).

Another person underlines this:

*"This project is not well-thought-out: it is designed as a masterplan without having an overview of the project as a whole. As a result, not many people use the Grünmetropole route and this route does not help with explaining the region's mining past"* (GM12: tour guide, 2019).

In this regard, also the approach of the project didn't help as it was foremost a nice plan which lacked links with other aspect like local communities, or existing spatial issues. Although one interview (GM1: tourist officer, 2019) states that

*"it would have been logical to address spatial issues as well"*

it turned out that this was not the case:

*"The Grünmetropole was too much on 'high-level', hence it wasn't able to really have impact on the local scale. It was an abstract masterplan which was okay, but didn't lead to something, there was too much distance between this masterplan and reality"* (GM19: policy officer, 2019).

He adds to this:

*"I remember about the study reports, which were in itself quite interesting, but it didn't lead to a concrete, perceptible project, where we could work on at a local scale".*

The Grünmetropole had no, or only weak links, with other projects or developments (GM2: policy officer, 2019):

*"The mining history is the most important factor to stimulate a endogenous potential including aspects like spatial planning, landscape, architecture, technique, and socio-cultural aspects. I don't think these aspects were part of the Grünmetropole project"* (GM16: heritage officer, 2019).

Thus the potential of the project was recognized by various stakeholders at that time. But implementation became a disappointment, because it was a promising project, but it remained to be only a well-designed promising plan (GM1: tourist officer, 2019). A quote from (GM20: policy officer) is included to summarize this discrepancy between the plan and the implementation:

*"The Grünmetropole had some potential, there were some nice studies done at that time. Besides, it was an interesting approach, but it remained a theoretical story. When it was implemented, it was a rather pathetic implementation. It were only some signs, and some information signs, but these were located in weird locations. The Grünmetropole and the signs were like a weird ufo which landed here. Hence, the Grünmetropole is overlooked nowadays, I now only remember the name of the project"*

### 3.2 Cross-border cooperation

Strengthening the region's identity and stimulating cooperation in the region was one of the three goals of the Grünmetropole project. The data from the fieldwork once more show a nuanced reflection on this cooperation. Cooperation in the border region is in general seen as good thing, but the cross-border aspect is mentioned as a complicating factor, and also the link with tourism is questionable as we will see in this paragraph.

Several interviewees state that cross-border cooperation is one of the main strengths of the Grünmetropole project (e.g. GM3: policy officer, 2019; GM19: policy officer, 2019).

*"The initial aim of this project was to present the mining history of the region, and to stimulate cross-border cooperation. These are interesting things to focus on, and at that time, we saw some initiatives that indeed focused on cooperation. Of course, there is a language barrier, but still it is good to cooperate at a regional scale. This project helped start building these connections"* (GM1: tourist officer, 2019).

The Grünmetropole project is seen as a

*"valuable learning experience"* (GM3: policy officer, 2019)

and in fact led to cooperation:

*"Cooperation is nowadays quite good in this region. We work on several international projects"* (GM1: tourist officer, 2019).

Although cooperation led to some concrete results, the cooperation within the project Grünmetropole was not always fruitful:

*"International cooperation as such is a good goal to set and closer cooperation in this border region is really needed. Unfortunately however, this project is not a good example of international cooperation. Maybe this region is just too big to really create cross-border cooperation, or maybe too many stakeholders were involved"* (GM12: tour guide, 2019).



Other reasons that cross-border cooperation never really came off the ground are mentioned by a former Dutch miner:

*"This region is characterized by the perils of village politics, each city has his own initiatives and the provincial government does not make guiding decisions, so nothing happens. Besides, regional and cross-border cooperation needs to be organized by the government. Yet, they don't pay attention to this topic because it is not interesting enough, electorally speaking"* (GM13: former miner, 2019)

Next, the cross-border aspect is mentioned as a complicating factor:

*"Historically speaking, there has never been a link between the Belgian, Dutch and German mining regions, these are different periods, and different approaches used there. The Grünmetropole tried to make a link that's not there. If people want to make a link between the three countries they use Facebook to communicate with their German and Dutch friends, but not a route like this"* (GM21: tour guide, 2019).

And also the touristic aspect is a complicating factor, as is explained by both a German and Dutch tourist officer:

*"Cross-border cooperation with regard to tourism doesn't work, there is always competition, different interests, and cross-border cooperation is simply very difficult to realize"* (GM6: tourist officer, 2019)

and

*"Although there are some cross-border routes, we see that most routes end when they reach the border. Our policy is too much focused on individual regions and countries instead of connecting these routes by cross-border cooperation"* (GM14: guide museum, 2019).

### **3.3 Governance and community**

The discrepancy between the Grünmetropole plan and implementation was in a way disappointing. One reason for this could have been the governance approach used, which only had little room for incorporating stakeholders and communities' ideas. Various interviewees state that the Grünmetropole was a top-down organized project. One person explains that there was no room for participation hereby referring to politicians and designers:

*"They remained deaf to what local citizens were saying"*

and

*"If you don't have academic titles, like professor or doctor, in front of your name, then they think you don't have any knowledge at all; they won't listen to you. But these people do in fact have the most valuable, local knowledge, way more important knowledge than people with academic titles like professor or doctor can ever acquire"* (GM12: tour guide, 2019).

Other interviewees underline this lack of community involvement, but do mention some other ways of participation:

*"I don't think there was community involvement, there were some discussion groups with local entrepreneurs who discussed the plans and decided to make a link with this project. And besides organizations such as the 'VVV Zuid Limburg' made proposals: did you consider this, or this, or this? But citizens did not make any proposals, no" (GM1: tourist officer, 2019).*

Also local non-professional heritage clubs were asked to propose objects or locations. But this was only a supporting role, without a decisive say about the design of the project. The lack of community involvement is seen as a major pitfall as this could have had an impact on the future development of the Grünmetropole.

*"There was a possibility to engage with citizens, if you don't do that at that moment you will never do that. Eventually however such a project has to be supported by citizens, because they are the potential users" (GM1: tourist officer, 2019).*

Hence, this led to a situation that the Grünmetropole does not live in the minds of the people (GM13: former miner, 2019) (GM20: policy officer, 2019).

At the same time, it should however be noted that the Grünmetropole project has been developed and implemented in a period when community-involvement was not a common practice. This is also recognized by the interviewees as the for instance state that:

*"Nowadays I think there is anyways more awareness of community-involvement, especially in comparison to 20 or 10 years ago" (GM1: tourist officer, 2019).*

Indeed, nowadays there is more interest in local stories and bottom-up developments. One person who works at a Dutch municipality in the area of the Grünmetropole, for example explains that with regard to the mining history, they now initiate various projects to collect local stories and ideas:

*"Top-down projects, organized by a bigwig, don't work. Projects only work if local stories are incorporated, you actively need to look for these stories and incorporate them in your projects" (GM4: policy officer, 2019).*

He for instance mentions the project 'Jaar van de Mijnen' ('Year of the Mines': a year to commemorate the closing of the Dutch mines, 2015) which, according to him was very successful because

*"this was not a top-down organized project, this project was particularly interested in local stories. That was one of the strengths of this project".*

Also with regard to designing a route, like the Grünmetropole routes, these local stories and ideas should be taken into account. At least this is what a Belgian policy officer explains:

*"It may sound logical to start from a regional story and then select individual projects, but it works the other way round: you have to start with small entities, and only then look for a connection within a certain area, or region, for example the former mining region" (GM20: policy officer, 2019).*

### 3.4 Activities: tourism

Within the Grünmetropole project, the goals of revitalizing mining heritage, and stimulating tourism were intertwined. A touristic route was implemented to inform the public about the mining past in the region: a dedicated route for bicycles and one for cars. The routes connect 70 individual heritage or touristic/recreation sites – predominantly but not exclusively related to the industrial mining history of the region.

The value of such an approach is recognized by the interviewees who state that it is important to inform the tourist about the heritage they encounter along the route:

*"Information leaflets and signs are needed to tell about the history and heritage of a particular region: it brings the objects 'alive' again"* (GM2: policy officer, 2019).

This is underlined by another interviewee, who however questions whether tourists actually read the information that is provided:

*"People want to know about the history, or about what they see. Providing information along the route is important",*

And at the same time

*"I don't think citizens know a lot about the routes in the landscape. I think you will be surprised"* (GM1: tourist officer, 2019).

Moreover, tourists are also misinformed or even fooled by touristic routes as a Dutch policy officer elaborates:

*"The mining past cannot be linked to touristic activities since there are almost no visible relicts of the mining past. Stories are now made up at places where mining activities used to be, but this is not 'readable' for a tourist who comes here. Designing a new route about the mining past is a sign of a lack of creativity: if you run out of creativity, you come up with a route"* (GM3: policy officer, 2019).

He furthermore states:

*"I think we're putting too much attention to this mining past. If there is no link, you cannot make a link with the past".*

Although some interviewees question whether the mining past can be linked to tourism, storytelling and region-branding are seen as important aspects with regard to tourism:

*"We can think of new storylines to add to the touristic product of our region, we must think about locations which are not yet part of our tourist offer and include these places into tourist offer by presenting a new story at that location"* (GM8: policy officer, 2019)

and

*"We are constantly looking for new storylines to tell, to make and keep this region attractive for tourists" (GM7: tourist officer, 2019).*

That there are not much relicts from the mining past left doesn't seem to be a problem:

*"A location can be opened-up to the broader audience by telling the stories of that place, objects are usefull for that, but not necessary" (GM7: tourist officer, 2019).*

Hence tourism is a very important economic sector in the area of the Grünmetropole, and branding touristic routes is an important aspect. This however also leads to competition, as a Dutch tourism officer explains:

*"Routes are really an issue in this region, we always promote that. But now there are so many projects, so many routes, we need to choose for certain storylines. The Grünmetropole is also a storyline, and if we can, we will try to promote this route as well. In the region South-Limburg however, there is more supply than just the Grünmetropole-route: we can make various storylines about for example the Mergelandroute, the hills, the wine, the Burgundian lifestyle, our pie's: there are about 15 powerful storylines that we can brand and promote. The mining history is also a powerful storyline, absolutely, but we can't just focus on one storyline, as they did in the Aachen region, that we won't do, because our touristic supply is too important" (GM1: tourist officer, 2019).*

### 3.5 Impact

When asked about the impact of the Grünmetropole routes itself, interviewees are either modest or critical.

*"The Grünmetropole is history. I was surprised when I read that you are interested in the Grünmetropole. I didn't expect that anyone would still be interested in the Grünmetropole" (GM21: tour guide, 2019).*

This is underlined by two other interviewees. One of them states:

*"The Grünmetropole is now heritage itself" (GM24: heritage officer, 2019).*

Another interviewee underlines this:

*"That's already a couple of years ago, about 10 years ago, so I don't know exactly. I know about because I remember some of the documents made. But I don't remember concrete results at this moment, except the information signs which can be found at all the mining sites in Limburg, but they work alienating I think. I just remember the name of the project. Besides, the signs are still there, actually this morning I spotted a sign indicating the car route of the Grünmetropole project" (GM20: policy officer, 2019).*



The alienating effects of the route signs and the mistakes in the design of the route itself are mentioned several times as reason for the lack of impact of the Grünmetropole routes.

*"This project never functioned the way it was designed. Also the signs are very useless, they are not well designed and besides, they located here in Eisden on a location where no tourist or cyclist will notice it. People maybe look on internet or websites about information about the mining past, but the cyclist who pass by here are either just looks for a place to have a drink or for some information, only some of them indeed stop and read the information. That's also due to practical aspects because this info sign is placed in the wrong direction, no cyclist will notice it"* (GM21: tour guide, 2019).

Another interviewee notices that:

*"It is just stupid that this route goes from A to B, that does not work. It would have been interesting to make a round tour, especially because they want to promote cross-border tourism"* (GM1: tourist officer, 2019).

Besides, practical issues, such as money for maintenance works are mentioned as reason for the lack of impact of the Grünmetropole routes.

*"Even before the project was well implemented, it turned out that there was no money available and that maintenance works could not be done anymore. This was really a disappointment, especially for local entrepreneurs"* (GM1: tourist officer, 2019).

All in all this led to a situation that:

*"there are now nice maps, pictures and information leaflets, but they are not very practical, so where did that bring us?"* (GM12: tour guide, 2019).

Various interviewees (e.g. GM1: tourist officer, 2019; GM11: tour guide, 2019; GM19: policy officer, 2019) indeed state that the information leaflets are not distributed any longer, and that the routes are barely used.

## 4 Reflection

This section firstly provides a reflection on the OC Grünmetropole by considering the data from the case observation from the three thematic lines of OpenHeritage: resource integration, community and stakeholder integration, and regional/territorial integration. Outcomes of interviews, field observation and literature study are complemented in this section with newspaper articles from different periods. Finally, we shortly compare the Grünmetropole project to other projects related to mining history and touristic routes within the same region. We question whether lessons from the Grünmetropole can be of help there.

Overall, the case observations show a somewhat nuanced evaluation of the Grünmetropole project. Although the overall perception is rather negative, it should be noted that some interviewees however also note some positive results of the Grünmetropole project. The overall intention of the project as well as the intention to closer cooperation in the region are for example valued as positive aspects. The overall perception is however rather negative. We can cluster this negative perception along the three thematic lines of OpenHeritage.

### **1. Resource integration**

The first reason why stakeholders overall perceive the Grünmetropole as negative, can be linked to the theme of resource integration. Overall, the project lacked many practical aspects and agreements. As seen in the previous section, interviewees mention that even at the time of the implementation there were questions about some practical aspects, like the placing of information signs and the design of the route itself as it is not designed as a round tour. But moreover, interviewees mention the lack of practical agreements about for example funding, a plan for the Grünmetropole after implementation, and the lack of agreements about maintenance. These aspects indeed have had a negative impact on the success of the Grünmetropole. Nowadays, for example, some information signs as well as signs indicating the route, can still be found in the landscape whereas others are gone due to vandalism, renovation works, or changes in the spatial context (e.g. new infrastructure). Thus tourists who come to the region nowadays can't possibly cycle the entire route as signs are missing, but may wonder what this route and the signs are about. Maps or other information can however not be found anymore since the website is not maintained and information leaflets were never reprinted after they were sold out. All in all this resulted in a situation that nowadays the signs and the routes work 'alienating' as one of the interviewees called it. In fact, as is mentioned by several interviewees, the routes are hardly used nowadays, and the Grünmetropole is relatively unknown to both locals and tourists.

### **2. Community and stakeholder integration**

A second reason explaining the negative perception of the Grünmetropole project can be linked to community and stakeholder integration. When looking at the governance model applied, the interviewees frame the Grünmetropole as a top-down organized project. Although there were some forms of participation included, decision making was done by the designers

of the project. Moreover, local citizens were not included in the design and decision making process at all. It is questionable whether the lack of community involvement should be regarded as a negative aspect, especially when realizing that community involvement was not a common practice at the time of designing this project. Yet at the same time it is mentioned that the lack of local knowledge has had negative impact because local stories and bottom-up developments were not included in the plans. This was yet another reason leading to a situation that the project didn't land at the local or individual level. Nowadays, community involvement is more and more common practice in spatial developments. Some of the interviewees name examples of other, more recent projects (e.g. *Jaar van de Mijnen* project), that did incorporate local stories hereby showing that these projects are better known among local citizens, but also catalyzed new, bottom-up developments (Leunissen, 2019). The lack of community engagement with the Grünmetropole project can thus be partly explained by looking at the applied governance model. Linking the project to local bottom-up initiatives, and incorporating communities' stories would have led to a more interesting route, and to more engagement at present day.

### **3. Regional/territorial integration**

A third reason explaining the negative perception of the Grünmetropole project is the approach used within this project. It was namely not only a top-down plan in terms of governance model applied, but also in terms how it was brought to this region. It was a high-level, abstract, visionary masterplan which had almost no links with the existing spatial issues, or socio-cultural patterns in the region. The consequences of this were practical in terms that it didn't lead to concrete, perceptible projects at the local scale, as one interviewee tells us. This plan was implemented in a way that it was just placed in the landscape without having a concrete impact. In this regard, it should be noted that also the method used (i.e. designing two touristic routes) didn't really address the issues the region was dealing with. This resulted in a situation that the signs and routes work alienating nowadays (as explained above). Moreover however, due to this approach, and the methods used, the Grünmetropole never became a catalyzer for stimulating developments in the region. In fact, because there were no concrete projects linked to the project, and because the project was not linked to other ongoing projects, the Grünmetropole never achieved the goal of renewing the landscape. Next, using this approach once more contributed to the mismatch between plan and local perception as it didn't help the region. Hence, as a result not many citizens know about this project or have a personal link with it. Also with regard to the goal of cross-border cooperation and connecting the mining regions in the three countries, it is questionable whether this plan really contribute to these goals. The overall impression from the interviews is namely that the project has more or less been forced upon the region. Creating a common identity, and organizing cross-border cooperation are however difficult processes in itself which develop over time, instead of bringing it to a region by implementing a plan like the Grünmetropole.

The three abovementioned reasons summarizing the negative perceptions of the Grünmetropole project are based on the case observations (i.e. data from the interviews, and field observation). The case observations thus represent value judgements made at present day, more than 10 years after the project was designed and implemented. However, an interview with three main stakeholders involved in the EuRegionale 2008 project, during and directly after the implementation of the project, can be found in a document reflecting on the EuRegionale 2008 project (see Vos & Gottschalk, 2009, p. 40). Not surprisingly, these stakeholders see the Grünmetropole project as a successful project. Especially with regard to the cross-border cooperation, and the touristic routes. The fact that a cross-border route is developed and implemented is valued, and the high number of maps distributed is seen as an indicator for the success of the routes. At that time (2009) none of the stakeholders seems to worry about the future of the route and maintenance activities. They see the cross-border cooperation as a lasting activity that will ensure the future of the Grünmetropole project, and specifically of the routes (Vos & Gottschalk, 2009). Likewise, also in the booklet that discusses the ideas of the Grünmetropole (see Heinrichs et al., 2008), the project is regarded as very successful. It is stated that the Grünmetropole contributed to a feeling of communality in the region, and that it stimulated cross-border exploration in the sense that both citizens and tourists started to get interested in the common history of the region (Heinrichs et al., 2008).

In newspaper articles of that time some more sceptical remarks can be found. In an article of De Standaard (2006), concerns are shared that the Grünmetropole will be just a gushy, city-branding story, without concrete ideas or projects that will stimulate developments in the region. Besides, they condemn the lack of a well-thought-out concept underpinning this project as it is mainly framed as a nice region-branding story. Finally, they notice that the Grünmetropole plans degenerates local citizens into users/tourists instead of seeing them as a potential source of input of local knowledge (De Standaard, 2006). In a local Belgian newspaper *Het Belang van Limburg*, we read that critics focus on the idea that the Grünmetropole project is too much backwards looking instead of a driver for future developments (van den Reydt, 2006). At the same time reporters in various newspapers note that stakeholders, and especially those involved in the project, nevertheless expect a lot from the project (see for example Swinnen, 2006; Swinnen, 2007; Van den Reydt, 2007). In 2011, a reporter of the online blog *ZuiderLucht* reflects on the Grünmetropole project by interviewing several stakeholders who were involved in the set-up of the project (see van der Steen, 2011). Although the interviewees in this article name some positive aspects, the overall perception in 2011 (only four years after implementation) is rather negative. The concept of the project is criticized, the cross-border cooperation is mentioned as a failed attempt, and it is stated that the project doesn't live in the minds of the people (van der Steen, 2011).

To sum up, although the project is initially evaluated rather positive, opinions changed over time into a more negative perception. Hence, both the reflections in the 2006/2007 as the one in 2011 show striking similarities with the remarks of the interviewees of today.

## **Lessons from the Grünmetropole**

Considering these critical reflections on the Grünmetropole, one could conclude that valuable lessons can be learned from the case, especially for other projects dealing with mining heritage, and other spatial developments with regard to tourism. This however appears to be hardly the case. Even at the time of the Grünmetropole project, other projects dealing with the mining heritage were implemented. In the Belgian mining area for example, a project called '*Masterplan Mijnstreek*' (Masterplan Mining area) dealt with the exact same spatial issues, such as bringing the relicts of the mining past alive again. This masterplan was also produced in 2008, yet there are no links made with the Grünmetropole project (Mols, 2008). But it is even more striking to see that even at present day projects are designed and implemented that address almost the same goals as the Grünmetropole project, and propose more or less similar measures with regard to spatial planning and tourism. A Dutch policy officer for example elaborates on a project called '*Leisure Lane*'. This project is about creating a touristic route that connects various attractions and informative stops. So there is a similarity with the Grünmetropole project in the sense that it a route and stops are designed. But moreover the interviewee explains that there are similarities in terms of governance model applied:

*"This is once more a top-down organized project, which is forced upon us. Maybe we should dust off the Grünmetropole project again, instead of making new projects"* (GM2: policy officer, 2019).

Another interviewee adds to this the example of a project called '*Mijnspoor*' (Mine trail). This project is about transforming a former mining railway into a cycling path which leads tourist along relicts of the mining past in the region. The interviewee states:

*"I'm wondering for who these projects are intended, I think we're putting too much attention to the mining past. Designing a new route about the mining past is a sign of a lack of creativity: if you run out of creativity, you come up with a route"* (GM3: policy officer, 2019).

He is very skeptical about this route since the route –similar to the Grünmetropole routes- tries to make links that aren't there:

*"Tourists will wonder how this route links to the mining past because they can't see any relicts of the mining history. Tourists will say: where is this mine you're talking about?"* (GM3: policy officer, 2019).

Also in the Belgian part of the mining region, new routes around the topic mining heritage are designed. A project called '*Kolenspoor*' (cCoal trail) aims at more or less the same goals (with the exception of cross-border cooperation) as the Grünmetropole project. These similarities in goals are not concealed by the interviewees as one of them says that



*"This route has the same aim as the former Grünmetropole project, since they both try to connect various mining regions and promote it as one entity: we try to link various mining sites by using a former mine trail" (GM18: tourist officer, 2019).*

Another interviewee adds to this:

*"Kolenspoor is again a quest to find each other and to cooperate, and it is once more a quest to link the former mining sites" (GM19: policy officer, 2019).*

Many other examples of (cross-border) touristic routes, in all three countries, could be named here. These routes not only try to achieve more or less similar goals, but also use more or less similar principles like designing a route, making links between mining areas, and attracting tourists to mining heritage sites.

Based on the lessons derived from the Grünmetropole, critical remarks can be made here. Implementing top-down designed touristic routes might result in a mismatch with local perceptions. Routes on a map do not necessarily land in practice and easily remain nice plans only. Moreover, focusing on tourism can be a goal as such, but this goal can't easily be linked to other goals like renewal of the landscape, community-involvement or specific spatial heritage issues. The Grünmetropole does not incorporate communities' and individuals' ideas of heritage in order to land in the existing physical, but also socio-cultural or 'mental' landscape of the region. This bottom-up perspective on heritage and regional socio-cultural aspects. The idea of heritage that formed the basis of the two touristic routes was an object-focused one. Therewith the Grünmetropole-project left no room to incorporate other immaterial, or more personal, ideas of heritage. This is also one of the main lessons with regard to governance models applied in heritage re-use practices.

The question thus remains whether successful examples of routes as an instrument for adaptive re-use of heritage through community-involvement can be found, and if so, what specific approach and/or conditions made them successful?

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- GM16: heritage officer. (2019) *Field observations: online questionnaire send to an employee of 'VZW Het Vervolg',.*
- GM17: tourist officer. (2019, 10-04-2019) *Field observation: conversation with an employee of 'Tourism Limburg' (Belgium),.*
- GM18: tourist officer. (2019, 10-04-2019) *Field observation: conversation with an employee of 'Tourism Limburg' (Belgium),.*
- GM19: policy officer. (2019, 09-04-2019) *Interview with a policy officer at the municipality of Beringen (Belgium),/Interviewer: K. Van Knippenberg.*
- GM20: policy officer. (2019, 09-04-2019) *Interview with a policy officer at the municipality of Beringen (Belgium),/Interviewer: K. Van Knippenberg.*
- GM21: tour guide. (2019, 10-04-2019) *Interview with a guide at the city of Eisdien (Belgium),/Interviewer: K. Van Knippenberg.*
- GM24: heritage officer. (2019, 09-08-2019) *Interview with a policy officer at a regional heritage management organization in Genk (Belgium),/Interviewer: K. Van Knippenberg.*

# **15. Marineterrein - Navy Yard (Amsterdam, The Netherlands)**



Picture 1. **Voorwerf en Scheepvaartmuseum.** Photo by Siebe Swart.



Project Full Title	Organizing, Promoting and Enabling Heritage Re-use through Inclusion, Technology, Access, Governance and Empowerment	
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# 1 Introduction

Marineterrein (Navy Yard) is a historic 13-hectare area close to the Central Station in Amsterdam. Built in 1655, it was an innovation area used for the construction of warfare ships for the Dutch East India Company - which transformed The Netherlands into a world power and brought much affluence into the country.

Due to its military nature, this navy base has been sealed off from the rest of the city for 350 years.

In 2013, during the economic crisis, the Ministry of Defence decided to sell the terrain. Because the municipality of Amsterdam could not afford to buy the terrain at the time, it led to an innovative collaboration between the national government and the municipality – who together opted for a slow transformation of the site, led by the historical value of the area, with the aim to create long-term value for the city and country.

Since 2015, the area has been gradually opening up to the public and will be transformed into a future-proof city quarter.

*"We had these values - innovation, connection, focus - and I really want to make [Marineterrein] a new kind of area. So not a business district or a start-up place, but to really find something new. And I always said, I don't know what it is because if I would know, it would be something that already exists!" – Liesbeth Jansen, director Bureau Marineterrein.*



Picture 2. **Ground plan phase 2.** Photo via [www.marineterrein.nl](http://www.marineterrein.nl)

## 2 Timeline

**1650** — The Eastern Docklands are built.

**1655** — The Admiralty of Amsterdam establishes “The National Dock” (“Lands Werf”) for the construction of warfare ships for the Dutch East India Company.

**1915** — The navy yard closes and the name is changed to Marine Etablissement Amsterdam. It becomes a military base for the Royal Navy.

**1968** — The western part of the terrain is demolished to make room for the IJ-Tunnel. Many new constructions are built such as several educational buildings, a conference centre, sports fields and a helicopter landing site. The terrain is completely isolated from the city by a wall and satellite images are blurred. The terrain functions are largely kept secret.

**1973** — The National Maritime Museum ([Scheepvaartmuseum](#)) is established in the former warehouse of the Admiralty of Amsterdam, a building from 1655 at the edge of Marineterrein.

**2013** — Amidst the economic crisis, the Ministry of Defence decides to vacate most of the terrain by mid-2018. A cooperation agreement is signed between the government (represented by the Ministry of Defence and the Central Government Real Estate Agency) and the municipality of Amsterdam – to develop Marineterrein gradually. Liesbeth Jansen is appointed as director of [Bureau Marineterrein](#).

**2015** — The Ministry of Defence vacates the first part of the terrain: Voorwerf (Front yard). The first renters move their office on site. Voorwerf officially opens to the public.

**2016** — Transformation of building 027E to host the events related to the EU presidency of the Netherlands. Opening of Kade West area for the public. Construction of the commander’s bridge, connecting the terrain to the rest of the city.

**2017** — First big research project and collaboration between several tenants – [research about blue-green roofs](#).

**2017** — Motion by the local council – the municipality decides to increase the percentage of housing on the terrain. Beginning of the second phase, the planning phase. (October)

**2018** — Arrival of some key community members: [Codam](#) – an innovative coding school, Amsterdam Institute for Advanced Metropolitan Solutions ([AMS Institute](#)) and [Nemo Museum of Science](#).

**2018** — Construction of the boardwalk on water. The inland port becomes an unofficial swimming spot in Amsterdam. (July)

**2018** — Planned date for the Ministry of Defence to fully vacate Marineterrein. The Ministry of Defence announced that they want to stay in a larger area than initially planned. (July)

### 3 Story of the Area

*"In this area, the ships were stored, repaired, built, and from that, the Netherlands spread out all over the world, in the so-called 'Golden Age'. It was, I guess you can say, the biggest country in the world. (...) But we were, and still are a very big trade nation. That all started in this innovation quarter." – Michiel Buchel, director NEMO Science Museum.*

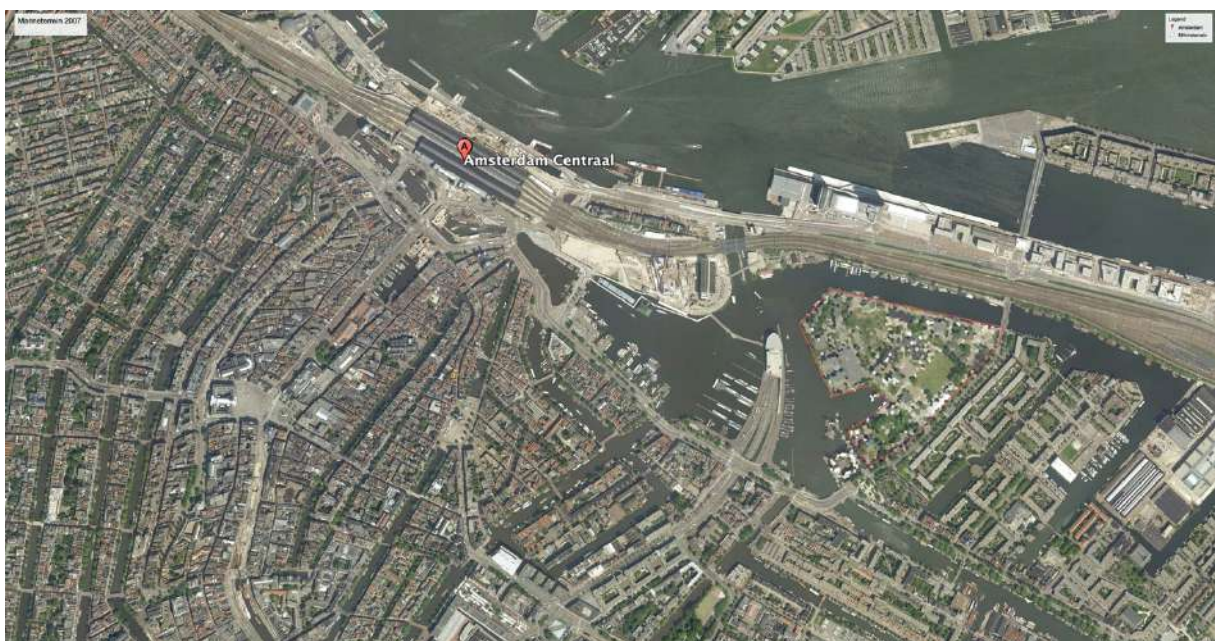
Marineterrein is a historical area of 13 hectares located on the eastern side of the centre of Amsterdam, on one of the Eastern Islands. The Eastern Islands were built in 1650 to create a new wharf during the "Dutch Golden Age", to build large ships to protect the Dutch East India Company's fleet. The terrain was used by the Admiralty of Amsterdam and later by its successor, the Royal Navy.

In 1915, the Navy Yard closed and the terrain was renamed to Marine Etablissement Amsterdam. The area's function changes to education and training centres for the Royal Navy.

In 1962, the western part of the area was demolished to make room for the IJ-Tunnel, a car tunnel under the river IJ which connects the centre of Amsterdam with the Amsterdam North neighbourhood. Several new buildings were constructed in this period, to replace the old ones from the western side, such as several educational buildings, a conference centre, sports fields and a helicopter landing site.

*"This has always been a military zone, and it has always been close to the city, in one way to protect this heritage of the trading history. Even though it is not always reflected in the buildings themselves, this has always been a very important place in a historic sense." Liesbeth Jansen, director Bureau Marineterrein.*

In recent history, until 2013, the function of the area was secret. The terrain was completely separated from the city through the large outside wall, and the satellite image above the area was blurred on Google Maps. Sometimes, leading suspects or threatened politicians would be hosted on the site.



Picture 3. **Blurred satellite map of Marineterrein in Amsterdam from 2007.**  
Photo via Google Earth Image © 2019 Aerodata International Surveys



## 4 The Initiative

*"The municipality couldn't afford to buy the whole area, so we had to work together with the national government. And it's... I think it's really special that the national government decided not to sell for the highest price, but to instead obtain long-term value for the city and the country." – Marlene Rienstra, municipality of Amsterdam.*

In 2013, the Ministry of Defence decided to vacate part of the terrain due to the need to cut costs during the economic crisis. The municipality of Amsterdam was not able to buy the terrain at that point. Therefore, the municipality and the national government decided to sign a cooperation agreement for the development of the area in December 2013.

Because of the economic crisis, it was opted for a **guided organic transformation** approach: starting from existing buildings and infrastructure, the area would gradually be open to the public and for programming, as soon as the Ministry of Defence would release each building. Moreover, the direction of development was determined based on a few starting points:

- The area would become an innovation workplace with international appeal
- The area would be developed based on its 400-year old history of maritime power
- The area would create added value for the city and would become a meeting place
- The iconic value of the area should be in the programming, and not in the buildings.

The method chosen for the development strategy of Marineterrein is a **guided organic transformation**. This means that the transformation is based on an area concept (see page 25) and not an urban development plan. Moreover, there is no specific end-goal for the transformation.

Specifically, this means that the programming of the site is done in an incremental way: using available resources (eg. rental fees) to organize the programming and the maintenance works. The process involves a lot of flexibility in steering the process. The step by step approach is considered essential to transforming an area into an innovation district – in a rapidly changing world, it is imperative to remain flexible.

**An innovative aspect of the contract** is that it was decided to form a new independent organisation to lead the transformation, Bureau Marineterrein. With a big mandate, it has full decisional power to select the renters and do the site programming and the communication in the temporary phase.

*"There was a combination of administrators who had the guts to do it this way. Because this way, you take some of the responsibility out of the separate levels. So, the municipality and the government don't have much to say about what's going on the temporary base, because we have this contract which says it's out of the municipality's hands, and it's out of the government's hands, it's what we do together. It really gives some space to do what's good for this area..." – Marlene Rienstra, municipality of Amsterdam.*

Liesbeth Jansen was directly appointed as director of this newly found organisation. She was known for having been the director of [Westergasfabriek Amsterdam](#) for over 18 years – a famous example of organic transformation of a site. Her role as director is to lead the first phase of temporary programming and establish a local community.

*"Nobody believes us if we tell them that we have these contracts with the mayor and the deputies, saying that the Marineterrein should be developed in an organic way. Everyone thinks, 'how is that possible?' " – Liesbeth Jansen, director Bureau Marineterrein.*

Through the cooperation agreement signed between the national government and the municipality of Amsterdam, the two parties decided to give form to their cooperation by establishing a **joint project organisation** to lead the development, maintenance and exploitation of the area: Bureau Marineterrein.

The **mandate** of the director of this organisation includes the following, according to the contract: implementation of the area development, concept monitoring, hiring staff, responsibility for the development, liabilities under € 100.000, alienation of movable property, renting out spaces for a duration of under 5 years and for spaces under 1.000 m<sup>2</sup> GFA.

This is considered one of the main success factors so far by all stakeholders of the project because it offers continuity to the process, reduces bureaucracy and facilitates a hands-on approach to the transformation.

In January 2015, the Ministry of Defence vacated the first part of the terrain (Voorwerf). The first renters started coming in, and in April 2015 the area became officially open to the public, while nevertheless maintaining its quality as a private terrain. In 2016, a second area was released (Kade West) and some small interventions were made, such as connecting Kade West to city through a new temporary bike bridge. Many buildings were renovated, the first restaurants opened and slowly the community and the area started to develop according to plan.

In 2017, at the end of the first phase, the transformation up until that point got evaluated by several parties including the general public, the adjacent neighbourhoods, policy makers and entrepreneurs. The municipality then decided to adopt a motion to realize more housing on Marineterrein than initially planned. One year later, in 2018, the Ministry of Defence announced that, for strategic reasons, they would like to remain in the area. The area that had already been opened for the public would stay that way, however they would not release any new buildings. The situation at the moment is still uncertain with regard to adapting these two changes into the future plans and resolving the conflict of interests.

## 5 Community

*"We started by distilling the ambition and the brand values starting from the description in the cooperation agreement. So, we came quite soon with 'innovation', 'connection', and 'focus'. And of course, there were other values, but I think these should be always there, such as sustainability." – Liesbeth Jansen, director Bureau Marineterrein.*

Soon after the start of the transformation process in 2014, Bureau Marineterrein started to bring more focus to the development by developing the **three core values** of the project: innovation (being able to adapt to a constantly changing world), connection (being able to work in cooperation with other sectors) and focus (working with really important topics with a wider societal value). These values helped to **select the tenants**, as the management team received more than 900 applications.

*"It's about how can you ensure that you get interesting, talented people in your buildings, people who can really contribute to your ambition, while at the beginning that ambition is not yet very concrete. What we did was to offer short-term contracts so that there is flexibility, but at the same time there is also a sort of gut-feeling, that is just very good at Liesbeth. You should make sure that the tenants are also people who not only sit here for themselves, but also want to contribute something to the city, and find it exciting to contribute to that development taking place here." – Jacqueline Verheugen, communication Bureau Marineterrein.*

The community working on site at Marineterrein represents a mix of innovative companies and organisations. Currently, the area has more than 40 tenants including three restaurants, a hotel, several organisations dealing with sustainability in cities, research institutes, start-ups, digital innovation or education centres. All contracts with the tenants are temporary, lasting a duration of 1-3 years with the exception of tenants who had high investment costs in the buildings themselves (such as Codam Coding College and restaurants Pension Homeland and Scheepskameel), who received 5 to 10 year contracts. Codam is since the summer of 2019 the biggest community on site.

*"The number of employees will soon be outnumbered by students, so we will get many young people who want different things on site, who are curious about everything happening here, who want to collaborate and do internships, who are less cautious and that is... now the golden age is about to start, I think". – Jacqueline Verheugen, communication Bureau Marineterrein.*

The main role of Bureau Marineterrein is to ensure that there is interaction between the numerous community members and to think of ideas and formats which contribute both to the aims of the transformation and the individual aims of the organisations involved. Usually, Bureau Marineterrein aims to start initiatives which would be later on adopted by individual organisations. According to the initiators, the most important elements of this sort of community building are time to experiment and flexibility to adapt what is not very successful or appropriate for the site. Moreover, the initiators underlined the importance of giving community members some time to settle in before cross-fertilization can start, which can take up to 3 years.

*"Without the community, you can never develop an identity. For me, it really starts with a selection of a community. Community members. And then comes the selection of a programme." – Liesbeth Jansen, director Bureau Marineterrein.*

## 6 Activities



Picture 4. **Open day in 2014. Photo by Arjen Veldt.**

Several activities are organized in order to bring the community together, create cohesion and involve them in the programming of the site. Some examples:

- Community drinks – organized periodically, every time in a different building on site. The aim is to create cohesion in the community. Mostly employees participate. Sometimes organised together with a workshop or a masterclass given by one of the community members.
- Directors lunch – a new initiative to invite the directors of the organisations on site for lunch to brainstorm about new ideas or spaces.
- Online community tools – from a weekly newsletter for community members to Slack, Instagram etc.

By selecting the core values and the tenants, several common threads started to appear as potential themes for the area's programming. The aim of the programming is to address city and country challenges and to propose new solutions. The area profiles itself as a place where innovations are not only invented but also tested and put into practice.

*"This area only has small spaces, the biggest space can hold 60 people. It's only offices. So, I thought, we will not have festivals here. At first no one believed it, 'every place in Amsterdam has festivals'. We have one now, that is the Amsterdam Water Games. It's organized by Pension Homeland, to involve the neighbourhood. That's one party in the year. It's big, and the rest is all very serious business" – Liesbeth Jansen, director Bureau Marineterrein.*



## Programming Themes

The current themes approached by Marineterrein in their programming are **housing, water, learning, traffic and health**. The aim of the themes is to stimulate cooperation between community members and to stimulate them to develop programmes together.

*"There is having businesses on the terrain, and there is having a community. As long as the tenants do not work together, it is a business park and not an active community." – Anikka Fulop, project assistant Bureau Marineterrein.*

**Temporary programming** is an essential part of organic development. It involves the testing of possible uses of a building or site by organising various events and pilot actions. Usually, this type of programming uses few resources and it is essentially a series of tests which can be scaled up if enough alignment is found with values of the site or the community. Moreover, programming is an important tool in branding a site.

At the moment, the theme **learning** is considered the most relevant at Marineterrein. As the world is changing faster and faster with new technology developments, learning is considered a key theme in helping the city and the neighbourhood adapt to new realities.

Many community members at Marineterrein deal with the theme of learning such as [Codam](#) (a non-conventional school for coding), [GrowthTribe](#) (teaching companies how to hack their growth) and [Cinekid](#) (who has an awareness programme for children and social media).

The programme related to learning includes meet-ups (such as "successful dropouts"), teaching modules designed to introduce teachers to new skills for the future (such as project-based education and peer to peer learning) and an expedition about the future of learning (five community members give workshops on future skills to a broad public).

*"And then you always hope that the community will embrace this and continue it themselves, because they also get something out of it. I think this is important when you work with communities, that you don't just ask them to do things, they really need to see the added value for themselves, be it to have more students, or more business to business connections." – Anikka Fulop, project assistant Bureau Marineterrein.*

## Living Lab

Since 2019, Marineterrein also hosts a Living Lab, where community members and other organisations can test solutions for future-proof cities. A great advantage of the area is that it is a private terrain which is publicly accessible, meaning that it is easier to test many developments before applying them to public space.

*"We always experiment with the aim that the city and the country and the region benefits from it. So we are looking for experiments that have a chance of upscaling." – Anikka Fulop, project assistant Bureau Marineterrein.*

*"We have started to set up a living lab, so we have created spaces where we can test things in the open, like vehicles without a driver. We also see it as a place where we cannot just gather opinions, but also gather real data – what solutions do work? For example, about the work on cleaning the water, there were still some sewers coming out on that water, which made it too dirty to swim in. So the Marineterrein found out where this comes from, tested every day, and now people are swimming!" – Michiel Buchel, Director NEMO Science Museum.*



## Future Transformation

As mentioned above, Marineterrein is currently being involved in an organic way, meaning that the development of a community and of programming for the site are the leading principles at the moment. However, the end goal is to also transform the site from a physical perspective, and the current phase gives many of the components for the transformation later on.

*"There won't be one moment when the temporary phase will end. It will be an ongoing process and buildings will follow programming, and not the other way around." - Marlene Rienstra, municipality of Amsterdam.*

*"I think the advantage of an organic development approach is that you take the time to find the value of the area together with stakeholders, and by doing that together, people start feeling ownership for the area. (...) if you take the time, you can really get many people involved. This also has the disadvantage that you don't get to see results quickly and people will keep on asking questions about the plans." – Anikka Fulop, project assistant Bureau Marineterrein.*



Picture 5. **Measuring water quality.** Photo by Maarten Pedroli.

## 7 Context

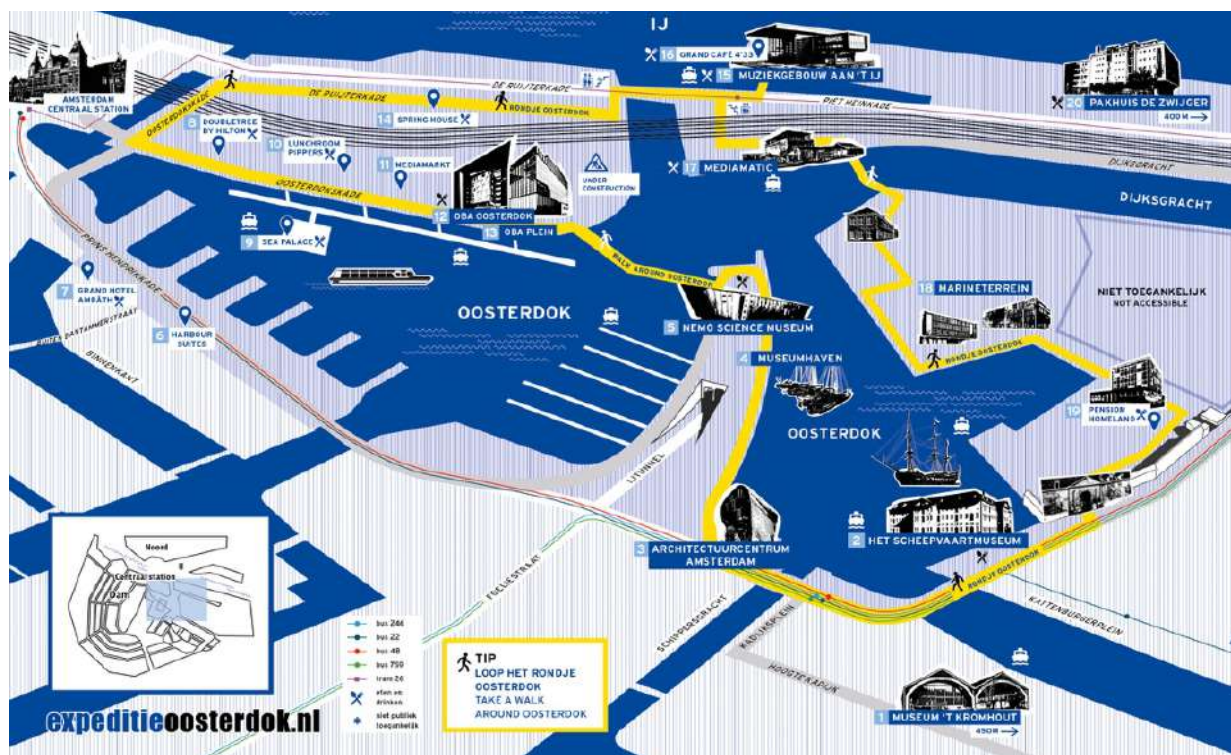
### 7.1 The Wider Area - Oosterdok

Besides working on building a strong community on site, Bureau Marineterrein is also working on creating a wider community who feels connected to the site. One example is [Expeditie Oosterdok](#). Oosterdok is the wider neighbourhood in which Marineterrein is situated, which shares the naval history of Marineterrein.

In 2017, Bureau Marineterrein initiated a walking route (Expedition Oosterdok) with several cultural organisations in the neighbourhood, such as [NEMO Science Museum](#), [The National Maritime Museum](#), [the Conservatorium](#), [The Central Library of Amsterdam](#) etc. Later on, several companies in the neighbourhood connected to the initiative, such as [Booking.com](#), [TomTom](#), [Oracle](#) and others.

Slowly, the whole neighbourhood is starting to get the image of an innovative quartier of the city and are beginning to work together. For example, once a year, all organisations now set up an open day where people from the neighbourhood and the public at large can come and explore all developments of the area.

*"If you want to collaborate, you need to understand who is the other. We all have our autonomous responsibilities. Which is, for us, to keep the museum healthy and get enough visitors, and work for our collections. But we also have a second layer on top of that, that is to say 'we live in this street and we work together'. And then, there's the third level, which is 'we share a mission; we have to take care of our planet'. And we all have our own possibilities, or limitations, but that's a sort of second umbrella or third umbrella that lies on top of it. If you want to join the hub, you have to join these visions and missions." – Michiel Buchel, director NEMO Science Museum.*



Picture 6. Expedition Oosterdok, [expeditieoosterdok.nl](#)

## 7.2 The Neighbourhood – The Eastern Islands

The residential neighbourhood surrounding Marineterrein used to be a rather different neighbourhood in the centre of Amsterdam, characterized by many social housing projects built between the 70's and the 90's. Currently in the process of rapid gentrification, as the rest of Amsterdam is, many of these social houses are being sold. In recent history, there have been some known cases of gun violence amongst youth groups from the area.

Some of the residents who moved in before the 90's have been very active in city policies and development plans through active civil engagement and lobbying throughout the years. These residents, together with some newcomers, form very organised social structures in the neighbourhood and have been very vocal in the transformation of Marineterrein to date.

In 2013, when the Ministry of Defence announced that they will vacate the terrain, the neighbourhood created ["Neighbourhood platform Kattenburg Marineterrein"](#).

*"Its main aim was to prevent that the Marineterrein was developed without a connection with the existing area. We wanted to be connected to social coherence, but also that Kattenburg should profit from development here." – Jeroen Verhulst, local resident.*

Many members of the neighbourhood appreciated that the municipality and the government appointed an **independent organisation**, Bureau Marineterrein, to use the buildings and the facilities already on site and that they opted for a **slow development** approach, which gives the neighbourhood more time to react in the process of defining the definitive functions on site.

Often, organic transformation processes have a slower pace. This means that no major investments are made in the first years. Instead, the first years are used to test some ideas for the area, develop a community and discover the type of programming needed for the specific site. This gives stakeholders time to react on plans or developments and often results in high community engagement.

Bureau Marineterrein organises a bimonthly session with the neighbourhood, where the municipality would also present plans or give information on various processes. Also, the neighbourhood would invite various contact persons from the municipality and the bureau to their local meetings, which usually give better results and more focused discussions. However, the residents were initially not very happy with how the municipality gave form to local participation in the physical transformation of the site and wanted to become more involved in the actual plan-making process.

*"We are trying to make a contract with how to relate to each other. So, how do we relate with the surrounding, with the neighbourhood, how do they want to participate in this project, and also what's a non-negotiable topic? Because the municipality, the decision makers, need to provide a framework for discussion." – Marlene Rienstra, municipality of Amsterdam.*

Bureau Marineterrein, the municipality and the neighbourhood are currently doing research into how to better formalize the participatory process through a project ([R-link](#)), which looks at possibilities for developing a 'neighbourhood' contract. The



aim is to come up with new ways of interacting with a wider local community that goes beyond the already active local inhabitants.

*"There's a lot of pressure and all the stakeholders have very different interests and goals. (...) And for me it's really a search to find the right groups and participants for the conversation, because it's not only for the people who live around, it's for the whole city." – Marlene Rienstra, municipality of Amsterdam.*

An important activity in creating a relation with the neighbourhood and with the city of Amsterdam as a whole was the opening of a new swimming spot in Amsterdam, at Marineterrein, once the boardwalk was set up. Though the swimming area is not yet official, various organisations at Marineterrein have been testing and improving the way water quality can be measured and improved through a Living Lab. The aim is to make this an official swimming spot.

*"The funny thing is, if the weather is nice, instantly the whole neighborhood, and the whole city knows to find this area, because they are all here, swimming in the harbor, so that's very interesting." – Liesbeth Janson*

Other activities which are organized directly for the neighbourhood summer camps (activities organized by the community members for children and teenagers from the neighbouring areas) but also the main festival on site, Amsterdam Water Games, organized by the restaurant Pension Homeland together with people from the nearby neighbourhoods.

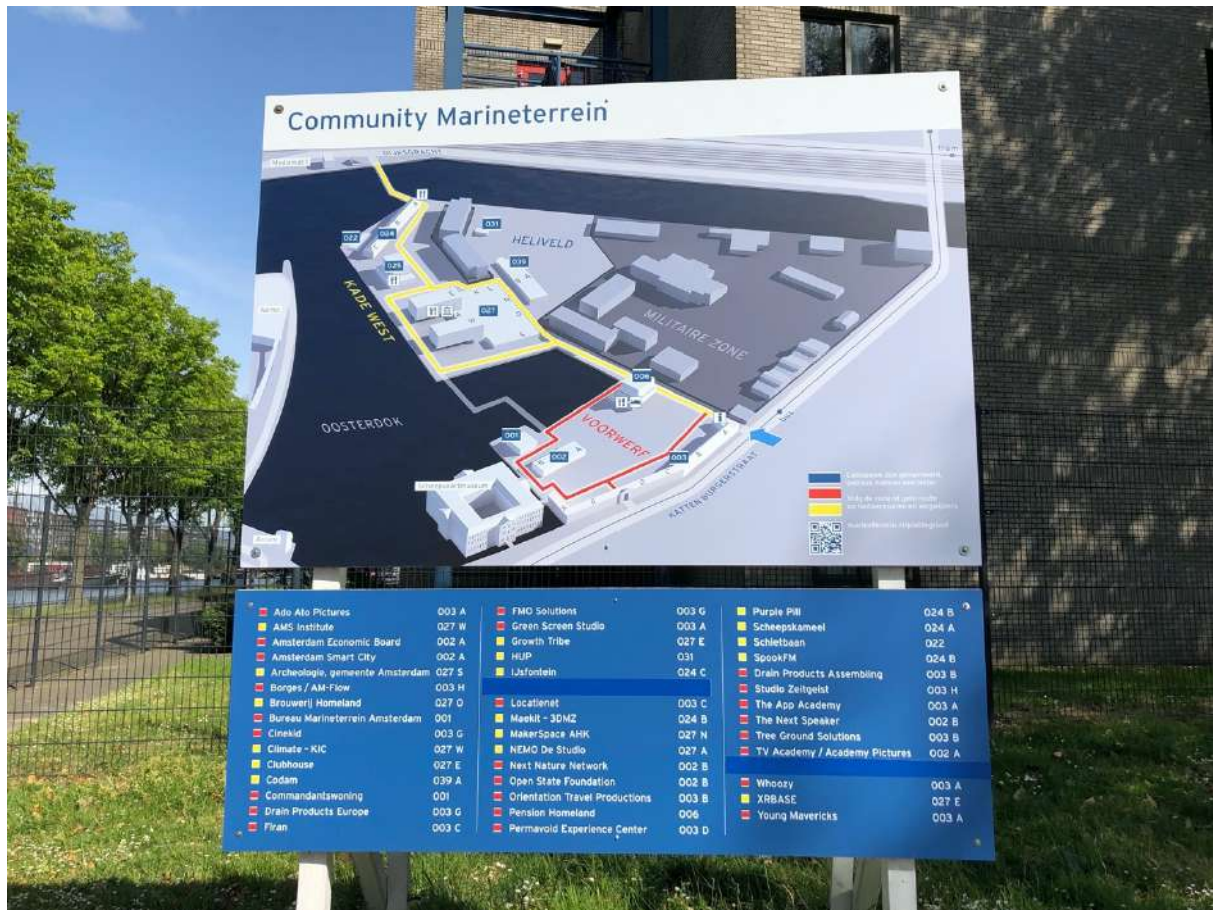
*"I think that Pension Homeland and the water have been very important in getting the neighbourhood to come here, and to create a bond with them. The terrain has been completely closed off for 150 years and (...) even though the door opened, we really had to pull the neighbourhood in at the beginning. Now we are a few years later and of course everyone knows where to find us now. But in the beginning that wasn't all that obvious." – Koen Vollaers, founder Pension Homeland.*

Some of the community members such as Codam Coding School and the upcoming chef's school are being perceived as very interesting to connect to the local residents and especially youth from the direct neighbourhood. Also, all the initiatives related to transforming the area into a sustainable district are supported by the surrounding community.



Picture 7. **People swimming from the boardwalk at Pension Homeland.**  
Photo by Alina Tomescu

## 8 Buildings / Complex / Site



Picture 8. **Community at Marineterrein.** Photo by Alina Tomescu.

Part of the site at Marineterrein is currently still being used by the Ministry of Defence, and that area is separated from the publicly accessible area by a fence across the whole territory. The parts which are open for public are Voorwerf (at the main entrance to the site) and Kade West, which in the meantime has been connected to the city through a temporary bridge. One building which also historically belongs to the marine complex but which is not currently a part of the transformation process is the former warehouse from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, currently hosting the National Maritime Museum and which is a protected monument.

Only one national monument is located on the Marineterrein site itself, namely the gatehouse at 003, a 100-meter-long building separating the area from the city, dating from 1655. Also, buildings 024 (built in 1860) and building 031 (beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century) fall under protected cityscape regulations. Most other constructions were built after 1960 and are characterized by prefabricated constructions and standardization. (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2018)



Building nr.	Former use	Current use
<b>001</b>	Commander's residence. Was found in good condition.	Restored in august 2015. It hosts Bureau Marineterrein.
<b>002</b>	Infirmery	Offices
<b>003</b>	Gathehouse (Poortgebouw). Offices, sail production, entrance to the area.	Offices
<b>006</b>	Officer building	Pension Homeland - restaurant, hotel
<b>022</b>	Building for shooting practice.	Experimentation space for VR installation and digital art.
<b>024</b>	Logistics school	Offices, restaurant
<b>025</b>	Alloy	Medium-term accommodation (6 days – 6 months), circular canteen and chef's school
<b>027L</b>	Offices	Offices, museum, brewery, makerspace
<b>027W</b>	Education centre	Offices
<b>027E</b>	Education centre	Restored in 2015 to host events related to the Netherlands EU Presidency. Restaurant Club House, offices
<b>031</b>	Storage	
<b>039</b>	Offices	Codam – programming school

**Table 1. Adaptive reuse of buildings on Marineterrein**

## Renovations



Picture 9. **Boardwalk Marineterrein.** Photo by Marnix Foeken, Orientation Travel Productions

Many of the buildings on Marineterrein have been adapted to host new functions – most have become offices or horeca businesses. As most of the buildings were highly functional 60's buildings, they were relatively easy to transform into office spaces with minimal interventions.

A few interventions were made in order to facilitate better access in the area, such as signage, a new bridge and a board walk. Also, some buildings were renovated to various degrees in order to make them suitable for new functions. Three examples are presented below.

### 8.1 NEMO De Studio



Picture 10. **NEMO Science Museum – De studio.** Photo by NEMO De Studio.

One of Marineterrein's direct neighbours is NEMO Science Museum, the 5<sup>th</sup> most popular museum in the Netherlands. The museum focuses on interactive ways to explore scientific topics for families, children and schools. In 2018, NEMO decided to extend across the water and open an extra space on the Marineterrein.

*"For us the studio is a place where we can experiment with other types of stories, targeted at adults. Whereas in the NEMO museum we develop the exhibitions ourselves, in the NEMO studio we want to develop them together with partners from the terrain, but also with other organisations, NGO's or universities." – Michiel Buchel, director NEMO Science Museum.*

The building (dating from the 1960s) has 1400 sqm and was originally a sports hall for the military troops. The transformation of the site was done in a circular way, so that it would be in sync with the ideas presented in the museum, but also because it was cost effective. Furniture was bought second hand and many of the elements which were removed during the renovations were donated to offices, schools, a mosque or the fitness garden on Marineterrein.

*"We didn't have very big budget, so we sort of had to convert it in a very basic way. We wanted to be able to host 1000 people there, so we had to change the infrastructure. We could not really change the building in itself because it's part of the architecture of the other buildings around it. So, we came up with the solution with the architect, to put a little extra layer in front of it that we can easily replace, because we can only rent space there for temporary periods (5 years). So, we had to be very practical and pragmatic in terms of how much can we invest." – Michiel Buchel, director NEMO Science Museum.*

The NEMO Studio officially opened in July 2019 with an exhibition on the Future of Food. The objective of the studio is to translate important scientific and technological developments into accessible exhibitions aimed at citizens, so that they can not only form opinions, but also contribute to the solutions.

*"One of the things that I learnt and that struck me most was – if you do a project and you do it together with your neighbours and people are motivated by the goal, there's enormous amounts of energy that comes free. People give things, you know, people work many more hours than they are paid for... and this inspires me enormously. Because this is the sort of energy, positive energy that we will need to make real change. (...) I think that's where the heritage can play a role - to bring people together" – Michiel Buchel, director NEMO Science Museum.*

For the adaptive reuse of the building hosting NEMO De Studio, circularity is a central theme: 100% second hand furniture, the façade is made of spare materials from the car industry, there is a 100% recyclable floor and a pay per use light system. Moreover, most elements removed from the building were donated to organizations on Marineterrein or in Amsterdam. ("Circulaire gevel voor omgebouwde sporthal op Marineterrein Amsterdam – BouwTotaal", 2019)



## 8.2 Pension Homeland



Picture 11. Pension Homeland. Photo via [www.Pensionhomeland.nl](http://www.Pensionhomeland.nl)

The first publicly accessible space to open on Marineterrein was [Pension Homeland](http://www.Pensionhomeland.nl) – a hotel, restaurant and brewery. Inspired by the location of building 006, a former lodging for military officials, Koen Vollaers and Astrid van der Meiden decided to transform it into an accommodation for people working on site and a restaurant. Pension Homeland plays an important role in bringing together the community on site, the defence authorities, the neighbourhood and the city.

*"As far as the brewery is concerned, that was very exciting, because of course that was not entirely in line with the objective of the site. But I also thought it was especially important to actually produce something, not only digital things. Because this also makes it more accessible to other people, because it brings life, literally and figuratively. You have to be extremely careful if you develop a site like this, that it does not become dead site at six o'clock when everyone is gone. You have to find a very good balance between public things and office-like functions, and I think the brewery also helps with that." - Koen Vollaers, Pension Homeland.*

The renovation took much longer than originally planned, as the building was in a rather bad condition, with traces of asbestos. The costs also got out of hand (1.4 million euro, while the initial investment was estimated at 1 million euro), but the owners were motivated to continue investing in the place. Many of the original elements were kept, and the additions respected the 60's heritage: simple, functional rooms with furnishings from the same period. Feeling it was too sterile, the owners decided to bring their private art collection into the building.

*"There is also another reason why Pension Homeland looks like this. In the beginning, there were some difficulties with the Ministry of Defence, they were not so comfortable with all the civilians coming on their terrain. So, we thought, we have to make a place where they feel at home. And that really worked well, because there are a lot of old militaries who came here and they said 'wow, how beautiful it has become here, we used to sleep here!'. And that has really helped in the mutual tolerance and I think it has opened some doors." - Koen Vollaers, Pension Homeland.*

### 8.3 Codam



Picture 12. Codam. Photo via [www.codam.nl](http://www.codam.nl)

An important landmark in the transformation of Marineterrein is also the arrival of Codam, a revolutionary programming school based on the concept of the French school 42.

*"It's quite revolutionary actually. It is completely tuition-free, it's open 24/7, we don't require any kind of experience or former diploma, anything... You can just give it a try and come. Here, we don't have any teachers, we don't have any planning, we don't have exams and things like that. Everything's different. We use peer learning, so the students are going to learn from each other and with each other, so that's a lot of fun." – David Giron, Codam.*

About 25% of the students are from the Amsterdam. Even though being connected to the local neighbourhood was not an initial objective of the transformation of Marineterrein, the commissioners are beginning to see the benefits of a better connection with the community. As the nearby neighbourhood is known for a relatively high percentage of youth at risk, with drugs, violence and early drop-out of school, the presence of Codam could offer solutions.

The building transformed by Codam used to be an administrative building with narrow hallways and dark rooms. Through extensive interventions, it was transformed into a modern school in about 6 months. The building also attracted the attention of the militaries, and students sometime play football with the soldiers in the military area:

*"Often as the militaries go past the barracks, some step in and ask us about what we are doing here. And we show them around, and they get very excited! And now it's sort of this thing where the traditional world of the military and this crazy world of Codam, it's sort of colliding and it's a very special thing. Which is really interesting, because there's a lot of IT jobs also, for the safety for the country, so that's a beautiful way to work together." – Lisa Stamm, Codam.*



## 9 Heritage

*I find some of the buildings on site really great. But actually what I find even more special is the story we want to continue to tell, as an area that has always been of great value to the city, region and country. A lot of value has been created from here and we aim to do that again. – Anikka Fulop, Bureau Marineterrein*

Already in the area concept developed in 2013, it is mentioned that **Marineterrein is iconic through values, not architecture**. Most stakeholders agree that the terrain in itself has an important historical value for Amsterdam and the Netherlands. However, the attachment does not always reflect in the individual buildings on site.

Only one building remains from the time of the Admiralty of Amsterdam, namely building 003, the gatehouse separating the terrain from the Kattenburg street and neighbourhood. While some of the stakeholders (such as the inhabitants of the neighbourhood on the other side) would rather have more access points towards the Marineterrein from the main street, there are also stakeholders who appreciate the sort of mystery given by having this wall around the terrain and believe that this could help maintain the terrain as a green oasis in the middle of Amsterdam.

*"I think that you should aim for the highest possibility in choosing a function for a heritage site, to give it meaning to as many people as you can think of. In this phase, for Marineterrein, it is quite difficult. At the moment I am thinking about the best destination for the gatehouse. Currently it hosts offices, but it is a very special building, so I believe it should have a public function. But in order to develop such a function, you'd need to invest a lot in this building, and you cannot do it for 5 or 10 years, it should be at least 12 or 15 years. That's difficult in the temporary phase." – Liesbeth Jansen, director Bureau Marineterrein.*

There are also two buildings, 024 (built in 1860) and 031 (built in early 20<sup>th</sup> century), which are protected under the protected cityscape measures, and will therefore also be kept as such.

For the rest, many buildings on site date from the 60's and have a highly functional character. Here, opinions are divided about whether these should be kept in the next phase of the transformation of the Marineterrein, which will involve physical development of the terrain. The Monuments and Archaeology office of the municipality of Amsterdam evaluated the historic value of the buildings and recommended that most of the buildings, including the ones from the 60's, should be kept, to showcase the historic context.

*"But it's hard to keep all the buildings when you have to increase the density of an area. Because they are really in a strange setting, they just... the defence authorities, they didn't care about urban planning, they just spread the buildings over the whole area." – Marlene Rienstra, municipality of Amsterdam.*

*"As heritage, the buildings don't have that much value I think. But the buildings in use now, were renovated, and they look better now, so why should we demolish them? It's easier to keep them. But there are more buildings hardly in use now. They can be demolished..." Jeroen Verhulst, local resident.*

*"I actually think every building here is heritage, because it simply stands here. (...) Yes, I think every shed and every building is actually a shame to demolish, because then you also have to build something new for it" – Koen Vollaers, Pension Homeland.*

Few buildings from the 60's were transformed more thoroughly, such as 006 (Pension Homeland), 039 (Codam) and 027E (transformed on the occasion of the Dutch EU presidency). Many stakeholders have started to become attached even to these buildings or to not see the use in demolishing them. Especially when it comes to Pensioen Homeland, the adaptive reuse managed to put the historic context of the buildings in a new light, which made many stakeholder appreciate the style of these buildings much more.

*"Homeland, it should actually be listed as a monument I think. It is really architecture built in a very special way and also shows a very good picture of buildings from the sixties. Precisely because of those straight lines, precisely why some people would find this an ugly building, there are also other people who think this is a very beautiful building because of its spirit of the time."- Koen Vollaers, Pension Homeland.*

Many of the interviewees saw (built) heritage as a starting point for the design and programming, which gives direction to the transformation on the site. They all agree that heritage, both immaterial and material, add a lot of value to the area. However, heritage is perceived as most valuable when it can find a new spot in contemporary times.



Picture 13. Kade West, Gebouw 027E. Photo by Arjen Veldt.

*"I think heritage gives some backbone to what we do here, because otherwise you can do whatever you want here... I think the value of heritage, you can see it when you can incorporate it in modern times. It shouldn't be a museum; it should be part of the city. And for that, maybe the buildings will remain, but you always have to do something with the function of the buildings. And for that, when you do that, it has value. If you don't, I think it will lose its value." – Marlene Rienstra, municipality of Amsterdam.*

The decision of the defence authorities to remain on a large part of the area is also perceived as a double-edged issue. On the one hand, it gives less room for the city to develop. If 13 hectares could have really become an important new neighbourhood for Amsterdam, this will be more difficult to achieve having only a part of the site. On the other hand, having the military on site adds to the special character of the site and is also adds value with regards to continuity and heritage. However, the main challenge will be to manage to involve this new key stakeholder in the vision for the site.

*"Maybe it's a good development that the defence part is becoming bigger than what we envisioned at the beginning. Because in that way you can relate also physically to the history, and take it to a next level. But only if we can cooperate with them, if they decide they want to be part of the innovation environment." - Marlene Rienstra, municipality of Amsterdam.*

*"In a way, there have been a lot of inventions here, it's always been an international community, so it's interesting... Most innovations start in the military, like the computer, all kinds of things. In a way, it took a while to connect with the Ministry of Defence on this subject, but it's sort of slowly coming." - Liesbeth Jansen, director Bureau Marineterrein.*

*"Personally, I actually find the militaries nice, because it makes it different. It makes it weird and exciting and also somehow very safe." - Koen Vollaers, Pension Homeland.*

## 10 Regulations and Policy

Marineterrein is a very peculiar area from many points of view in the context of policy and regulations, which allowed for the transformation to take place in a special way. There are a few interesting developments and instruments which have laid the foundation of this way of working.

In 2012, the government together with the municipality commissioned several documents that laid the foundation of the **cooperation agreement**: A recognition study ("verkenningstudy") in 2012 to see the development potential of the area, as well as an **area concept** ("gebiedsconcept") and a development strategy ("strategienota").

The **area concept** is described as "not an end-goal, but a compass for the organic transformation of Marineterrein. It provides guidance for the (temporary) development but also offers the flexibility to respond to the needs of society". The area concept of Marineterrein was to, just as in the past, create a context where innovations can originate and which in turn contribute for a better city. Three key themes were identified: (1) Maritime power, (2) Water park, (3) Innovative Workplace.

In the **cooperation agreement**, this "slow transition" was estimated to last for 10-15 years and the aim was that it would lead the later transformation of the area. In the **first phase** (2013-2017), no major interventions and no well-defined urban plans would be developed. The transformation would happen gradually, based on the area concept and not on an urbanistic plan. Another important principle of the first years was that the value development process would take place for the area as a whole and not for the individual buildings.

A key success factor was also that, in the cooperation agreement, the two parties (the government and the municipality) decided to appoint an **external party** (Bureau Marineterrein, led by Liesbeth Jansen) to lead the temporary phase.

*"[Something that was really important for the development] is the fact that in the contract it was put down that we shouldn't do the transformation ourselves, but have this project bureau instead, an organization which has the mandate to do the things thought to be right for this area. That's really important. The normal decision making process for a municipality and also for a national government takes a very long time and then you are not able to anticipate the chances and the opportunities you see on the terrain." - Marlene Rienstra, municipality of Amsterdam.*

When the Ministry of Defence decided to stay on a larger part of the terrain, despite the contract between the government and the city, the parties needed to start renegotiating the context of the development. In this specific situation, having an independent organisation to lead the development was also very beneficial for the transformation, as it ensured continuity.

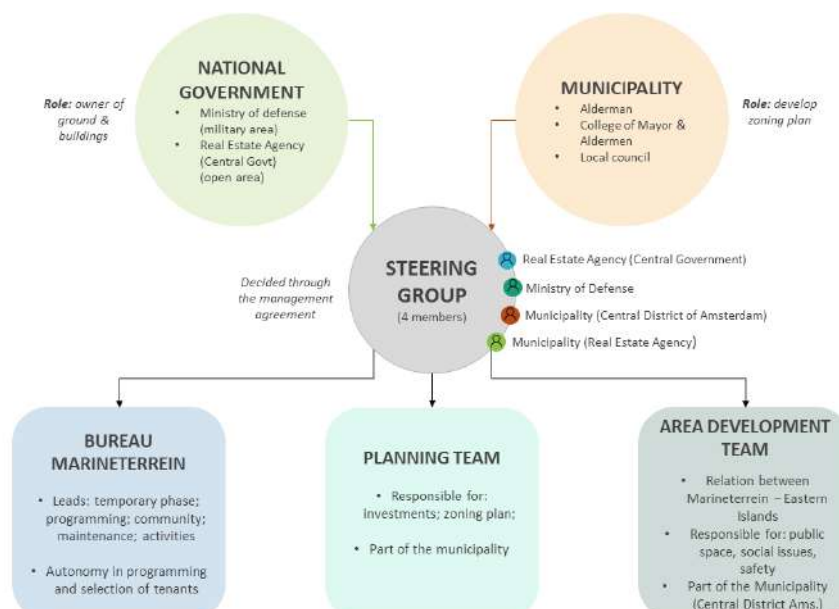
*"I have a very broad mandate, I can do almost anything except giving way too much money or organize a foundation or a limited company... and besides that, I'm completely free in the tenants I choose, in the contracts I sign, in the content... These kinds of projects don't go very smoothly, easily, it's always a bumpy road. So we sort of, are the continuous factor in the development, while they [the government and the city] meanwhile are in a complex situation of coming to an agreement." – Liesbeth Jansen, director Bureau Marineterrein.*

After 2017, the transformation would then enter a **second phase** (2017-2027) – still characterized by temporary exploitation and experimentation, however also starting to better define the concept, the area and the zoning plan. After 2027, it was hoped that the transformation would be definitive and that most buildings would be assigned definitive functions.

*"In the beginning... there was no zoning plan, so for every need in the city, everyone said 'oh! Marineterrein!'. It took us so much time to fight this, 'no you should not make the Marineterrein the dumping ground to put whatever you don't elsewhere have space for'. People have realised that, it's not on that level anymore. And of course, the government is much less politically influenced than the city. The city, you notice very well the periods of elections." – Liesbeth Jansen, director Bureau Marineterrein.*

While the regulatory context was very special, which allowed the area to be developed in a slow, organic way, it is worth mentioning that another key success factor was that the **creative civil servants** working on this area had courage to try something different in the governance process.

*"It needs guts to do this, but I think decision-making in the future should be like this, because it's kind of old fashioned to do it the way we are used to do normally. Because who are we, civil servants and municipality, to decide what's good and working for a long time? Because normally, we make plans, and then 10 years later, we realize the plans Then you're always behind. Then you always make plans that are outdated at the time you realize them. So, I think it's necessary to do it this way."- Marlene Rienstra, municipality of Amsterdam.*



Picture 14. Management model Marineterrein



## 11 Financial Model

The initial budget for Marineterrein was 6.5 million euro, made available by the national government and the municipality. This budget was used for several infrastructure investments (such as a bridge, a boardwalk, the renovation of building 027E in the context of the EU presidency) and for starting up the organisation Bureau Marineterrein.

However, soon after the buildings started being rented out, the rent was enough to cover all the management and exploitation costs. An important factor to take into account is that Bureau Marineterrein does not pay any rent in turn.

*"If you rent out cheaply, you can be accused of "irregular subsidy", that you subsidize people in a way that is not legit, so we really had to ask for market value. They were very surprised that we managed to do that. So the income we had is higher than their expectations. So we could also draw some bigger projects like the board walk and the bridge and... but the exploitation and the maintenance we can also do ourselves from the rent." – Liesbeth Jansen, director Bureau Marineterrein.*

## 12 Communication

*"We have been very careful with our communication strategy (...) as in we actually chose not to have one, or to have a very sober one. So, the website was also not meant to create interest, because we first wanted some time to define our values before we would come out of the closet." – Anikka Fulop, project assistant Bureau Marineterrein Amsterdam.*

The first step of defining the communication strategy for Marineterrein was positioning – assessing what are the real values and strengths of the site, and how these are different in the context of the city. In the first instance, the communication was focused on the commissioners, the city and the government, to have a very transparent process.

Moreover, at the beginning of the process, all eyes were on Marineterrein. Having so many stakeholders with various interests at the beginning was a process that needed to be managed carefully until the values were clear.

Currently, after selecting the community members and defining the programme, the communication has become more specific and more focused on general public and presenting the developments happening on site. Most of the news items come from the community members themselves. Important milestones in raising the popularity of the site were the opening of the (still unofficial) swimming area and the opening of the Codam school – inaugurated by the Queen of the Netherlands.

An important part of the communication coming from Bureau Marineterrein is **business to business**: start-ups, companies, educational institutes, universities who could test solutions on site or engage with the community. Another important target group is the **local neighbourhood**:

*"We organise regular meetings with the local neighbourhood. And currently the summer camp is taking place, for young people from the neighbourhood. These activities are really important for showing what we are doing. It costs an incredible amount of money and time, but they yield so much more. I believe so much more in these kinds of activities. The*



*communications so the newspaper and so on, they follow.” – Jacqueline Verheugen, communication Bureau Marineterrein.*

When it comes to the **general public**, many people in Amsterdam do not yet know about the area or about the activities happening on site.

*"The general public just really doesn't know anything about Marineterrein, some think it's still a military area. The message follows after years, this also happened at Westergasfabriek. And since we have only been working on it for a few years now, I think that those types of processes are always slower than you think." –Jacqueline Verheugen, communication Bureau Marineterrein.*

The main communication channels for Marineterrein are the [website](#), monthly general newsletter, community newsletter, a magazine, [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#).



Picture 15. Marineterrein magazine. Photo by Alina Tomescu.

## 13 Impact

Marineterrein is currently in a period where the community has settled in and the cross-fertilization in the area is starting to develop more and more, which is giving hints of the wider impact expected to develop in the coming years on the neighbourhood and city, and maybe even at the national or international level.

For Amsterdam, at the moment Marineterrein added an important green and blue recreation space, where people can swim or relax, which was missing in the busy

centre area. Moreover, it improved the accessibility in the area by adding a boardwalk and a bridge connecting the area to the rest of the city.

From an innovation perspective, there are many ideas currently being developed, tested or implemented which will influence the way the area develops and also many future policies for Amsterdam: from blue-green roofs to self-driving boats and vehicles.

*"The blue-green roof initiative, that became a big European project. So there are now more than a thousand square meters in the city who will get such roofs and which will also measure other parameters in turn. The goal is that all the interesting developments from here also go to other cities." – Jacqueline Verheugen, communication Bureau Marineterrein.*

Another issue which will impact the development and the city is the housing problem in Amsterdam, which currently adds a lot of pressure to the development. How that will take shape in the coming years is not yet known.

For the neighbourhood, the impact is already more important than initially estimated. While it used to be perceived as one of the poorest and least educated neighbourhoods in the centre of Amsterdam, with many young school drop-outs, people in the neighbourhood see an important connection for the future with community members such as Codam, which could offer a second chance for the young people with social issues in the neighbourhood.

*"We always thought it was important [to connect to the neighbourhood], but the national government was not too enthusiastic about that. They were thinking about really the highest quality of innovation hub, and 3 years ago they did not involve social exchange or social return on innovation. (...) But I think there is much more awareness right now of the importance of being connected. Also, for AMS and for NEMO [community members], it is an important ambition to not only keep the knowledge at the highest level, but to share and involve citizens." – Liesbeth Jansen, director Bureau Marineterrein.*

Other ideas for a future relationship between Marineterrein and the neighbourhood are currently being explored, from a neighbourhood contract to organising a lab with free activities for children living nearby.

A note is to be made about the difference between planned and achieved impact. Since the Ministry of Defence decided to remain on a larger part of the territory than initially foreseen, the project ambitions have to be re-evaluated. Dealing with a much smaller terrain is seen as a challenge in achieving the initial impact, and it of course depends very much on the way the relationship between the public and the military area.

*"I think this counts for all of us... we love this place so much, it's so amazing to be able to work for this, in such a nice place with so much green and so many nice people. Sometimes it's very stressful, because a lot of things are happening at the same time. But I think we all do it for a higher purpose, for the social interest. And together with all the people here, also in the neighbourhood. We all want it to be a nice place here and not everyone has the same idea, but in the end it starts to take shape. If we can leave something behind for the next generation, for people who are about to take over again, that would be beautiful." – Jacqueline Verheugen, communication Bureau Marineterrein.*

## 14 Interviewees

- Anikka Fulop – project assistant Bureau Marineterrein.
- David Giron – director Codam.
- Jacqueline Verheugen – communication and community building Bureau Marineterrein.
- Jeroen Verhulst – local resident and secretary of [neighbourhood organisation 1018](#).
- Koen Vollaers – founder Pension Homeland.
- Liesbeth Jansen – director Bureau Marineterrein.
- Lisa Stamm – communication Codam.
- Marlene Rienstra – project manager at the municipality of Amsterdam for Marineterrein.
- Michiel Buchel – director NEMO Science Museum.

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# **16. The Citadel**

## **(Alba Iulia, Romania)**



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# 1 Introduction

This paper presents the redevelopment project of the Citadel in Alba Iulia, Romania. The 110-hectare territory of the Citadel is defined by an 18<sup>th</sup>-century star-shaped fortification. However, the complex resulted from construction and landscaping activities of almost two thousand years. Starting from around 2000, the territory and the buildings were gradually handed over to the city municipality by the previous occupant, the Ministry of National Defense. Since 2008, the municipality has raised more than 60 million euros for the economic, social, and cultural redevelopment of the Citadel. The project is a part of the municipality's strategy to turn Alba Iulia into a city that is attractive for tourists, investors, and residents.



*Figure 1 Aerial view of the Citadel in Alba Iulia, and Alba Iulia within Romania. Source: Wikimedia Commons, © Kiki Vasilescu*

Note: This paper contains references to an external document (Appendix 2) with the full list of the building in the Citadel in Alba Iulia. It refers to specific buildings as "App. 2, No. ...".

## 2 Timeline

- 1715–1738 – Sébastien Le Prestre de Vauban erected the Citadel over the remains of the ancient Roman military fort Apulum and the medieval and early modern town.
- 1945–1989 – the territory of the Citadel is used by the army of Communist Romania and for official ceremonies; limited access to public; the historical building stock is neglected.
- 2000 – most of the fort is handed over to the Alba Iulia Municipality; beginning of the revitalization project
- 2007 – Romania joins the European Union, access to the Regional Operational Program 2007–2013, the beginning of large-scale renovations and developments
- 2008–2011 – restoration works in the area of the gates of the Citadel.

- 2009–2011 – rehabilitation of the eastern, southern, and northern side in the Vauban-type fortification.
- 2010–2013 – rebuilding the western access route to the fortification.
- 2010–2015 – rehabilitation of the inner area of the Citadel.
- 2011–2012 – establishment of the “Route of the Three Fortifications” in the southeastern section of the Citadel
- 2014–2015 – creation of the Principia Museum and the Lapidary.
- 2014–2015 – the establishment of a National Touristic Information and Promotion Center in the western part of the fortification.
- 2016–2020 – the renovation of the Palace of the Princes starts, financed from the Regional Operational Program 2014–2020.

### 3 The story

Though the Citadel forms the center of the city in terms of its spatial development and topography, most of it was inaccessible for the public before the Romanian revolution in 1989. The former Communist leadership focused on developing the surrounding districts into modern housing estates. With a few exceptions, the historical building stock within the Citadel was neglected, left decaying, and several buildings were used by the military forces.

The situation was changed by the emergence of modern democratic Romania, though the revitalization was a longer process. The building stock previously handled by the Ministry of Defense was transferred to the City Hall, the most important parts at the very beginning of 2000. The city management draw up a plan for the revitalization of the Citadel and aimed to attract funding from various national and international funds. A team was created under the leadership of Nicolae Moldovan, who was appointed as City Manager responsible for coordinating fundraising activities, the city’s international relations, European affairs, as well as the relationship with civil society and businesses, including tourism. As he recalls:

Up to 15 years ago, most of the fortress was a forbidden place for those who live in Alba Iulia. After the mayor, Mr. Mircea Hava was able to convince the Ministry of Defense to transfer the property to the city, we started to make plans to change it, to turn it into a vivid and attractive place for those living in Alba Iulia and for the tourists, for those coming here to learn, to invest, and to have some quality time (Moldovan 2019).

In 2007, Romania joined the European Union. Between 2007 and 2014, the municipality of Alba Iulia was able to attract 60 million euros within the Regional Operational Programme 2007–2013 funded by the European Regional Development Fund for the restoration and revitalization of the Citadel (“Project Stories,” Alba Iulia). The program was mostly focused on infrastructure development: establishing a new sewage system, public lighting, pedestrian areas, parking lots, urban furniture, touristic signage, public squares, green areas. Statues, monuments, decorative architecture were placed in the public areas of the Citadel. The gates and the walls of the 18<sup>th</sup>-century fortress were restored; the western part previously covered by a park was re-opened. The entrenchments between the two ranges of the fortification were organized into a green zone and opened for the public.

The major part of construction works was finished by the end of 2014 – beginning of 2015, but some are still in progress, such as the renovation of the Palace of the Princes (App. 2, No. 10). Parallel with the large-scale project run by the municipality, other property owners in the Citadel also proceeded with the renovation of their own buildings: the Roman Catholic Bishopric (App. 2, No. 11-12), the Romanian Orthodox Church (App. 2, No. 15), the Council of Alba County (App. 2, No. 2), and the University 1 December 1918 (App. 2, No. 21, 22, 25, 51).



*Figure 2 Park between the two walls of the fortification. Photo: Volodymyr Kulikov, 2019*

The municipality had a double aim: to give the Citadel back to the inhabitants of Alba Iulia, and, at the same time, to develop it into a touristic destination, thus contributing to the economic and social development of the city – all these in partnership with the organizations owning or using properties within the Citadel. To achieve these goals, the city leadership also started to develop a branding strategy in 2010.

## 4 Context

### 4.1 Demographic context

The population of Alba Iulia in 2018 numbered 66,369 inhabitants, which makes it the 33<sup>rd</sup> largest city among the 320 cities of Romania. Its population has been increasing for the last 15 years, while the national trend is population decrease (Moldovan 2017, 7; Maican, Muntean, and Pastu 2018, 16).



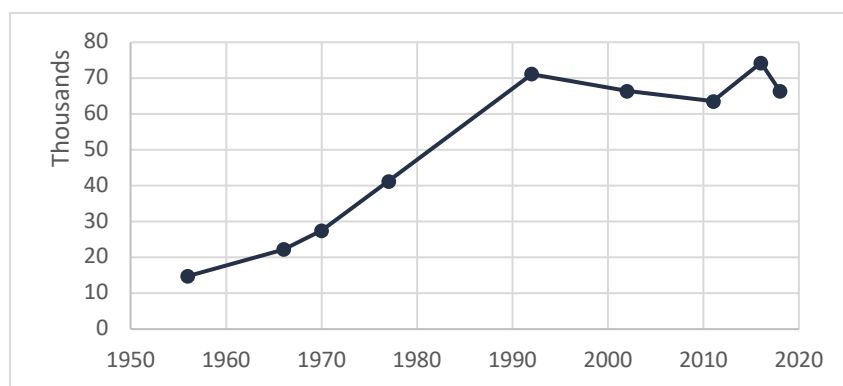


Figure 3 Population in Alba Iulia

According to the census in 2011, the population of Alba Iulia consists of 87% Romanians, 2% Hungarians, 2% Roma, 9% undeclared, and other nationalities. Two third of Alba Iulia's residents have at least high-school education: 28% have higher education, 5% post-secondary and masters, 30% high-school, and 14% professional and apprentices. In 2017, Alba Iulia had 7 tertiary education institutions, 4,953 enrolled students, and 156 teaching staff (*Strategia Integrată 2014-2023*, 232-235). Compared with other Transylvanian urban centers, Alba Iulia has a relatively large share of the population with tertiary education, being surpassed only by Cluj-Napoca, the second university center in Romania (*Project Prioritization 2014-2020*, 130).

In 2016 nearly 47% of Alba Iulia's population was economically active (compared to the national average of 45,6%), 22% were retired, and 7% officially unemployed (Moldovan 2017, 8). Half of the population is involved in economic activities, out of which 95% are employees, the rest are entrepreneurs, self-employed or unpaid family workers. Overall, the active population, including both employed and unemployed persons, reached 32.242 people, representing 51 percent of the total stable population (*Project Prioritization 2014-2020*, 125). As Table 1 demonstrates, most of the residents work in the tertiary sector.

Table 1 Percent of employed people in the sector from Alba Iulia (2011 Census)

Extraction, processing industry, and energy	24%
Retails and repairs	16%
Public administration, administrative and support services	13%
Constructions	9%
Health and social services	6%
Education, culture, and recreation	7%
Transport and logistics	5%
Agriculture, forestry, and fishing	4%
Professional, scientific and technical services	3%
Other services	12%

## 4.2 Economic background

Alba County is an average Romanian county from the point of GDP per capita and level of entrepreneurship development (*Project Prioritization 2014-2020*, 122-123). Alba Iulia benefits from a local business class: small and medium-sized

enterprises are the basis of both the city's and the county's economy. Most of the employers are micro and small enterprises employing up to 50 workers. The tertiary sector is currently driving the business environment of the city, with a share of around 75% of the total number of companies (*Project Prioritization 2014-2020*, 124). Among the most important manufacturing enterprises are Apulum porcelain factory (a local supplier of IKEA), VCST Automotive Production ALBA specialized in metal processing, as well as several mid-sized textiles, wood, and food processing factories (*Project Prioritization 2014-2020*, 135). The tourism industry is an essential contribution to the economic development of the city. Besides its importance as a significant employer and contribution to the city's budget, the tourism industry creates demand and growth for many other industries.

Alba Iulia Municipality could obtain more than 150 million euros of European and other non-reimbursable funds since 2007. The city has the highest rate among the Romanian cities of absorption such funds per capita. The funds were attracted from European operative programs, the World Bank, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the Kingdom of Norway, funds from the Romanian government, and other sources ("Start Up Information, Alba Iulia"). However, the leadership of Alba Iulia wants to attract more financial and human capital to the city. They compete in this respect with the other Transylvanian cities with relatively developed business and hospitality infrastructures, such as Cluj-Napoca, Sibiu, Arad, Braşov, and Timişoara. Alba Iulia tries to define and exploit its competitive advantage. Among the main challenges is the lack of qualified labor force (due to "brain drain") and of a fair quality of educational services, the socially and poor urban areas, and the underdeveloped mobility infrastructure (Moldovan 2017, 139-140; *Project Prioritization 2014-2020*).

### 4.3 Cultural and hospitality infrastructure

The main cultural infrastructure includes (in 2016): a cultural center, two culture houses, an institution of shows and concerts, two cinemas, 28 libraries, three history museums, six local television channels, one newspaper, and six online local newspapers, three local radio channels (*Strategia Integrată 2014-2023*, 239-246).

As of early October 2019, Alba Iulia offered to its visitors accommodation in 17 hotels, including four four-star hotels (booking.com). Airbnb service offers 145 places to stay (airbnb.com). Alba Iulia used to have an image of a small city where there is nothing to see, and tourists spent there on average one night. Since the beginning of the redevelopment project of the Citadel, which is in the focus of tourism development strategy of the city, the average of the nights spent increased to almost three (Maican, Muntean, and Paştii 2018, 25). According to some estimations, the foreign tourists come mostly from Poland, the Republic of Moldavia, Italy, Germany, and Hungary (Maican, Muntean, and Paştii 2018, 26). A study conducted at the end of 2013 on the tourists' profile who chose Alba county as a destination demonstrated that more than half of the tourists were searching for a place for resting, recreation, and relaxation. Tourists who practice mountaineering, rural tourism and agritourism also have a significant share, as well as those with other forms of tourism such as visiting relatives and friends, religious tourism and pilgrimage (Muntean and Moisă 2014, 235).

## 5 The Alba Iulia Citadel

### 5.1 2000 years of reuse

The Citadel in Alba Iulia is the main attraction as well as the spatial center of the modern city. Today it is a district that is surrounded by the 18<sup>th</sup>-century fortification walls, but the story goes way back in time.

#### *The Ancient Roman Apulum*

The first urban settlement here was the ancient Roman Apulum, founded in AD 106. The fort of the Legion XIII Gemina was built on the plateau bordered by the River Ampoi in the east and by the River Mureş in the west. It had a rectangular ground plan (c. 400 x 400 m) with towers and asymmetrically located gates. In the second half of the third century, when the Roman administration and military forces were withdrawn from the entire Dacia province, the massive stone fortification remained there. It has determined the topography of the settlement ever since then. Archaeological excavations carried out since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, but especially after the Second World War have brought to surface numerous architectural and material remains. Many of these are presented today in the Citadel to the broad public and define to a significant extent the image and identity of the modern city (see App. 2, No. 4, 6, 7, 18).

#### *The medieval town*

In the centuries after the withdrawal of the Roman Empire from Dacia, various peoples migrated to the region and set up their settlements within the area protected by the walls of the ancient Roman fortification. The next phase of constructions that left their long-term marks on the city was carried out after the year 1000 when Transylvania was incorporated into the Kingdom of Hungary, and the Transylvanian bishopric was organized within the western church hierarchy. The bishopric cathedral and the bishop's residence were built in the southwestern corner of the ancient Roman fort, and they are still among the most important landmarks in the city (App. 2, No. 11, 12).

#### *The capital of the Transylvanian Principality*

When the Ottoman Turkish conquest brought the end of the medieval Hungarian Kingdom in the mid-sixteenth century, Transylvania was turned into a semi-independent tributary state of the Ottoman Empire, ruled by a prince, with Alba Iulia as its capital. Princes in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries fortified the old walls with some new bastions. They turned the medieval bishop's palace into their Renaissance residence (App. 2, No. 10-11). Besides this palace, which is one of the largest architectural complexes in the Citadel today, one more building survived from the seventeenth century: that of the *Collegium Academicum*, a higher educational institution (App. 2, No. 20). Though the Palace of the Princes was handed over to the city by the Ministry of Defense around 2000, the building of the Collegium is still a part of the military complex occupying the eastern part of the Citadel.

#### *The military base of the Habsburgs*

When the united military forces of the European powers pushed back the Ottomans from this region in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, Transylvania was incorporated into the Habsburg Empire, and Alba Iulia was turned into a military base. Between 1715 and 1738, a new star-shaped fortification system was built around the old town with walls and bastions made of brick and filled up with earth. Within the fortification, large buildings were erected to house various military functions which determine the layout of the Citadel today (App. 2, No. 2, 3, 16, 17, 19).

Besides the army, the Catholic Church also had a share in the Citadel. The cathedral and the palace were given back to the bishopric. They possessed further buildings in the Citadel, for example, a theological seminary was established, and the Jesuit order also moved back to the town (App. 2, No. 22). The Trinitarian order built their church and monastery in the northern part of the Citadel, which was taken over by Bishop Ignatius Batthyany later in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, to house his book collection and an astronomic observatory. The Batthyaneum, with its precious collection, is one of the most important cultural institutions in Alba Iulia even today (App. 2, No. 49).

#### *The place where Great Romania was born*

The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy (the successor state of the Habsburg Empire since 1867) was dissolved by the end of the First World War, and Transylvania was taken over by the Romanian military forces in 1918. On 1 December, the union of Transylvania with Romania was proclaimed in Alba Iulia, in the former Military Casino building, which since 1968 – the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary – has served as a commemorative exhibition hall to celebrate this event (App. 2, No. 17). The rest of the Habsburg military buildings were taken over by the Romanian army (App. 2, No. 19). Another pivotal event of modern Romanian history took place in the Citadel: the coronation of 1922 King Ferdinand I in 1922 in the Orthodox Cathedral built for this occasion in the western part of the fortress, dominating the view since then from that direction (App. 2, No. 15).

#### *In Communist Romania*

After 1945, the Citadel remained a place of symbolic significance and housed various official ceremonies in Communist Romania. In 1968, the National Museum of the Union and the Union Hall were moved to the former military buildings of the Habsburg era (App. 2, 16, 17). However, the entire fortress and the buildings within were neglected and left to decay, and a large segment of the citadel was used by the Ministry of Defense. After the revolution in 1989, the Citadel was gradually handed over to the city, and the revitalization project started from around 2000.

## **5.2 Ownership structure**

The territory of the Citadel is in mixed ownership today. Most of it is in public hands, owned by the City Municipality, the County Council, and the December 1, 1918, University. The Roman Catholic Church and the Romanian Orthodox Church both own buildings and lands. The Ministry of Defense still has two military units

in the Citadel. In the northern part of the area, there are also some, though very few properties privately owned by residents.

### 5.3 The Citadel as a protected heritage site

The Citadel has been on the Tentative List for UNESCO World Heritage Sites since 1991. It is one of the easternmost representatives of a series of fortifications built in Europe in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a type named after Sébastien Le Prestre de Vauban, a French military engineer. A group of similar fortifications in France has been declared as UNESCO World Heritage site (UNESCO, "Fortifications of Vauban").

The Alba Iulia Citadel is one of the most strictly protected areas of archaeological and built heritage in Romania. Archaeological sites within the entire Citadel of Alba Iulia are A category archaeological monuments, that is, of national or universal value (AB-I-s-A-00001; AB-I-m-A-00001.01), the highest level of protection possible in Romania. Both the ensemble of the fortification "Alba Carolina Fortress," with all the components: walls, bastions, gates, curtains, ravelins, etc., and entire urban area called "Alba Iulia Fortress" are protected as architectural monuments in category A (AB-II-a-A-00088). Within the Citadel, there are 28 buildings which are protected individually, seven of these as A-category, the rest as B-category architectural monuments, that is, representatives for the local cultural heritage. In addition to these, there are three B-category public monuments within the fortress (see also App. 2). The General Urban Plan composed in 2014 by the municipality proposed further four sites for protection (App. 2, No. 9, 19, 36, 52; RLU-PUG 2014, 123).

This protected status had to be taken into consideration during the revitalization: archaeological research is required before earthmoving or constructions, and the renovation of protected buildings also has to be preceded by research. The Ministry of Culture and National Identity issues permits for this research, and their approval is also needed to change the function of protected monuments. The City Hall in Alba Iulia, as the owner and initiator of the works in the Citadel expressed that they were dedicated to acting according to the law. Still, they received heavy criticism from the professional community and the broader public for not dedicating enough time and resources for the protection of heritage, especially for the research preceding the renovation of urban areas and buildings. As an example, in 2011, when doing works on the main square, Piața Cetatei, the excavations were carried out according to the law by the municipal museum, but the time available was incompatibly short considering the size of the area and the complexity of the archaeological site. Marius-Mihai Ciuta, archaeologist and expert in the field of protection of the Cultural Heritage observes:

Alba Iulia is a key to understand many processes and moments in the history of Transylvania and not only Transylvania. They did not realize the value of the sites, and the reason was to hurry up so as not to lose the EU funds (Ciuta 2019).

According to the expert opinion, the presentation of the results of the research has not been satisfactory either. Ancient Roman stone carvings were displayed in the square without any protective roof, and they quickly started to decay. They are not interpreted for the public, and the results of the research have not been made accessible for the broader academic community either (Ciuta 2019). Another case that appeared to be problematic is the Palace of the Princes, presently under



reconstruction. When the municipality expressed its plans about this building of immense historical and architectural value, the community of scholarly experts approached the mayor and offered their cooperation in the research preceding the works. They set up an interdisciplinary expert team which carried out a preliminary survey in the limited time they got and presented their results to the city leadership, pointing out that much more time and resources are needed for the research suitable to the character of the monument before the reconstruction (Burnichioiu 2017). However, these concerns were not fully met by the reconstruction process of the Palace.

Another problem is already visible for the broader public as well: the use of the materials during the reconstruction works on protected architecture. The bricks applied on the Vauban-type fortification proved to be of poor quality and are already decaying. The stone used for paving the street surfaces was also criticized since the original stones were replaced with uniform but worse-quality material (Ciuta 2019).

These issues resulted from problems inherent in the Romanian system of heritage protection: the organizational system is very much centralized, the regulations are strict, but the element of monitoring is not satisfactory, and they are not prepared to handle locally specific situations. As in this case, it largely depends on the owners of the heritage site how pro-active they are in this respect and to what extent they seek and consider experts' advice. However, there is also a pressure coming from the deadlines of EU-funded projects, which might prove more urging than the will to make extra efforts to protect heritage.

## 6 Urban Development Policy

In 2009, the Municipality created an Integrated Urban Development Plan for the city of Alba Iulia for the period of 2009-2015, a prerequisite of benefitting from the Regional Operational Program (ROP) 2007-2013 funded from the European Regional Development Fund (PIDU 2009). The PIDU 2009 contained an analysis of the entire territory of the Municipality of Alba Iulia in terms of its infrastructure, environmental conditions, economy, tourism, society, education, etc. and set up objectives, strategic priorities, policies, programs, and medium- and long-term development projects. The three strategic objectives were 1) improving the quality of life; 2) turning Alba Iulia into an attractive touristic destination; 3) developing the business environment. For the period of ROP 2007-2013, seven projects were proposed for financing and implementation, and two of these affected the Citadel: the rehabilitation of the public spaces within the area inside the Vauban-type fortification and the reconstruction of the western side of the fortress including the access routes.

As a preparation to benefit from the new Regional Operative Program 2014-2020, the City Hall prepared an Integrated Strategy for Urban Development for the period of 2014-2023 (*Strategia Integrată 2014-2023*). The Program aimed at turning Alba Iulia by 2023 into an inclusive, open, and smart city (*Strategia Integrată 2014-2023*, 316; *Project Prioritization 2014-2020*). The complete renovation and rehabilitation of the Citadel are among steps towards turning Alba Iulia into an

attractive tourist destination, which is one of the three main strategic aims. The sustainable development of cultural tourism combined with effective city branding as an area of intervention is expected to contribute to reaching the objective of sustainable, smart growth and economic competitiveness. Cultural heritage is also seen as a field relevant from the point of view of urban regeneration leading to a sustainable, clean and unpolluted urban environment.

Relevant projects planned for this period continue the reconstruction campaign within the Citadel as well as finding suitable functions for the buildings: the *caponieri* in the Saint Elisabeth and Saint Charles Bastions, and the Trinity Ravelin where they plan to establish an open-air amphitheater, and the Palace of the Princes. The renovation of the latter as well as of the eastern and southern sections of the walls is also planned as a priority project (*Project Prioritization 2014-2020*, 83-85). They plan to develop the access route to the Apur Palace and the Saint Elisabeth Ravelin and to increase the green zones within the Citadel. The renovation and valorization of the Batthyaneum is an integral part of the project package. They plan to renovate and re-valorize the National Museum and the Unification Hall and consolidate the complex of the Incoronation Cathedral. Projects with some more general aims target the presentation of archaeological sites and the creation of a complete built heritage inventory in the city – it is not clear whether they understand only protected monuments here or apply a broader definition of built heritage. A number of projects do not concern the physical reconstruction of the Citadel anymore but its utilization primarily in the field of tourism, e.g. “Ensuring a continuous promotion of the Alba Iulia Fortress, in partnership with the economic agents from the HORECA<sup>1</sup> sector”; and some projects concern it indirectly (smart city, tourism strategy, etc.). Other projects target the development of a regional network of destinations for heritage tourism. The development of the university and the construction of a new psychiatric hospital also affects the function of the buildings in the Citadel, though they primarily target the development of educational and cultural infrastructure to achieve the objective of social inclusiveness. Related to the latter, the construction of a Cultural Center is planned on the Saint Michael's Bastion, which will contain a theatre, the Philharmony, the County Library, and the already existing Museikon Museum Complex.

The strategy does not explicitly consider the role of the Citadel in the identity of the city. This approach seems to be aligned with the national cultural heritage policy in Romania, where preservation has been in focus, and the available financial resources were also centered in this direction (Becuț 2014). However, the Citadel has been an essential element in city branding and marketing (“City branding” 2017, Docea, “City logo”, “Good practice summary” 2017).

#### CITY BRANDING

*The logo of the city is a representation of the star-shape fortress. The marketing strategy is primarily aimed at cultural tourism. They have been developing an integrated approach towards city marketing and smart city technologies (“Alba Iulia Smart City”). Alba Iulia is positioned in this as ‘The other capital of Romania’*

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<sup>1</sup> HORECA is a syllabic abbreviation of the words Hotel/Restaurant/Café, e.g. food service industry.

*referring to its role in the unification of Romania in 1918, and also on its aspiration for a symbolic role, a spiritual capital for the entire country. At the same time, the municipality positions the city as a model for small- and medium-size towns in Romania and Europe due to the developments in the past decade. Alba Iulia was also among the applicants for the title of the European Capital of Culture 2021.*

The role of the Citadel in the life and formation of the local community is not discussed in the strategy either. Still, involving locals into the general planning process is an essential element in the Integrated Strategy for Urban Development 2014-2023 for Alba Iulia: it presents in details the participative process in its preparation, and the Local Action Plan recognizes that the lack of feeling of involvement is one of the major problems to handle (Docea, "City logo"). However, the city management does not seem to recognize that treating the Citadel as heritage in the context of the local communities and not just as a protected national monument could be a key to increase the level of involvement. Some actions initiated by the city management show the direction that they recognize this potential. For example, in 2009, Alba Iulia entered the Guinness Book with the largest human hug in the world, when 10.000 inhabitants embraced the fortress for 15 minutes (Moldovan 2019). Though this was a symbolic way to express that people should be involved, this was still a top-down initiative. When a group of locals expressed their wish to be consulted by demonstrating against the elimination of an old park at the main square of the Citadel, the municipality did not follow their request and had the trees cut (Ciuta 2019).

## 7 Adaptive Reuse

The buildings in the Citadel have been continuously used and re-used for centuries. However, the transfer of the site from the Ministry of Defense to the City Hall created an entirely new situation, when new function had to be found for the buildings in former military use and spaces in the fortification itself. Parallel with this, the city leadership has to deal with some other functions inherited from the Socialist period, which do not fit the new profile they envision for the Citadel, focusing on tourism and culture.

The revitalization of the Citadel and the buildings there are discussed by a series of urban planning documents issued from around 2000 (for the complete list, see PUZ 2013, 1.1-1.2; RLU-PUG 2014; and the summary in App. 1). These regulated all building activity within the Citadel in accordance with its protected status, and defined the functions of spaces and buildings. The rehabilitation of the fortification zone followed the principles established in these documents. Today the exterior side of the wall system – overlooking the surrounding city – is a green area, with some sports establishments and a community garden (App. 2, No. 1.10, 1.20-1.23). As a result of the rehabilitation works between 2009 and 2014, now a continuous park belt runs between the two lines of the walls. The rooms within the exterior fortification line (former guard rooms and storage spaces) open from this park belt; some of these house restaurants, pubs, the Tourist Information Office, a cultural center, and an equestrian school, while others are empty. The rooms

within the inner fortification line are accessible from within the Citadel and are also partially utilized for hospitality purposes. (App. 2, No. 1.11-1.19) This green belt around the walls is mostly used by tourists and only in nice weather. Locals come here if there is some temporary event, festival, which might be of special interest to them.

The interior of the Citadel is structured by a regular street system following the former northwest-southeast axis of an ancient Roman fort. There are about sixty buildings within the walls, most of them large historical structures built from the Middle Ages to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, with the exception is two blocks with one-story urban houses in the northwestern corner also erected from the medieval to the modern times. The western side of the Citadel is dominated by the two, Roman Catholic and Orthodox cathedral complexes. The Citadel opens up towards the city in its main axis, with the Orthodox Cathedral complex, the construction of which in 1922 slightly moved into the background the medieval Roman Catholic Cathedral in terms of the cityscape. The latter forms one spacious complex with the medieval and early modern Bishop's Palace and the Palace of the Princes. The area east from the church complexes is occupied by Habsburg military buildings and the University, organized around the main square of the Citadel, Piața Cetatii.

The southeastern part is dominated by ancient Roman architectural remains excavated and presented to the public (App. 2, No. 4, 6, 7, 18), and the two earliest military buildings of the Habsburg era: the former War Commissariat now under renovation to be turned into the administrative center of Alba county (App. 2, No. 2;) and the Warehouse which is now the Hotel Medieval (App. 2, No. 3).

The archaeological remains of the Principia, the central building of the ancient Roman fort were excavated in Piața Cetatii in 2011. The reconstructed remains were covered with a metal and glass museum building and opened for the visitors, together with an open-air lapidary occupying a part of the square otherwise decorated with 19th-century and modern public monuments (App. 2, No. 16, 56-59). The northern side of the square is dominated by the façade of the main building of the December 1, 1918 University which, starting from its establishment in 1991, has step by step occupied several large historical buildings in the Citadel, such as the Baroque building of the former Jesuit monastery, some recently renovated military barracks, and the former Baroque palace of the Apor family (App. 2, No. 21, 22, 25, 51, 52). The latter is flanked by a seventeenth-century building housing the School Inspectorate of Alba County since 2002, and the eighteenth-century building of the Roman Catholic Theology (App. 2, No. 50, 52). The Roman Catholic and the Romanian Orthodox bishopric occupy their historical buildings, including the two cathedrals, which dominate the cityscape (App. 2, No. 11-12, 15).

At present, almost all of the most important cultural institutions in the city – museums, libraries, the university – are clustered in the fortress housed in historical buildings from the Principality and the Habsburg era. Three of these even have a national significance. The Union Hall, established in 1968 in the former Casino of the Austro-Hungarian military forces to celebrate the 1918 foundation of modern Romania borders the western side of the main square (App. 2, No. 17). Behind that, The National Museum of the Union has also occupied since 1968 the former military housing called 'Babylon building' in the Habsburg era (App. 2, No.

16). The northwestern corner of the Citadel is dominated by the Biblioteca Batthyaneum in the former Trinitarian church, a function that has not changed since the 18<sup>th</sup> century (App. 2, No. 49). There is one more relatively large complex here: that of the former Military Hospital from the Habsburg era, now the Psychiatric Hospital of Alba County inherited from the Socialist era (App. 2, No. 47). The northernmost building of the complex was transformed into a museum of sacred art in Romania called Museikon and opened in 2017, but it is accessible only through the courtyard of the psychiatry located in the 18<sup>th</sup>-century building of the Habsburg military hospital (App. 2, No. 48), which is a disturbing situation both for the patients and for the visitors. As outlined in the Integrated Strategy for Urban Development 2014-2023, the city management plans to sort out this clash of functions in the forthcoming period (*Strategia Integrată 2014-2023*, 311, 352). The other, still problematic area is on the easternmost side of the Citadel, between the main square and the fortification, and it is still used by the Ministry of Defense. Thus, the former Austro-Hungarian barrack buildings, as well as the building of the 17<sup>th</sup>-century Collegium Academicum, is closed from the public (App. 2, No. 19-20). The city leadership, as well as the residents, seem to agree that the army should have no place in the Citadel anymore, and they hope that the negotiations with the Ministry will soon conclude. However, it is a task on the long run to find a function to these enormous historical buildings along the lines prescribed by the PUG.

The City Hall has to face the same problem about the Palace of the Princes, a 17<sup>th</sup>-century building already handed over by the Ministry of Defense. They were able to find financial resources for the renovation of the building, and the idea is to create a modern, interactive museum focusing mainly on the Principality period here (Neag 2017, "Palatul Principilor" 2019). Nicolae Moldovan city manager explains:

The Palace will be a museum but also a vivid space for cultural and educational activities. It will not be just a museum, but a space for temporary exhibitions, multimedia halls, with a concrete cultural agenda for the entire year (Moldovan 2019).

Though there was a design competition, and a young architect was selected as the winner with her design of an interactive educational center, the plans are still vague, especially in terms of sustainability. These buildings represent a typical problem the City Hall has to face: their policy is to keep the Citadel for cultural and touristic, and in a limited scale administrative functions, but the buildings they take over were built for military and state administration purposes, which determines their large scale and arrangement. It is especially problematic to fill these buildings with life considering the population number in Alba Iulia. Hence the strategy is to focus on tourism and attract visitors to the Citadel, which might, however, easily lead to a situation where the topographic and historical center of the city is almost entirely outside the sphere of life of the locals.

This would mean a failure in integrating the Citadel into the city despite the spectacular developments there. It is even more difficult because only a few people live in the Citadel. The two northwestern blocks of the Citadel are occupied by small dwelling houses, some of which are used by various foundations and church organizations. As Radu Cadinoiu, the president and program manager of the civic initiative "Carolina Creative Quarter" pointed out:



... those spaces, even if they are extremely beautiful and can tell a lot about our identity and our history, are still preserved as if they were some passive or dead monuments. That is not what we would like to have in our Citadel (Cadinou 2019/2).

Despite the emphasis on the touristic potential of the Citadel, the hotel-restaurant-café industry, which could attract both tourists and the locals, is poorly represented inside: the above-mentioned Hotel Medieval in the former Habsburg military warehouse (App. 2, No. 3), a café in the so-called Jericho building (App. 2, No. 9), and a small pub mostly visited by locals (App. 2, No. 24). Tourists can mostly feed themselves in the mobile food wagons installed along the main street of the Citadel. Restaurants and cafés are in a larger number in the spaces within the fortification walls and bastions. (App. 2, No. 1.11-1.19). Some restaurants deliberately build on the atmosphere in the vaulted rooms inside the fortifications. The owner of Pub13 even decided to brand his restaurant based on the specific heritage site, a 15<sup>th</sup>-century barbican, the history of which is presented to every visitor on the paper plate mats (App. 2, No. 1.11; Ciuta 2019). An art café popular among locals but also attractive for tourists is accessible from inside the Citadel, but technically it is in the fortifications; it is not too easy to find though (App. 2, No. 1.17).



*Figure 4 Interior of Pub13. Source: pub13.ro*

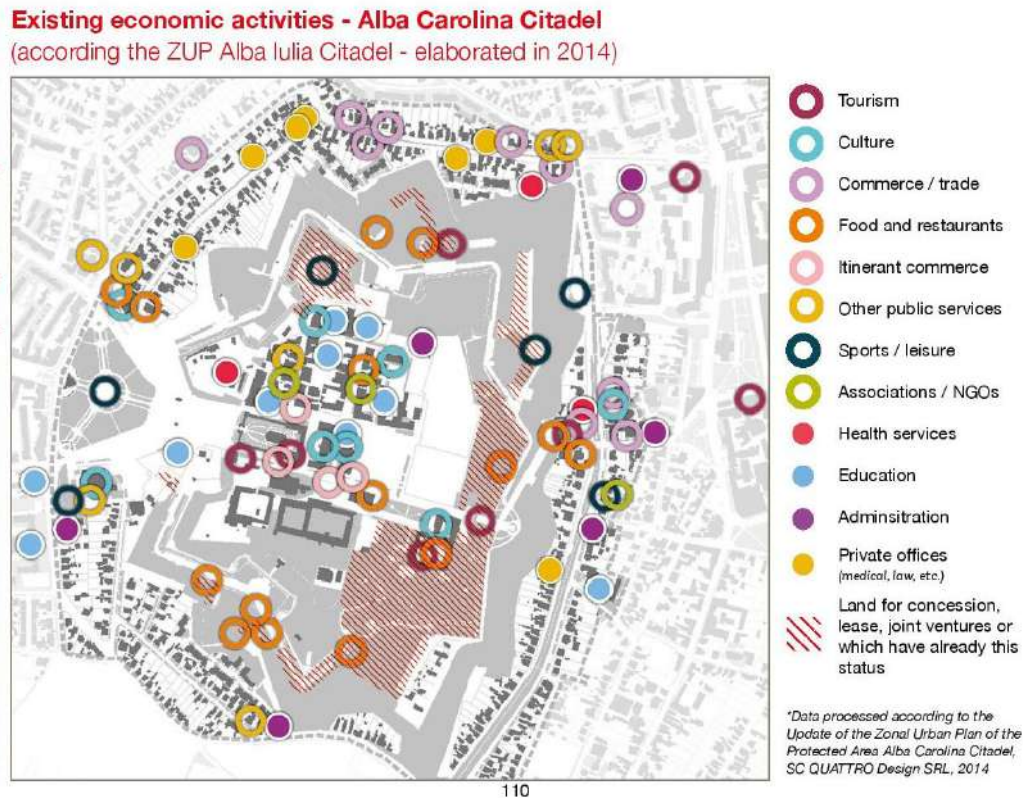


Figure 5 Image source: Project Prioritization 2014-2020, 110.

Hospitality and catering industry seems to be an answer for how to use these spaces; on the other hand, these places are not easy to access from inside the Citadel where tourists are expected for sightseeing and cultural programs. This might be the reason why there are traces of such places among and in the walls, which once operated but are closed down by now. It seems that only those are successful which are located close to the main entrances of the fortification system. The recently established Tourist Information Office in one of the bastions is also difficult to access since it is outside the main tourist route in the Citadel. In general, the orientation towards the hospitality business in the Citadel has not been entirely successful, and there have even been complaining on behalf of the public that there are only profit-oriented enterprises in the Citadel instead of the promised cultural and community spaces ("Cetatea Alba Iulia" 2016). Some others see that focusing exclusively on the business side is not enough.



*Figure 6 Venue of a closed summer bar in the Citadel walls. Photo: Volodymyr Kulikov, 2019*

Cristian Mladin, the initiator and former vice-president of the Carolina Creative Quarter shares his explanation for the phenomenon:

The question is why there is still no big interest in the Citadel if you have a restored Citadel, nice places where you can eat and drink and have some words with friends or others, still, there is a lack of interest. My explanation is that there is a lack of the kind of infrastructure that supports creativity and all kinds of activities, non-traditional ones in the cultural and economic horizon. (Mladin 2019/2)

The city management also identified the double problem after the bulk of the renovation project: they have too many empty spaces which need a suitable function, and the Citadel is not integrated organically with the rest of the city in terms of urban life (Moldovan 2019). They came up with various methods to solve these problems. The Citadel houses at least 20 public open-air events per year, some of them organized by the municipality (e.g. the Dilema Veche Festival, a private initiative financed by the Municipality and the Alba County Council, historical festivals focusing on the Ancient Roman Period or the Middle Ages, concerts) and some by external organizations (e.g. truck art festival, pet shows). They also seek to strengthen the public-private partnership especially in the hospitality sector, where tourists are the primary target audience. Developing the educational profile of the town is part of the long-term strategy to bring life into the Citadel by strengthening the role of the university there. That could also be an answer to how to use the remaining military buildings from the Habsburg period.





Figure 7 Truck Tuning Art Show between the two walls of the 18th-century fortification, August 3, 2019. Photo: Volodymyr Kulikov

Culture remains the primary profile in the vision of the City Hall about the Citadel (Moldovan 2019). The Integrated strategy 2014-2013 also emphasized the direction to develop the creative and artistic sector by encouraging local creative and cultural industries and attracting investors and involving valuable human capital in the field, which is seen closely interlinked with the conservation and rehabilitation efforts on the historical buildings through the capitalization of the material and immaterial local heritage of the city (*Strategia Integrată 2014-2023*, 303).

The forth direction in which the city leadership started to experiment, though still in a relatively small scale, is establishing a partnership with civic organizations in the cultural and creative sector, such as the Theatre Skepsis or the Alba Iulia Creative Quarter, and offering some of the spaces for them to use. The target audience of these organizations is the local community, so their programs and activities can attract locals into the Citadel. Cristian Mladin acknowledges:

Until people still think the traditional way about developing a cultural infrastructure at a place like Alba Iulia, you have no chance. You have to challenge the residents. It is not enough to organize big music festivals in the Citadel on certain days, e.g., the Days of Alba Iulia, all financed by the Municipality. (Mladin 2019/1)

These have been project-based cooperation between the municipality and the civic sector, which resulted in the temporary use of certain spaces in the Citadel. The city leadership recognized the potential of experimenting with temporary use, and between 2013 and 2015, they took part in a program called *Temporary Use as a Tool for Urban Regeneration* financed by URBACT scheme (TUTUR). Within this project, they experimented with the temporary use of various places in the fortress for cultural activities, such as the backyard of the palace of the Princes before starting its restoration. However, these experiments have not been turned into a general practice yet. The former city manager of Alba Iulia Nicolae Moldovan explains the limitations:

To some extent, we are accustomed to this concept [temporary reuse]. We started to use it, but it is not so extensively used right now because we lack resources but also because of the

mentality. We have to educate, open the mentality towards these new concepts in urban regeneration, how to create a vivid city using different arguments with different stakeholders. So, we have started, but we still have a lot of steps to follow in this field. (Moldovan 2019)

Such an experiment has been the cooperation with the NGO Carolina Creative Quarter. The NGO was established in 2017 to activate the cultural and creative industry in Alba Iulia, and the Citadel plays a crucial role in their vision. As Cristian Mladin recalls the circumstances,

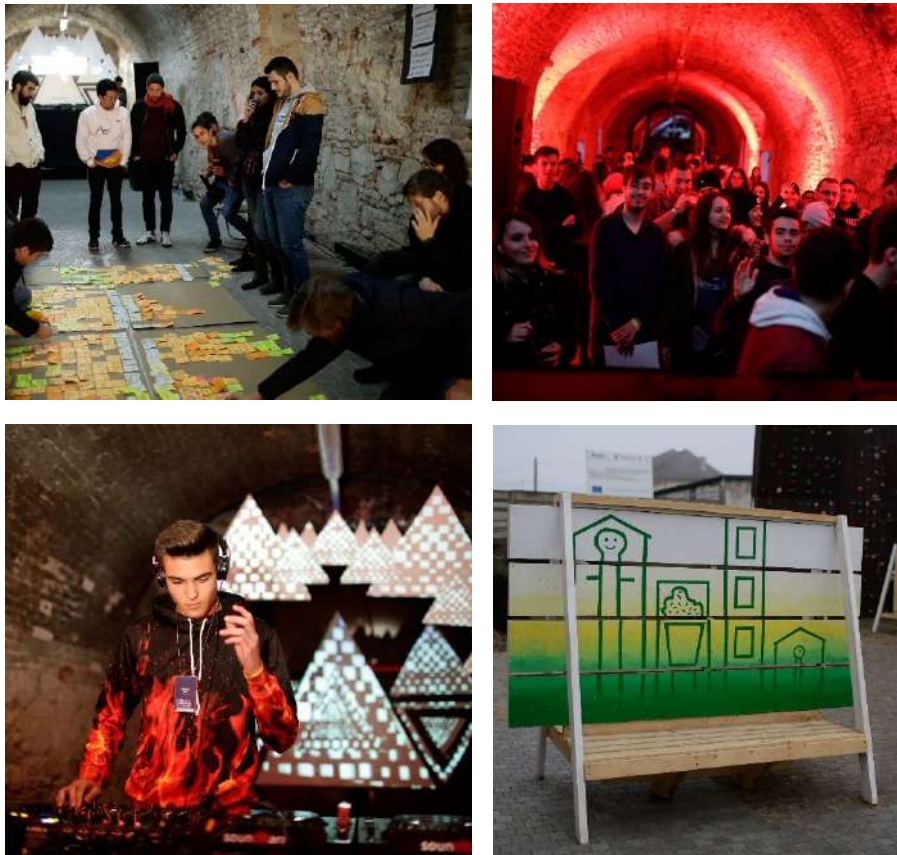
The municipality was just finishing the restoration of the Citadel, and the idea was to do something with these spaces, mainly those within the walls of the Citadel..., to activate them somehow, to bring people inside... Our main aim was to activate the local community regarding creativity. We saw that creative hubs and other similar institutions was a trend in Romania, so we tried to do something similar in Alba Iulia, having this great privilege to be in a historical city with a very different type of heritage. (Mladin 2019/2).

The current president and program manager of Carolina Creative Quarter Radu Cadinoiu dreams about the Citadel as a place for the community where civic movement and public engagement flourishing:

Our obsession for the future is to be considered the home of all the creatives of our community who accept us, who are able to do something for the community and who are willing to develop a more meaningful approach to the Citadel instead of seeing it as a dead monument, going there from time to time to place a flower but without understanding that it is a part of our identity. I would like to have a common space, some kind of hub, makerspace, offering them all the main facilities they need, and they do need those facilities. We would like to be the home for our creatives. We would like to have spaces even if they are not owned by us as an NGO but only administered or managed, in order to help the authorities, the municipality, to have a better interaction with the teenagers, meaning the next generation. (Cadinoiu 2019/2)

Already in 2016, the founders of the future NGO brought together all creatives from Alba Iulia and organized an exhibition in the Citadel, combining architectural plans, design objects, jewelry, works of arts, and many other things. In 2017, they won funding for a program from the national program directed by the Ministry of Culture called ACCES dedicated to the centenary of 1 December 1918, the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Great Union of the Romanian territories. They developed an urban game combined with urban art using various spaces in the Citadel, the aim of which was to bring together the locals and heritage. In 2018, they organized an international event series called Creative Hubs. They collected people with experience in the field from all over Europe to have a brainstorming on how a creative hub could be established in Alba Iulia. This was combined with workshops for local young people in various creative fields: DJ-ing, video and light design, cultural marketing, modern design, and photography, which took place in the Palace of the Princes and space in the walls called Caponiera in the Citadel. In the end, the results of the programs were presented for the broader public and the city management in the Principia Museum. The Caponiera was renovated by that time by the municipality to be used as a community space by various civic organizations.





*Figure 8 Creative Hubs. Event organized by the Carolina Creative Quarter, 2018 November. Source: Carolina Creative Quarter*

Though the activists of Creative Quarter Carolina are satisfied with the results of these events, and they very much value the supportive attitude and openness of the city management, they urge for a more intense cooperation since they feel that they could do much more in developing the cultural and creative sector in the city, in involving and mobilizing the local community, and in bringing life into the empty walls of the Citadel. Radu Cadinoiu emphasizes:

From the very beginning, we cannot imagine our activity without the support of the municipality, that is very clear. We really appreciate that there is a team who is always supporting us... For those two projects we have to thank the municipality; without them the project would not have happened... We would expect more in terms of an official policy regarding our interests and activities ... We expect that in the next few years they would be more open just asking us what we expect to see here, what would be the experience we are able to propose for our Citadel, not even only their citadel but our Citadel. (Cadinoiu 2019/2)

The main issues seen by the activists are the slow rhythm of bureaucracy, the lack of inclusion of civic initiatives in terms of mid- and long-term strategy, and the fear of giving away a part of the control in the case of such an important national monument as the Citadel. They feel that the municipality does not recognize the full potential of civic initiatives and temporary reuse, and they too much insist on keeping the control in the management of the site (Cadinoiu 2019/1, 2019/2). Cristian Mladin thinks that more empowerment could help the decision-makers to understand the prospective direction for the site's development:

I, as a major or council president, would choose a month, let's say July or August, to let all the spaces in the Citadel occupied by some activity. What is the profile of your NGO? Go

there and play cards or have a musical event, have some movie projections, whatever. Go wild! Have rock or hip-hop music there; I don't care, but populate that space. Give it a life. Bring people here. If things go well, I will help you from our budget. (Mladin 2019/1)

## 8 Actors and governance

The main actor is the municipality of Alba Iulia as the owner of most of the Citadel. They set up the relevant strategies, do the planning at the level of the Citadel, provide access to financial resources, control the partnerships, and dominate the public discourse. The Council of Alba County is one of their most important partners and co-owner of the Citadel. The two, Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches are responsible for the management of their own assets within the Citadel. Their cooperation with the city and each other is reduced to the necessary minimum, but the churches have a decisive role in the discourse about the Citadel, and there is clear competition for the ownership of the past where heritage serves as an argument. Since religion is interlinked with ethnicities, in this case, they also represent two, Romanian and Hungarian ethnic groups in the Citadel. The University and the Museum are also among the main partners of the municipality in understanding and communicating what heritage means in the case of the Citadel. Nicolae Moldovan, as a representative of the municipality acknowledges the importance of contribution of the abovementioned institutes:

We had a good and strong and active partnership with these organizations. We were working together to restore and to valorize our properties and to manage to attract funds. A process over 15 years, all those having properties here worked together to change, to open them. (Moldovan 2019)

The private sector in HORECA industry and services is considered as an important stakeholder by the city management. Civic organizations, NGOs have had a relatively small role by now, but there is a segment in this field that urges for deeper involvement. Both the activists and the representative of the city agree that all this is not enough, partnerships should be broadened and strengthened between all actors, and new partnerships should be established (Mladin 2019/2, Moldovan 2019). Nicolae Moldovan indicates that the municipality wishes to intensify the partnership:

Alba Iulia and the fortress needs different institutional partners, some of them are already here, others could be attracted in order to help us to promote the potential of the city outside its boundaries. National Government, through the Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Development, Ministry of Tourism, could be a strong partner for Alba Iulia. Also, international tour operators could be attracted here as stakeholders. Relevant transnational networks promoting cultural heritage, such as the Cultural Routes organized by the Council of Europe. Also, a network of universities, cultural and creative industry hubs, from all over Europe. (Moldovan 2019)

To coordinate all processed related to the Citadel, the municipality raised for consideration the idea of creating a special organization called Citadel Heritage Management (*Project Prioritization 2014-2020*, 111).



Figure 9 Citadel Heritage Management - organizational chart. Source: *Project Prioritization 2014-2020*, 111.

Between 2016 and 2019, the Alba Iulia Smart City Pilot Project runs within the European Innovation Partnership on Smart Cities and Communities ("Alba Iulia Smart City"). The initiative supported by the European Commission bringing together cities, industry, SMEs, banks, research, and other smart city actors. The outputs of the project are based on partnerships with the private creative sector, such as an app to explore the Citadel, wifi hotspots in public areas, an e-Alba Iulia app developed in partnership with Orange. A web application called Local Community Barometer is in the testing phase now, designed to consult city residents on selecting community-relevant objectives and projects proposed for funding or other topics of general interest.

The municipality experimented with some methods to involve the local public into the decision-making processes. In 2007, before starting the project, the town leadership conducted a sociological survey asking people what they wanted them to do with the fortress. The results showed that they wanted to see it as a space for leisure activities (walking, biking) and cultural events (Moldovan 2019). After the project started, the town leadership organized annual surveys together with the university to measure the level of satisfaction, four times between 2014 and 2018 ("Barometrul" 2014, 2015). Participatory processes were also initiated during the preparations of the Integrated Development Strategy 2014-2023, facilitated by the inter-community development association Alba Iulia – AIDA. They set up an Urban Working Group from local actors from civil society, institutions, private investors and in the field of research and development. Public consultations were also organized during the preparation of the document (*Strategia Integrată 2014-2023*, 444-452). However, some feel that these participatory initiatives were more formal and not effective (Ciuta 2019). Despite the attempts by the municipality to initiate participative processes and community involvement, the role of the local community in general as an actor is undefined and ineffective. Their role is mostly to act along the initiatives of the government, provide support, and to give feedback in a form also organized by the city leadership. They have acted independently in a few isolated cases, such as by demonstrating – unsuccessfully – for keeping the old trees in the Citadel. The identification and inclusion of marginalized groups into decision making do not appear explicitly in the participatory processes.

## 9 Financial framework

The primary financial resource for the Citadel project came from the Regional Operational Program of the EU. Projects were submitted for international and national funds and in various partnerships: European Commission (Horizon 2020, Interreg, European Social Funds), Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Education of the national government, Kingdom of Norway, and also private investment. These were complemented from local and county budgets (*Strategia Integrată 2014-2023*, 343, 358-359). Totally more than 60 million euros were gained, implemented in several projects. (Moldovan 2019). From the works done on the fortress in the period of the Regional Operational Fund 2007-2013, 76% of the investments were funded from EU resources, 9% from national resources, and 15% from the local budget (*Project Prioritization 2014-2020*, 22). For a list of projects with the amounts of funding, see App. 1.

Construction works financed by partners in the Citadel include the reconstruction of the Union Hall and former War Commissariat buildings (App. 2, No. 17 and 2) financed by Alba County. The establishment of a cultural center around the Museicon Museum, in the place of the present psychiatric hospital (App. 2, No. 47 and 48), will also be financed from the county budget. The University was also able to attract funding from the Regional Operational Program 2014-2020 for its buildings (see App. 1). The Romanian Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Bishopric funded the renovation of their building complexes, the latter financed by the Romanian state, the Hungarian state, the Catholic Church, and from private donations.

The financial sustainability of the Citadel program is embedded into the economy of the city and the related strategy, but no detailed plans are openly accessible in this respect. In this respect, the main value of the Citadel is defined by the city management as its touristic potential.

## 10 Communication

The city leadership has put a great emphasis on the efficient communication of the project and city branding in general, which is largely based on the historical past and the Citadel as heritage. On the site, billboards were set up about the phases of the projects, and a permanent pyramid-shaped public monument was installed on Piața Cetatii displaying before-after images. The city leadership regularly informs the local public on the plans, the attained funding, and the steps in the realization of the conservation and renovation project. They use a variety of communication channels: the website of the municipality, six local television channels, three local radio channels, as well as the local newspaper and six online local news sites (*Strategia Integrată 2014-2023*, 239-246). The municipality also has its own Facebook page. They use various events and actions to popularize the project, such as two Guinness record attempts initiated by the town leadership to create a sense of pride among the residents. In 2009, Alba Iulia entered the Guinness Book with the largest human hug in the world around the fortress



embraced by 10.000 inhabitants, and in 2018, a similar action was organized on the occasion of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of modern Romania (Moldovan 2019).

In 2010, the city started to develop a branding strategy focused on the Citadel in the framework of the URBACT project ("City branding" 2017; Docea, "City logo"). They had a city logo designed which consists of four elements: the star-shaped ground plan of the Citadel, the name of the city and the new slogan at the top ("the other capital"), and a message at the bottom under the name of the city ("welcome to the largest citadel in Romania"). The site [visitalbaiulia.com](http://visitalbaiulia.com) was created as part of the branding project. In 2011, the city started the project called "Breathe the air of history" financed by the Ministry of Regional Development and Tourism. The project aims to promote the tourism potential of the Citadel by creating an integrated package of marketing activities ("Referat" 2019).



*Figure 10 The city logo displayed in the Citadel. Photo: Volodymyr Kulikov, 2019*

## 11 Values and identity

The revitalization project focuses on the conservation and renovation of the buildings and their utilization to attract visitors to the Citadel. The core values perceived by the Municipality as manifest in the planning documents is that Alba Iulia is a unique city in Romania with the largest fortress in Southeastern Europe. The Zonal Urban Plan refers not just to the fortification itself but also to "the remarkable building stock of the fortress comprised of fortifications, secular, ecclesiastical and administrative buildings." (PUZ 2013, 177: Study of the historical, architectural and urban values) The official communication emphasizes that this is also the place where modern Romania was born 100 years ago. The strong partnership they were able to establish between different stakeholders and work together in order to change the image of the fortress and to create a new atmosphere based on the 18<sup>th</sup>-century one is also a value that is emphasized (Moldovan 2019). The branding strategy of the city presents Alba Iulia as a modern, fast-developing town which "might be small" but "rock & roll" ("The Other Capital"). It is presented as "the other capital" contrasted with Bucharest based on its historical significance and heritage, the center of which is the Citadel.



The narrative of the Citadel presented by the city on the site and in various media is based on three historical phases: the ancient Roman military fort, the Habsburg era, and the creation of the modern Romanian state in 1918. The period of the Transylvanian Principality appears in the concept of “three fortifications,” which would be the Roman castrum, the medieval fortress, and the “Alba Carolina Citadel” built in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (App. 2. No. 7; “Alba Iulia Fortress.”). Medieval, in this case, does not include the real Middle Ages of the town when it was an important regional and ecclesiastical center in the Hungarian Kingdom. This periodization does not correspond to the archaeological interpretation of the built heritage here, which, before the 18<sup>th</sup> century, suggests more and continuous use and reuse of the site with minor phases architectural transformations from time to time (Ciuta 2019, see also Rusu 2010). The Principality era will receive more emphasis when, according to the plans, the Palace of the Princes will be turned into such a thematic museum. In the Principality period, Michael the Brave Prince of Walachia and Moldavia had the Transylvanian throne in Alba Iulia as well for a brief time, so his rule is regarded as the predecessor of the modern Romanian state, and he himself celebrated as one of the main national heroes (See PUZ 2013, 88-89; “The Other Capital” ). The exhibition in the National Museum of the Union is still based on the historical narrative of the Socialist era; the curators modernized only the ancient Roman section.



*Figure 11 The Apur Palace with the light on the façade in the colors of the Romanian national tricolor. Photo: Volodymyr Kulikov, 2019.*

Built heritage and history is emphasized in the modern presentation of the Citadel, intangible heritage is not explored. The historical narrative focuses on the political and ecclesiastical history, while the everyday life of various layers of the population hardly appears. The multiethnic and multicultural character specific for Alba Iulia since the beginnings is not present. There are minority ethnic groups who once lived or still live in the city – Germans, Jews, Hungarians, Roma, etc. – are poorly represented in the narrative. The Hungarian minority is kept present in the Citadel by the Hungarian Catholic bishopric. The heritage represented by their sites, the

medieval cathedral, and the bishop's palace are targeted by tourists from Hungary, who, however, do not connect to the narrative presented by the city. An archaeologist and heritage expert Marius Ciuta think that more inclusive historical narrative can contribute to heritage value of the Citadel:

This is not tourism but a pilgrimage. There is more here: many monasteries, the Bathanyeum, the old streets. The tourists do not know that the streets today are the same streets as in the Roman military camp. Nobody knows that medieval streets had names like Italian (Olasz), German (Szász), Jewish (Zsidó) Streets. It is beautiful, and you should tell them the story of how multicultural was once this city.... If we want to put the Citadel in its real value, we need to assume all moments of its history. Not only Roman history, not only Austrian history, not only Michael the Brave. The kind of history with big jumps is not a good one because frustration will appear on behalf of the minorities. (Ciuta 2019)

#### CONTESTED HERITAGE

*There is also a long ongoing contest for the ownership of the past in the fort, which is also present in the interpretation of the built heritage. Since ethnicity in Transylvania is interwoven not just with language but also with religion, the recent archaeological excavation of a 10th century church in the southwestern part of the fort has again brought to surface the question of who was first here: the western or the eastern church and various historical interpretations connect the ruins to various ethnic groups present in the area (Marcu Istrate 2015).*

A research project financed by the Local Council and the City Hall of Alba Iulia in 2014-2019 and implemented by the Department of History, Archaeology and Museology of the 1 December 1918 University in cooperation with the Museum of the Union presents a different and much more inclusive version of the city's past. The output of the project called *Memoria Urbis* is a website and a book. Various layers of the history, as well as the minority groups, appear in it, though mostly related to the districts surrounding the Citadel (Anghel et al. 2018; "Memoria Urbis"). These perspectives still need to find their way to the story presented in and about the Citadel. Cristian Mladin is sure that more sophisticated historical narrative is important not only due to the public curiosity, but it can also be a part of the sustainable approach:

The Citadel in the next 10 or 15 years could have or could add other stories besides the principal story, the historical one. We always see it, that is here, that is a fact. But I think we need to add to the Citadel other stories, maybe unpopular or untraditional stories regarding, of course, the civil society, the arts, crafts, and other similar domains. The only chance for the Citadel to survive and not in the touristic way. (Mladin 2019/2)

## 12 Impact

The Citadel project, embedded into the context of other EU funded development projects in the city, was able to stop the population decrease in Alba Iulia, which is otherwise the national trend. Moreover, it attracted many visitors, whose number has doubled since 2013. With a population 66,369 residents, Alba Iulia welcomes some 400,000 visitors per year, out of whom 14% come from abroad. Nicolae Moldovan sees it as a positive trend which has direct impact on the quality of life of Alba Iulia residents:

The recent growth of the population shows that we increased the quality of life here, and people moved here. There are also many foreign, national, and private investments in Alba Iulia and the surrounding area, which attracted many labor forces here who decided to stay here. (Moldovan 2019)

*Table 2 Alba Iulia Citadel: Museums visits and Hospitality*

	Visitors at the museum	Overnights	Accommodation capacity
2009			612
2011		59,510	
2013	91,608		
2014	128,958	78,336	941
2015	154,700	111,446	1,186
2016	167,200		

The mayor who lead the entire process was elected and re-elected by the citizens of Alba Iulia six times, which, as the city management interpreted it, indicates that most people were satisfied with the results (Moldovan 2019). The results of the surveys also indicate general satisfaction despite the occasional criticism.

The Alba Iulia's success was also recognized on the national and EU level. In 2012, Alba Iulia was chosen as one of Romania's Destinations of Excellence under the EU's EDEN tourism project. The European Commission launched the EDEN Destinations of Excellence project in 2006 aimed to promote sustainable tourism and unknown or underdeveloped areas. Romania's Ministry of Communication chose Alba Iulia in 2016 to be the first smart city in Romania because it is one of the first cities to have a long-term development strategy, launched in 2002-2003 and implemented since then. It is also the city that attracted the highest rate of EU funds and started to develop a smart transport system (Vasilache 2016). This award brought to the city prominent technology companies, such as Siemens, Microsoft, Google and Orange (Moldovan 2019).

## 13 The model

- The municipality is the primary owner, decision-maker, and investor.
- A high level of protection of the entire site and buildings as monuments at the national level.
- Substantial limitations concerning the functions of the building defined by the local municipality: public and cultural functions, tourism.
- Emphasis on tourism and creative industries as a leveler to revitalize the city. Orientation towards modern technologies, interest in using big data, flirting with the concept of urban digitalization, presenting itself as "smart city".
- Project-based long-term developments along with a mid-term strategy. Building new projects on the previous successful ones, e.g., building a branding strategy on the city logo project.

- Financed mostly from EU funds. A desire to increase the share of the private financing which is low compared to the public investments.
- Top-down model, strong administrative and political leadership for a long period.
- Increasing the level of citizen participation, but the potential is still high. The stakeholders believe that inclusiveness should be increased. Controlled participation, a fair level of public empowerment.

## 14 Recommendation

In addition to moving public institutions into the buildings, community initiatives for the temporary reuse of various parts of the sites could be actively encouraged by the municipality – it would increase the attractiveness and the value of the place (Plevoets and Sowińska-Heim 2018). In general, this is understood in the context of elevating underdeveloped parts of the cities to generate a process of physical restoration, but in this case the method could be adapted to bring life into a highly protected and recently renovated district. The presence of the local communities would increase the touristic attractiveness of the Citadel since this would mean a shift from looking at heritage as a “thing to conserve and protect” to “heritage as a process,” an active creation of heritage, in a broader sense than just presenting historical monuments. To reach its vision and have a livable urban space which economically contributes to the city, the municipality should give up the control of defining the heritage values, and instead, open up the field for value creation for various, even marginalized groups by inviting them and offering partnership. Thus, they would be involved in the creation of the new Citadel understood as a functional site and become a part of its story (Plevoets and Sowińska-Heim 2018, 137).

## 15 List of interviewees

Cadinoiu, Radu – president and program manager of the Carolina Creative Quarter

Ciuta, Marius – archaeologist, police officer at Heritage Police, faculty at the University of Lucian Blaga, Sibiu

Mladin, Cristian – director of the Batthyaneum Library, initiator and former vice-president of the Carolina Creative Quarter

Moldovan, Nicolae – City manager of Alba Iulia between 2012 and 2019

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## Appendix 1

### Projects and funding sources between 2009 and 2019

#### **Projects financed from the Regional Operational Program 2007-2013**

Sources: PIDU 2009; *Strategia Integrată 2014-2023*; Regio, "Proiecte;" POR 2007-2013.

2009-2013: The total investments in the project "History has a future in the other capital of Romania" amount to EUR 44 670 000, the contribution from the European Regional Development Fund of the EU being EUR 35 878 000 for the 2007-2013 programming period ("Rehabilitation" 2016).

- 2009-2011: Rehabilitation of Historical Center East Route, South Route, and Northern Route, Alba Iulia Vauban-type Fortification - Access roads, exterior lighting and specific urban furniture. Source: Regional Operational Program, priority axis No. 5 – Touristic development and promotion. Total project value: 47 533 652.79 RON
- 2010-2011: "Breathe the air of history." Source: Regional Operational Program. Total budget: 1 033 249.95 RON; ROP funding: 665 850.04 RON, national budget: 94 002.36 RON; local budget: 23 500.59 RON

- 2010-2013: P6. Rebuilding and improving the access to the western of the Alba Carolina Fortress, Vauban Type Fortification, Alba Iulia Municipality. Source: Regional Operational Program. Total project value: 49 763 664.55 RON / 68 347 406.80 RON
- 2010-2015: Rehabilitation of Alba Iulia Historical Center, Vauban-type Fortification - Access roads, exterior lighting and urban furniture. Inner area. Source: Regional Operational Program. Total project value: 64 102 190.34 RON / 76 087 835.63 RON

### **Projects financed from the Regional Operational Program 2014-2020**

Source: "Lista proiectelor" 2019

- 2015: National Touristic Information and Promotion Center. Source: Regional Operational Program (National Touristic Development Center). Total project value: 486 752.94 RON.
- 2016-2020: Conservation, restauration, and sustainable valorization of the Palace of the Princes complex in Alba Iulia. Source: Regional Operational Program. Total project value: 21 724 540.94 RON; EU contribution: 21 065 662.54 RON
- 2019: Improvement of the educational infrastructure within the D-body and the H-body of the University 1 December 1918. Source: Regional Operational Program (Regional Development Agency). Total project value: over 24 million RON, of which 23.9 million RON is financed from the ROP. Project owner: University 1 December 1918.

### **Projects financed from other EU funds:**

- 2013-2015: Temporary Use as a Tool for Urban Regeneration. Source: URBACT, Regional Development Fund (TUTUR)
- 2013-2015: City Logo. Source: URBACT, Regional Development Fund (Docea, "City logo.")
- 2016-2019: Alba Iulia Smart City Pilot Project. Source: European Innovation Partnership on Smart Cities and Communities (EIP-SCC), European Commission. Total project value: c. 1 million EUR for 100 projects including projects dealing with the Citadel ("Alba Iulia Smart City").

### **Projects financed from national and local budget:**

- 2006-2007: Consolidation works, restauration of Gate I. Source: Budget of the Ministry of Culture, local budget. Total project value: 2 248 772.33 RON
- 2008-2009: Consolidation works, restauration of Gate II. Source: Budget of the Ministry of Culture, local budget. Total project value: 2 253 396.32 RON
- 2007-2009: Consolidation works, restauration of Gate III. Source: Budget of the Ministry of Culture, local budget. Total project value: 6 927 027.24 RON
- 2004-2009: Consolidation works, restauration of Gate V. Source: Budget of the Ministry of Culture, local budget. Total project value: 2 415 914.26 RON
- 2007-2009: Restauration and development of the Southern Gate of the Roman Fort. Source: budget of the Ministry of Tourism, local budget. Total project value: 1 770 271.34 RON.

## **Summary of revitalization plans in the documents PUZ 2013: 1.1-1.2 and RLU-PUG 2014**

The most important urban planning document explicitly dealing with the Citadel is the Zonal Urban Plan and the related Local Norms of Urbanism created in 2013 (PUZ 2013). According to Law 350/2001 on spatial and urban planning, the relevant PUZ must be aligned with the General Urban Plan, which is mandatory to create for all administrative units in Romania. In Alba Iulia, the revision of the PUG from 1996 went parallel with the elaboration of the PUZ, and it was accepted in 2014 (RLU-PUG 2014). Parallel with these, several Detailed Urban Plans were created from 2015 for various parts of the Citadel, which regulated specific construction activities in detail (for the complete list, see PUZ 2013, 1.1-1.2).

The RLU-PUG 2014 introduced a new zoning system in the city which was based on four factors: 1) the functions permitted in the zone; 2) the mode of construction (continuous, discontinuous, etc.), 3) the height of the buildings, and 4) the level of historical or natural protection. The Citadel located in the Central Protected zone was covered by two sub-zones: CP1 (the territory surrounded by the 18th-century fortifications) and CP2 (the zone of the fortifications), both protected historical monuments in the highest, A category. The RLU-PUG 2014 prescribed the conditions of any developments within this area.

The RLU-PUG 2014 defined which functions are permitted for the buildings in the Citadel: only representative public functions, administrative functions, museums, libraries, cultural centers, educational and cultural functions, student accommodation and other functions related to the university campus, galleries, shops selling religious objects, antiques, art, books, handicraft products, public catering and accommodation for tourists, fine art workshops, and organized and planted public spaces. For the zone of the fortifications, the following functions are permitted: planted public spaces, also with some specific uses, such as outdoor exhibitions, botanic gardens, landscape models; spaces for sport and cultural activities, information services, public sanitary facilities, arts, medieval crafts, exhibitions, shops, public catering such as clubs, pubs, confectioneries, bars, seasonal terraces, as well as travel agencies and guide services. The operation of the kindergarten or the already existing healthcare services are permitted conditionally, until their relocation. Outdoor activities are allowed in the zone of the fortifications in case they do not disturb the neighboring functions and do not damage the vegetation. There is also a list of prohibited functions, which is especially restrictive in the case of the fortification zone: everything is prohibited which is not connected to leisure or tourism.