

# Ageing Society, Ageing Culture?

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of the  
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European Capitals of Culture*

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## **'AGEING SOCIETY, AGEING CULTURE?'**

**(CAPTATIO BENEVOLENTIAE)**

The topic of the UNeECC 2012 Conference "*Ageing Society, Ageing Culture?*" was in concord with the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between the Generations. The title is based on implicit premises concerning a burning question of cultures: do modern forms of culture sustain patterns of social behavior that accommodate and respect aging? If they do, what are the initiatives worth observing and adopting? How can sensitivity, empathy and solidarity become part of a humanistic approach to understanding citizens with special needs and a particular status. With a quest for innovative solutions, our annual scientific conference set out to pursue the analyses of culture-related issues along three lines: (i) The effect of ageing on modern society, (ii) The effect of culture on ageing and (iii) The ECoC coming of age - Financial and cultural sustainability of the ECoC program.

The main objective of the European Year was to raise awareness about the role of senior citizens and their contribution to society. The intention of the UNeECC conference by adhering to this particular topic was to examine the role of culture in the ageing society.

As Commissioner László Andor states "It is undoubtedly true that the rapid ageing of Europe's population over the coming decades and the upcoming retirement of the 'baby-boom' generation present real challenges. Many people fear that life will be harder in the much older societies in which we will be living and that tensions or even open conflicts between the generations will be unavoidable." (The EU Contribution to Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations, 2012, Brussels)

The UNeECC conference examined how and to what extent the ageing society affects modern cultures. Ageing was examined from many different angles. We heard presentations about how ageing is addressed in higher education, how culture and ageing have reciprocal benefits, about the way of living in an ageing society, how people in senior homes should be treated, and even a topic concerning the effect of football on elderly people. Ageing was discussed as it is depicted in literature and we followed an interesting presentation on how ageing appears in German humor. Very special and useful presentations were delivered about the role and opportunities of senior people on the labor market. We witnessed research results about intergenerational learning and intergenerational solidarity as well.

Several presentations were devoted to the European Capital of Culture program which examined this very European phenomenon from a novel perspective as well. Research results were presented about the financial and cultural sustainability of the ECoC program in the very light of a process that is inevitably coming of age. In this respect, the multi-faceted nature of the ECoC program mixed with global and local perspectives were examined with an eye to changes, modifications and innovations that have been triggered by the accumulating experience about the impact cultural decisions on the lives of communities.

We wish to send our acknowledgements for the wonderful UNeECC 2012 Conference to the University of Maribor, to the Euro-Mediterranean University and to all conference participants.

We hope that the UNeECC Forum Volume 5 will provide a valuable resource for the researchers.

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# **OLD AGE, DEMENTIA AND EVERTON FOOTBALL CLUB**

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## *Abstract*

This paper describes Everton Football Club and its charity Everton in the Community (EitC) and their contribution to enriching the lives of dementia sufferers and their careers.

## *Dementia and Health*

Dementia is a serious and growing concern in the United Kingdom (HMSO 2012). Over 670,000 people in England have dementia. This number will double by 2042. Twenty per cent of people aged over 80 years have dementia, 5% of people aged 70-80 years have dementia and 2% of people aged 65-70 also suffer from dementia. It is predicted that 33% of people over 65 years of age will have dementia by the time they die. One million people have a close friend or family member with dementia and it is estimated that the annual loss to England's economy is approximately £19 billion. The impact of dementia is significant for economic and health care planning reasons and also because of the impact it has on people living with dementia, their family and professional careers.

Liverpool is a poor city and has received significant economic support from Europe via the European Social Fund and the European Regional Development Fund. Health is closely related to poverty and there is great discrepancy between the health of people in the more and less affluent parts of the city. In an attempt to overcome the poor health of its population the city designated the period 2010-2020 as the Decade of Health and Wellbeing and 2013 as the Year of Dementia. Both these initiatives recognised that there are two main approaches to dementia care, medical and life style interventions. This paper describes life style interventions promoted through the Everton Football Club brand and resources.

## *Everton Football Club and Everton in the Community Charity*

Everton Football Club is a Premiership Club (ie it plays in the top professional league in England and Wales). The club was founded in 1878 and was a founder member of the Football League in 1888. It has been

in the top league for 108 years which is an English record. The club has been League Champions on 9 occasions, has won the Football Association Cup on 5 occasions, the European Cup Winners' Cup once, and, in the last 6 seasons has been continuously placed in the top 8 clubs in the Premiership. It has a Merseyside fan base of 198,000 and average attendances in excess of 30,000 fans.

The Club has its own charity called Everton in the Community which celebrates its 25th Anniversary during the 2012-13 season. The 2010-11 turnover was £1.6m. The charity is financially independent of the football club. The club has a long history of community involvement and has always been owned by Liverpool and Merseyside-based entrepreneurs. The charity operates through use of the Everton FC brand, the players (current and former), resources and facilities, the commitment of the fans, and the overall ethos epitomised in the slogan Nil Satis Nisi Optimum (nothing but the best is good enough).

The charity is widely acclaimed and has won countless local, regional, national and international awards for its work. It is the foremost and most successful sporting charity in the United Kingdom. In recent years it has won the European Sport Industry Award for the Best Community Scheme and the European Stadium Award for the Best Community Scheme.

### *Football's Tainted Image*

Whilst the charitable activities of Everton in the Community long pre-date the recent tarnishing of the image of professional footballers in the United Kingdom, there is no doubt that the charitable activities engaged in by Premiership (and other professional ) football clubs is partly stimulated by an attempt to negate their tainted image. This is a period in which the income of professional footballers places them regularly in the Sunday Times Newspaper's Rich List and in which the retail extravagances of footballers' wives and girlfriends (WAGS) and the alleged individual excesses of players such as the former Manchester City player Mario Balotelli take the headlines. The racism charges against the former England and Chelsea captain, John Terry, and Liverpool's popular Uruguayan striker, Luis Suarez, plus the historic incidences of hooliganism by the fans mean that the Premiership charities have an important role in the public redemption of the reputations of professional football.

## *Activities of Everton in the Community*

Everton in the Community has 6 strands of activity, Social Inclusion; Health, Sport and Physical Activity; Equality and Diversity; Education; Community Engagement and Fundraising. Each strand is championed by a first team Player Ambassador.

### *Social Inclusion*

EitC runs a large number of social inclusion projects to encourage community cohesion and inspire individuals to make positive life changes. The schemes include Kickz, Positive Futures, the Prince's Trust and Safe Hands. All have the same aim which is to steer young people away from anti-social behaviour into education and employment, to help them become socially mobile. Kickz is run in conjunction with Merseyside Police and Liverpool FC and takes place in three of the more deprived parts of Liverpool with high levels of gangs, gun and knife crime and anti-social behaviour. EitC runs football and other activities to encourage children to develop their potential.

### *Health, Sport and Physical Activity*

This strand aims to promote positive lifestyle choices among some of the most hard-to-reach groups in Liverpool. The ethos behind the health strand is to bring activity to the community and to use the Everton FC stadium Goodison Park as an inspirational venue. Examples of these programmes include Imagine Your Goals, a programme for people with mental health problems and Inside Right a programme for former military personnel with mental health and reintegration into society problems.

Inside Right: working with former military personnel with mental health and social reintegration problems



In addition to offering sport and health opportunities the charity also delivers a programme to help residents back into employment. One scheme called Everton 4 Employment is funded by the New Football Pools, the Premier League and the Department for Work & Pensions. The course provides a 10 week course at the stadium where the participants are introduced to activities preparing them for employment as well as offering 2 week work placements with one of 30 employers.

*Equality and Diversity*

This strand is dedicated to providing programmes that focus on inclusion for everybody regardless of ability, race, sex, background or age. The disability programme engages with over 17,000 disabled participants, supports 26 football teams and has 8 international players. The programme offers competitive football opportunities for a range of different disabilities including deaf, blind and wheelchair teams. In addition EitC offers Royal Blue Bingo activities for residents of old people's homes and supports football for the homeless which aims to improve the lives of homeless people. This nationwide programme supports over 90 homeless women at 5 Premiership Clubs including Everton and at the 2012 Homeless World Cup in Mexico, 2 of the Everton team represented England.

## *Education*

Education is high on the agenda of EitC. The charity offers people the chance to access educational and training opportunities to suit their learning needs and improve their futures. A range of largely vocational programmes is offered including a BTEC National Diploma in Sport at local sports colleges for students wishing to enter further education. In 2012 EitC opened a Free School, the first of its kind in the UK, which focussed on providing specialised support for vulnerable children between the ages of 14 and 19 years.

## *Community Engagement*

Local community engagement and support is at the heart of the work of EitC. This involves organising free community events, providing volunteers to help out locally, offering young people the chance to learn life skills, and events to raise money to help EitC and other charities to continue their work. Player appearances and the donation of signed footballs and shirts also provide ways of helping community groups raise money. EitC also fund raises by encouraging sponsored activities such as climbing Kilimanjaro, walking the Inca Trail, taking place in a Zip Slide across the stadium, taking part in the Liverpool Marathon and the annual Santa Dash through the city of Liverpool (in BLUE Santa clothing!).

## *The 'Everton in the Community' Dementia Project*

### *Antecedents*

It was in the context of the successful EitC charity that the dementia project was formulated. The project built upon the author's personal and professional experiences. First was the awareness of the challenges for people with dementia and for their carers. This was gained during the period when his mother was progressing through the various stages of dementia and he, his wife and father were caring for her, initially at home and then, later as visitors to a residential nursing home. A second link was through being a life-long supporter of Everton Football Club, an affiliation inherited from his father. A third link developed as a result of a professional relationship with the current Chief Executive of EitC whilst she was Chief Executive of a School Trust which was in partnership with Liverpool Hope University and whilst the author was Pro-Vice-Chancellor External Relations and Widening Participation. A fourth influence was the development at Hope University of a link between its Social Work Department and Personal Services Society (PSS), a major and long established Liverpool charity which had an exper-

tise in dementia. This partnership led to a joint week-long dementia awareness conference (Hope and Understanding) attended by over 700 delegates and the involvement of Liverpool Hope and PSS in both the City of Liverpool's Decade of Health and Wellbeing 2010-2020 and the designation of 2013 as the Year of Dementia. In addition it led to a joint proposal for the establishment of a Health, Care and Science Centre at the University. Finally the author had been appointed as a Trustee of the EitC charity and so had access to the human and physical resources of the football club.

Whilst my mother's experience in the nursing home was favourable, I became aware that my mother and father and their contemporaries spent much of their time reminiscing and the subject of their reminiscences was almost always the Second World War. This depressed me. I was aware that the other major element in their lives was football and specifically my father's life long support of Everton Football Club. The idea came to me that if we could assemble a selection of Everton memorabilia it could be used to stimulate memory and more important discussion and feelings of goodwill amongst dementia sufferers.

Once the idea was articulated a number of partners quickly expressed an interest in developing the Everton Dementia Project. Two local National Health Partnerships and Trusts (MerseyCare and The Five Boroughs NHS Partnership) had attended the conference; the Mersey Care Homes Association wished to participate; a former NHS Dementia national leader, Ruth Eley, brought both her professional expertise and networks as well as her commitment to Dementia patients and carers developed via her company Life Story Network; Caring Memories run by Chris Wilkins which specialises in personalised Memory Books for people with Dementia was contacted; a number of parts of Everton FC, the Everton Former Players Foundation and the Everton FC Heritage Society were approached and invited to contribute to the project. Finally the Sporting Memories Network CIC was instrumental in helping to develop the sporting reminiscence resources and expertise that are utilised in the Pass on the Memories dementia programme, following their pioneering work in this field. The Sporting Memories Network CIC work closely with Alzheimer Scotland, the Scotland-based charity who were instrumental in developing football-based reminiscence interventions for people with dementia in partnership with the Scottish Football Museum following research by Glasgow Caledonian University (Schofield & Tolson 2010).

## Reminiscing with leather boots and football at Goodison Park



### *Memory Bag*

A Working Group was established which met monthly with the expertise of the members ranging from health care professionals, to football professionals, publishers and academics. Quite rapidly the group focussed on the preparation of an Everton Memory Bag. This comprised physical memorabilia including post-war leather footballs, leather football boots, studs, 'dubbin', rattles, old-fashioned shirts, scarves, shin-pads, tickets, programmes, newspapers, medals, international caps (belonging to the former Everton and England international Alan Ball) and bus tickets and models of the buses used to travel to matches.

## Dementia patient with leather football at Goodison Park



Much of the material was obtained by Dr John Rowlands of the Everton FC Heritage Society, who is a member of a team of researchers from Keele, Manchester and Liverpool Hope Universities studying the effect of head injuries in professional football. The materials were obtained either from his own collection or from the Everton FC Shop or from eBay.

### *Photo Cards*

It was then agreed to provide a set of photo and information cards comprising glossy laminated photographs of legendary Everton players on one side with brief biographical notes, written by Tony Heslop and John Rowlands, on the reverse. These could be used to stimulate conversation. The choice of players was made by Tony Heslop and John Rowlands of the Heritage Society and originally included 69 players. This was eventually reduced to 66 which were produced to a template and design created by Sporting Memories Network CIC specifically for reminiscence activities.

## CD Memories of Everton Legends



A third component of the Dementia package was an audio CD entitled Memories of Everton Legends. The CD was produced by a Liverpool Hope University MA student and freelance multimedia journalist, Brian Plumridge. The CD comprised 4 traditional Everton songs sung on the terraces of Goodison Park 'It's a Grand Old Team', 'Forever Everton', 'Z Cars' and 'All Together Now'. These were all contributed free of charge by the composers, performers and copyright holders. In addition to the musical content were interviews with former football heroes Dixie Dean, Dave Hickson, Brian Labone, Alex Young, Alan Ball, Howard Kendall, Graeme Sharp, Neville Southall and Joe Royle. These players were included on the basis of advice from the Everton Heritage Society as well as availability from the BBC Radio Merseyside archive. Excerpts from Radio Merseyside commentaries on some of the most important matches in which Everton played over the last 60 years including FA Cup Finals and the European Cup Winners Cup Final were also interspersed with interviews with the former players. The project team was fortunate that Tony Heslop is married to Radio Merseyside producer Angela Heslop and she facilitated the use of the audio clips as well as the permission of the BBC and its presenters Alan Jackson and Mike Hughes, again at no cost to the project.

Once the resources had been developed the project was ready to commence. Working with funders MerseyCare and also a small group nominated by the Liverpool Care Home Association a number of dementia sufferers and their carers were identified and invited to a series of weekly meetings held at Goodison Park. The sessions were managed by EitC's Henry Mooney and supported by MerseyCare and Liverpool Care Home Association staff, volunteers from EitC and placement students from local universities and colleges. All partners in the project

were trained in the delivery of football based reminiscence activities by the Sporting Memories Network CIC, utilising their resources, knowledge and delivery guides. In addition, the resources and expertise of Ruth Eley from Life Story Network were used.

The weekly programme started with chair-based exercises that brought the group to life and led by a member of the Everton Football Club training team. This was followed by a range of activities including the use of the memory bag, photos and CD and a stadium tour (where they met the Everton and England international defender Phil Jagielka).

Meeting current England international Phil Jagielka during a stadium tour of Goodison Park



The group also plan visits to the Liverpool Football Club Museum and Anfield Stadium, to local landmarks, the Liverpool Alzheimers Centre and the local Gwladys Street Primary School to participate in its Christmas festivities. All activities are evaluated by a Liverpool Hope University volunteer using standard MerseyCare techniques and new ones specific to sporting memories which are being developed.

The project will be formally launched at a press conference at Goodison Park in January 2013 which will be hosted by former Everton star and local radio celebrity Graham Sharp and attended by the dementia patients and their carers. In addition, media including BBC North West

and Granada Television plus Radio Merseyside and the Liverpool Echo newspaper and national press coverage are expected.

Launch of the Everton dementia project with Graeme Sharp former Everton Scottish international



### *Other Dementia and Arts Projects*

It should be noted that creative, activity based approaches to the treatment of people with dementia are receiving considerable attention on Merseyside as alternatives to the medical model of treatment. Examples include the National Museums Liverpool House of Memories project, Chaturangan's Pancham project, The Reader Organisation's Get into Reading project and Collective Encounters Theatre for Social Change's Dementia Project. The House of Memories project uses the resources and archives and staff of the new Museum of Liverpool Life to stimulate, record and care for people's memories. Participants are encouraged to explore and connect histories, to examine objects and memorabilia and to engage in relevant and meaningful social interchange. Weekly visits by dementia patients, their families and carers to the museum have led to a considerable increase in happiness and

contentment. Chaturangan, a Merseyside-based South Asian Dance Company, delivers participatory, culturally diverse (Indian, Chinese and African) dance and music programmes in hospices, care homes and temples. In addition to running programmes such as Growing Old Disgracefully they also organise conferences such as Memory on the links between dementia and dance which brings health and dance professionals together to share good practice. The Reader Organisation aims to encourage reading for pleasure amongst all groups but especially including older patients in care homes, hospitals, day centres, sheltered housing, community centres, prisons, mental health drop-in centres, hostels and refugee centres. They train project workers and volunteers to organise and lead groups of older people in weekly story and poetry readings. They and numerous other groups in Liverpool also encourage poetry writing and the stimulus of memory in dementia patients through story telling. Collective Encounters Theatre Company uses the medium of drama and performance to stimulate memory of experiences but also to develop role-plays which allow carers to articulate and share their understanding of problems and solutions in caring for people with dementia. This is then used for staff training in the care sector.

### *The Future*

Merseycare has committed to funding another programme in Liverpool and negotiations are underway with the Five Boroughs Partnership to extend the programme to Greater Merseyside. The early indications are that the project is meeting its objectives and engaging with predominantly (but not exclusively) older men suffering from dementia. It is planned to extend the programme to include other football clubs (such as Liverpool, Tranmere Rovers and Southport ) using the Everton model. There is little doubt that demand for such activities as an alternative to medical or passive sedentary approaches to dementia care will grow and is as effective.

### *Conclusion*

Dementia is a permanent and growing social and health care problem. Most dementia sufferers eventually end up in care homes. Care homes are poorly funded and some have poor reputations.

The treatment of dementia sufferers often involves medical interventions including drug therapy which often induces a reduction in activity and increased anxiety. As a consequence of the therapy, the poor funding and, sometimes, poor training and exploitation of staff, many nursing homes default to the use of passive television watching to manage

their patients. The use of more active and engaging activity is a different, and, to many, preferable, approach to the treatment of dementia.

Many elderly men and women with dementia were engaged in the Second World War and spend much of their time reminiscing about their wartime experiences, watching war films or listening to wartime music. Their other major lifelong interest is football. This is particularly the case in a soccer-mad city such as Liverpool. Most have an affiliation to a particular club and for many their lives revolve around supporting their club. This provides football clubs with the opportunity to use their brand to provide memories as a stimulus for dementia patients. This is particularly the case for clubs with a long commitment and experience of community engagement such as Everton.

In the current economic recession, many arts and cultural organisations are struggling to attract funding to allow them to continue practising and performing. Consequently many are chasing grants, many of which are of dubious relevance to the aims and missions of the organisations. As there is a movement towards the activity-based treatment of dementia patients, these arts and cultural organisations are offered a viable and mission-related opportunity to use their art form and resources to provide a stimulus and engagement for dementia sufferers and their carers. Whether the art is music, dance, drama or writing and whether the cultural organisation is a museum or a football club, they have a great opportunity to use their skills and resources and the communities' goodwill towards them to enhance the life experience of dementia sufferers, one of the quickest growing groups requiring care in the early decades of the 21st century.

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# AGE MANAGEMENT AS A STRATEGIC TOOL FOR AN ELASTIC ORGANISATION

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## 1. Introduction

According to the EU's new developmental strategy, Europe 2020, three main priorities should steer the Union in the direction of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. These are: smart growth – addressing the development of an economy based on knowledge and innovation; sustainable growth – promoting a more resource-efficient, greener and more competitive economy; inclusive growth – fostering a high-employment economy delivering economic, social and territorial cohesion. In addition to the targets defined, a measure was introduced to monitor how the plan is being fulfilled up to the 2020 deadline – one directly addressing the employment issue:

*The employment rate of the population aged 20-64 should be increased from the current 69% to at least 75%, including the greater involvement of women, older workers and the better integration of migrants in the workforce.<sup>1</sup>*

To achieve this will demand a huge effort from the governments of EU member states to devise suitable policies. Firstly, however, the will-power and the skills of these interest groups (women, older workers and migrants) must be activated. A major problem for the modern world is the growth of mismatches between supply and demand in the labour market, which is connected to some 'slippage' factor between the product of professional education and the speed of technological progress and globalisation. The most negative result is the growth of the competence gap. This weakens the potential competitiveness and innovativeness of organisations directly, whilst indirectly – it has adverse effects on social development and well-being in general.

This paper aims is to add some comments to the on-going debate on the issue of age parameters on the labour market – viewed through what we might term the 'prism' of the inadequate representation of older workers. It also touches on the problem of barriers to inter-generational cooperation within companies. The main question to be addressed is; How can the integration of different age-groups in the labour market be facilitated? We suggest the conceptual framework of

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<sup>1</sup> European Commission (2010):10

an 'elastic' organisation as a useful paradigm which can help in coping with negative stereotypes related to the ageing of the labour-force and in enhancing efforts to innovate.

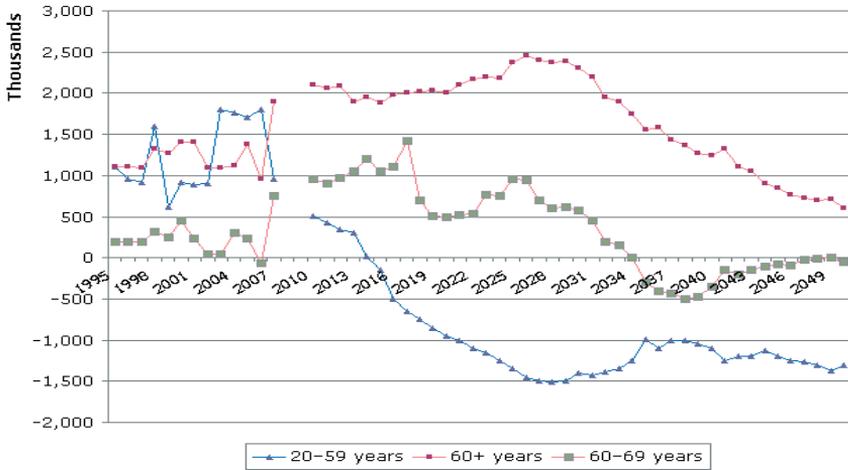
## *2. Competence gap in organisations*

### *2.1. Demography – the Coming of the Silver Economy*

As already mentioned, the highly visible and significant worldwide imbalance in the labour market is basically the result of changes in the demand for labour which are faster than the current supply can cope with – can adapt to. Due to technological progress, vocational and professional education is a long-term process and the period of time needed to enter the job market for young people is very often inconveniently protracted. Any competence gap appearing in the supply-side of the labour market should be covered by continuous Life-Long Learning on the part of individual employees and by their readiness to re-qualify. The problem, repeatedly revealed in surveys, is forecast to be much more significant in the years to come when the effect of an ageing labour-force will be more evident (see Fig 1.).

Looking at the current age structure of the labour-force in Europe, we can see that the so-called 'Baby Boomer' generation (born in the 1950s and 1960s) has stabilised the labour market supply up to the present. However, these people are now (from 2011 onwards) starting to retire, and this will lead to a steady decline in the working-age (15-64) population. The negative results of the recent economic downturn prevented the earlier predicted rise in the EU labour market from developing. This – in the form of a significant shortage of labour – now seems likely to appear from 2018 (see Fig. 1) especially in groups of highly skilled workers, whilst the same pattern with semi-skilled workers will probably appear even earlier. For those reasons, the need to replace the labour supply is more urgent than ever, and the trend illustrated (based on data from 2009) is, in fact, more dramatic. The competence gap will grow very rapidly and pose the urgent question of how this is to be bridged. One reaction must be to retain the older workforce on the market as long as possible.

Fig. 1 Demographic trend projection of labour supply (EU-27 to 2049)<sup>2</sup>



\* Projection based on data from EC, 2009.

The concept of the “silver economy”, originally defined as a new element of the commodities market dedicated to meeting the needs of older consumers, can also be seen as a current challenge for the labour market and for global socio-economic policy. The problem of the ‘greying of Europe’ had already been mentioned in 2004 in the EU’s Report ‘Facing the challenge: The Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Employment’<sup>3</sup>, as leading to a considerable increase in spending on pensions. This would inevitably increase the pressure on public expenditure, and so it was expected that:

- retirement age would be raised from current levels,
- access to early retirement schemes would be further curtailed and
- greater incentives would appear for older workers to remain in the labour market.

All of this would obviously lead to a further ageing of the workforce.

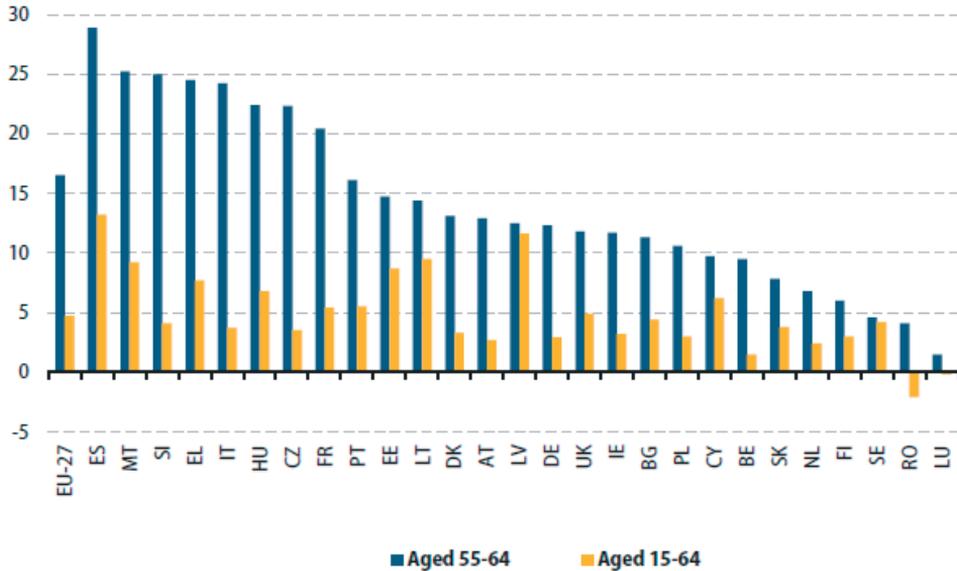
Those predictions have already started to be confirmed, and, due to this, the European Parliament and Council nominated the year 2012 as ‘European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations’. A serious ageing of the labour-force will be especially visible in the case

<sup>2</sup> European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (2010):9.

<sup>3</sup> Kok High Level Expert Group (2004).

of Spain, but also in Malta, Slovenia, Greece, Italy, Hungary, the Czech Republic. and France (see Fig.2).

Fig. 2 Changes in the employment rate: 2010-2060, EU-27<sup>4</sup>



A positive value indicates that the employment rate is projected to increase.

\*% points difference between actual rate for 2010 and forecast for 2060

The problem affects both the 'old' (EU-15) states, as well as the 12 'new' (largely ex-Socialist) members, but probably not in the same way. The different socio-economic conditions of the second half of the 20th century shaped the behaviour patterns of employees. Active ageing actually means creating objectives and subjective opportunities for employees to decide on staying in the labour market for a longer period. This will be made easier in more than one way. There will be new regulations in place in as part of the Employment Law concerning retirement age. This is becoming common practice among EU countries – for example, in Poland the new retirement age is 67 for both men and women. There should also be improvements in working circumstances to match the aspirations and needs of older employees. Many will wish to be professionally active as long as possible – but according to their own decision – and to use their own best efforts to achieve this. However, to do this, they also need adequate institutional and organisational help and support which will discourage any temptation to withdraw prematurely from work. Some countries – for example, in Scandinavia

<sup>4</sup> Eurostat (2011):41

– introduced some years ago special labour market solutions. (Denmark, for example elaborated an interesting model of ‘flexicurity’<sup>5</sup>) and they now rate highest in all EU indices relating to older employees – although they also face the same age-related problem with future labour shortages (see Fig.2).

## 2.2 Attitudes to retiring in the 50+ age group (EU-12)

It is hard to stay active in the labour market when, in reality, older workers are not welcome in organisations due to prejudice concerning competence gaps. Moreover, employers expect and demand that older employees will be more open to flexible forms of working, to innovation and technology, although the need to be more flexible is not the only issue faced by those working into their later years. It should, of course, be obvious to employers that, very often, it is a totally new experience for older workers who, in the past, had permanent, indefinite job contracts and who had started work in a significantly less competitive world. Because of this, they tend to interpret new flexible working offers (short-term contracts, self-employment, teleworking) as a threat rather than as a benefit for both employee and employer.

*That was in the case of the Baby Boomers generation of new EU member countries (EU-12), who were starting their careers in the days of socialism, where, at least formally, everyone had a job guaranteed by the state, although often this work made no economic sense and usually brought little satisfaction. Socialism/Communism’s real (not simple official propaganda-based) organisational culture depended on employees’ passivity rather than activity. It reflected the popular Russian proverb: “the more quietly you ride, the farther you go” illustrating the pragmatic strategy of the ‘low profile’: to be invisible at work and to escape home as quickly as possible. In Poland there was a similar saying, expressing what a ‘good worker’ should be in the eyes of the employer (the state representative) as: “passive, mediocre – but loyal”. Ambitious, critically minded and creative workers were seen as problematic at best – unstable, perhaps even a security risk. This partly explains why citizens of the new EU member-states protest strongly against the introduction of new retirement regulations.*

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<sup>5</sup> Flexicurity is a model of the labour market which is ‘flexible’ and ‘secure’ at the same time – for both employees and employers. Employers do not avoid recruiting by using short-term contracts, and so the unemployment rate is kept relatively low, but people during a short period of unemployment are motivated by a government support system to update or change their competences and to actively look for a new job.

### *2.3. Generational misunderstandings and the exclusion of older workers from the talent pool*

On the labour market there are always employees of different ages, with differing skills, experience and mind-set. Pedagogy and Psychology show that work-related attitudes are determined in the period when the employee is growing up; they fluctuate only slightly in later years. Hence, the meeting of representatives of as many as four generations in the labour market at the beginning of the twenty-first century, has been seen as a kind of unique socio-economic phenomenon and also as a challenge for an organisation's Human Resource Management. The concept of the difficult coexistence of four generations was popularised for many years in Western publications – mainly in the USA. Special labels were introduced to characterise the generations: Generation Y, Generation X, Baby Boomers, Traditionalists (or Veterans).

Our comment would be that these labels, defined on the basis of observation at work, were reporting on attitudes in US society and cannot be automatically used to describe and analyse workers' behaviour in other – even culturally similar – countries without studying the different socio-economic conditions of the last century. We have to remember that the labour market is only one part of the whole: national or regional markets and general economic and political conditions create a framework for people's behaviour at work. For this reason categorising different generations at work must refer to the circumstances under which attitudes were developed during the lifetime of that generation. (According to psychology, this usually comes at the time of the first systematic work experience of the individual). For the new EU member countries (EU-12), as we know, such 'developmental circumstances' were completely different in comparison to the reality of the old EU states (EU-15). A short description of particular 'work-generations', historically revised in relation to Poland, is given below in Table 1.

Table 1: Four 'Work-generations' and their work-related mentality<sup>6</sup>

| <i>Generation</i>      | <i>Date of birth</i> | <i>Work – related mentality</i>   |
|------------------------|----------------------|---|
| <i>Traditionalists</i> | Before 1945          | Generation leaving the labour market; they value work ethic, are familiar with labour standards, strongly tied to values of family and private life. Poland: generation mostly out of the labour market. (Under Socialism labour was heavily exploited and had to end active working life early for health reasons. Some continued in private enterprises developed from some craft activity (permitted in Poland under socialism)  |
| <i>Baby Boomers</i>    | 1946- 1964           | <p>Generation cultivates work ethic; committed and loyal to the organisation; values promotion based on progressively acquired experience during time spent at company; rarely speaks foreign languages; no IT skills and afraid to learn them.</p> <p>Poland: generation 'burdened' with the memory of socialist economic reality; not identifying with the socialistic work system but treating organisational 'common property' as belonging to nobody. Often willing to withdraw from labour market; majority not fully adapted after transition to new capitalist order and globalisation.</p> |

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<sup>6</sup> Source: own on basis of literature

*Generation X*    1965 – 1979    Dominant group in the labour market; their parents worked whilst they grew up and so they value independence, are willing to work hard but also care about non-working life and the balance between the two.

Poland: the generation which survived the shock of the transition from 1989; difficult adaptation, with fear of losing job and often with workaholic tendency; do not understand modern call for work/life balance and often pay price in form of health and stress-related problems. Unhappy at rapid promotion of younger colleagues, reluctant to share own (slowly gained) professional experience.

*Generation Y*    After 1980    Now entering labour market; so-called digital generation since they grew up with the development of IT and globalisation. Oriented on 'life/work balance' and individual career path; aware of own values and skills and wanting quick promotion; ready for sharp competition. Moved by calculation in the choice of organisation; value possibilities of self-realisation at job and travelling during job.

Poland: first generation without 'socialist complexes'; high aspiration for fast global career, determined to continue learning; often migrates from Poland and does not return. Due to long, intensive learning (Poland has one of top tertiary education indices in EU) little practical experience; starts first job prepared only theoretically.

The youngest EU generation (Y) of the EU-12, with a similar socio – economic history to their colleagues from EU-15 (they all grew up in a capitalist world, even if their countries were at different stages of development of a capitalist economy); well adapted to the rules of the global corporations, especially when they are located abroad. However, there is a different situation in the internal labour markets of the EU-12. Here, representatives of Y often do not understand the historical reasons for the 'too serious' or ambivalent work attitudes of older workers. More dangerous is, however, that Y (usually rightly) evaluates

the professional competences of generation X and of Baby Boomers as of little use – obsolete. For this reason, Y do not like to cooperate with them, often ignore the opinions of their elders and do not value the experience gained within the sector or in a organisation. This is a primary source of intergenerational conflict at work. From the other side, older workers do not value, and even fear, the fast-track careers of young people, do not understand their modern work techniques based on IT and criticise their 'too light' attitude to work and their assertiveness at work. The conflict is more sharp when Y workers are appointed superiors over Baby Boomers or X; this happens frequently since employers faced with serious market competition look to hire 'young wolves'. They are usually recruited as graduates from the best universities and afterwards are heavily exploited by offering them responsible tasks. Young people, however, are usually emotionally unprepared for heavy responsibility, and, without the support of experienced co-workers, often make serious mistakes at work and suffer because of the high level of stress. Organisational policy to 'load the young' is euphemistically called the battle for talent'. Many surveys and analyses are conducted on this with the common complaint that there is "insufficient talent on the market"<sup>7</sup>. This (apart from the obvious discrimination factor) is, in the longer perspective bad for organisations since, at the very least, it:

- overlooks an unknown amount of undiscovered talent;
- does not recognise the potential of already employed workers and exposes the company to unnecessary recruitment costs;
- creates an organisational culture based on internal conflict instead of co-operation.

Due to this, the successful employment of older workers requires a general shift in attitudes to the ageing workforce, focusing on intergenerational cooperation, the exchange of competences and promotion of the concept of balance between work and life. Representatives of trade unions in the EU's Western as well Central and Eastern countries, commonly criticise the efforts of employers to prioritise flexibility of employment conditions at the expense of workers' social security. There is a growing requirement to develop training programmes with an ageing population in mind, and to develop and implement support programmes for enterprises, especially SMEs, to encourage them to employ older workers. In our opinion, however, these approaches are all too fragmented. Activities guided only by social calls will probably remain only moderately successful in pragmatically oriented business surroundings. The new approach should be more open and wider at

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<sup>7</sup> World Economic Forum (2011).

the same time. Without a new business strategy for organisations to confront the ageing of their work-force it is hard to plan the sustainable development of global society.

### 3. Age Management

*The differences investigated between work generations imply that organisations should use the potential of the different mentality and skills of different generations to produce synergy from complementary competences. Managers must learn to distinguish between generational priorities in work attitudes, work style and career goals to achieve the goal of intergenerational cooperation. An improved, 'tailor-made' incentive system will probably minimize many negative work phenomena such as too little involvement, premature withdrawal from the labour market, absenteeism, high turnover, bullying etc. The goal is clear: to create conditions for the transfer of organisational and professional knowledge and to integrate employees for the good of the company. This will benefit everyone – not only in increasing customer satisfaction and employee morale, but also in developing experience and skills in the different age categories. This, in turn, gives the opportunity not only to improve the company's productivity in general, but also to stimulate innovation in the organisation.*

Such an approach is a clear example of 'Age Management'(AM). Age management is a relatively new issue in the EU, especially in the new member states, and the concept focuses on identifying the motivational tools preferred by different and on the problematic area of intergenerational cooperation. It is still difficult for individual companies to access information about practical approaches to the problem, even though employers are aware that, in future, older people will play a more important role in the labour market.

In an earlier publication we included AM as a "proactive HR strategy" – an especially recommended approach in times of economic crisis and the post-crisis period. We differentiated it from the common reactive approaches<sup>8</sup> which tend to have little or no value, starting with some appropriate activity (diagnosed on basis of a careful analysis of signals from currently available data) before it is too late to make the best choice in business behaviour. The ageing of the workforce is well documented, and this should stimulate the use of proactive strategies by corporate HRM. The motivation behind such an approach is to retain expertise and ensure the transfer of older workers' knowledge and experience to

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<sup>8</sup> Matuska (2011): 45-46. Reactive behaviour means acting according to the S:R formula (Stimulus-Reaction) where the subject is in a passive mode and can only adjust to something which has already happened. Proactive behavior, on the other hand, means starting to act before having to adjust.

the younger generation. In SMEs (Small and Medium-sized Enterprises) however, where companies often do not have the financial resources to invest in adapting the workplace or offering special employee benefits, young employees continue to be preferred. Nevertheless, regardless of the size of the company, it is crucial to understand that different work generations can offer mutually complementary types of organisational competence. Older employees can offer mentoring support for younger colleagues, share professional knowledge collected over a long period, experience, introduce their own client base and other useful information. The most important feature is, however, that maintaining a mutually satisfactory relationship (rather than being in conflict) they demonstrate a model pattern of behaviour and work attitude: accuracy, perseverance, the ability to organise themselves, ways to resolve personal problems, effective communication and, primarily, loyalty to the organisation and respect for the work of others. From the other side, younger employees can explain to older colleagues how to use modern IT technology, how to apply new marketing tools, to collect useful data from the Internet and to use social networks. They can also bring new energy and enthusiasm to the organisation. Fruitful cooperation will probably not only bring satisfaction to all company members, but will also create opportunities to activate the “bomb” of innovative ideas for the organization.

#### *4. An Elastic Organisation and Age Management*

Long-lasting current economic crises have inspired intensive efforts to formulate theoretical models of an organisation sufficiently resistant to market shocks. One of such proposals is the new concept of an “elastic organisation”, a model described in 2012 by Nicholas Vitalari and Haydn Shaughnessy in their book entitled “The Elastic Enterprise: The New Manifesto for Business Revolution”. The content of the book focuses on companies which have grown and thrived, despite unpredictable economic conditions. Corporate business development strategy is here based on self-management, self-organising and the concept of open ecosystems which are very flexible and can grow without high investment costs. Examples cited include organisations such as Apple and Amazon, operating on extreme scale, typically with many thousands of business partners and by the intensive use of IT channels. Unlike traditional business strategy, which the authors call ‘episodic’ – where organisational plans are usually prepared as a one-year forecast whilst elastic enterprises use a “continuous, active approach” to their business strategy. This allows them to identify precisely current business conditions and to select the best possible business opportunity in real time. The authors comment:

*An active strategy is defined by the 'presence of active strategic portfolio management, a continuous creation of new strategic options, and knowing when to go ahead or hold back.'*<sup>9</sup>

An elastic organisation seems to act similarly to the forms of work organisation termed High Performance Work Systems (HPWS). The main feature of HPWS is that it requires a commitment to innovation at all levels of the workforce, the promotion of project management as a regular work method and the use of a wide definition of talent in HR recruitment and developmental processes. HPWS can be characterised as: "Much more inclusive, 'democratic' and incremental, rather than elitist, imposed and radical"<sup>10</sup>.

This description suggests that, to achieve innovation in a company, it is necessary to facilitate intergenerational cooperation within an organization.

In our view, the psychological rationale for favouring organisational elasticity is based on two core business competences: creativity and flexibility, insofar as they can be embodied in the way of thinking and acting of all managers and staff. On this basis we can also suggest of the distinctive attributes of an 'elastic organisation', such as:

*recruiting new employees regardless of age; promoting employees regardless of age; widely using flexible forms of employment; keeping contact with former employees, including retired people; implementing internal coaching and mentoring as regular training tools and working with project management methodology.*

Let us assume that an elastic organisation concept promotes age management as an important part of the whole HRM system in a company and proposes to offer a promising framework for developing the innovative organisational culture. However, it requires managers to formulate a long-term business perspective by using proactive (not- reactive) strategic approach to making business. Perceived by all stakeholders, age-related benefits will help to promote major co-operation in an organisation instead of disruptive rivalry and non-loyalty. The positive examples from a pragmatically oriented organisational perspective may will give a further for a faster revision of social stereotypes connected with ageing and work.

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<sup>9</sup> Vitalari & Shaughnessy ( 2012).

<sup>10</sup> Tether et al. (2005):76.

## *5. Conclusions*

Currently, an imbalance between the skills and competences of employees and the needs of employers is evident – an imbalance which is expected to worsen in the near future. This needs to be counterbalanced by introducing new social policy and HRM practices addressing the issue of ageing and work. The problem needs to be solved urgently – and especially by the new member-states of the EU. The negative demographic trend and the heavy emigration of skilled workers from these regions will rapidly increase staff shortages in their domestic labour markets. The mutual exchange of competences between different work generations will remain a problem as long as older employees are not well enough supported to be professionally active for the longer term. As a result, the demographic pressure on the labour market will continue and corporate competitiveness will be at risk. One prospective organisational idea might well be to promote the model of an elastic organisation which enables all work generations to cooperate effectively in the framework of innovatively oriented and pro-active business strategy. This framework of elasticity can help companies to understand that, in offering work opportunities to older people, they will first of all be promoting their own benefit.

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# OLDER PEOPLE AND THE LABOUR MARKET

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## *Introduction*

The aim of the paper is to research and analyse issues relating to older people in the labour market. In ageing societies where the ratio of people actually working to those in retirement is in decline, the total capacity of the labour force is needed.

Older workers may be happy to work longer if they can enjoy more flexible working arrangements, healthy workplaces, lifelong learning, retirement schemes and no age-discrimination. Discrimination on the basis of age is one of the least acknowledged barriers to workforce participation, but it interacts with other problems such as long-term unemployment and the practice of private recruitment agencies who hire staff according to age rather than their skills.

## *1. Demographics perceptions*

In most parts of the World nowadays people are healthier and live longer – the increase being up to two and a half years per decade. Ongoing demographic change also affects the people of the European Union and, as a result, the structure of the EU's population is changing significantly – steadily ageing.

*As the World Health Organisation has noted, "population ageing is one of humanity's greatest triumphs. It is also one of our greatest challenges. As we enter the 21st century, global ageing will put increased economic and social demands on all countries. At the same time, older people are a precious, often ignored resource that makes an important contribution to the fabric of our societies."<sup>1</sup>*

In April 2011, the European Commission published its Third Demography Report, which shows how the EU population aged 65+ has increased as follows: in 1990, there were 13.7% in this bracket and 17.4% in 2010, whilst estimates indicate that, by year 2060, about 30% of the EU population will be over 65.<sup>2</sup> For us to comprehend the

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<sup>1</sup> World Health Organization (2002):6.

<sup>2</sup> Third Demography Report (2011)

dimension of the population's ageing, EUROSTAT has calculated the old-age dependency ratio in the EU27 between 2008 and 2060, indicating the relationships between two groups in society – those over 65 and those of working age (15-64).<sup>3</sup> The ratio indicates that there will be a shift from 25% in 2008 to 54% in 2060 – truly enormous growth – whilst the most critical situation is in Poland, Slovakia, Lithuania, Romania, Latvia and Bulgaria. In the case of Latvia, according to data from the Central Statistical Bureau of the Republic of Latvia, there were 2 070 371 persons residing in Latvia on 1 March 2011.<sup>4</sup> This shows a fall of 155 000 since the previous census in 2000. The reasons for this dramatic fall are a low birth-rate and large-scale emigration. As a result, considering that, since 2000, nearly 250 000 economically active people have emigrated from Latvia<sup>5</sup>, Latvian society is facing negative demographics, i.e. the number of deaths is exceeding the number of births. The average 1.3 children per family is well below the replacement rate of 2.1 needed to maintain a constant population.<sup>6</sup> With this tendency, the estimates show that by 2030 there will only be 1.63m people living in Latvia.<sup>7</sup> As said earlier, today people in the developed countries are facing a specific demographic trend – an ageing population, which means that the average life expectancy is increasing and the elderly are living longer. The same tendency is seen in Latvia also. This expansion of the older population and the decrease in the number of people of working age has one clear consequence: the total demographic burden will grow.

## *2. Working towards a labour market for all ages*

### *2.1. Employment strategy of the European Union*

This demographic trend increases pressure on pension systems and public finances, but the trend also has its positive sides. On the whole, Europeans live longer and healthier lives, and, by elderly people remaining economically active and delaying retirement, this tendency can benefit the labour market. For sustainable economic and social development, the labour market must be reorganised so that the well-educated, well-trained and healthy people can, irrespective of age, remain socially and economically active. EU Member States must, therefore,

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<sup>3</sup> EUROSTAT, EUROPOP (2008). [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics\\_explained/index.php/Glossary:EUROPOP2008](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Glossary:EUROPOP2008)

<sup>4</sup> Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia (2011) <http://www.csb.gov.lv/en/statistikas-temas/population-census-2011-key-indicators-33613.html>

<sup>5</sup> Hazans (2011) 74.

<sup>6</sup> European Commission and Economic Policy Committee (2012) The 2012 Ageing Report. 34.

<sup>7</sup> Dundure (2012)

reform their welfare and employment systems so that employment increases and economies, as such, perform more efficiently.<sup>8</sup>

To have a retrospective look at the attempts to introduce such reforms, there are several measures taken at EU level. The Amsterdam Treaty (approved in 1997) was the first European level document that included title to employment as one of the main parts of the Treaty. In 1997, the heads of the Member States of the EU met in Luxembourg; it was the first European Council meeting organised to address the problem of unemployment within the EU.

*The new determination incorporated in the Amsterdam Treaty sounded as follows: "Article B The Union shall set itself the following objectives: to promote economic and social progress and a high level of employment and to achieve balanced and sustainable development, in particular through the creation of an area without internal frontiers, through the strengthening of economic and social cohesion and through the establishment of economic and monetary union, ultimately including a single currency in accordance with the provisions of this Treaty (..)."*<sup>9</sup>

The next important step in seeking sustainability in the European labour market was the Lisbon strategy, which was launched in 2000 and declared achieving an overall employment rate of 70% by 2010 as one of its targets. From 2003, the EES has declared that full employment as one of its three objectives, thus implementing the Lisbon strategy. Unfortunately, the main targets of the Lisbon strategy – a 70% employment rate and 3% of GDP spent on research and development – was not reached. Instead, the employment rate, in 2008 had increased to 66% (from 62% in 2000) but it dropped back again due to the economic crisis.<sup>10</sup>

Subsequently, the Europe 2020 strategy was adopted; it aims to reach smart and sustainable growth by ensuring high levels of employment, productivity and social and territorial cohesion. Among the five targets for the EU to meet by 2020, the new strategy sets a goal of reaching an employment rate of 75% for all 20-64 year-olds (Target 1 "Employment") and at least 20 million fewer people in (or at risk of) poverty and social exclusion (Target 5 "Poverty/social exclusion").<sup>11</sup> These five essential targets are implemented into national targets, whereas each Member State has individually defined its targets expressed.

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<sup>8</sup> Bosch, Lehndorff, Rubery (2009): 254-255.

<sup>9</sup> The Treaty of Amsterdam (1997) 4.

<sup>10</sup> EUROPEAN COMMISSION (2.2.2010) 3.

<sup>11</sup> EUROPEAN COMMISSION. Europe 2020 targets.

As stated earlier, one of the greatest challenges posed by demographic change is to the labour market. In order to encourage policymakers and legislators, 2012 was declared the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations (EY2012). Functioning as a framework for identifying the existing problem and seeking new solutions and opportunities for involving the elderly in the labour market, the following spheres of activity were stressed: employment, participation in society, health and independent living, and intergenerational solidarity.<sup>12</sup> The overall aim is to ensure that the elderly have the possibility to remain in employment to a later age.

In the light of all the effort undertaken at Community level, in order to avoid decline in the economic growth of the EU as a whole and in each Member State, Member States must work on such a social system that would encourage the baby-boom generation – the substantial number of people born in 1950 – 1960 who will soon reach retirement age – to stay in the labour market instead of going into retirement.

The section of the economically active has been shrinking, hence active ageing, i.e. remaining active over the whole life cycle, is crucial and must be strongly supported. The methods for achieving this are promoting people's physical and mental health and lifelong learning, providing access to more flexible working arrangements and healthy workplaces, as well as ensuring well-functioning, reliable retirement schemes. As a result, older people can continue working and thereby financially provide for themselves, at the same time earning larger future pensions. Further, such psychological factors as improved well-being and higher self-esteem must not be undervalued. The scale of involvement of the elderly in the labour market within Europe varies – from 70% in Scandinavia to below the 30% in the Malta.<sup>13</sup>

This is due to different legislation and diversities in tradition and practice in recruiting older workers. To ensure sustainable social development across Europe, the concepts of active ageing and active age management must be the basic elements in building more successful cross-sectoral policies.<sup>14</sup> This is essential because, as the Council of the European Union has indicated, all available labour resources must be put to active use.<sup>15</sup>

## *2.2. Labour market situation in Latvia*

To continue with an analysis of the age structure of the Latvian population, in 2011, in Latvia, there were 1540 thousand people aged

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<sup>12</sup> AGE Platform Europe (2012)

<sup>13</sup> EUROPEAN COMMISSION (2010), Employment in Europe 2010:66.

<sup>14</sup> Cedefop (2010c)

<sup>15</sup> Council of the European Union (2010a)

15-64, and an average of 1100 thousand were economically active (73.3%), 950 thousand employed (61.8%) and 180 thousand unemployed (11.5%). 456.2 thousand people were above working age. The largest age group of the registered unemployed is between 50-54 years (15% of all unemployed). The proportion of the unemployed above 50 years amounts to 33%. The registered long-term unemployment figure in February 2012 was 42%. There is one other alarming figure: long-term unemployment tends to rise in Latvia and reaches around 51% for persons at pre-retirement age.<sup>16</sup> High long-term unemployment may cause an increase in structural unemployment, as the longer such people are jobless, the higher is the risk of losing working skills and competences – particularly in the case of older people. Research indicates that older employers face longer unemployment periods, a higher risk of losing a job and lower earnings.

Public research shows that the number of employed will continue to rise and that the unemployment rate will fall. Firstly, this is mostly due to an increase in economic activity and job creation, but also, unfortunately, to the decline of the economically active population, working-age people leaving the country or leaving the labour market. Secondly, the labour market situation will be positively affected by economic growth.

In the author's opinion, the prognosis of a rise in Latvian employment is too optimistic, taking into account the proportion of registered unemployed and the number of registered vacancies on the market. This is one of the indicators reflecting changes in labour demand, and, according to data from the State Employment agency, the registered number of unemployed significantly exceeds that of vacancies available in the labour market in August 2012. Moreover, the number of new jobs in Latvia still remains critically low. For each vacant position there are 22 unemployed people. The total number of jobs available has declined from over 13 thousand in 2008 to 5 thousand at the August 2012.<sup>17</sup> It should also be taken into account that the balance between labour demand and supply is influenced not only by education and skills, but also by wages, and so vacancies may remain even under high unemployment conditions.

*"Job quality and job satisfaction are key factors for sustainability of work and retaining older workers in the labour market".<sup>18</sup>*

On the one hand there is this disproportion, but, on the other hand, the direct and indirect discrimination of the elderly in the labour market.

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<sup>16</sup> Ministry of Welfare of the Republic of Latvia (2012):6. [http://www.lm.gov.lv/upload/darba\\_tirgus/darba\\_tirgus/labour\\_market\\_270312.pdf](http://www.lm.gov.lv/upload/darba_tirgus/darba_tirgus/labour_market_270312.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> STATE EMPLOYMENT AGENCY .<http://www.nva.lv/index.php?cid=2&mid=1>

<sup>18</sup> Dr.Pillinger (2007)

### *3. Age stereotypes and discriminatory attitudes towards older workers*

#### *3.1. Age non-discrimination law*

Since 1964, when the Civil Rights Act was accepted, employment discrimination law has been a dynamic field of conflict in both legislative and judicial arenas. The European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), which sets out a general prohibition on discrimination in its Article 14, and the framework of EU law prohibiting age discrimination, as created by Article 19 and Directive 2000/78/EC on Employment Equality, are the texts fundamental to the fight against discrimination at EU level. The Directive defines Special Provision for Older Workers. These measures tend primarily to be directed towards encouraging older workers to remain in the workplace and employers to recruit and retain older workers.<sup>19</sup>

Age is generally assumed to be an objective factor with a clear meaning and hence is not defined. Most Member States have not restricted the scope of legislation. The implementation of the age provisions of the Employment Equality Directive remains 'Work in Progress'. In fact, Article 6 of the Directive permits the justification of both direct and indirect age discrimination, and most Member States have decided to exercise this option. As a consequence, there remains very substantial uncertainty across Member States as to which forms of age discrimination will be treated as justified by national courts.

The prohibition on discrimination is guaranteed by Article 14 of the ECHR, which guarantees equal treatment in the enjoyment of the other rights set down in the Convention. Protocol 12 (2000) to the ECHR, not yet ratified by all EU Member States<sup>20</sup>, (Latvia has also not ratified the Protocol 12) expands the scope of the prohibition of discrimination by guaranteeing equal treatment in the enjoyment of any right (including rights under national law). According to the Explanatory Report to the Protocol, it was created out of a desire to strengthen protection against discrimination which was considered to form a core element of guaranteeing human rights.

A general prohibition against discrimination is included in the Latvian Constitution (*Satversme*) which lays down that human rights shall be effected without discrimination of any kind.<sup>21</sup> Article 106 of the Latvian Constitution proclaims that everyone has the right to freely choose their employment and workplace according to their abilities and qualifications. The respective article also includes the prohibition of forced

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<sup>19</sup> O'Dempsey, Beale (2011):37.

<sup>20</sup> Protocol No. 12 (2000)

<sup>21</sup> *Satversme* (1922): art 91.

labour. Participation in disaster relief and work pursuant to a court order is not deemed forced labour.

Article 107 proclaims the right of every employed person to receive appropriate remuneration for the work performed, which is not less than the minimum wage established by the state, and to receive weekly holidays and paid annual vacation. The Constitution also establishes the right of employed persons to collective labour agreements and the right to strike, and declares that the state guarantees the freedom of trade unions. The Constitution also guarantees the right to social security in cases of disability, unemployment, old age and in other cases as provided by law.<sup>22</sup> Latvia's Labour Law<sup>23</sup> is the principal source of employment law, regulating various aspects of employment and determining that everyone has an equal right to work, to fair, safe and healthy working conditions and to fair remuneration. On July 11, 2012, amendments were introduced in the Latvian Labour Law -Job advertisements must not contain requirements for a certain foreign language, except in cases where it is reasonably necessary for the job functions.

Stereotypes of older workers have a negative connotation. They may lead to social exclusion, not only because one may judge an employee on the basis of average and inaccurate representations of the category, but also because stereotypes may lead to self-fulfilling prophecies, when those who are subject to negative stereotypes behave accordingly.<sup>24</sup>

In the study on the spread of discrimination within Latvian employment, the Ombudsman of the Republic of Latvia organised a survey "Discrimination in the employment environment"<sup>25</sup> in October 2011.

The aims of the survey were:

1. To examine forms and types of discrimination which Latvian workers face when starting employment, in work and when ending employment;
2. To clarify the employee's awareness of existing discrimination, including cases where the employee himself gives information which could be used to discriminate against him;

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<sup>22</sup> Satversme (1922): arts 108, 109.

<sup>23</sup> Labour Law (2001)

<sup>24</sup> Hilton, Hippel (1996).

<sup>25</sup> Ombudsman (2011)

3. To study employees' awareness of self-protective action in cases of discrimination in the workplace.<sup>26</sup>

The target group was employees living in Latvia and aged from 15 to 74 years. 1001 respondents were questioned from different social and demographic groups. The survey method – Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews (CATI).

The survey begins by examining the perceived extent of discrimination on the basis of fourteen different grounds:

- Spread of Discrimination;
- Information which one should provide;
- Information which people usually provide;
- Information asked for by the potential employer;
- Characteristics most often leading to discrimination;
- The situation relating to discrimination in the workplace;
- Source of discrimination;
- Advertisement with discriminatory content;
- Source of advertisement;
- Content of discriminatory advertising, situations;
- Recourse in case of discrimination;
- Reasons why people may not seek help in cases of discrimination;
- Dismissal from work for discriminatory reasons;
- Whether and when discrimination is allowed.<sup>27</sup>

The summary of survey presents a selection of findings, focusing mainly on results of discrimination against older people.

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<sup>26</sup> Ombudsman (2011):3.

<sup>27</sup> Ombudsman (2011):2.

The survey shows that there are no equal opportunities in employment for elderly people. "Discrimination in the employment environment of Latvia" defines discrimination on the grounds of age as the most widespread form of discrimination in Latvia (32%); then comes discrimination against nationality (23%). Women consider that most often employers discriminate against them due to their gender (19%), number of children, and age of children (17%).<sup>28</sup> Among the respondents, elderly people mentioned age as the area of discrimination. Relating to "The situation in the area of discrimination at the workplace" and the question: "Have you experienced unfair or abusive treatment in your workplace during the last 3 years?" 72% of respondents answered that they had not experienced any unfair or abusive behaviour, 6% had experienced discrimination in respect of their age, whilst 5% had done so in previous work-places due to health or disability.<sup>29</sup> In respect of "Source of discrimination" and the question: "From whom did you experience unfair or abusive treatment in your workplace during the last 3 years?", as indicated in the chart, most often (31%) the direct manager is the one who somehow discriminates against his employees. The next level in the hierarchy – the top manager of the company (25%) – also discriminates against subordinates. In addition, discrimination exists not only in vertical relationships – colleagues often treat each other unfairly or abusively also.<sup>30</sup>

In respect of the "Advertisement with discriminatory content" and the survey question: "Have you encountered job advertisements during the last 5 years, where persons of a certain sex and age are looked for, when there is no objective need for such criteria?" 12% of respondents confirmed having experienced this: 31% replied "Yes, very often" or "Yes, sometimes".<sup>31</sup>

The survey reveals that advertisements with such content appear on the special websites dealing with employee recruitment (55%), in the press (41%), on internet news sites (27%) and social networks (6%).<sup>32</sup>

Analysing answers from respondents about the situation and content of these advertisements, 2/5 of the Latvian employees who have encountered discriminatory advertisements indicate that an age limit was given in the advertisement where there is no objective need for such criteria.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Ombudsman (2011):16.

<sup>29</sup> Ombudsman (2011):18.

<sup>30</sup> Ombudsman (2011):19.

<sup>31</sup> Ombudsman (2011):20.

<sup>32</sup> Ombudsman (2011):21.

<sup>33</sup> Ombudsman (2011):22.

In the course of interviews regarding "Information that people usually provide" it was interesting how often older workers come up with information about age (85%), gender (74%), disability, health problems (35%), nationality (57%), children (43%), as well as the photograph to be affixed to the CV (28%).<sup>34</sup> Older people are convinced that their age limits their options in the labour market.

*As noted by Leslie Ayres, „There are many negative stereotypes of older people, and many are held by the older workers themselves“.*<sup>35</sup>

### *Conclusions*

Based on the given statistics, one consequence of the increasing proportion of old people and the decreasing number of people of working age, the overall demographic burden will grow.

Research has consistently shown that older adults in general and older workers in particular have suffered from negative perceptions of their capabilities and desire for continued work.

The study reveals that often the employees are those who, when commencing employment as well during their employment, disclose information which can lead to unfair treatment or discrimination.

Discrimination in employment on the basis of age is one of the least acknowledged barriers to workforce participation. Older workers may be willing to work longer, if they can have access to more flexible working arrangements, healthy workplaces, lifelong learning, retirement schemes and protection against age-discrimination.

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<sup>34</sup> Ombudsman (2011):12

<sup>35</sup> Ayres (2011)

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# **AGEING POPULATIONS – FROM RECOGNITION TO REFORM**

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## *Abstract*

Many scholars argue that one of the most significant features of post-industrial societies is the trend towards population ageing, a phenomenon evident in almost every EU country. The ageing of the population per se is not a matter of concern, but it becomes alarming when considered together with other issues characteristic of many EU countries today. These include the declining birth rate, the lack of a solid foundation for financing social benefits for the elderly, and the fiscal impact on the younger generations who will have to foot the bill.

This demographic shift is in an early phase, and, according to some data, the bulk of the transition will occur between 2010 and 2035. European welfare states still have time to deal with these problems and to provide solutions to this kind of demographic pressure which, despite its transnational nature, is deeply embedded in each society and consequently requires ad hoc measures. In fact, scholars and researchers support the view that there are at least two main areas where the welfare states face problems related to population ageing. These are a basic reform of the pension system, which is closely related to the way in which the employment net has been developed over recent decades and the provision of health care, since the elderly are the main consumers.

If, on the one hand, governments and institutions are interested in (or, rather, concerned about) the social dimension of population ageing and its impact on the state budget, there are, on the other hand, people who consider the elderly as a source of many benefits: they can provide childcare, financial, practical and emotional assistance to family members, gaining in return a new social role. However, as some people notice, the elderly can also be vulnerable subjects who might suffer poverty, social exclusion and even violence.

The aim of the paper is to discuss the issue of population ageing from these perspectives – that is, as a macro-economic and social phenomenon as well as psychological and emotional phases of a human lifespan,. In this way it is hoped to show that new and sustainable reforms are required for the socio-economic wellbeing of the elderly in line with the needs of present and future generations.

## *Introduction: a dynamic scenario for post-industrial societies*

The ageing of a population can be recognised as one of the main changes which have occurred in recent decades in many post-industrial societies. In particular, apart from population ageing, other profound transitions are taking place in many European and non-European countries: a slowdown in the growth of productivity, the gradual expansion and maturation of governmental commitments and welfare state maturation and the restructuring of the household. Such transitions are closely related and have an impact on the performance of the welfare state.

Population ageing is very visible in almost every country of the European Union. As data<sup>1</sup> suggest, the proportion of the population over 65 has risen and it is projected to rise further in the near future. In fact, according to some data, much of this growth will occur between 2010 and 2035.

Population ageing per se is not a matter of concern, but it becomes alarming when considered together with other issues characteristic of many EU countries today. These include the declining birth rate, the lack of a solid foundation for financing social benefits for the elderly, and the fiscal impact on the younger generations who will have to foot the bill.

The demographic shift underway is very profound and its effects are central if we are to understand the pressure which welfare states will face in 20-30 years time.

The next paragraphs will provide a more detailed explanation of what kind of transitions post-industrial societies are facing and how such events are intertwined.

### *1.1 First transition phase: productivity grows more slowly*

Economists, statisticians and experts on economic growth complain about the decrease of productivity in advanced industrial countries.

From the data collected by international organisations such as the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development), the general scenario reveals a massive shift in employment from relatively dynamic manufacturing activities to generally less dynamic service provision, and, in consequence, a large and consistent gap in productivity between services and manufacturing grew from 1960 to 1994<sup>2</sup>. This

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<sup>1</sup> Source: OECD, *Economic, Environmental and Social Statistics*, 2011.

<sup>2</sup> Source: OECD, *Historical Statistics, 1960-94* (Paris: OECD).

means that, over time, more workers have been engaged in service provision and fewer in manufacturing. Inevitably, however, a slowdown of productivity is the final result, since service provision tends to lead to economic stagnation. As many suggest, such trends also impede the growth of wages and salaries, on which welfare state revenues depend heavily.

The slowdown of productivity is linked to rising unemployment, since factories tend to close whilst, at the same time, service employment tends to stagnation.

Poor people, occasional workers, people who cannot find a job or lose it receive benefits from the state. Obviously, the more people who need support, the more a state has to spend in order to sustain them. In fact, figures tell us that, over the years, one area of public spending has come to carry the burden of unemployment, a burden which has notably increased. This leads us to the second phase of transition.

### *1.2 Second transition phase: government commitments increase*

Pierson (Pierson, 2001) argues that welfare states grew at a remarkable pace from 1945 to 1973, far faster than the growth of their real GDP. Even after 1973 they continued to grow and expanded their governmental commitments, especially in the provision of health care, pensions and unemployment benefits.

Population ageing, among other factors, is linked to the rise of government commitments in both pensions and health care provision. In fact, data<sup>3</sup> suggest that, between 1960 and 1990, public expenditure on pensions in the OECD increased from 4.6 to 8.5 per cent of GDP, together with health care, which represents the other massive social commitment of most European governments.

Another major item of public expenditure relates to unemployment benefits, which is, in effect, financial compensation for the unemployed but also for low- wage and occasional workers. The revenue needed to pay these benefits means that taxation and fiscal pressure rose for average workers in the 1990s and 2000s.

Inevitably, states incurred large budget deficits and were forced to pay higher interest rates, and the negative economic effects are still visible.

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<sup>3</sup> Source: OECD, *New Orientations for Social Policy* (1994); OECD, *Reforming Public Pensions* (1988).

### *1.3 Third transition phase: change of typical household structure*

The final phase in the transition is a basic reconfiguration of the household structure. In fact, 'household reconfiguration' is a term which can be an umbrella for several phenomena, such as the massive increase in participation in the labour force by women, declining fertility rates and the increase of single-parent families or households.

It is obvious that declining fertility rates are associated with population ageing and a result of a new life-style for many women in advanced industrial societies. Cultural changes and the ready availability of pregnancy control systems mean that birth rates have declined sharply in several industrialised countries; women prefer to work or decide to have fewer babies due to a lack of efficient support for childcare.

If women are able to work and want to contribute financially to the family budget reducing the traditional male role as breadwinner, then they cannot take care of their children on a full-time basis – or of the weaker members of the family such as the older generation. Both children and the old were traditionally handled by the women in the family, who either preferred, or were obliged, to stay at home rather than study and work.

Female emancipation has meant progress and freedom for thousands of women, but, in some cases, it has led to a household transformation which most certainly needs a stronger institutional commitment to provide efficient public services for the children and the elderly to compensate for the void left by women.

In addition to declining fertility rates, another factor in the process of household transformation is the increasing ratio of single-parent families or households in many EU and non-EU countries. These households, mostly female-headed, are more likely to have low incomes and to experience poverty unless the state intervenes. This, therefore is yet another commitment which the governments of welfare states have to face.

To summarise, the broad scenario offered by data and statistics reveals that advanced industrial societies are becoming more service-based, with a consequent decline in the growth of productivity, with public programmes and expenditure dominating national budget, with populations becoming older and household structures changing dramatically.

The social dimension of population ageing, together with new family trends, has had, and will have, an impact on the strategies of welfare states, and we should now address this topic.

### *1.3.1 The family and the elderly as core issues of the welfare state*

The above trends (that is, the slowdown in the growth of productivity; the gradual expansion and maturation of government commitments and of the welfare state, the demographic shift to an older population and the restructuring of the household or family) are general and common issues, but they also display a distinct national character. European countries are currently somewhere in between adopting solutions to these problems provided by the European Union and solutions embedded in national traditions and practice.

The author's view is that the most dramatic issues are the restructuring of the household and population ageing, not only from a social perspective but also as major burdens for the welfare state. In fact, issues which seem to concern the private sphere (family and old age in this case) can have wider public implications and generate huge social and economic events.

First of all, many scholars claim that the family is suffering 'de-institutionalization' (Roussel, 1989). Data on family change document a greater looseness of the marital bond as seen through divorce and cohabitation statistics.

The fragility of the traditional family model varies in the EU countries. High divorce rates and high numbers of live births outside marriage are typical of North European nations; the UK resembles Scandinavian countries with its high divorce rates, although the proportion of births outside marriage is lower. South European countries such as Spain, Portugal and Italy have low divorce rates as well as a low proportion of births out of wedlock.

As other kinds of benefit, family policies differ considerably from one country to another. Northern Europe is more generous in providing services and benefits for childcare and for pre-school education, whilst, by way of contrast, subsidies for childcare in the South of Europe are less serious. Because of this, many women are obliged to postpone or suspend their participation in the labour market. Obviously, when child-related services are few and weak, two consequences are possible: women abstain either from the labour market or from the maternity experience, and, unfortunately, the second option is too often the one favoured.

As mentioned earlier, the emergence of single-parent households puts considerable strain on welfare states, since they are significantly more likely than other families to have low incomes and to experience poverty.

Secondly, many scholars sustain the view that the role of population ageing is crucial in the formation of the welfare state. In fact, demographic changes represent a new challenge for welfare states. Since achieving higher life standards for its citizens has become the main responsibility of the state, and since pensions and health services are clearly part of welfare policy, generous retirement benefits and increasing health costs are difficult to sustain for an ageing society.

Esping-Andersen (Esping-Andersen, 1990) describes different models of a welfare state. In his study, Liberal, Social Democrat, Continental, and South European classifications have been found useful in analyzing labour market characteristics, including the extent of labour force participation of given age and sex groups, along with social security (including pension) policies.

Even if welfare states could share common challenges, their responses might vary from country to country due to the strong link between labour market and retirement policies.

A pattern of path dependency arises when institutions and programmes, once established, become difficult to reverse (Pierson, 2001; Wood, 2001), but a restructuring of the welfare state can be realised along three dimensions: re-commodification, cost containment, and recalibration (Pierson, 2001).

Approaches to pensions and social security are linked with the demographic dynamics of a given country. For example, the social democrat model has a greater ability to influence the level of childbearing (McDonald, 2006), along with an interest to maximise labour force participation to pay for generous social policy. The liberal model is based on greater privatisation, which also involves using immigration to deal with demographic problems of a too slowly growing labour force. The continental and South European models have most difficulty in achieving reform, and they also face the highest rates of ageing. In some European countries, the family (especially in Southern Europe) still plays a decisive role in the care of the elderly and, reciprocally, the elderly are judged as a source of benefit. They can provide childcare, financial, practical and emotional assistance to family members, gaining in return a new social role.

This is the second aim of this paper – that is, to assert that the elderly can also be seen not as a burden for the society, rather a useful resource.

### *Pros and cons of an ageing population*

Science and research have contributed to increasing life expectancy by years. If it is true that the population is ageing, then such people are healthier than those who were old 30 or 40 years ago.

The recent concept of 'active ageing' urges the promotion of better physical and mental health, including participation in physical activities as well as economic, social and cultural affairs. In fact, the increasing numbers of older people offer a growing market for education and training.

Far from being net receivers of help and support, older people are, in fact, net providers, at least up to the age of 75. They provide childcare, financial, practical and emotional assistance to family members including helping people outside the household with the chores of daily life. In particular, adult children can benefit from their wisdom and experience, and, consequently, they sustain an inter-generational network of knowledge and personal growth.

It is evident that there are advantages and disadvantages in an ageing population. Among the benefits, there are considerable economic effects, such as higher accumulated savings per head than with younger people, or unpaid work helping relatives, such as babysitting. Moreover, after retirement, most old people have a good deal of time for travelling or leisure activities, which sustain specific economic sectors. Finally, they help to maintain the culture and religion of their own nation for future generations.

Some of the disadvantages of an ageing population have already been mentioned. From a macro-economic perspective these include expenditure on pensions and health care provision. From another perspective, however, psychologists stress that some older people are likely to experience poverty, social exclusion, and even domestic violence, making them vulnerable subjects.

The elderly may become victims of mugging, burglary and physical assault. They may experience different kinds of abuse such as emotional and verbal abuse (discrimination on the basis of age, insults and hurtful words, denigration, intimidation, false accusations, psychological pain and distress); and/or financial abuse (extortion and control of pension payments and theft of property).

## *Conclusions*

Population ageing is a serious and pressing problem requiring a wide and multi-level response.

The increase in the retired and elderly populations will increase the need for pensions, healthcare and long-term care. This will increase costs for the countries affected unless their public provision systems are adjusted.

The restructuring of the welfare state is urgent and tailor-made strategies are necessary for these countries.

On the other side, governments and institutions have to consider the elderly as a specific social group which can play positive and active roles in a family structure as well as falling victim to abuse and maltreatment.

A variety of interventions could be devised to sustain population ageing at a reasonable level such as an adequate pension system in every country to avoid poverty, easily available and comfortable facilities for the old and infirm and preventative measures and basic training in detecting abuse of the elderly etc.

As Article 22 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, 'everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realisation, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organisation and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality'. Population ageing is a human right.

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## BEING IN THE MIDDLE: THE SITUATION OF THIS SPECIAL AGE-GROUP IN HUNGARY

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### *International Trends – Ageing Society*

Ageing society is a matter of prime importance in today's European Union. The proportion of older people in the population has continuously increased their number having almost doubled over the past 40 years. In 1960, 34 million older people (aged 60 and over) lived in what was then the European Community or Communities, but by 2001 this number had reached 62 million.<sup>1</sup> In many respects the demographic situation in Hungary reflects that of Western Europe, but some of its characteristics are influenced by the change of system which took place in Hungary in 1989.<sup>2</sup>

The two main reasons for demographic ageing are the decreasing number of births and increasing life expectancy.<sup>3</sup> The crucial factor of the population decline is a natural decrease, which means that fewer people are born than die. In this process, not only do the number and percentage of the young and the old age groups change, but age distribution also. The latter is demonstrated by the Ageing Index. (See Population Pyramid below)

These proportions, of course, depend on who is considered to be young and who to be old, and the European Statistical Office (EUROSTAT) suggest that the age group 0-19 be considered as 'young', and the over-60 group as 'old'. There is one more significant age grouping which should not be overlooked and that is the 'people of active age'. This covers the population from 20 to 59 in most statistical protocols. The dependency ratio is a further significant indicator which shows the ratio of the young and the old (as above) compared to the 'actives'. Regarding the ageing process, the old-age dependency ratio is increasing, whilst the

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<sup>1</sup> The most dramatic growth is expected in the number of the population over 80. Their ratio will increase by some 50% in the next 10-15 years, according to statistical predictions. Dr. Fífik Erika - Dr. Szilágyi Klára: policies related to older workers in Europe and Hungary Bp. NFI, 2006. 9. p

<sup>2</sup> Lenkei Gábor (szerk): Demography, employment, female employment. Stratégiai füzetek 14, 2003. 18. p.

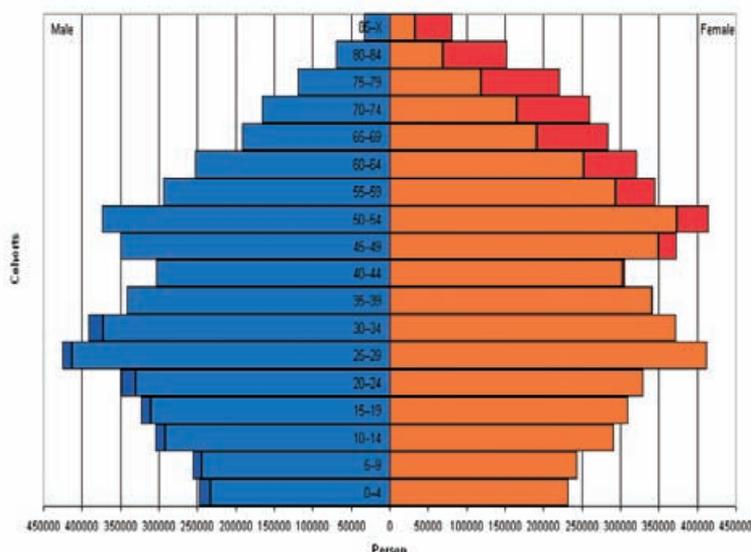
<sup>3</sup> In Hungary life expectancy at birth in the 19th century was only 25 years; by 1900 it had risen to 37 years; in 1950 it was 62 years, and at present it is 72.5 years. By 2050 life expectancy at birth is expected to be 80 years. Augusztinovics Mária: population, employment, retirement. In: Economic Review, LII., 2005. may (pp.429-447.) 430. p.

young age dependency ratio is decreasing. The dependency ratio in total illustrates the level or ratio of burden of dependency on the active age group. This has been growing rapidly in Hungary for the last decade, as in Western countries. This quite simply means that the number of dependents has risen, whilst the number of active workers has fallen. This process endangers economic balance, in which the most relevant issue is the funding of 'old age pensions' as there are fewer working people to provide social care for more non-working people. This situation needs a rapid resolution, and probably the most efficient tool would be to increase the proportion of active workers in society.<sup>4</sup>

### 1.1. The demographic situation in Hungary

The number of the over-sixties age group was more than the number of children under fourteen years of age in Hungary in the early 1990s. In 2004 the number of people over 65 became higher than the number of children, and the number of the 60 + age group was the same as that of the 0-19 group. Analyses indicate that, by the year 2020, the same correlation will be visible between the 65+ age group and the 0-19 bracket.<sup>5</sup> This change is demonstrated by the population pyramid of Hungary. This is pear-shaped and clearly shows the low fertility rates of recent years.

The Hungarian population pyramid in 2005.



<sup>4</sup> There are some other alternatives, such as raising taxes or the retirement age. In: Halmos Csaba: The employment strategy of the EU, PTE-FEEK, 2006. 23. p.

<sup>5</sup> Habcsek László – Pákozdi Ildikó: The social challenges of the ageing society (2004). In: Esély 2004/3. (87-119. p.) 89. p

The pyramid has two extensions: one for the 50-54 age group and one for the 25-29 group. Those in the former group are the so-called Ratkó<sup>6</sup> children, who are expected to retire within the next 2-5 years. The second extension indicates their children's generation which means that Hungary, together with most European countries, has to face two retirement surges. The first will be between 2010 and 2020, and the second around 2050. A large number in a single age group approaching retirement age is always a major burden on society, but in this case the problem is even more acute, due to the low birth rates of recent years.<sup>7</sup>

The population of Hungary in 2011 was 9,982,000, which is 2.1% less than it was 10 years earlier.<sup>8</sup> This trend has been visible since 1981, and in the 1980s it was at its worst. During the 1990s the trend did decrease, but it then increased again between 2001 and 2011. The population decline caused by natural decrease was partly compensated by immigration from neighbouring countries, when Hungarians resettled here, but this replaced less than half of the natural decrease.<sup>9</sup> Without immigration, the population of Hungary will be transformed in the future into the so-called "one third population", when approximately 30% of the population will be 65 years old or above.<sup>10</sup>

In this complex situation it is not only the low birth-rate which causes the problem; life expectancy shows an increasing trend also. In Hungary life expectancy at birth is 69.8 years for men, and much higher (77.8 years) for women.<sup>11</sup> Although these figures are much higher than earlier, life expectancy is still below the European average, i.e., 75 years for men, and 81 years for women. However, this indicator is continuously rising due to the improved quality of life, and the difference between men and women is expected to shrink still further in the near future.

To conclude, we can say that phenomenon of an ageing society is a long-term process, and its effects are reflected over a longer period of time. This means that problems cannot be resolved from one day to the next, and we must learn how to handle this situation, and how to find complex answers as solutions.

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<sup>6</sup> Ratkó- the era from 1949-1956 when Anna Ratkó was Minister of Health and introduced a ban on abortion.

<sup>7</sup> Habcsek – Pákozdi: 92. p.

<sup>8</sup> [www.nepszamlalas.hu](http://www.nepszamlalas.hu); census data of 2011

<sup>9</sup> Hungarian Central Statistical Office: A 2011. census data

<sup>10</sup> In Hungary the number of marriages is also decreasing, and a parallel phenomenon has appeared, namely that the average age of childbearing was also postponed. The number of single-person households is also increasing, and this does not support rising trends in childbirth. Dr. Fifik- Dr. Szilágyi: 9. p.

<sup>11</sup> Monostori Judit [2009]: Ageing. In: Demográfiai Portré 2009. Szerk: Monostori Judit – Öri Péter – S. Molnár Edit – Spéder Zsolt. KSH Demographic Research Institute. pp. 79-87.

## *2. Responses based on Employment Policy*

From the 1970s the employment level in Europe was far below those in the USA and Japan. As Europe was facing an economic crisis at that time, it seemed that early retirement would be one possible way to resolve the problem. Almost all European countries, in fact, did agree to shorten the retirement process for the older generation as an appropriate tool to reduce unemployment in the younger generation. Although this was useful in the short term, in the long run it proved harmful. At state level the overall income of the economy declined whilst government spending on pensions increased. Since then the approach has changed, and keeping older employees in the labour market as long as possible has become the primary goal.<sup>12</sup>

### *2.1 The Lisbon Strategy*

In 2000, during a special session of the European Council in Lisbon, strategic goals were established to deliver strong, durable growth and to create more – and better – jobs. The aim was to unlock the resources needed to meet the wider economic, social and environmental objectives of Europe. This would make the continent a more attractive place for investment and work and also improve knowledge and innovation to further stimulate growth.<sup>13</sup>

The strategy was designed to help Europe address a variety of issues such as the challenges of an ageing population, the need to increase productivity and the competitive pressures of a globalised economy. Economic modernisation is at the heart of the strategy for growth and jobs, as a key to maintaining Europe's unique social model in the face of increasingly global markets, technological change, environmental concerns and demographic pressures. To unlock existing resources in Europe, a number of actions are needed:

- greater investment in young people, education, research and innovation to generate wealth and provide security for every citizen;
- the opening up of markets;
- the reduction of bureaucracy;
- investment in modern infrastructure to help enterprises grow, innovate and create jobs;

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<sup>12</sup> Dr. Fifik – Dr. Szilágyi: 14-15. p.

<sup>13</sup> Kovács István Vilmos: The Lisbon process and the education development from Barcelona. In: EU- studies, III. volume, edit: Dr. Inotai András. National Improvement Office. Budapest, 2005. (p. 199-235) p. 202.

- development of a skilled entrepreneurial workforce;
- the provision of high levels of employment, social protection and a healthy environment for society.

The objectives for 2010 (in figures) regarding employment policy were<sup>14</sup>:

- to raise the general employment rate to 70%;
- to increase the rate of women in employment to 60%;
- to increase the rate of older workers in employment to 50%.

Due to the differences between member states at the initial stage, it was suggested to all that they set their own targets for increased employment rates.

The revised Lisbon Strategy is based on the European Council resolution of 2000, in Lisbon, to turn the EU into the most competitive knowledge-based society by 2010. In 2005, the Council modified the strategy to focus primarily on creating growth and jobs. This, by enlarging the labour force, would support sustainability in the social protection systems.

Three highlighted aims are of major importance for national employment policies:<sup>15</sup>

To achieve overall employment targets<sup>16</sup> by helping all citizens of active age to stay in the labour market with fewer compromises. The unemployment rate should be reduced to less than 6%.

To improve the quality of work by giving higher priority to lifelong learning as a basic component of the European social model and by improving employability and reducing skill-gaps.

<sup>14</sup> EC 2000: Presidency Conclusions, Lisbon European Council, 23 and 24 March 2000 [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/lis1\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/lis1_en.htm) download: 2012. 08. 28.

<sup>15</sup> Cserné Dr. Adermann Gizella – Dr. Fodor Imréné – Dr. Koltai Dénes – Kövesi Gusztáv – Kövesi Jenő – Muity György – Dr. Nemeskéri Zsolt – Dr. Szép Zsófia – Vámosi Tamás – Váradi Ákos: Complex educational systems for the enhancement of adult employability, with special regard to the disadvantaged.. Final Study. National Adult Educational Institute, Budapest, 2006. 21. p.

<sup>16</sup> [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics\\_explained/index.php/Employment\\_statistics/hu#Tov.C3.A1bbi\\_inform.C3.A1ci.C3.B3k\\_az\\_Eurostat](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Employment_statistics/hu#Tov.C3.A1bbi_inform.C3.A1ci.C3.B3k_az_Eurostat) retrieved: 2012. 09. 02

To strengthen social cohesion by facilitating participation in the labour market for everyone, by fighting discrimination and exclusion from the labour market.

## 2.2 Employment situation in Hungary regarding older workers

In 2010 the average employment rate in Hungary was 55.4%, a rate well below the European average. On closer examination we can see that the 45-49 age group is the last in which the economic activity of the population is quite high.<sup>17</sup> Labour activity declines dramatically in the following, higher age groups. This requires urgent intervention since keeping people over 50 in the labour market is a strategic aim and also a necessity considering that retirement age in Hungary is 65. This means that the group surveyed should be active members of the labour market for at least another 10-15 years.

The employment rate between 2000-2010 in the EU27 and Hungary

|                             | 2000  |      | 2005  |      | 2010  |      |
|-----------------------------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|
|                             | EU-27 | HU.  | EU-27 | HU.  | EU-27 | HU.  |
| <i>all (15-64 years)</i>    | 62,2  | 56,3 | 63,5  | 56,9 | 64,2  | 55,4 |
| <i>women</i>                | 53,7  | 49,7 | 56,3  | 51,0 | 58,2  | 50,6 |
| <i>elders (55-64 years)</i> | 36,9  | 22,2 | 42,3  | 33,0 | 46,3  | 34,4 |

Source: Authors' editing of EUROSTAT data base

The proportion of older employees is significantly higher in medium-to-large companies than in micro-to-small companies. Compared with the private sector, the figures for older people employed by the public sector are significantly higher. During lay-offs over the past few years, more employees in this age group lost their jobs than in the under 30s. As scientific data forecast, no change can be expected in the labour market within the next five years as most company executives have no intention of employing older employees.<sup>18</sup>

## 3. Characteristics of the surveyed age group in Hungary

In recent years a number of actions were taken in order to increase the employment rate of older people. Some were quite successful, but

<sup>17</sup> [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics\\_explained/index.php/Employment\\_statistics/hu#Tov.C3.A1bbi\\_inform.C3.A1ci.C3.B3k\\_az\\_Eurostat](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Employment_statistics/hu#Tov.C3.A1bbi_inform.C3.A1ci.C3.B3k_az_Eurostat) retrieved: 2012. 09. 02

<sup>18</sup> Cserné Dr. Adermann– Dr. Fodor– Dr. Koltai –Kövesi– Kövesi– Muity– Dr. Nemeskéri– Dr. Szép– Vámosi– Váradi: 2006. 55. p.

there is still work to be done. We cannot ignore the fact that rules and regulations are not enough to activate this age group, although their participation is extremely important. Besides job opportunities and material considerations, there are some special aspects strongly linked to the characteristics of this age group. Those features influence not only their willingness to work, but also their employment opportunities.

### 3.1 Marital status and financial circumstances

71% of the age group are married<sup>19</sup>, most raising one or two children on the verge of starting an independent life. For a parent this is a financial burden. This generation is not only facing the provision of financial support for their children, but for their parents as well. In this situation they often carry a double burden,<sup>20</sup> and this assistance can be both financial and physical at the same time. This has a great influence on the financial situation and emotional state of this age group and also determines their everyday activity level and wellbeing. As a result, they often have no potential to take care of their own needs, such as enrolling in further education, indulging in sport or any leisure activities.

### 3.2. Educational levels

In Hungary The education level of the age group in question is extremely low. Between the ages of 45 and 64 only 14% are graduates and 38% are under secondary school level in terms of education. The data are worse than for other age groups, but this fact alone is not an explanation for their low employment rate.

The populations education level 2002

| education level     | age group |       |       |       |       |       |
|---------------------|-----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|                     | 25-29     | 45-49 | 50-54 | 55-59 | 60-64 | 45-64 |
| elementary level    | 17,0      | 25,8  | 29,3  | 40,3  | 65,3  | 37,9  |
| secondary education | 67,3      | 59,0  | 57,1  | 46,1  | 23,3  | 48,5  |
| higher education    | 15,5      | 15,2  | 13,6  | 13,6  | 11,5  | 13,6  |
| all                 | 100,0     | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 |

Source: Adler Judit: The situation of older employees in Hungary – Research 2005.

<sup>19</sup> Domokos Tamás – Virágh Eszter – Dobossy Imre – Vukovich Gabriella – Mahler Balázs – Obádovics Csilla – S. Molnár Edit: Adult education in Hungary and the age group of over 45. Research Study. In: Employment policies for older workers. p 49-212. National Adult education Institute, Budapest, 2006. 62. p.

<sup>20</sup> This generation is often called as a sandwich generation because of this double burden situation. Their children need mainly financial help, but their parents are in their vulnerable life period, and they mostly need physical care as well.

Regarding participation levels in adult education we can affirm that<sup>21</sup>:

Referring to the survey by the National Statistics Office, in Hungary only 3.3% of employees from 30-44 attend any kind of training and 1% from the 45-64 group. If we focus specifically on older employees (aged 55-64) education activity involves only 0.6%. The average rate of educational activity in older employees in the European Union in the same age group is 5%. This means that more efforts should be made in to increase this rate in Hungary.<sup>22</sup> It is also important to emphasise that 80% of training is financed by employers and that, in Hungary, micro- and small enterprises are predominant in the labour market. Even though most training focuses on improving their professional knowledge, research has shown that those employees who took part felt more confident and secure after completion. They also emphasised that this is the only way to avoid unemployment, and in Hungary statistics indicate that returning to the labour market is more than difficult for this age group. The average period needed is 2 years.

### *3.3. State of health*

The latest research regarding these issues did not focus on health from a professional medical perspective. The research was based on self-assessment, focusing on the level of concentration, memory, eyesight and hearing of the participants.<sup>23</sup> 25% of the respondents considered themselves healthy and rather more than half reported minor health problems, although these did not prevent them from working. Only 10% of the respondents had serious health problems. These people are still in the labour market, but their health problems cause serious difficulties at work. 12% of the respondents had such serious problems that they simply could not work, and so had had to give up their job. Analysing the above data leads us to conclude that the 50th birthday in some ways represents a watershed. Most workers had almost no medical problems before that age, apart from some minor discomfort which did not prevent them working. Self-assessment results shows that in the 51-55 age group the proportion of those who felt healthy dropped to 25%. See the chart below:

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<sup>21</sup> In this case the meaning of training and education includes both the school system of education and course training participation as well.

<sup>22</sup> Cserné Dr. Adermann– Dr. Fodor– Dr. Koltai –Kövesi– Kövesi– Muity– Dr. Nemeskéri– Dr. Szép– Vámosi– Váradi: 2006. 65. p.

<sup>23</sup> Adler Judit: The employment situation of the age group over 45. In: Labour Research: OFA Research Yearbook, 3. /edit. Pongrácz László. – Bp. Országos Foglalkoztatási Közalapítvány, 2005. – p. 29-38.

| self – assessment % | age group |      |       |      |       |      |
|---------------------|-----------|------|-------|------|-------|------|
|                     | 30-39     |      | 40-49 |      | 50-59 |      |
| very good           | 70,2      | 69   | 32,6  | 30,2 | 23,7  | 27,7 |
| Good                | 24,3      | 24,1 | 51    | 53,3 | 44,3  | 42,5 |
| Bad                 | 5,5       | 6,95 | 16,4  | 16,5 | 32    | 29,8 |
| All                 | 100,0     |      | 100,0 |      | 100,0 |      |

The study also highlighted that 20% of older employees felt that their working intensity was significantly reduced and 6% experienced some decrease in their field of competence. All in all, we can conclude that this is a vulnerable group who perhaps need special arrangements at work, such as longer breaks, or limited shift-work requirements.

*Summary:*

In recent years, due to the development of medical science and medical services, life expectancy has grown rapidly and so we now live longer than ever in human history. Although this should be one of the most important aims of all modern societies, this is not where the problem lies. The other source is that the birth rate continues to decline. These two factors together produce the phenomenon which is called the 'ageing society' – meaning that the proportion of older people in a given society continuously increases. The dependency ratio is, in consequence, significantly distorted. As always, the duty of the younger generation is to care for the older generation, but in this case the number of older people exceeds the number of the people of working age. This is known as a 'generation bomb'. This is, perhaps, a rather dangerous expression in that it could stimulate ageism but the situation is truly serious and needs an urgent solution. At the same time, however, great care is needed to avoid encouraging the younger generation to develop strong feelings of resentment against the older.

By way of summary, it is clear that, whilst we live longer, we do not work longer, as the average retirement age has changed little in recent years. Most countries have recognised the problem and have started to modify their pension systems. Postponing retirement may be one tool, but helping people to maintain their ability to work is still more important.

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# **LANGUAGE AND CULTURE IN THE SPECIAL SETTING OF A HOME FOR ELDERLY PEOPLE**

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## *1. Introduction*

This article contains some elements of my Phd research, focusing on the role of culture in linguistic mediation.

The subject of my Phd thesis was community interpreting in elderly care facilities in the Flemish province of Limburg.

This article describes how the consequences of the migration and integration phenomenon now manifest themselves in the ageing population of the Italian immigrants. I intend to focus on the special setting of homes for the elderly, where this ageing immigrant population is now beginning to find itself in a multilingual environment as they themselves persist or regress into their native languages.

## *2. Historical background*

The Italian community is the second largest foreign community in Limburg, after the Dutch. The explanation for this is economic in that many Italians arrived at the beginning of the 20th century to work as coal-miners, although, more precisely, the major wave of immigration came immediately after the Second World War when the Italian government needed raw materials (such as coal) and the Belgian government needed manpower to work in the mines. Consequently, the two governments signed a pact obliging the Italian government to send to Belgium a certain number of workers. In exchange the Italian government became Belgium's main partner in trading coal at below market price.

The immigrants in the first wave, especially the women who survived husbands who had died of work-related diseases, now find themselves in homes for the elderly without speaking or understanding Flemish, the official language in Limburg.

In order to communicate with the medical staff or the nurses, they have to make use of a community interpreter who translates from Italian into Flemish and vice versa.

### 3. *Communication and Culture*

According to Kondo and Tebble,<sup>1</sup> every communication which involves an interpreter has to be seen as an intercultural communication. In this it is not only language which plays an important role but also the cultural differences between the medical staff and the residents of the home. For example, the perception of illness and/or getting older and the strategies to cope with these two phenomena differ from culture to culture.

At this point it is useful to explain some concepts of culture and, even more important for our societies and for community interpreting, some concepts of interculturalism.

As Eveline van Asperen explains<sup>2</sup>, the concept of culture already existed in ancient Greece as the opposite of nature. In her historic analysis of the term 'culture', the Dutch author reminds us that there are several important currents which influenced the concept of culture: on the one hand, French enlightenment and, on the other, German romanticism, concentrating on the freedom of the individual and on the "Volksgesit", which means the collective wish of one nation. Both currents idealised the European lifestyle and went so far as to believe that the European model was superior to all other peoples' civilisations.

This changed at the end of the 19th century when, due to pressure from colonial governments, many researchers and scientists were sent to the colonies in order to study the lifestyle of these people. Direct contact with other peoples helped to overcome the myth of European superiority and was also the beginning of a new science, cultural anthropology, which concentrated on the study of non-occidental peoples regard their civilisations as equal to the occidental.

According to the American anthropologist Herskovits, an individual sees the world around him on the basis of his or her acculturation. It is culture which forms a human being and language is nothing more than a vehicle. Cultures have to be seen from the inside; otherwise the outside observer runs the risk of feeling superior.

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<sup>1</sup> Kondo & Tebble (1997): 150.

<sup>2</sup> Asperen (2003): 35.

Asperen enumerates five important aspects of culture [own translation]:

1. Individuals are connected because of their culture, their language and the values and standards of this culture.
2. Culture is an invisible steering mechanism which determines the way of thinking, acting and view of the world.
3. Culture is something limited to a geographical area and is connected to a historical past.
4. One cannot get to know a different culture from the outside; culture is absorbed by socialisation and one cannot judge other cultures.
5. Cultures all have the same value and have to be respected.<sup>3</sup>

What is the relationship between culture and communication?

Based on her empirical research, Asperen<sup>4</sup> sees a strong relationship between the two elements: the individual is born without a predefined culture and only by communicating will it acquire a certain culture. The fact that, in the past, there was no direct contact between cultures does not justify the opinion of some scientists who consider culture to be a closed system in which every group lived on its island sharing the same standards and values.

Such a concept of culture based on homogeneity succumbed to another model based on heterogeneity and dynamism. In this context, the author quotes the position of Sperber & Wilson. The two authors are of the opinion that every individual has a different vision of the universe. The same message may be of different relevance for two persons of the same culture depending on their experiences. This makes every individual unique.<sup>5</sup>

The concept of culture seen as an island has to be rethought. Giarelli bases himself on the classification of multicultural societies by Hannerz and asks himself if, nowadays, it still makes sense to speak about multiculturalism. In this multicultural society, he sees three important aspects [own translation]:

1. Those cultures change constantly; contradictions and innovations stem from the influence of cultural elements from the outside;

<sup>3</sup> Asperen (2003): 48.

<sup>4</sup> Asperen (2003): 51.

<sup>5</sup> Asperen (2003): 85.

2. Societies are open for globalisation so that their culture is no longer definable as a territorial entity, but is characterized by more than one centre of reference;
3. The result of the presence of many realities is not the coexistence of parallel cultures isolated from each other, but a process of creolisation. By exchange and inter-penetration, the cultures become more and more heterogeneous and, at the same time, connect themselves to the outside by means of networks of transnational communication.<sup>6</sup>

Gudykunst & Kim have developed an interesting model on intercultural communication based on the fact that communication between persons of different cultures is the same as between persons of the same subculture. They are convinced of the mutual influence of culture and communication. Only by taking into consideration this mutual influence can communication with persons of another culture work effectively.

This model sees communication as a process influenced by conceptual filters which, according to the authors, may be of a cultural, socio-cultural, psycho-cultural and environmental nature.<sup>7</sup>

#### 4. *Communication in the medical field*

What happens in the medical sector where the concept of illness and the medical knowledge of a foreign patient differs from that of an autochthon patient and from that of the medical staff.

Gumperz<sup>8</sup> sees communication as a social activity in which the participating speakers have different levels of power and mobility. The doctor, because of his medical skills, has much more power than the patient. Further, the perceptions of the medical problem differ when seen from the viewpoint of the doctor or of the patient.

Merlini and Favaron<sup>9</sup> say that asymmetry is of great importance since, in a conversation between physician and patient, there is an unequal distribution of knowledge due not only to the medical context but also to the type of communication which follows a certain structure.<sup>10</sup>

The physician taking part in the interaction often has a different perception of illness than the patient, has been trained completely

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<sup>6</sup> Giarelli (2008): 30-31.

<sup>7</sup> Gudykunst & Kim (1997): 44.

<sup>8</sup> Gumperz (1982): 1-7.

<sup>9</sup> Merlini & Favaron (2007): 105.

<sup>10</sup> Meyer (2003): 168-169.

differently from the patient and bases his decisions on rational and objective criteria. The physician plays his role in an institutionalised context. Kaufert and Putsch<sup>11</sup> explain that, in the physician- patient relationship, the physician has the responsibility to solve the problem and so plays the dominant role, influencing the roles of patient and interpreter.

Which role does language play in this relationship between physician and patient? In this case, language has to be seen in the context of a social relationship and not as a grammatical and lexical system of which the society avails itself in order to communicate. When communicating with the patient, the physician finds himself in an institutionalised context, using an institutionalised language which depends on his cultural background. Language in this context has to be understood as described by Bourdieu as a "good" being offered on a "linguistic market".<sup>12</sup>

How is the communication carried out on this market of linguistic exchange? The communication takes place in the context of the market on which the speaker, consciously or not, takes certain decisions to place his goods on the market.

[...] the use of language, that is to say, both in terms of manner and content, depends on the social position of the speaker who dictates the way in which he wishes to use the language of the institution – the official, orthodox, legitimate vocabulary. This means using the proper instruments of expression, and so participating in the authority of the institution, which makes all the difference [...].<sup>13</sup>

This innovative system of linguistic exchange is far from the classical linguistic system and helps to better understand the power of the physician and the cultural mediator when performing their tasks.

##### 5. *Communication in the presence of a community interpreter*

Returning to my research, it was important for me to show that the community interpreter not only performs linguistic tasks, translating from one language to the other, but finds himself in a triadic communication situation, where culture plays an important role.

For my research aims it was important to find out whether the elderly Italians had different needs for assistance compared to the Dutch-

<sup>11</sup> Kaufert & Putsch (1997): 72.

<sup>12</sup> Bourdieu (1982): 16.

<sup>13</sup> Bourdieu (1982): 107.

speaking population, the Flemish people. Unfortunately, only a few studies were carried out on the specific needs of the old immigrant population and two of these show that there is in the first place a different perception of illness; a different needs for treatment due to different nutritional and lifestyle habits. For example, there is the risk that elderly Turkish men are much more affected by lung cancer than elderly Dutch people, due to the fact that Turkish people smoke much more than elderly Dutch people).<sup>14</sup>

The community interpreter has to try to balance the asymmetry between physician and patient, taking care to deliver the message of the physician in a language which the patient understands, without leaving out any important medical facts.

The perception of illness varies between cultures. The community interpreter has to take this into consideration when, e.g., delivering bad news to a patient or a family. Often the community interpreter has to abandon his passive role of interpreter and bridge cultural differences which the medical staff does not know of or does not deem important and which the patient is unable to communicate due to missing language skills. These circumstances may refer to different nutritional habits, e.g., Muslim patients not wishing to eat pork or other cultural habits, such as an elderly Italian lady not wishing to be washed by a man.

All these tasks cannot be performed by the physician in direct communication with the patient since he does not have enough knowledge of the cultural background of the patient, nor by family members who translate between medical staff and patient because they do not know medical language and the patterns of this language in an institutionalised context.

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<sup>14</sup> KWF Kankerbestrijding (2006). Alloctonen en er: sociaal-culturele en epidemiologische aspecten. Amsterdam: Signaleringscommissie Kanker van KWF Kankerbestrijding. RVZ Raad voor the Volksgezondheid en Zorg (2000). Interculturalisatie van de gezondheidszorg. Zoetermeer: RVZ.

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# **INTERGENERATIONAL LEARNING AS A MEANS OF INCREASING SOCIAL CAPITAL WITHIN THE LIFELONG LEARNING CONTEXT**

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## *Introduction*

The recent world crisis has created preconditions for a new paradigm, a new epoch of creativity and enterprise. In the process of change, new economic and social models are developing. To ensure a new era of prosperity, it will be essential to have a system of education and development able to mobilise and exploit human creativity. In these conditions forms of education, cooperation or partnership which can actively develop the creative spirit to provide an open, dynamic, human-oriented professional environment must be promoted. Intellectual capital, and, moreover, social capital are also becoming more significant. The role of partnership and its strategy is growing, as, with the growth of solid knowledge, what is needed is to use more innovative ways and ideas to maintain competitiveness. One of these lies in how knowledge is passed from one generation to another – applying intergenerational learning.

According to data from the Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, the size of the population of Latvia is continuously declining, whilst that of people over working age is rising. The demographic load in 2010 was 514, in 2011 it was 558 and in 2012 it reached 573 per 1,000 of the total population. The number over working age is 1.57 times higher than of children and teenagers.

This paper focuses on one of the issues stressed in connection with the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations – that of enhancing cooperation and solidarity between generations. This could be done by supporting mutual learning, paying special attention to inter-generational learning. This must be implemented in all stages of education – from the early years of learning to the university level. The paper analyses intergenerational learning and social capital, their mutual interrelationship and their connection with lifelong learning in the university context.

## 1. *Theoretical Framework*

The theoretical framework is formed by the theories of intergenerational learning and social capital. Although intergenerational learning is accepted as the oldest method of informal learning<sup>1</sup>, in today's societies it has come to apply to both formal and non-formal education<sup>2</sup>. Intergenerational learning is regarded as an all-encompassing concept for several kinds of human relationship across different generations – one which involves both teaching and learning<sup>3</sup>. It is an important part of lifelong learning in which generations cooperate to develop skills, acquire knowledge and create values. It helps in transferring skills and knowledge to other generations and fosters positive relationships between different generations. As intergenerational learning involves mutually beneficial activities for different generations, also covering different cultures, it promotes greater understanding and respect between generations, so contributing to building more cohesive communities<sup>4</sup>. Hence intergenerational learning can contribute to community safety, health and wellbeing<sup>5</sup> and foster a new entrepreneurial culture through the activities and encounters of younger and older colleagues in creating a common business, sharing knowledge in the workplace<sup>6</sup> and negotiating with clients and business partners. For intergenerational learning to be beneficial, it has to be "inclusive for all, and learning outcomes should involve both generations"<sup>7</sup>.

As intergenerational learning models are becoming more culturally diverse, they are closely connected with the social capital paradigm<sup>8</sup>. According to the World Bank, social capital means institutes, relationships and norms which form qualitative and quantitative social interaction in society. However, social capital is not simply a set of social institutions, since it encompasses connections between people. The strength of these connections depends upon people's mutual trust and their behaviour. To manage the development of social capital, several factors have to be taken into consideration, including the prevailing mood of society. (In Latvia today this is one of total pessimism). It is also necessary to take into account the crisis in human thinking relating to the meaning of their work. Employees' work motivation is significant since people are seeking for sense in their life and work. If employees can see the sense of their work, they are more satisfied with the work and more involved in it. Christiani & Scheelen<sup>9</sup> argue that

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<sup>1</sup> Pinto (2010):1; Pinto (2012):1; Hoff (2007):126; Newman & Hatton-Yeo (2008): 31.

<sup>2</sup> McKechnie (2012): 4-5.

<sup>3</sup> Gadsden & Hall (1996): 3.

<sup>4</sup> Boström (2003); Wermundsen (2007).

<sup>5</sup> Thomas (2009): 8-9.

<sup>6</sup> Pinto (2010): 3.

<sup>7</sup> McKechnie (2012): 5.

<sup>8</sup> Newman & Hatton-Yeo (2008): 33; Wermundsen (2007): 37-40.

<sup>9</sup> Christiani & Scheelen (2002): 8.

people can be truly happy for the long-term if they have an opportunity to demonstrate their real talent and develop their strengths.

The studies<sup>10</sup> point to the interrelationship between concepts of inter-generational learning and social capital. They both refer to the resources of social networks for the individual, shared norms and values between members of social networks as well as mutual trust between the individual and the network. At the same time intergenerational learning can provide a basis for lifelong learning from a social capital perspective<sup>11</sup>.

In the university context intergenerational learning comprises formal and informal learning. Formal learning is connected with lectures, seminars, workshops and internship training where students learn from their professors, lecturers and training supervisors. In the formal learning context "inter-generational activities can be developed to support virtually any curriculum subject and academic skill"<sup>12</sup>. Informal intergenerational learning occurs when working with professors on research projects as well as in informal discussions. Informal intergenerational learning also occurs during internship training when students meet more experienced colleagues, learning from them and their training supervisor.

Social capital is, in essence, connected with Lifelong Learning<sup>13</sup>. Considering the connection between social capital, Lifelong and Life-wide Learning, and different generations learning from each other, the authors have adapted Boström's<sup>14</sup> model of intergenerational learning for application in university studies.

## 2. *Research Framework*

### 2.1. *Methodology*

The present study was conducted at Turība University, Latvia in 2012. The purpose of the research was to study intergenerational learning opportunities at a university and find ways to promote intergenerational learning.

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<sup>10</sup> Wermundsen (2007): 3-40; Newman & Hatton-Yeo (2008): 31-39; McKechnie (2012): 4-14.

<sup>11</sup> Newman & Hatton-Yeo (2008): 33.

<sup>12</sup> Kaplan (2001): 6.

<sup>13</sup> Cropley (1980); Aspin & Chapman (2001); Boström (2003): 4.

<sup>14</sup> Boström (2002): 510-524.

The research questions are:

1. What is the relationship between intergenerational learning and social capital in the university context?
2. How productive is the created multidimensional model of intergenerational learning for university studies?

A quantitative approach, using a questionnaire containing Likert scale questions and ranking questions, was selected to determine the situation regarding the development of social capital in studies<sup>15</sup>. This approach, applying a survey and semi-structured interviews, was used in order to understand the differences in the phenomena studied<sup>16</sup>. In order to ensure data validity and reliability, we used data triangulation<sup>17</sup> by means of a questionnaire and a survey of students, and semi-structured interviews of professors. Quantitative data were analysed, using SPSS software (frequencies, means, ranking, Cronbach's Alpha test, One-way Anova test). Qualitative data were analysed by means of qualitative content analysis<sup>18</sup>.

## *2.2. Context of the Surveys*

Turiba University, founded in 1993, is the largest higher education institution in Latvia. The principle that decision-making in business needs to be based on reliable information ensures success – which is closely connected with the research undertaken at the university.

The quality and validity of surveys carried out by students depend on the values of the university, the institution's purposefulness and management culture – as well as on basic integrity. The core values of Turiba University comprise liberty (which involves the freedom to study and pursue a profession), competence (being prepared to admit a mistake and to study the world for a lifetime) and enterprise (acting positively since each step will then bring new opportunities and ideas, will teach and strengthen you). Students' surveys are organised annually, and invariably observe these core values. Such an approach provides positive results, since surveys offer a way in which the study programme can be improved, and the virtues of collaboration and mutual trust also need the basis of a successful university.

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<sup>15</sup> Turner (2007): 119.

<sup>16</sup> Pipere (2011): 89.

<sup>17</sup> Flick (2004): 178-183.

<sup>18</sup> Mayring (2004): 266-269.

### 2.3. Sample

The sample of the study was composed based on the approach of Trochim and Donnelly<sup>19</sup>. An intentional sample of 65 students who had had some internship training was created. Of these students, 11 were aged 19-24, 52 were aged 20-24 and two students were in the 25-34 bracket. Most had had their training in the tourism industry (52 students). A further intentional sample of 6 professors delivering different courses was built up – one Professor of Tourism, one of Management and Lecturers in IT, French and German. The sample was formed by selecting professors and lecturers of different age groups, from different fields and with different work experience. The age groups covered were: 25-34 (1 Lecturer); 45-54 (1 Professor and 1 Lecturer); and 55-64 (1 Professor and 1 Lecturer). Their work experience in a university ranged from 7 to 32 years.

### 3. Research Findings

The findings indicate that students understand the role of social capital in contemporary entrepreneurship and social capital is developed in their studies. The findings further show the role of professors and training supervisors in the development of social capital and reveal that it has a connection with Lifelong Learning. However, findings also show the need to carry out more profound and versatile work with students in formal and non-formal education, so that they can better understand what leadership is and how it develops.

Table 1 summarises the means of the findings obtained in the students' questionnaire (refer to Table 1). The higher the mean, the more do students agree with the statement in the questionnaire.

Table 1. Students' opinions on interpersonal relationships in studies

| No. | Issue under investigation   | Mean (max 6) |
|-----|---|--------------|
| 1   | People's mutual relationship influences the competitiveness of an enterprise  | 5.1538       |
| 2   | Professors influence students' culture of behaviour   | 3.9846       |
| 3   | Students recognise that, in the lectures, they have learnt from Professors something new – i.e, outside the lecture field | 4.9538       |
| 4   | The value of lectures grows with the age of the Professors  | 3.0769       |
| 5   | Students recognise that they consciously develop their interpersonal skills   | 4.3077       |

<sup>19</sup> Trochim & Donnelly (2007).

|    |   |        |
|----|---|--------|
| 6  | Students recognise that, ideally, they would like to resemble their professors                                    | 3.7077 |
| 7  | People's clients and business partners influence the competitiveness of an enterprise                             | 5.5692 |
| 8  | A student's internship in an enterprise influences a student's culture of behaviour                               | 4.6769 |
| 9  | Students recognise that their training supervisor was their educator in the specialisation                        | 4.5385 |
| 10 | The training quality depended on the age of the training supervisor   | 3.3846 |
| 11 | During training students become aware that interpersonal relationships are significant in for successful business | 5.0923 |
| 12 | After their internship students start to develop their own interpersonal skills more consciously                  | 4.3385 |

Students' answers to questions 1, 7 and 11 indicate that they are aware of the increasing role of social capital. Answers to questions 3, 8 and 9 indicate that social capital is being developed in their studies. Both professors and (especially) training supervisors have a significant role in the exploration, comprehension and development of social capital. However, it was not revealed that students more highly evaluate older professors and supervisors than young ones, hence recognising greater added value to their work.

In general, the One-way Anova Test showed no significant differences in its findings. Analysing the data according to students' age, the training institution and the job done training, in some cases significant differences appeared in ranking questions. Students undergoing training in hotels ranked creativity lower than students in other training institutions. Surprisingly, students working in cultural establishments and museums ranked openness in 9th place only. Those working in catering ranked positivism more highly than others whilst students working as receptionists rated creativity rather low (positions 10, 9, 6). Cronbach's Alpha test confirmed high data reliability ( $\alpha = .734$ ) and validity ( $s = .692 - .740$ ).

Students evaluated professors' experience highly, and in most cases they wrote that, apart from the course content, they had learnt most from their professors in terms of their experience in different situations. They also wrote that they had learnt the code of behaviour and business etiquette (Student 3), attitude towards work and thirst for knowledge (Student 13), an ability to listen to others (Student 17). Student 22 summarises an opinion expressed by several others as: "I have learnt to communicate well with surrounding people, as well as a sense of responsibility towards the work to be done". In general, students mention more work-related experience that they had acquired from their professors than social situations and traits of character. Only some students recognised that they had adopted a professor's traits of

character, e.g., behaviour, attitude, understanding (Student 31), interpersonal and communication skills (Student 51), respect for other people (Students 54 and 57), a friendly attitude towards people (Student 60), a sense of responsibility and enterprise (Student 65). The majority of students could not say whether professors had learnt anything from them, as shown by the following statements:

- I think that I am the only one who can learn something; not the professor.”(Student 22)
- Professors teach students. I don’t think they can learn anything from them. (Student 35)

Those students who agreed that professors had learnt in a mutual relationship with students, mostly pointed to: an ability to listen to others (Students 1 and 4), a skill to communicate with the younger generation (Students 13 and 44), a positive attitude (Student 15), technical skills (Student 25), patience (Student 26) and looking at things from another perspective (Students 59 and 65). Some, however, agreed that informal learning takes place everywhere and at any time: “I believe that in life we can learn from every individual we meet and so I consider that professors can also learn from our experience which we have shared during lectures.” (Student 39)

Intergenerational learning also occurred during students’ internship training where students under the supervision of their supervisor worked together with colleagues of different generations and contacted clients. Students admitted that the training period had been beneficial both to them and their training supervisor. Students had acquired not only practical skills but had also, in informal learning, gained social experience. Students admitted that they had learnt persistence, accuracy, creativity (Student 1), experience (Students 2 and 6), communication skills (Students 3, 29 and 44), team working (Students 10, 13, 14, 22, 40 and 59), a positive attitude to work (Students 15 and 34), the need to take responsibility and show initiative (Student 21) and to be open and friendly with colleagues and clients (Student 47). Students consider that training supervisors have learnt from them as well: “Training supervisors learn that all people are not the same; everyone must be treated individually.” (Student 4)

According to students’ replies in the survey, training supervisors admitted that the greatest advantage had been the opportunity to work together with the younger generation and pass on their experience, feel useful and acquire new social experience. Students were satisfied that training supervisors recognised their skills and admitted that they had adopted positive thinking from the students (Students 20, 22 and 27) and had become more creative (Student 26). Student 23

characterised intergenerational learning by revealing the change in training supervisor's opinion:

My training supervisor has learnt that age does not matter. A young employee might be willing to work and be an attractive and enthusiastic employee, including a young person without previous experience. (Student 23)

Students also admitted that training supervisors had developed their team working skills in contact with younger employees (Student 41), had improved communication skills with Russian tourists (Student 53), had understood the role of human relationships in work-related situations (Student 44) and had learnt enthusiasm and how to promote innovative thinking (Student 65). As a result of intergenerational learning, both students and supervisors drew conclusions regarding people's age and mutual relationship:

Problems can be solved in very different ways and age does not matter. People's knowledge and experience matter. People are so different. The same age category does not mean similar work abilities and attitudes. (Student 49)

Professors' semi-structured interviews validated the findings of the students' questionnaire and survey. The professors, similarly to students, considered that people's mutual relationship influences competitiveness of an enterprise (mean 5.4). Another similarity was exposed regarding the value of lectures. More students (mean 3.0769) and professors (mean 3.2) disagreed than agreed that the value of lectures increases with the age of the professors. The difference emerged in the relation to whether or not professors influenced students' culture of behaviour. Contrary to student opinion, professors agreed strongly with this statement (mean 4.6). Although the student survey showed that some students considered that professors had learnt nothing from them, professors agreed that they had learnt from students (mean 4.6):

- I have learnt from foreign students to look at things from the perspective of other cultures. (Professor of Tourism)
- I have improved my communication skills and acquired an ability to adapt to different situations. (IT lecturer)
- I understand youth's approach to life, although I did not learn directly in a formal way. (Professor of Management)

This points to intergenerational learning as students also emphasised certain features which they believed that professors had learnt from

them. The earlier statements also indicate that professors have learnt communication and inter-personal skills. Professors, similarly to students, found that the relationship between students and professors in a formal setting is positive, trustful, respectful and creative. However, the Professor of Tourism argued that the relationship is gradually changing. It is becoming more unceremonious, familiar in certain cases this may hamper learning outcomes. All professors agree that an informal relationship is good. However, the Professor of Management stresses that "It is not customary for Latvia to have a tradition of meeting professors informally – at a professor's home – as happens in some European countries".

Regarding the relationship between professors and training supervisors, the professors indicated that the relationship is quite formal or neutral. Only the IT Lecturer found it constructive, target-oriented and formal. The findings pointed to a good mutual relationship between students and professors, students and training supervisors and good collegial relationships between professors and supervisors. These contribute to personality development and intergenerational learning in the Life-Long Learning context.

#### 4. *Discussion*

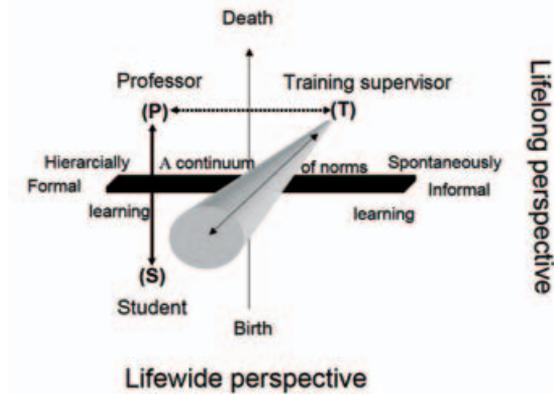
We should consider the character of Life long and Life-wide Learning as comprising two dimensions of learning: the vertical time dimension – education from birth to death – and the horizontal space dimension – formal and non-formal education and informal learning<sup>20</sup>. The mutual relationship between Lifelong, Life-wide and Intergenerational Learning, as well as the different forms of university studies, the authors adapted Boström's<sup>21</sup> multi-dimensional model of intergenerational learning for university context (see Figure 1).

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<sup>20</sup> Dave (1976): 31.

<sup>21</sup> Boström (2002): 510-524.

Figure 1. Multidimensional model of intergenerational learning applied at university studies



Similarly to Boström’s model, “the Lifelong and Life wide perspectives of Learning are represented as extending along two axes. The vertical axis denotes the Lifelong perspective, representing the total life cycle from birth to death. The horizontal axis denotes the Life wide perspective, described as two dimensions where one represents formal and informal learning, and the other a continuum of norms”<sup>22</sup> or social capital.

As stated above, in the university context both formal and informal learning are implemented, and so the adapted model includes both. Individual relationship ensuring informal learning between the student (S) and the training supervisor and colleagues (T) is mapped out by the arrow which symbolises two-way learning, stressing that the learning process is beneficial for both parties. The main task of internship training is to provide students with an opportunity to acquire practical skills and competencies in the study field and this process occurs under the guidance of the training supervisor. The cone symbolises the transmission of knowledge, skills, competencies, experience between the training supervisor (T) and the student (S). The relationships between the student (S) and the professor (P), and between the professor (P) and the training supervisor (T) are also marked by arrows. The lines between the student (S) and the professor (P) and between the student (S) and the training supervisor (T) are marked more heavily since a greater age difference is observed between these two actors than between the professor (P) and the training supervisor (T). The formal aspect of learning shows itself between the student (S) and the professor (P) and so it is depicted on the left-hand side. As in the enterprise learning occurs in both formal and informal ways, and the learning acquired during a student’s internship is depicted on the right-hand side of the figure. There also occurs knowledge and experience

<sup>22</sup> Boström (2003): 24.

transmission between the professor (P) and the supervisor (T) in relation to carrying out a student's training programme, reporting on a student's success, etc., and so this relationship is marked by a dashed arrow as their meetings are rare and quite formal. "Social capital is created by the existence of closure in social networking"<sup>23</sup> involving students and adults (professors, supervisors, colleagues). Trust, communication, mutual collaboration and knowledge dissemination characterising social capital are exposed as social networking. Hence intergenerational learning in the model ensures Lifelong Learning in the academic context in a social capital perspective.

### *Conclusion*

Social capital enhances interpersonal communication. The process of social capital creation and development simultaneously creates interpersonal culture and human wisdom. Becoming wise, people not only understand the necessity to acquire new knowledge, new experience, but people become process- dependent in the positive sense – people turn into professional thinkers. This means that their motivation to be actively involved in lifelong learning systems increases. According to Schumacher "humanity is too clever to survive without wisdom"<sup>24</sup>. Wisdom concerns how we use our knowledge. Its essence is discernment of right from wrong, helpful from harmful, truth from delusion<sup>25</sup>.

The findings of our research show that students regard the following features as the most useful for them: communication skills, trust, an ability to listen to others and positivism. They also highly evaluate accuracy, tolerance and leadership. Surprisingly, students evaluate openness and creativity relatively lowly – which prompts us to look for a reason. This trend may be unpleasant, even an emotionally painful experience, for other people in the future as 3T (Talent that is exposed in creative activity; Technology and Tolerance) have the leading role in the future of humanity. Human creativity is unlimited and it is enhanced by social capital and human capital. Creativity as a driving force of the innovation process should be enhanced, and it is favoured by partnership and openness. As the demographic or social load in Latvia increases year by year, it is essential to turn the ageing process into a process which promotes creativity. This could be done by promoting solidarity between different generations and the use of accumulated wisdom. Hence the contribution of universities to creating an understanding of social capital and its development as an essential component of contemporary paradigm is vital.

<sup>23</sup> Boström (2003): 24.

<sup>24</sup> Schumacher (1997).

<sup>25</sup> Russell (2012).

In its essence social capital is connected with Lifelong Learning and, to manage this, universities may apply Boström's multidimensional model of inter-generational learning. However, the findings from the student questionnaire and survey indicate that we must improve the process of developing students' value system using both formal education and informal learning. It is necessary to determine the factors which influence students' work on their personality development and to create methodology on how to promote the development of students' self-analysis competences, creativity, as well as learning-to-learn.

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# HOW IS AGEING ADDRESSED IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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## 1. Introduction

In the mission statement of the European Network of Ageing Studies we can read the following:

One of the greatest challenges that today's societies face is their radical demographic change resulting from the expanding human lifespan. The ever-increasing group of older people prompts a thorough reflection on the ways in which we experience and organise human life, more specifically, on the cultural meanings of the ageing process, and the theories and policies on ageing.<sup>1</sup>

Sociologists and social work professionals would, in all likelihood, agree with the above statement except for one adjective, namely 'radical'. We have been facing an increasing lifespan and a continuous socio-demographic shift in western societies for many decades. It seems that only now are we facing the consequences of these changes, such as states not being in a position to pay for retirement benefits any longer, but are we becoming aware that such changes need action?. The current economic situation forces every one of us to look at ageing and old age differently. According to statistics, more than a quarter of Austria's population will be over 65 in 2030.<sup>2</sup> No longer can anyone say "the old" and, by doing so, categorise them and put them in the group of "other". We will have to look for ways to include elderly people in society in a meaningful way. At the University of Applied Sciences JOANNEUM (FHJ) Graz/Austria we address ageing in a very specific way: The Department of Social Work offers a Master programme which focuses on "ageing and social work with adult and elderly clients".

At the Department of Social Work the term 'ageing' is not used to specify a certain age group. In fact, no exact age group can be named, as age is an attribution by society, on the one hand, and by individuals, on the other. Taking this postulate into consideration, then being elderly is either attributed or attributing and cannot be ascribed to people of a certain age.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ageingstudies.eu>, retrieved on: April 4, 2012

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.statistik.at/web\\_de/dynamic/statistiken/bevoelkerung/067546](http://www.statistik.at/web_de/dynamic/statistiken/bevoelkerung/067546), retrieved on: November 5, 2012

## 2. General trends

Education, research and development as well as continuing education at the Department of Social Work are focused on client work as well as organisational, managerial and leadership tasks. Whilst, post-WWII, social work referred mainly to youth welfare work, we are addressing a much wider field and diversified target groups if we talk about modern social work today. Among these professional fields we can find the relatively young field of work with adult or elderly clients, which was only been recognised internationally about ten years ago.

In the 21st century, professional social work is facing a precarious situation. It is characterised by increasing client needs as well as demands made by client families, which goes hand in hand with rising costs. On the other hand, the profession has not escaped the current financial crisis: public funding has been drastically reduced in the province of Styria<sup>3</sup>, namely by 25%, and is not likely to be increased in the near future, considering the economic situation. Hence, the means available have to be used responsibly and social agencies are held accountable for the measures and interventions they set and how they allocate money.<sup>4</sup>

We assume that, in postmodern society, the trend towards less individual assistance, e.g. through family networks, will continue, but this will have to be compensated by increased public and private social services. Taking into account the double mandate under which social work operates, namely accountability towards both the client and the state, a holistic understanding of the situation will be vital.<sup>5</sup>

## 3. Curriculum for Bachelor and Master studies: Ageing

The work with adult and elderly clients is based on a multitude of professional social fields. Therefore, students will have to be trained according to a generalist principle before specialising in training for working with elderly clients. In their studies at FHJ, students acquire theoretical, methodological and practical skills which provide a solid basis for their professional careers.

Specific courses offered in the Bachelor programme in the form of both lectures and seminars are:

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<sup>3</sup> [http://www.steiermark-sozialarbeit.at/index.php?option=com\\_frontpage&Itemid=1](http://www.steiermark-sozialarbeit.at/index.php?option=com_frontpage&Itemid=1)  
Löschnigg/Scheipl (1999). «Sozialinitiativen», in: Österreich Sozial. Wien: BMAGS.

<sup>5</sup> Rauschenbach T. (1992). Soziale Arbeit in der industriellen Risikogesellschaft. Berlin: Luchterhand.

- Adult and elderly clients (4 ECTS points)<sup>6</sup>
- Chronically and mentally ill clients (4 ECTS points)
- Migrants (4 ECTS points)

Specific courses offered in our Master programme focusing on working with adults and elderly clients are:

- Generations living together (4 ECTS points)
- Gender-specific aspects of ageing (3 ECTS points)
- Adults in retirement (3 ECTS points)
- Health, sickness and disability in age (8 ECTS points)
- Social work with the oldest (5 ECTS points)

#### *4. Philosophy of ageing at the Department of Social Work FHJ*

To an extraordinarily high extent ageing is influenced by culture and society. Therefore, the concepts of ageing are diverse; what some cultures see as “successful ageing”, which is a term that in itself begs further discussion but which cannot be examined in more detail in this paper, might be seen in a totally different light by another culture. What can be said about ageing and reflects a more broadly applicable truth is that whether a positive development for adults who have to live through transitions in their lives, e.g. from a working life to retirement, is possible or not depends greatly on the society involved. Does it have a reflected attitude towards living and ageing? Does it enable and support transitional processes which people cannot avoid going through in their lives? Vital questions to be asked are: Do elderly people have “agency” (the power to make independent decisions in their society)? Do they have access to knowledge and resources? Can they participate as they wish in a society?

A policy of ageing addresses two sides: political regulations and the services offered to the elderly on the one hand, and, on the other, “political agency” for the elderly themselves. This, in itself, can and will show conflict on one side or the other regarding objectives in securing and strengthening social integration, especially if it comes to a question of risk distribution. Ageing in itself bears risks but there are dis-

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<sup>6</sup> ECTS = European Credit Transfer System, see: [http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/ects\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/ects_en.htm), on: 08. Nov. 2012

proportionally higher risks for those who age in a state of being socially vulnerable. The structural change of ageing in postmodern society shows a polarisation between positive and negative ageing. Therefore, social work professionals will have to analyse existing disparities, social disadvantages as well as material and immaterial privileges most carefully to develop equal opportunities for all ages.

### 5. *Current trends in ageing*

In our research at FHJ we have identified the following trends<sup>7</sup>:

- increasing life expectancy
- increasing population ratio of the over-60s
- lack of support in post-professional life
- feminisation of ageing
- above-average increase of aged migrants
- increasing population ratio of the oldest (over 80)
- increasing numbers of in-patients in care-facilities

Hand in hand with these trends go certain social risks:

- lack of social networks (collapse of traditional family structures)
- social isolation and disintegration
- dire financial situation and poverty
- need for social assistance
- high risk of illness
- (early) disability
- lack of perspectives
- scarcity of old-age provision for "non-normal" biographies

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<sup>7</sup> Loidl/Posch (2005). „Sozialarbeit mit alten Menschen: ein junges Berufsfeld.“ in: Strategien gegen soziale Ausgrenzung alter Menschen. Graz: Druckhaus Thalerhof. 153-161.

Further, taking into account the oldest in our society, i.e. people who pass 80, another set of risks needs to be taken into consideration:

- isolation
- chronic illness
- multi-morbidity
- dementia
- increased need for specific care
- dependency on assistance

The oldest in our society deserve particular attention in respect of solidarity and the current socio-political discussion, seeing that the EU's population of this group amounts to 18.8 million today and will rise to 34.7 million by 2030.<sup>8</sup>

A major focus and objective must be to ensure the quality of life of the elderly so as to offer an alternative to merely medicating them. As the quality of life depends to a great extent on material resources, social work tries to develop and put into practice suitable, milieu-specific concepts to make the concept of "agency" possible for the aged.

Apart from medical assistance and care, other issues are also increasingly important for the oldest and the frail of our society:

- financial assistance
- material substance (e.g. savings, property)
- contacts, networks, cooperation
- learning facilities
- participation
- space for creativity and recuperation
- support through family and neighbourhood

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<sup>8</sup> EU Commission Green Paper "Confronting demographic change: a new solidarity between the generations", [http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/social\\_situation/green\\_paper\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/social_situation/green_paper_en.html), retrieved on: 13 November 2012

What will remain and become increasingly a challenge for the social work profession is to satisfy client needs whilst doing justice to the providers of financial funding, regardless of whether funding comes from private or public sources. SROI, the Social Return on Investment, has found its way into the language of social services. The days of limitless spending have been replaced by responsible financial appropriation and the careful planning of suitable services.

## 6. *Future trends*

Social work with adult and elderly clients is a field which works closely together with other professions; interdisciplinary work has gradually become more important. Not only does social work cooperate closely with care and health professions, which are clearly related fields, but also with, for example, information technology. Further, on a non-professional level, a generation mix and a normalisation of ageing will have to take place, i.e. dialogue between generations has to be encouraged and the awareness needs to be raised that no one escapes the ageing process and will, therefore, after no more than a few decades, belong to the elderly themselves.

We hope that social work can facilitate and further a number of processes:

- individualisation of services in both in-patient and out-patient facilities
- good and efficient coordination of referrals, psycho-social counselling, case-management and family assistance
- increased offers of functional, reliable technologies
- suitable educational and cultural offers
- promotion of self-help groups
- support in self-determined and independent actions
- preservation of skills and empowerment
- assistance in planning and directing charity work
- assistance in goal development
- nurture of "learned hopefulness"

- political change
- community participation

## 7. Conclusion

This paper has endeavoured to demonstrate that ageing cannot be reduced to SIMPLE biographical ageing. Cultural factors, background, individual biographies, the existence of material and immaterial resources (or their lack) play decisive roles in how well one can age and the extent to which agency and, hence, continued participation in society, can thrive. The complexity of client needs requires tailor-made solutions, which are hard to realise in a world which is struggling with a global financial crisis. The careful planning of measures to assist ageing, the skills training of professionals and an efficient collaboration among them, an open and productive dialogue between service providers and policy-makers, and finally, no less importantly, a general awareness that all ageing concerns need to be fostered.

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# **THE ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE DIMENSION IN THE SOCALISATION OF NEW EMPLOYEES (THE CASE OF LITHUANIA)**

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## *Abstract*

It is often noted in scientific literature that many employees find it difficult to adapt to constant changes in the work environment. The research of the authors of the article reveals that one of the causes of this is insufficient attention to socialisation. This article describes, at a theoretical conceptual level, the importance of the induction of a new employee into the culture of the organisation for successful socialisation. The authors apply the results of their empirical research and analyses the practice of the socialisation process in an organisation in the context of the problem discussed. The benefit of successful socialisation to both the organisation and the employees' loyalty is substantiated in the article. The authors' research shows that the employee socialisation process in Lithuanian organisations lacks any systematic quality, the reason being the fact that, very frequently, new employees are not adequately integrated into the organisational culture. Recommendations for the development of the socialisation process are given on the basis of scientific publications and the authors' research, with the result that appropriate procedures for better adaptation to a changing environment can be created.

Key words: socialisation stages: anticipatory socialisation, adaptation, integration; organisational culture.

## *1. Introduction*

Research into an employee's loyalty to the organisation conducted in Lithuania reveal that the index of attachment is one of the lowest in Europe, as, on average, one employee in three in Lithuania leaves the organisation due to a lack of socialisation in the work environment<sup>1</sup>.

Management professionals started to develop a serious interest in the topics of employee socialisation in the 1970s, when it was recognised that the transfer of essential professional skills, knowledge and values

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.vaiciulis.lt/lojalumo-prasme-ir-verte&http://www.vaiciulis.lt/index.php?id=4>

of the organisational culture and, also, employee self-development are equally important in the socialisation process<sup>2</sup>. An analysis of the practices of Lithuanian organisations shows that, in many organisations, the emphasis lies primarily on the importance of orienting new employees (the transfer of knowledge and skills, the awareness of work order requirements etc.)<sup>3</sup>. At the same time, for a variety of reasons such as a lack of management competence, inappropriate management style, etc., insufficient attention is paid to the psychological element of employee socialisation as a value-related element of organisational culture<sup>4</sup>.

In general, specialists in Lithuanian organisations have only begun to pay more attention to the socialisation of their employees in the last decade, which entails inevitably that this process has been poorly perceived and its interpretation is still complicated.

In a rarer case, the consequences of employee socialisation are related to the impact of the organisational culture on the employees' loyalty – in other words, on the situation when an employee becomes committed to the organisation. Long-term organisational observations strongly indicate that answers can be found at the theoretical level of the problem. On the other hand, the roots of the variety of interpretations of the socialisation process are determined by different practices, the consequences of which are varying levels of commitment (loyalty) by an employee to an organisation.

The majority of specialists agree that successful socialisation is characterised by job satisfaction, high work motivation, productive performance, a desire to cooperate, to pursue a career and, finally, a desire to contribute to the implementation of the organisation's goals. Successful socialisation brings mutual benefits, when the organisation forms a committed and competent team – which is vital under the conditions of the competitive economy<sup>5</sup>. Meanwhile, unsuccessful socialisation results in job dissatisfaction, a negative socio-psychological climate in the organisation and absenteeism, which reduces the work efficiency of the organisation.

The aim of this article is to reveal and evaluate the prevailing tendencies in Lithuanian organisations by means of theoretical provisions discussed in scientific sources on the correlation of employee socialisation

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<sup>2</sup> Van Maanen& Schein (1979), Steers (1991), Robbins (2006).

<sup>3</sup> It is believed that such situations are not accidental, since, in some jobs, more attention is devoted to a person's professional competence and knowledge of the work than of the organisation. (Sakalas, 1998: 132-134, Bakanauskienė, 2008: 178-179).

<sup>4</sup> Grazulis&Baziene (2009): 344.

<sup>5</sup> Robbins (2006): 292, Grazulis&Baziene (2009): 345.

with the organisational culture and the analysis of the results of the authors' own research.

## *2. Varying attitudes towards employee socialisation*

Employee socialisation as a scientific concept was formed as early as in 1979, when it was defined as not the mere commencement of a new job, but as a process lasting throughout a person's career. During this time, an employee acquires new social knowledge and skills necessary to play his role in an organisation<sup>6</sup>. The relevance of employees' socialisation is emphasised by the future target of gaining an employee's loyalty or commitment to the organisation and by the long-term positive results of investigations into organisational activity by numerous researchers<sup>7</sup>. For example, R. M. Steers (1991, p. 580-599) and S. P. Robbins (2006, p. 291), when discussing the socialisation of an individual in an organisation, emphasise the importance of the first encounter of the employee with the organisation they are to join. Having analysed the role of the job interview, the authors claim that it is necessary to disclose information important not only for the employer but for the candidate also. In addition, the authors discuss socialisation stages which an individual undergoes when he has decided to start working for an organisation: 1) anticipatory socialisation<sup>8</sup>, 2) encounter and 3) change. Some specialists specify factors which ensure successful socialisation: approval of the leader and colleagues, support and cooperation, clarity of the delegated competence and a possibility to access the resources of the organisation, the adoption of cultural values<sup>9</sup>.

It has been noted in the scientific literature that a strong commitment of an employee to an organisation is expressed in recognising organisational aims and values and a conscious desire to implement them, a commitment of the person to the organisation and a motivated feeling to stay a member of the organisation<sup>10</sup>. Numerous researchers have indicated that organisations which succeed in developing employee loyalty stand out from the rest by low staff turnover and rare employee absenteeism, effective motivating schemes due to which employees

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<sup>6</sup> Van Maanen & Schein (1979).

<sup>7</sup> Moorhead & Griffin (1989), Allen & Meyer (1990), Steers (1991), Cherrington (1993), Gibson et al. (1997), Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg (2003).

<sup>8</sup> According to Van Maanen & Schein (1979) anticipatory socialisation is a process, when a person prepares to start the new job before he actually does so – which means that in many cases, a person's readiness appears earlier, including his family, groups of contemporaries, educational institutions etc.

<sup>9</sup> Joiner & Bakalis (2006): 439-452, Dose (1997): 220-230, Elizur & Koslowsky (2001): 3-7.

<sup>10</sup> Jans (1989): 247-266.

enjoy higher job satisfaction, a need to take up additional responsibility and to contribute to the welfare of the company<sup>11</sup>.

It should be noted that employee socialisation in Lithuania has only been investigated episodically, and so the concept of socialisation is defined differently in the scientific literature:

- an adaptation phase focusing on becoming familiar with the new workplace and the rules, working methods and task fulfilment<sup>12</sup>;
- technical adaptation and socialisation, at the end of which there is a review process to ensure that the new employee has met the requirements of the probationary period<sup>13</sup>;
- employees' adaptation as an on-going process of working in an organisation<sup>14</sup>;
- the novice employee's social-psychological process of adaptation<sup>15</sup>.

No doubt, in each case such interpretation of the socialisation process is not clear enough to understand its importance to the organisation.

Our current studies confirm the conclusions of many scientists that the socialisation process consists of three interrelated stages, equally accepting the importance of individual's personal features, organisational and work environment and socialisation factors<sup>16</sup>.

Later, we shall discuss our understanding of the employee socialisation process:

- anticipatory socialisation is a stage which starts with the job interview when candidates, at the same time as they discuss work organisation and compensation conditions, have an opportunity to present their professional and social competencies, discuss expectations and evaluate the outside image of the organisation. Hence, the aim of the job interview is to help to reveal the candidates' personal qualities, predict their performance, discuss the organisational and employees'

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<sup>11</sup> Mathieu & Zajac (1990): 171-194.

<sup>12</sup> Sakalas (1998): 128, 132-134.

<sup>13</sup> Bakanauskiene (2008): 200.

<sup>14</sup> Korsakiene, Lobanova & Stankeviciene (2011): 108-111.

<sup>15</sup> Zukauskaite (2009): 34-44.

<sup>16</sup> Steers (1991), Cherrington (1994), Juceviciene (1996), Stoner(2001), Kouzes& Posner (2003), Robbins(2006).

values and expectations and foresee the possibilities of his incorporation into the organisational culture, etc.<sup>17</sup>. It has been noted that successful anticipatory socialisation usually does not only include signing a contract but also concluding a psychological contract<sup>18</sup>.

- Adaptation – or encounter – is a stage whose aim is to help a new employee enter the new work environment, reduce “the shock of the first work day”, become acquainted with the working procedure, technological process and organisational goals and facilitate joining the organisational culture. At the same time opportunities are created for the employee to identify himself and show the prerequisites for successful work in the organisation. This stage comprises professional guidance and social-psychological adaptation. Since the orientation task includes providing the newly recruited employees with the basic information about the organisation (organisational orientation) and the work (professional orientation), the aim of the social-psychological adaptation is the establishment of the appropriate job relationship with the leaders and colleagues and becoming aware of group values and norms of behaviour. In other words by means of social-psychological adaptation the novice employee is allowed to successfully integrate into the prevailing organisational culture at the integration stage. In order to be able to identify themselves with the organisation during adaptation, new employees usually need to rethink and change their own attitudes and to strengthen them by those of the organisation. The outcomes of the adaptation depend on the personal characteristics and business performance of the new employee; on the other hand, the attitude of the leader and the team and their positive help and support influence a new person’s alignment and organic involvement in organisational activities<sup>19</sup>. Hence, successful adaptation creates favourable conditions for effective work in an organisation.
- Integration or change is a stage during which management (motivation, training, education, evaluation, etc.), social (or-

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<sup>17</sup> Robbins (2006): 289) noted that if the value orientations of the organisation and the candidate do not coincide as the rule the latter is withdrawing from the selection process and “the marriage” is not taking place, at the same time the anticipatory socialisation in this organisation is not happening.

<sup>18</sup> De Meuse & Tarnow (1993):5, Newstrom& Davis (2000): 86.

<sup>19</sup> Employee adaptation systems have widely been used in West European countries and the USA. As some authors state, an efficient adaptation system can decrease employee turnover by 25 per cent in the future (Urbonavičiūtė, <http://www.vaiciulis.lt/index.php?id=4>), on the other hand, a new employee who does not adapt well is related to the organisation only by financial obligations.

organisational culture, psychological atmosphere in the team) and technical (technology, work and rest conditions) measures are used to help employees learn how to make their personal and team interests compatible. They are also to acquire new competences and actively participate in the process of finding solutions to the challenges of the new environment, and, finally, they identify with the group and become a part of the organisational culture<sup>20</sup>.

The outcomes of successful employee socialisation can be characterized by<sup>21</sup>:

- strong motivation for work,
- a feeling of security,
- cooperation and comprehension of one's role,
- job satisfaction, and, as a result, creativity and high performance,
- emotional obligation to be a part of the team,
- new opportunities to implement personal career development ambitions.

Organisational practice tells us that employees do not always manage to ensure the realisation of their personal expectations. Most frequently this occurs because of insufficient attention and the (often sceptical) attitude of management to this area of staff relations. Perhaps a mentor is not appointed; there are no appropriate programmes and, finally, an inappropriate style of management is used. In such cases employees quickly promptly understand that employers are not sufficiently obligated, and so they also try to be less obligated to the organisation<sup>22</sup>. The consequences are seen in the poor quality of employee performance, the violation of rules, unacceptable behaviour, frequent absenteeism and a higher staff turnover<sup>23</sup>. In this case specialists who associate the consequences of the socialisation process with the managers' attitude towards subordinates, or who, in other words, highlight

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<sup>20</sup> As Kouzes&Posner (2003): 267-268)) note, superiors, who encourage employees' self-autonomy by enhancing their possibilities to choose, by developing competences, trust and responsibility, can expect the desired changes in their employees.

<sup>21</sup> Juceviciene (1996), Robbins (2006), Stoner (2001), Grazulis & Baziene (2009).

<sup>22</sup> Robbins (2006): 31.

<sup>23</sup> According to Newstrom & Davis, (2000):102, the consequences of insufficient socialisation can be described as employees' course of action oriented towards 'self-isolation' from the co-workers.

the problem of management style, might be right<sup>24</sup> since this, to a great extent, determines how employees feel and behave at work, their attitude to work, their need to be loyal, etc. Basically, we are talking here about the influence of management style on employee motivation, as only a suitable selection of motivating measures will help employee behaviour towards meeting the organisation's goals, encourage their aspirations to integrate and to continuously improve<sup>25</sup>.

Successful socialisation is associated with the possibilities of forming a loyal, committed and stable team since employees who intend to remain in the organisation do, as a rule, work better than those who do not associate their future there<sup>26</sup>. J. P. Meyer & N. J. Allen (1991) suggested a theoretical three-component conceptualisation of organisational commitment, the essential elements being employee priorities in the organisation<sup>27</sup>:

- emotional, which can be described as emotional attachment and involvement in the organisational activities trying to achieve its strategic goals. Such behaviour of an individual is based on sufficient satisfaction of personal needs, creative cooperation within the team and, finally, job satisfaction and a sense of security;
- business continuity, which shows the employee's intention to remain in the organisation, as his current efforts and behaviour may be associated with organisational development and the person's own principle "Do as I have to". Despite the recognition of the organisational objectives, such behaviour is often accompanied by a lack of creativity and a standard way of thinking;
- normative, the employee remains a member of the team, keeping only a formal commitment to the workplace. In this case, the employee cherishes his job as long as poor company discipline and high staff turnover are tolerated.

The analysis of the employee organisational commitment model offered by J. P. Meyer and N. J. Allen in the context of a person's socialisation results, provides the following insights:

- the behaviour of the employee "not fully involved" in the company is characterised by "formal commitment to the or-

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<sup>24</sup> Bauer & Green (1998): 73-80, Major et al. (1995).

<sup>25</sup> Blaskova & Grazulis(2009): 160-167.

<sup>26</sup> Gibson et.al.(1989), Steers (1991), Robbins (2006), Moorhead & Griffin (2007).

<sup>27</sup> Meyer & Allen (1991): 61-98.

ganisation”, as these people stay to work in the organisation as long as they are expected to do something;

- an employee having experienced an excessively high level of socialisation works for the company because he feels it is his duty to do so as he believes that it is necessary “to maintain commitment to the activity” without even questioning the realisation of the goals and tasks of the organisation;
- outcomes of successful employee socialisation are characterised by an emotional type of commitment (as a continuation of a psychological contract), when he stays to work for the company because he wants to and such behaviour of the employee can be described as a person’s conscious involvement in the realisation of the goals and tasks of the organisation.

As we can see, only in the case of successful socialisation of an employee we can expect his willingness to remain a team member and to be committed/loyal to the organisation, and to pursue a career there.

The variety of approaches to socialisation of employees discussed in the second part of the paper shows that, whilst analysing questions of employee loyalty to the organisation, it is necessary to pay attention to certain specific points:

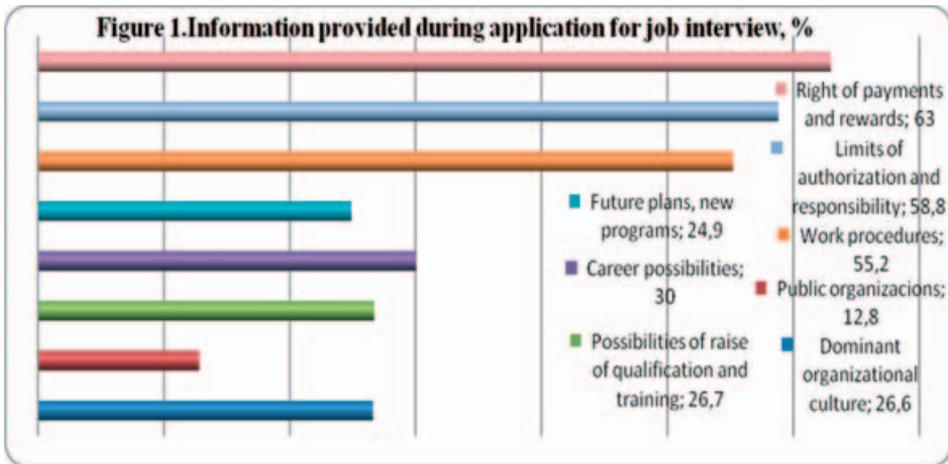
- an individual realises his expectations in his work environment, matching them with his personal and team behaviour and becomes loyal to the organisation, taking part in the development of organisational activity at the same time and making a positive impact on the development of the organisational culture;
- an organisation implementing its mission, seeking its vision and realising its goals, using organisational culture and other managerial instruments (management style, motivation, work content and others) provides conditions for the employee to become committed, – i.e. loyal to the organisation.

To conclude, we can state that the system of relations between the employee and the organisation is formed by the whole complex of organisational, managerial, psychological, organisational, legal and other factors.

### 3. Experience of employee socialisation in Lithuanian organisations

To evaluate the tendencies of employee socialisation in Lithuanian organisations 320 respondents working for the government, Higher Education institutions and the private sector were questioned during August – September, 2012. 95.9% of the respondents had Higher Education, and 41% were MA and PhD students currently employed. The research was regarded as exploratory in nature, but it allows us to see what has been achieved and what employee socialisation problems Lithuanian organisations face.

Figure 1. Respondents' evaluation of their job interview.



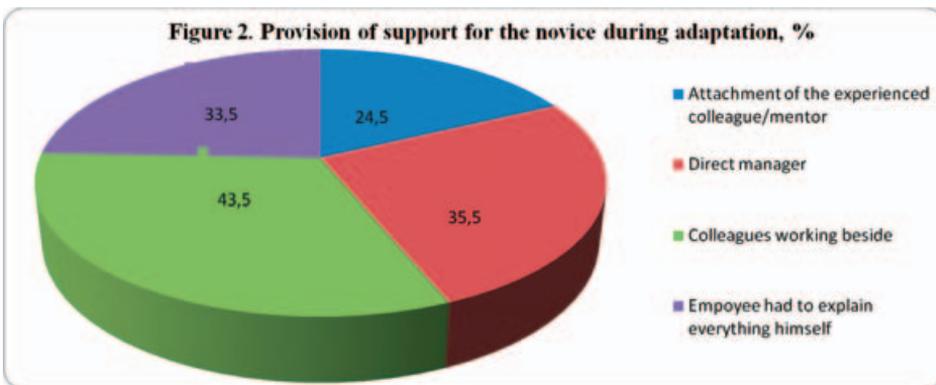
Source: own study

As we can see in Figure 1, the representatives of the organisation and the potential employee first of all discuss compensation conditions (63%) and then the extent of responsibility and authority (58.8%). Then follows information on the work of the organisation (55.2%). In spite of the fact that discussion of the economic and organisational aspects of the future job is not always consistent, the attitude of the respondents towards this block of questions during the job interview is rather positive. However, the expectations of the employees and their values, as well as improvement possibilities, the perspective of one's personal future, conditions for joining the organisational culture and other questions related to individual development are not given sufficient attention and thus are evaluated as insufficient (24.9–30%). As the research suggests, public organisations are rarely discussed, and most often as a background to other questions and so the respondents value these as poor (12.8%).

The results of the research indicate that, during the job interview, the organisations are concerned with professional competences of the employees and other job-related issues, pushing the individual behind the boundaries of early socialisation. As at this employee socialisation stage the foundations are laid for the first working results, this type of selection does not help the majority of candidates to see the perspective of successful involvement in the organisation and conclude a psychological contract beneficial to both parties.

A peculiar trait of the adaptation process of novice employees is their inevitable collision with the environment of the new organisation which is alien to them. This includes the vital importance of the support provided to them to reduce "the shock of the first working day", to be acquainted with the goals of the organisation and its organisational culture, and to introduce themselves. Although the quality of the adaptation period depends to a great extent on personal and professional qualities of the novice employee, the attention provided by the new leader and the appointment of a mentor help the new employee to be involved in the organisation. Analysis of the adaptation processes in organizations (Figure 2) has shown that novice employees rely on the advice of the colleagues working next to them (43.5%), while at the same time the respondents evaluate the help of their direct leaders as "insufficient" (35.5%) and the activities of their mentors are evaluated at 24.5%.

Figure 2. Provision of support for the novice during adaptation



Source: own study

This tells us that a mentor is mainly appointed as a formality in an organisation and individual mentoring programmes are run only in exceptional cases. That is why a new employee is often forced to seek help from colleagues working alongside them (help which is evaluated

as "satisfactory"). Otherwise they must take care for all job-related details in achieving their personal needs.

During the adaptation period poorly organised support provided to a new employee frequently causes additional problems for integration into the organisational environment. A list of factors which are the most difficult for a novice to adapt himself to would include:

- adaptation to the management style of the line manager 18,4%
- absorption of work tasks 17,7%
- adaptation to change 17,4%
- adaptation to the group, its behaviour and communication standards 15,8%
- adaptation to working conditions 11,3%
- adaptation to the requirements for the position 10,9%

In consequence, the evaluation of the efficiency of the adaptation stage is rather low. For instance, only one third of new employees becomes acquainted with the organisation's strategic plan and the requirements of work order; during adaptation only 38.6% of new employees manage to develop a full awareness of the subtleties of the new job and the peculiarities of the organisational culture.

The low efficiency of the adaptation stage has a negative impact on the integration process of new employees, whilst the task of the adaptation stage is to help reveal the work potential of individuals, show their abilities to develop and integrate into the organisational culture and look for a career. The results of the research reveal that, at the adaptation stage, every second employee feels job satisfaction, learns to adapt to the norms of organisational behaviour, dominant traditions, cherished values and other factors related to the organisational culture.

Respondents who fail to integrate successfully into the organisational environment most frequently offer the following reasons:

- no possibilities to improve competence,
- pointless and boring work,
- not feeling a fully-fledged and full member of the team,

- personal goals do not match the organisation's goals and values,
- poor relationships with colleagues,
- inadequate working conditions,
- insufficient salary and reward,
- unacceptable dominant organisational culture.

The aim of the research was to find out how respondents regarded their future with the organisation. The results of the survey revealed, that every seventh respondent intended to change his job in the near future, with almost one in four planned to stay no more than three years. Due to the organisational and management problems discussed above, the majority of employees did not succeed in recognising the aims and values of the organisation and did not consciously seek clarification. Also, emotional commitment to the organisation (an extension of the psychological contract) and the wish to form and strengthen the relationship with the organisation did not become the norm for all members. As a result employees the motive to identify themselves with the organisation, to develop loyal behaviour towards it and to remain a member of the organisation. Applying the three-component theoretical model proposed by J. P. Meyer and N. J. Allen, such behaviour can be considered as the typical behaviour of "formally committed" employees.

### *Conclusion*

The process of new employees' socialisation in Lithuanian organisations is not systematic and cannot be evaluated as completely successful as the majority of the employees are poorly motivated to commit themselves to the organisation and stay loyal to it for the longer term.

As a result, one third of the respondents plan to change their job;

In order to encourage loyalty among personnel it would be advisable to change the selection procedure for new employees by ensuring that equal attention is paid to the interests of the organisation and to those of the candidate;

It is necessary to develop a new orientation, preparation and development programmes for employees, at the same time providing positive reaction measures, which could help to establish the organisational conditions corresponding to employees' socialisation systems.

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# AGEISM IN EUROPE

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## 1. *Introduction*

Despite laws created by the European Union to prevent discrimination based on age; gender; race; religion; or economic class, ageism is still a serious issue in Europe today. Many nations such as, Germany do not have laws specifically preventing age discrimination and in the current economic climate it is Europe's older citizens who are the first to lose jobs, housing, or access to medical and social welfare benefits. Discrimination against the elderly also occurs in other ways, such as disrespect from younger people or others viewing them as helpless or incompetent simply because they are elderly.

Age discrimination or Ageism is prejudice against people over the age of 50. This prejudice may take the form of discrimination in the workplace, housing discrimination, social discrimination or economic discrimination. Ageism affects the older members of society in every nation in Europe and influences every aspect of an older person's life. Nelson suggests that ageism is the one category of discrimination which has no boundaries. No matter what one's race, gender, ethnicity, sexual preference, or religion might be, everyone ages and becomes vulnerable to age-based discrimination<sup>1</sup>.

One of the main reasons why ageism is an issue is that it is unique amongst prejudices. One cannot simply change one's race, ethnicity or gender, whereas, in time, everyone becomes older. Prejudice occurs because people see someone as being different from themselves. When one grows older, one moves from being a member of what is termed a "cultural in-group" of younger adults to being a member of a cultural "out-group". A second reason why ageism is an issue is that the elderly pose a political and economic menace to younger adults. They are more numerous than other segments of the population and compete with the young for jobs, housing, and limited social welfare resources<sup>2</sup>.

In the current economy, ageism is becoming a more common issue in Europe specifically, in the workplace as companies seek to reduce costs by eliminating jobs. Older workers are typically the first to be laid off

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<sup>1</sup> Nelson:2010:Introduction

<sup>2</sup> Nelson:2010:28

when businesses seek to reduce costs because they earn higher wages and have more benefits than younger employees.

The older are vulnerable to other types of discrimination also. They may not have access to life, health or car insurance because of their age. They may also be treated with disrespect or abused because of their age. Social prejudice is also an issue and many view the old as less able due simply to their age.

## 2. *Purpose*

The primary purpose of this study is to explore attitudes towards ageism in a young adult population attending a college located in Poland. The central question surrounding this research is whether young adults aged 18-30 demonstrate ageist attitudes and behaviour towards adults over the age of 55. This question is critical in the current economic climate since it is this age group that previous studies have shown tend to show the most ageist attitudes and behaviour towards the old. It is also important to address the topic of ageism within this group, since this is the group that is entering both the workforce and the adult social world. This means that they have a significant impact on social attitudes about ageing.

It is hypothesised that fewer ageist attitudes will be demonstrated amongst this age group due to the location of the college as well as the diverse student population. It can also be hypothesised that discriminatory attitudes against older adults will be lower in ethnic and racial minorities and female participants.

By looking at how ageist attitudes and behaviour show themselves in young adults it is hoped that the researcher can determine what causes these attitudes and how best to reduce harmful stereotyping and behaviour which negatively affect the elderly population in the EU. While this study may not ultimately meet this goal, it may provide insight as to why people have misconceptions of the elderly. Thus, even if the initial hypotheses are not supported the study may reveal some effective results in terms of knowledge of young adults and ageist attitudes and behaviour.

## 3. *Literature Review*

### 3.1. *Demographics*

The results of a European Social Survey (ESS) on ageism in Europe and the UK conducted in 2009 revealed several facts about ageism in

Europe. In a survey of 54,988 participants throughout Europe, the ESS found that in most countries the end of young adulthood or the point at which one was no longer considered young ranged from 30 to 51 years of age. Old age was seen as beginning at anytime between 55 and 66 years of age. An estimated 34.5 percent of all survey respondents thought that ageism was a serious problem in Europe. Although more people in Eastern Europe reported having experienced ageism, people in West European nations were more likely to see ageism as a major problem<sup>3</sup>.

The types of discrimination commonly reported by those affected were a lack of respect from younger people, and being mistreated due to being old. Again, this behaviour was most common in East European countries such as the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Ukraine and Romania. Older adults were also more likely to report that they were viewed with pity rather than admiration or respect. An estimated 53.3 percent of young adults were likely to view older adults as an economic burden and as a burden on the healthcare system<sup>4</sup>.

These data indicate that problems with ageism seem more common amongst very young adults (aged 15-24) who are the other segment of the European population who are having problems due to the poor job market. The data also reveal that ageism is more common in East European nations which are affected by the poor economic climate. This is worrying because these nations have large populations of elderly citizens, and discrimination against the elderly could become an even more serious problem in the future.

### *3.2 Discrimination in the Workplace*

Discrimination in the workplace is one of the most common ways in which older adults face discrimination in Europe. Since 2008, the European economy has been in decline and most companies and organisations are focused on reducing costs, meaning that employees who receive higher pay and benefits are targeted for redundancy. Typically, these are older workers who have worked for the same company for many years. Sergeant states that 6,609,000 workers or 71.1% of the European workforce are over the age of 50. Once they lose their full time employment many of these older workers are reduced to part time jobs, or becoming self-employed in order to survive. Older workers are also less likely to find work comparable to the jobs they have lost after being unemployed for a significant length of time<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Age UK:2009:1-65

<sup>4</sup> Age UK:2009:p.1-65

<sup>5</sup> Sergeant:2011:41

Research indicates there are several areas in which age discrimination occurs in employment. These include retirement, the labour market and pensions<sup>6</sup>. These areas are critical since discrimination in any of these areas makes older adults more vulnerable to poverty, homelessness, or abuse from the social welfare system. Ekerdt argues that these forms of age discrimination are difficult to overcome as older adults often lack the time and money to take legal action against those who discriminate against them based on age.

Age discrimination occurs in every area of the workforce from larger companies such as Boeing to small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). A study of 20 SME owners and operators in Poland revealed that many smaller business owners saw older employees as being inflexible in terms of working hours, pay and benefits. Older workers are thought to be incompetent in the use of computers and other office technology. Finally, the study revealed that business owners thought that older personnel were slow to learn new ways. In contrast, the corresponding study of older employees revealed that older employees were more motivated and capable of learning new ways than younger employees who were less goal-oriented and task-focused<sup>7</sup>.

This reflects misconceptions which force older employees in the European labour market to retire early, denied promotion or being told that they were ineligible for pay rises due to their age<sup>8</sup>. Prejudice against older adults is often so strong that older adults may refuse to apply for work or choose to work in jobs for which they are over-qualified. Sergeant argues that this is more of a problem for women than for men and that many older workers experience discrimination due to failing health<sup>9</sup>.

Discrimination against older workers is not only common in nations such as Poland. The United Kingdom has also had substantial problems with age discrimination. An illustration of this is an experiment in the English job market by Risch and Risch. In this study, Risch and Risch had two associates apply for jobs. Two age groups were included in the experiment, job applicants between the ages of 35-50, and job applicants between the ages of 21-34. It was hypothesised that younger male workers would be more likely to have their applications turned down for certain types of service work such as waiting on tables. The results of the study revealed that older women were less likely to be taken seriously when applying for jobs than younger women and men in general<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> Ekerdt:2010:69

<sup>7</sup> Ziontara; 2009:150

<sup>8</sup> Sergeant:2011:41

<sup>9</sup> Sergeant:2011:42

<sup>10</sup> Risch and Risch:2010:184

Wood Wilkinson and Harcourt argue that ageism is primarily an economic phenomenon<sup>11</sup>. Workplace discrimination against the elderly occurs due to economic problems in the countries where they reside. The final example of this can be seen in how employers view retirement. While employers in some European nations support anti-discrimination laws relating to forced retirement, a study conducted by van Dalen et al. points out that enforcement of EU laws relating to age discrimination in the workplace is very inconsistently applied throughout Europe. EU nations such as the UK and France encourage and support older workers who wish to retire later, whilst this practice is less common in Eastern Europe<sup>12</sup>.

One of the main arguments concerning ageism in the workforce is that discrimination against older adults occurs since employers feel that older adults are less capable of learning how to use modern technology and so are less deserving of equal treatment in the job market. Schone calls this phenomenon 'skills biasing' and it is yet one more barrier which prevents older adults from finding well-paid jobs in the current climate. Schone also proposes that the use of new technology increases the demand for younger workers since society perceives them as being more capable than older workers of learning the use of new technology<sup>13</sup>.

However, this is not always the case. In an analysis of several organisations in terms of the use of technology and age-related hiring patterns, Schone points out that the use of technology is not the reason why younger workers are preferred over older workers. Rather, preference is guided by social stereotyping and misconceptions such as the view that the elderly are slow to learn new information, incapable of handling modern technology, or unmotivated to do so. These social stereotypes influence ageism in the workplace and allow it to flourish.

### *3.3 Social Discrimination*

Employment discrimination is often the result (or a reflection) of social discrimination against the elderly. This ageism may take the form of stereotyping about the old as portrayed in the media, actions towards the elderly, the denial of social welfare services and insurance, and, in the worst-case scenario, physical, emotional and sexual abuse at the hands of family or medical and social welfare personnel – whether in a mild form such as stereotyping the elderly or, more seriously, in the form of being denied life, health or car insurance, social discrimination being as insidious and dangerous as economic discrimination.

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<sup>11</sup> Wood et al:2008:426

<sup>12</sup> Van Dalen et al:2010:365

<sup>13</sup> Schone:2009:805

Wilinska and Cedersund argue that social discrimination in the media and economic and political discrimination against the elderly are linked. The media often stereotypes the elderly as frail and incompetent or as a drain on the economy. These stereotypes encourage disrespect in both the social setting and economic mistreatment of older people<sup>14</sup>. These stereotypes foster misconceptions of what it means to be old and produce behaviour which violates a person's human dignity and civil rights. Fois argues that it is these stereotypes which have made it difficult for the EU to formulate social policy for the elderly since each country encourages different stereotypes of what it is to be old<sup>15</sup>.

One of the most noticeable aspects of social ageism is that women are more likely to experience this than men, whilst men are more likely to be discriminated against economically. Many respondents reporting to the ESS stated they had been denied jobs, benefits, or pensions because of age were male<sup>16</sup>. However, Bodner Berman and Cohen-Fridel found that social ageism was more common in middle-aged men and directed towards women<sup>17</sup>. Women are viewed as more vulnerable to social discrimination for several reasons including the fact that they are more likely than men to be single or widowed and more likely to live on their own. This makes them easy prey for those who disrespect or abuse the elderly. They are more vulnerable to social crimes such as harassment, abuse, identity theft, and fraud. This burdens elderly women because they may not have the same access to pensions and extra retirement funds which allow them to escape abuse or pursue legal action against those that discriminate against them.

Abuse is one of the extreme forms of ageism. Older adults are stereotyped as being weaker and more vulnerable than younger adults. This creates a situation whereby others feel that it is acceptable to abuse or neglect their elders. This abuse may be physical, emotional, financial, or even sexual. Gutman and Spencer suggest that ageism in and of itself is a form of abuse. The lack of respect for older people in combination with the view of them as a burden on the young creates a social environment where the old are vulnerable to various types of abuse<sup>18</sup>.

When ageism leads to abuse it can be devastating for the older adult. Abuse often occurs to the most vulnerable in the elderly population. They may have few social and financial resources apart from their carers. What is most harmful is that it is their own family which may lack respect for them – which produces an abusive environment. The

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<sup>14</sup> Wilinska and Cedersund:2010:335

<sup>15</sup> Fois, 2010:25

<sup>16</sup> AgeUK:2009:1-65

<sup>17</sup> Bodner et al:2012:1-7

<sup>18</sup> Gutman and Spencer:2010:1

link between abuse of the elderly and ageism is serious, since abuse can come in many forms. For example being denied a job because you are no longer young is economic abuse. Being denied insurance despite being a good driver or in perfect physical health because you are an older adult is abusive.

Ageism, much like other types of prejudice, is dangerous for this reason. Stereotyping, misconceptions, and mistreatment are the results of ageism. As elders make up more than half the European population it is not a positive thing that ageism and stereotyping are being allowed to descend into abusive behaviour or behaviour that encourages violations of human dignity and civil rights. Many European nations are seeking to enact laws and social policies which will change not just age discrimination in employment but social age discrimination also. Social ageism is a more pervasive threat than economic ageism since it permeates every aspect of an older adult's life. Whether they are ignored in a shop in favour of younger customers, denied a job, or abused simply because they are elderly, it can be devastating physically, mentally and financially.

#### 4. *The Future*

Mirren argues that the Employment Equality Directive (EED) and other anti-discrimination laws that seek to prevent discrimination based on age has done much to combat age discrimination in Europe<sup>19</sup>. While policies against ageism have been implemented in some countries such as England, the EU has yet to successfully implement and enforce anti-ageism laws in every country within the EU. Laws against ageism are inconsistent at best, meaning that even if laws are in place to protect older adults from discrimination in the workforce or discrimination within society, nothing may actually be done to protect the elderly.

The main issue seems to be to formulate policies on discrimination which can be agreed upon by every member state of the EU. If this problem is not resolved, ageism will continue to be a significant problem for the EU. This will be increasingly so if the economy continues on its current downward spiral; older people will continue to be denied jobs or forced into early retirement without full pensions so that younger workers who are willing to work for less may take their place.

Mirren also suggests that ageism is on the rise, since many countries in the EU are moving from traditional cultures (where being older meant an increase in the respect one received) to modern societies

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<sup>19</sup> Mirren:2009:107

which regard youth and youthfulness as being more desirable traits<sup>20</sup>. Societies focused on the power of youth often fail to remember the value of older members of society and what is devalued is discarded or ignored.

The issue of ageism is a challenge to be dealt with. One cannot stop underemployed or unemployed youth from resenting older adults with their jobs, employment benefits, retirement funds and social welfare services. This is something that will be achieved only by positive changes in the economy of Europe. More jobs with better pay and benefits are needed for younger adults. Younger adults also need to be taught that respect is reciprocal and that, if they wish to be respected by older adults, than they will have to learn to respect the elderly. Change is not simple and eliminating ageism legally may be easier than eliminating the actual behaviour itself.

Schieck suggests that the main reason why the EU has had difficulty in implementing policies which are realistic, easily enforced and standardised in across the EU is that there are serious issues in defining and conceptualising what ageism is and how it affects the EU economically and socially<sup>21</sup>. Some argue that it is any behaviour which causes the elderly to be treated differently, while others claim that it is only related to economic discrimination. This lack of ability to determine a definition for ageism fails to recognise that it is often social ageism such as stereotyping and disrespect for the elderly which create an environment which fosters economic discrimination against the elderly.

Schieck further argues that ageism is not just related to how the elderly are treated but to how the young are treated<sup>22</sup>. There are stereotyping and misconceptions about young adults and they are also discriminated against when it comes to economic and social issues. However, stereotypical assumptions and economic discrimination against the young are not as much of a barrier to the young as to the elderly. This means that things must change before adequate policy on ageism in Europe can be formulated. Policies such as the EED focus solely on economic ageism, even though this does not deal with the cause of ageism, but merely its consequences. The root cause of ageism lies in how society perceives the elderly. Stereotyping and misperceptions are what shape ageism, and so laws must take into account social ageism before true change can occur.

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<sup>20</sup> Mirren:2009:107

<sup>21</sup> Schieck:2011:777

<sup>22</sup> Schieck:2011:778-779

## 5. *Conclusion*

Ageism is a serious issue in the EU. Typically ageism includes, disrespect towards older adults, promoting stereotyping about older adults (helpless, less competent etc.), and denying employment, insurance, or access to social welfare services. Ageism can also include the physical, emotional, sexual or financial abuse of elders. While current policy in the EU is focused on dealing with economic ageism, it is argued that addressing social ageism issues should be the priority, as it is social beliefs about older adults which create economic discrimination against older adults.

Demographics indicate that many young people have a lack of respect towards older adults and demonstrate many forms of ageism in their attitude and behaviour. Many older adults in Europe claim that they have experienced ageism in some forms at some time in their lives. There are several arguments as to why this occurs. The main causal factor, according to the literature, is that younger people tend to believe that older adults are overburdening employers and the social welfare and healthcare systems in the EU. This is seen as a variable due to the poor international economy which has created a severe problem for youth unemployment. Older workers are seen as taking jobs which younger workers feel that they should have.

The main purpose of this paper and the consequent study is to explore those attitudes of young adults towards older adults. It is hypothesised that, while students at college may not exhibit high levels of ageism, some information may be found regarding how young adults think of older adults and why some of these attitudes are reflected in the ageist treatment of older adults in Europe.

While many European nations have laws in place regarding age discrimination, in many cases, these policies are inconsistent across national borders. Laws are often difficult to enforce and it is very difficult to change the treatment of older people as these laws fail to address the root causes of ageism, which are social attitudes and behaviour of those who practise age discrimination. It is, therefore, important to determine how and why ageism occurs in the younger population of Europe.

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# **THE RECIPROCAL BENEFIT OF CULTURE AND AGEING: GIVING AND TAKING IN COLLECTIVE ENCOUNTERS' THIRD AGE THEATRE**

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Sarah Thornton is currently studying for a Professional Doctorate in Applied Theatre at Manchester University's Centre for Applied Theatre Research. This part-time study is being undertaken as part of her work as Artistic Director of Collective Encounters which was established in 2004 as a practice-as-research initiative whilst Senior Lecturer in Theatre at Liverpool Hope University. Collective Encounters combines Sarah's varied background including applied work in diverse community contexts, directing professional theatre, developing new work and academic research. She is heading up a new Research Laboratory which ensures that Collective Encounters' work resonates beyond the local experience and responds to best practice internationally, so contributing to the development of the sector.

## *Collective Encounters*

Collective Encounters is a professional arts organisation specialising in theatre for social change. It produces professional theatre for people who do not usually access the arts and delivers a range of participatory programmes with marginalised and difficult to reach groups. Theatre for Social Change comprises theatre processes and performances which aim to contribute to positive change on personal, civic and political levels.

Collective Encounters is based in north Liverpool in an area of extreme disadvantage in the top 10 in the Indices of Multiple Deprivation in the UK with up to 36% illiteracy; where men expect to die 8 years earlier than national average and 76% of children live in poverty. Collective Encounters' offices are based in Liverpool Hope University's Creative Campus.

In response to extensive community-based research into interest and need, Collective Encounters has run a Third Age Theatre (3AT) programme for the past 7 years. The programme has been shaped and steered by participants. 3AT has enabled people over 55 to use drama to explore issues that concern them; make theatre to articulate their experiences and ideas; integrate with the wider community through creative intergenerational and cross-community initiatives; become positive role models; and raise awareness of some of the challenges they face with health/social care professionals and the community at large.

Through an analysis of this project the paper explores the impact of cultural activity of older people on civil society as role models, as spokespersons for the voiceless and the marginalised as educators.

Collective Encounters has its own Manifesto which states that

*'We believe that the arts are vital to a healthy, thriving society; that great art has been at the heart of all great civilizations; and that all people should have the right and the opportunity to engage with high quality art that helps them make sense of their world.'*

*We believe that the arts hold both intrinsic and instrumental value: that they enhance capacity for life, experience of life and that they have powerful applications.*

*We believe that our world is undergoing huge changes, and that we face unprecedented environmental, economic and socio-political challenges. We believe that in these difficult times, the arts are more important than ever: they can help us to question our ways of life and the systems that govern us; help us to feel better about ourselves and our communities; and help us to recognise ourselves as agents of change.'*

Collective Encounters has three strands of activity. As part of its Professional Programme, themes and issues grow out of research with communities; from this, professionally produced and performed theatre is produced that tackles pressing social and political concerns. These pieces transform unusual urban spaces for non-traditional audiences: they are intended to be stumbled across by people who don't usually access the arts. A second strand is the Research Laboratory which explores international models of best practice, developing innovative ways of engaging communities and using theatre as a tool for change. Finally is an extensive Participatory Programme which engages with marginalised groups using drama as a process to develop new skills and explore areas of concern; using theatre to articulate ideas and give voice to experiences and working alongside professional artists to ensure high quality work. The current portfolio comprises Youth Thea-

tre; work with the homeless community; Third Age Theatre; arts and dementia.

### *Third Age Theatre*

The Third Age Theatre was established in 2005 in response to the identified local need that there was no long term arts provision for older people in north Liverpool. Its participant base is over 55s from north Liverpool. Most are female although this is not by intent. Regular weekly workshops are held in which drama and theatre skills are developed, issues of concern and interest are explored, and theatre and performance work is created.



*Members of the Third Age Theatre company performing at **In Our Times**, June 2012 (Photo by Ged Fleming)*

There are many opportunities including intergenerational projects; integrated workshops (for instance with the homeless community); facilitation training; master-classes; and performance alongside professionals in major productions; as well as theatre trips and involvement in festivals and events.

Since 2005 eight shows have tackled the impact of urban regeneration on older people; their experience of the National Health Service and health care; the celebration of pension and rights won by older people; money and impact of budget cuts; dementia and experience of older carers; ageist stereotypes and the disconnection between generations; war and peace; inequality and poverty. These have been performed in a variety of locations including mainstream theatres, care homes, university settings, the Pensioners' Parliament and the Liverpool Band Stand, site-specific/ installation work, community centres, social clubs and pubs.

Throughout its history Collective Encounters has developed a five-pronged approach to participation focusing on quality, feedback and evaluation, informing, access and reach and a wider arts engagement. Our Quality and Evaluation Framework sets out what we understand by a high quality drama process. It should be: inclusive, creative, challenging, empowering, responsive and developmental. Feedback and evaluation are fundamental to our approach. Feedback is built into each session; there is a focused evaluation at 6 monthly intervals which draws on creative and innovative methodologies. Thirdly, participants inform, shape, structure, design the content of programmes and work through feedback, evaluation and a Steering Group. Collective Encounters is also continuously extending access and outreach. Regular outreach taster workshops are held in community centres and with older people's groups to encourage participation; advertising is carried out in community-based spaces and through local press and radio; and regular newsletters and updates are sent to agencies supporting older people. A final prong is our wider arts engagement. We employ core professional facilitators plus team of professional artists to support and develop skills and introduce new ways of working; we hold regular theatre trips and visits to other arts and cultural events.

### *Collective Encounters' The First Five Years*

In 2009 we commissioned an impact study to explore what (if any) impact our work had had throughout our first five years. An independent researcher engaged 90 past and present participants, audience members and stakeholders to explore the impact of Collective Encounters' work over first five years (*Collective Encounters: An Impact Study* by Rosie Crook is available via our website).

The key findings with regard impact on participants were as follows:

- their self-confidence, sense of self-worth, and sense of identity has significantly increased through participating with Collective Encounters
- they have met people they would never normally have spoken to and broken social and `tribal' barriers based on district, class, clothing, appearance or age
- they have achieved things they'd never dreamed they were capable of and felt a new sense of pride
- they have developed new skills, tried new things and increased their capacity for concentration and self-expression

- they have altered some opinions, widening their perspective and become more open minded
- for many of the most vulnerable participants, taking part in sessions has meant being diverted from problems or addictions for a few hours and finding a safe haven

You can find the full copy of this report, as well as copies of our latest evaluations here: <http://collective-encounters.org.uk/international-research-laboratory/>.

### *Reciprocity: Now and Then*

In 2011 Personal Services Society, a Liverpool-based, national health care provider with experience in dementia, commissioned Collective Encounters to develop an interactive theatre piece which would explore the experience of people with dementia and their carers and raise awareness with health care students and professionals.

This represented a new way of working for Collective Encounters. It was a first commission for Collective Encounters, but fitted our ethos because it provided us with the opportunity to work with marginalised and often voiceless groups (i.e. people with dementia and their carers). It was also the first time the Third Age Theatre group had been invited to make work about issues that didn't come directly from their experience but were on behalf of someone else. It was also the first time we had created theatre to be used as part of awareness raising and training campaign and the first time we worked with people with dementia and with carers.

The theatre created was a 40 minute performance piece called *Now and Then* which told the story of one woman's journey from the onset of her mother's dementia, through caring, having her mum come to live with her and eventually having to support her mum to move into a care home. It was performed in 10 different locations as the first part of a training package to enhance understanding of dementia with health care professionals and students.



*Members of the Third Age Theatre company performing in **Now and Then**, May 2010 (Photo by Pete Carr)*

It stimulated much discussion, and sometimes elements of the piece were used as 'forum theatre' where audience members were invited to come and join in the action in order to try to find alternative solutions and different approaches to problems.

Conclusions were very positive. 81 per cent of audience members said it helped them to understand the situation differently, 82 per cent of audience members said it made them feel differently about dementia and 96 per cent of audience members said it helped them in the training.

The project benefits as perceived by stakeholders were numerous. Older people acting as positive role models for other older people was seen as important. Similarly, older people presenting positive images of ageing to health care professionals, students and to a broader public through their creation and performance of the piece was important. The project provided a platform for marginalised voices: both of people with dementia and carers. The project offered an innovative approach to training which had a demonstrable impact on students and health care professionals' receptivity to the issues at play and finally it provided a powerful way of communicating the experience of people with dementia and their carers.

Working with people with dementia and their carers through *Now and Then* clearly demonstrated to Collective Encounters that there was a real gap in provision, and a genuine interest and need for theatre for social change with people with dementia, their carers, and service providers. It highlighted that there was no regular creative provision in care homes; no opportunities for family carers to engage in positive

activities with those they care for; no regular creative provision for people with dementia and very few opportunities to have their voices heard. In response to these gaps, Collective Encounters worked closely with participants and partners to develop a follow-on project, which was called *Live and Learn*.

*Live and Learn* was a three-year project which aimed to both provide creative activity in care homes and for people with dementia and their carers in the community; to produce and pull together research which demonstrated the value and benefit of using the arts with people with dementia and their carers; and to develop a toolkit and series of models of creative practice which could be used by carers. The project was a collaboration between professional artists, dementia specialists and our Third Age Theatre group.

The research discovered scientific evidence that creative activity can help to engage people with dementia in positive ways and can stimulate parts of the brain so improving quality of life and reducing levels of medication; it also discovered much evaluative evidence to support the impact of the arts on health and wellbeing both on older people generally and on those with dementia. We also undertook research into best practice in arts and dementia delivery and models of evaluation most useful for measuring the impact in such settings. This material was incorporated into an evidence review publication and a practical toolkit.

Finally performances were created by Third Age Theatre members reflecting their experiences of working with people with dementia. In addition, performances of poetry created by people with dementia were given in care homes. This was a new model for Collective Encounters: a professional poet worked with people with dementia. She sat with each person for a while and talked with them, writing down everything they said. She noticed the repetitions, rhythm, and tone of speech. Later she structured the words and ideas of the person into a poem. This was then read back to the person and the poem is attributed to them. The Third Age Theatre members recorded the poems and one podcast was released every month, available via the Collective Encounters website <http://collective-encounters.org.uk/arts-health-well-being/bits-that-stick-to-your-mind/> Performances of all the poems are being given in care homes throughout Liverpool.

In working with people with dementia and their carers, Third Age Theatre participants have spoken about how anxious they were at the beginning of the project, and how much responsibility they felt they carried for getting it right: for representing experiences truthfully through performance and in engaging people effectively. Despite these fears, however, many of the participants have said that it has been the most

rewarding and fulfilling work they have done with Collective Encounters, and how proud they feel of the results.

### *Conclusion*

This case study has shown how mutual benefit can be derived from Third Age Theatre participants working closely with people suffering from dementia and their family and professional carers. It explores the impact of the cultural activity of older people on civil society as role models, as spokespersons for the voiceless and marginalised and as educators. Both groups are 'old' yet with different needs and gifts. Bringing them together provides mutual benefit and reward. The importance of a professional arts-based approach which includes careful strategic planning, sound partnership working, critical evaluation and the joining together of professionals and others is essential. We hope that through the Toolkit and Evidence Review the project will have a lasting legacy and impact on a wider field than the immediate participants in this project.

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Collective Encounters website: [www.collective-encounters.org.uk](http://www.collective-encounters.org.uk)

Information and a short film about Collective encounters' work with Third Age participants: <http://collective-encounters.org.uk/arts-health-wellbeing/third-age-acting-company/>

*Collective Encounters: An Impact Study* by Rosie Crook <http://collective-encounters.org.uk/international-research-laboratory/>

*Now and Then Final Evaluation* <http://collective-encounters.org.uk/international-research-laboratory/>

You can find out more about our work and the work of other companies in the Arts and Health field in the case studies section here: <http://www.art-shealthandwellbeing.org.uk/>

Professional Doctorate in Applied Theatre: <http://www.arts.manchester.ac.uk/catr/doctorate/>

The Toolkit and Evidence Review will be available from June 2013 on Collective Encounters' website.

## **THEATRE OF THE ABSURD AND ITS CHARACTERS: THE EFFECT OF AGEING IN EUGÈNE IONESCO'S THE BALD SOPRANO, THE LESSON AND THE CHAIRS**

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Throughout history, the factor of age has always been perceived in a strict and complex relation with culture, society and art. Age has always produced simple cultural stereotypes: young equals boldness and inexperience as old equals wisdom and knowledge.

In addition, the European paradigm of age and ageing has changed dramatically during the last century. One of the best examples of this is the way in which young people used to change their appearance in the old Austrian Empire – since, otherwise, society would not have taken them seriously. To have a voice which could make a difference and to be in the public eye – in a society where the focus was so strongly on the traditional social supremacy of the older generation, a very interesting situation had developed by the end of the 19th century. Stefan Zweig depicted this brilliantly in his memoirs: young men had to create a *persona*, by letting their beards grow long, by wearing austere suits, by not standing with their back straight or even by pretending to limp by using a stick to help them walk (not merely as a fashionable accessory). In a society and in a world that belonged to older people, this was an obligatory artifice and sacrifice which young men used to make in order to make themselves heard. As a man of the theatre, I truly believe this to have been a most important – fascinating – detail, as it suggests the composition of a character and the public presentation of a *persona*. Further, this means that communication must also depend on this theatrical detail.

With the opening of the 20th century, the numerous avant-garde movements started to change the paradigm of the perception of the age in European culture. During the complex and unsettled years between the two world wars, more and more young voices began to appear in European art and culture. It seemed that the future was theirs, but this effusion was to be halted by the atrocities of the Second World War. On this same line, it seems that today it is becoming more and more difficult to understand one of the most terrible effects of the war: Europe's population was decimated and this was a fact which is even more cruel through its simple, mathematical implications. Further, it is well known that one of the long-term effects of WWII was the fact that the process and the act of human communication were seriously altered, if not forever changed.

Literary critics agreed that the theatre of the absurd made its appearance especially because of the specific context of the years following WWII, when the true nature of the human being was revealed to the whole world. According to this interpretation, the preconceived idea of a permanent good side to the human spirit simply did not work any longer, and the post-traumatic shock in which humanity found itself proved to be a fertile ground for a new form of drama: the theatre of the absurd.

As the origins of the theatre of the absurd may be located in the avant-garde movements of the 1920s and 1930s, its burst onto the stage must be correlated with the realities of the late '40s and early '50s in that the effects of the war had shaken the principle of ideas, of social conventions and had also asserted the precarious condition of everyday life. The permanent fear in which mankind found itself, not only due to the nuclear threat, contributed to the birth of the theatre of this new theatrical movement.

At the same time, the theatre of the absurd seemed to have been an artistic expression of a lack of religious experience in the day-to-day life of modern man and may be regarded as an attempt to re-establish the importance of the myth and of the ritual, making people aware of the realities of their condition and trying to re-assert the comfortable sensation of belonging to a certain environment. The specific theatrical means of this challenge were achieved by the presentation on stage of a number of stereotypical and mechanical characters who followed a strange way of life.

In such a particular and peculiar context, I will focus on some of the plays of Eugène Ionesco, not only since he was the first major playwright of the theatre of the absurd, but also since he became its most iconic figure.

All the characters of the theatre of the absurd share a common denominator: the nothingness of everyday life and the impossibility of communicating by means of speech. Their age is a very important element in this equation, as some of them are quite old, such as the Professor in *The Lesson*, or the old couple in *The Chairs*.

Moreover, some other characters in his plays may be old, even if their age is not precisely stated. (For example, the couple in *The Bald Soprano* is of an unspecified age) However, their gestures, their way of thinking and of spending their time suggest that they are indeed both old and tired of the never-ending small and insignificant adventures of their everyday life. The world in which the Smiths live has no precise landmarks and everything is quite relative: distances, acquaintances and relatives who all have the same name (Bobby Watson), even words

and social status. In his first play, and in respect of the effect of ageing, even if it is neither explicit nor compulsive, the most common and frequent effects of ageing may very well affect the Smiths. The whole play may be regarded as a metaphor of the world which is under the cruel influence of the effects of old age: the loss of memory, the impossibility of remembering simple words, the continuous nagging (on the part of Mrs. Smith) and the passive lack of reaction of Mr. Smith. It is an old and grotesque world, in which people struggle to find their way and to react according to their instincts, truly believing that they are young and living a fresh, exciting experience.

*The Lesson*, Ionesco's second play, tells the story of an old serial killer who is put face to face with a young girl whom he is supposed to be tutoring. What we have here is a very simple and classical conflict: young vs. old, man vs. woman, teacher vs. student, delicate vs. cruel. At this moment, of course, I am only interested in the young vs. old element in the conflict, as it carries the most powerful and complex implications in the play. The depiction of old age in *The Lesson* is done in accordance with the most common stereotypes: the old teacher is violent and apparently does not have any specific reason for this (besides the simple and pure pleasure of inducing pain). He frightens the young girl with his demands, wanting her to solve impossible and absurd mathematical calculations, naming the capitals of countries which do not even exist, or talking about non-existent languages and dialects. As a matter of fact, he lives on a different level of reality, surrounded by his own beliefs and is not able to attune himself to the voice and rhythm of the youthfulness the girl emits. It is one of the most scarring and brutal depictions of old age in the whole history of the theatre and its implications are extremely violent: senility simply crushes youthfulness – which does not stand a single chance, and so the teacher will kill the girl. It is the bitter victory of old vs. young.

As we all know, *The Chairs* tells the story of an old couple trapped in the middle of nowhere. They are expecting and welcoming some invisible guests, for which they are preparing a huge number of chairs. Finally, there is an Orator who should deliver the old man's speech to the invisible crowd, but he is dumb and he unable to make himself understood. The suggestion that the Old Man and the Old Woman are the last people on the face of the Earth is very plausible, as the invisible guests may be perceived as the effect of their loneliness. Likewise, the two old lovers talk about some past events and cities, barely able to remember places such as Paris. The effect of ageing is now absolute and worldwide and it engulfs the whole world. As bleak as the perspective may seem, by carefully reading the text, one may actually find a strong sense of optimism, as the Old Man and Woman are very tender to each other, having a wonderful dialogue. It may be regarded as the

victory of the young human spirit, disguised and hidden under the mask of senility.

The theatre of the absurd was a considerable step forward in the way in which the modern world has conceived age. The dissociation from the cliché of the way age used to be represented on stage in traditional and classical theatre, together with the crises in which Western society has found itself, have led to the way in which Ionesco built his characters: age no longer represents a biographical condition, but a spiritual state of mind, a different level of reality, in which nearly everything is possible.

As illustrative as they may be, complicated sociological statistics are limited in offering a general portrait of the spiritual transformation in representing age in art. Theatre and literature, in terms of the text they provide for their specific markets, especially in the second half of the 20th century, are concerned with characters for which age represents a spiritual divorce from past and tradition. Moreover, in contemporary postmodern performing art and dramatic literature, age is not at all important, since producers and actors are free to build their characters.

As was said earlier, youth and old age are masks which a certain persona uses in order to adapt to the continuous changing conditions in society. Since this mechanism is somehow controllable, my conclusion is that the effect of ageing, as far as the theatre of the absurd is concerned, is an artificial concept. What really matters is what lies beneath the mask. That would be the most profound and intimate level of human conscience, in which the aspect of age ceases to make any difference. As the young people in the Austrian empire used to mask themselves in order to hide their youth and appear much older, Ionesco's characters use the mask of old age in order to force the mechanisms of communication by means of language. Age becomes a very intimate and precarious characteristic and, for the theatre of the absurd, it was in close relation to social conventions. The society of Ionesco's time was brilliantly mirrored in his plays: Europe was an old world, in which people were lonely and this loneliness was even worse as they were all feeling old, without necessarily being so. I think the most important thing which the theatre of the absurd accomplished in relation to the age of its characters is the fact that it brought before its audience a most interesting dramatic and theatrical mix, in which the effect of ageing was used, maybe for the first time, outside the frame of social stereotypes and clichés.

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## **THE OLD MAN AS A CHARACTER IN A NOVEL – A MIRROR OF REAL LIFE IN OLD AGE OR MERE PROJECTIONS OF OLD AGE?**

**JOOST VAN VLIET**  
**THE HAGUE UNIVERSITY, HAGUE**

*'The Mediterranean seems endless and looks simply like a mirror reflecting the sun. You cannot take in this blaze of colour but he keeps gazing at it, in a melancholy, wistful mood – so old, so helpless and infirm. For him it longer matters what time his watch shows' (Brouwers, 2011)*

### *Introduction*

Today we are faced with a unique, ageing society undergoing irreversible demographic change and the need is urgent for the common view in Western societies towards ageing and being old to change. Suddenly, around the age of 65, we realise that we may or will have an extra 15 to 25 years and we are simply not prepared. Neither we nor the community knows what to do. This has to change. We need to have more information about what it's like to be old. We have to talk with old people and we need images which are realistic, to counter the stereotyped myths about ageing. We need reflections, not projections, which help us to build a new and more realistic paradigm. Can the Arts help to reach the main public, with realistic perspectives and to open the minds of the European a little?

Maybe books can help.

### *Facing negative images*

Most people are not interested in the elderly, but this is a matter of basic instincts. The living are afraid of death, and old people are frequently associated with dying. This creates a distance between younger people and the elderly. Apart from this impulsive reaction, the cultural climate itself can produce this distance or, as happens very frequently, simply enlarge the gap between the old and the not-so-old. In fact, even in terms of social behaviour, we have no wish to interfere with old people. We do not want to hear their stories and we do not want to meet them in the supermarket queue or driving their car in front of us. We certainly do not want to think about our own ageing. Ageing is a frightening perspective that you can better ignore.

Ask your students if they will choose a profession working with old people. The majority of the health – and social science students at European universities prefer a job with children and young people. This is not very surprising since for young adults there is so much more to discover. In their minds it is spring and they are not conscious that after a blossoming spring and a long summer there will be an equally long autumn and – probably – an even longer winter. Most people do not want to think about growing old and will even fight against it. They do not want to know that, after the rise, there comes the fall.

Even old people themselves prefer to watch young people and describe others as old, projecting a negative image of some of their own peer group. The elderly are easily categorised as 'yesterday's people'; they have had their time and are no longer a part of the present. They threaten to lose contact with the world of today. They feel redundant, representing someone from the past. This often has a negative effect on their well-being; they no longer contribute to society; there is no one waiting for them; what are they living for and what is the meaning of their existence? The elderly can easily suffer from a loss of status. Formerly they were someone, but now they are no-one, sidelined, every day becoming a little more worthless. In many living rooms old pictures show life at an old age as the 'staircase of life' or slogans as 'memento mori' ('Remember that you will die!') are being replaced by big screen television sets, showing almost only ageless, happy youth. In that setting you feel like Don Quichot, fighting against this.

### *Changing dominant views*

My main question here is how we can change the dominant and mostly negative views of old age into something positive, such as "Yes, I shall get old." Or: "Getting old is part of life and I have integrated; that idea into my mind and am prepared for it". We need mirrors which reflect this part of our life which is pushed away. We need reflections which tell us about old age and we do not need projections, filled with all the negative emotions which these usually bring. I would like to discuss the function of the Arts in generating such reflection, and what triggered my thoughts in this field was the publication of two recent books, in both of which an old man is the central figure.

### *'Bittere Bloemen'*

The first book which I would like to consider was published in Dutch, but next Spring a French translation will be published. The publisher is also considering an English translation. The title is 'Bittere Bloemen' (Bitter Flowers) and it was written by Jeroen Brouwers.

In the book, 81-year old Julius Hammer is suffering from old age; loss and nostalgia for the past dominate. Long ago, "Hammer the Hammer", with his Harley Davidson never without a girl on the backseat, was successful in terms of power and prestige. There is little left of that now: "He is 81 and belongs to the past". A stroke produces a traumatic change in his life, and his fearsome daughter used the opportunity to clean up the house and send her father away on a Mediterranean cruise. The story begins on the cruise ship, where Julius is having an afternoon nap on a deck-chair. Suddenly the chair collapses and there lies the former senator with a sore back-bone – a helpless old man on a boat in the Mediterranean.

*'Thank you, thank you very much.'* You can infer from his voice that he is – or, at least, was – in the habit of speaking in public. His voice is as powerful as his figure is thin. Hopefully, there was no spittle running from his mouth. No, he checks it by touching his mouth with the back of his hand, and in the same movement he pulls the breast-pocket handkerchief from his jacket and begins to clean his glasses with it. 'No need to thank us, sir: it's our job! Here is your hat!' The hat had probably slipped from his head while he was asleep and slid between his back and the chair; it was now as flat as a pancake. It was a white straw-hat, just as white as the elegant, light suit he wore; the ribbon around it was red – exactly the colour of his breast-pocket handkerchief, his socks and the small motif on his tie. The ship's steward re-shaped the hat and put it back on his head. 'Thank you, thank you', he keeps on saying' (Brouwers, 2011).

This book is not a book for the public at large: it exemplifies the bitterness of growing old, of coping with daily living problems and the importance of memories. These memories are occasionally in the lime-light. The book is a clear reflection of the world we do not want to hear about.

We not only have negative views about the elderly; we also expect little, or perhaps even nothing, from old people. The older they are, the fewer expectations we have. Yes, there are some changes in expectations about people, but those changes focus on our youth. In our post-modern society young people are stimulated to act as adults as early as possible. Children are prepared for a life loaded with work and obligations. The focus is not on life-long development, but on development towards a job, a profession. This is the precise problem. We do not teach our children what it is like to be old and to live with older people. We are living apart together.

In our open society only training and talent are the cradle of success – not age, not origin. In this knowledge-based society, this is based on

equality; it is done with the prestige of the elderly. Labour is, then, the crucial practice for meaningfulness. This is bad news for the old.

Western society has changed. We are no longer living in the industrial age. In those days it was more or less normal that men and women were worn out by the age of 65. In those days, after a lifetime of hard work, came the well-earned period of rest, allowing us to detach ourselves from society. Today some still believe that people at 65 are worn out – but they are not. The young pensioners of the twenty-first century are fitter and healthier than ever, but we are still living mentally (and with our pension-system) in the industrial age.

There is a great deal of work to be done to create a perspective of stable expectations over a long period – virtually a lifetime. When we focus on a life which lasts no more than 65 years, we need to turn the clock back about a hundred years. Not simply in a few countries, but all over Europe people face an increased life expectancy. This is good news, but this news has been dominated by people complaining about pensions and healthcare costs. Instead of celebrating it, we overestimate the financial aspects, putting it exactly in line with the common view of ageing: it's a burden!

Our conceptions about life, about work, about how we organise our life and our system and about getting old are out of touch with the actual development of the ageing society which we are facing today, and so we create a huge gap which ignores and undervalues a significant part of our lives.

### *The Hundred-year-old Man who Climbed out of the Window and Disappeared*

The second book which I would like to mention is, to some extent, the opposite of Brouwers book. This book, *The Hundred-Year-Old Man Who Climbed Out of the Window and Disappeared* (Jonas Jonasson, 2009) is a humorous work, written in an accessible style – and a genuine bestseller, translated into many languages. The story of Allan Karlsson is a positive story of hope and pleasure, but it makes the same points about ageing and the importance of memories. The message is simple: 'Every day you can start all over again, no matter what age you are'.

In this book, full of life-threatening situations, the centenarian Allan lives more or less carelessly, without fear of something like death.

'In an explosion designed to keep the fox away from his chickens, he lost everything – his house and even his dog. He decides to register to apply for the local nursing home and wait for a quiet death, but death did

not come. On Allan's hundredth birthday a party is to be organised, but Allan does not like such events, and so he decided, shortly before the party started, to escape through the window...'. Then a crazy adventure starts and he meets many strange people, most of them shaped by the loneliness of their existence, such as the leader of a criminal gang, a police officer and the owner of a vegetarian takeaway restaurant. Here we meet a man who lives his life without worries; every day is a gift to enjoy. This positive view is also a kind of reflection of life in old age.

### *Task for Europe and European universities*

Much has to change. It has to change at macro-level as well as at individual level, and I think that Europe must take the lead in these changes. The theme which the European Commission gave to 2012; 'Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity' is a good and positive start, which needs to go further. Some examples:

1. It's our task to include, and not to exclude, people, no matter what their age might be.
2. It's our task to make people aware of becoming old. The best thing is to start at primary school, with small children – talking about and with old people.
3. Encourage the Arts to show that life is more, much more, than a career. Books, cinema and theatre really can help.
4. Find and create new roles for elderly people.

European Universities also have a task: At European universities it must be our challenge to motivate students to opt for the interesting world of gerontology during their study. We really need well- educated medical and social workers with an open eye for the elderly and gerontology, otherwise in a few decades in our ageing continent there will not be enough skilled staff to take care of all the fragile and the vulnerable.

5. Universities must find ways to challenge young people to think about ageing and to motivate them to choose a career with and for seniors.
6. Arrange projects with students and seniors together. In a study at The Hague University we found that the attitude towards old people among students really changed after working with them on a project.
7. Develop a counter-weight to economic simplification.

The Arts, such as good books, plays and films, are very positive ways to bring a more realistic element into peoples' minds and to reshape them a little – but it is not enough. What we need is a positive attitude and to open our eyes for the positive opportunities an ageing Europe can bring us.

*The sea offers consolation; it has neither a past nor a future – just as is the case with him, and certainly with respect to the latter. His past is so extensive and vast, so wide-ranging that he can no longer view it in its entirety which elapses according to the coercive whims of life, in which nothing happens without rhyme or reason. In his ageing brain his past as a coherent whole has largely faded or blurred; he is left with nothing more than incidental memories arising occasionally as snapshots, just as, in the sea, some object, debris or a wreck breaks the surface without offering a glimpse of the mysterious, romantic past of the sea itself. (Brouwers, 2011)*

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# THE ROLE OF CULTURE IN AN AGEING POPULATION – EXPLORING WHEN EMOTION GETS THE UPPER HAND OVER LOGIC

JONAS ERICSON – MARTIN GUSTAFSON  
CULTURE ON CAMPUS, UMEÅ UNIVERSITY, UMEÅ



AI Pitcher stand-up comedian from New Zealand,  
entertaining on the lunch break.

## 1. *Aim and introduction*

In this paper we would like to discuss the benefits of culture in a broad context. When the population grows older, in what way can we gain from making culture a part of our lives? What are the benefits?

Go back 15 years in time. How many of your friends had Internet at home in 1997? In those days home computers still were unusual, social media did not exist, nor did the Smart Phone. Since then, however, information technology has literally revolutionised our lives, both at home and at work – and progress has been truly rapid. As one effect, modern society places high and new demands on us in terms of interpretation and sorting of information.

At the same time the proportion of older people in society is increasing rapidly, but the society they grew up in was quite different from the one we live in today and the challenges they face in life are obvious.

In this context culture has the opportunity to play an interesting part, since culture makes no such demands as information technology does. Culture deals with emotions – not with logic. Culture is direct. For instance, if you like a song, you like that song – regardless of whether you are a student, a professor, 22 years old, or 80 years old.

## 2. *Built in power*

Our goal is to discuss the advantages of culture in a broader sense. Because in the same way as we use culture at Culture on Campus at Umeå University – as a means to gather people and create meeting places – culture could be used more deliberately in society as the population grows older.

The concept culture (latin: cultura) means to grow and is in a project in Umeå: Culture for Seniors – Culture for health used in the sense of “to grow happiness and vitality”. In this project culture includes all kinds of activities and their goal is to make cultural activities available to older citizens in the local community and to increase the awareness that active life can be beneficial for older people, that it makes them grow as human beings (Bodel, 2012). Research in the area of active life in older people is also something Ingeborg Nilsson, researcher and senior lecturer at Umeå University is focusing on. Her research interest started while she worked as an occupational therapist in nursing homes and realised the lack of possibilities for meaningful and enjoyable activities in older people’s everyday lives.

For ten years Ingeborg Nilsson has worked in the area of understanding and evaluating meaningful activities among older people, especially very old people. She has a position as researcher in the Ageing and Living Conditions Programme (ALC), one of the Umeå University’s strong research environments, and she is involved in studies concerning the effectiveness of activity programmes for older people’s health.

The overall focus of the projects she is involved in is to understand meaningful activities in later life. Studies have been conducted to explore what older people recognise as important in their everyday activities (see for example Nilsson, Lundgren, Liliequist, 2012) but also what activities that bring life satisfaction to older people (Nilsson et al, 2007). Through interviews new important activities have been identified, where modern technology can support continuing active life in later life (Larsson, Larsson Lund, Nilsson, 2012). Internet-based ac-

tivities can facilitate being active in different activities such as cultural activities and hobbies, but can also be a faster and cheaper way of communicating with family and friends. As very few older people use the Internet in Sweden (compared to other age groups) studies to introduce and support their involvement have been conducted (Nilsson, Forsberg, Lindgren, 2009).

Studies have been conducted in collaboration with Culture for Seniors – Culture for Health on seniors involved in cultural activities. A small pilot study has focused on the subjective effects of being a member of a rock choir as an older adult. Trends similar to other research have been found where participants reported positive changes in mood e.g., feeling happy or re-energised. However, this study needs further larger studies with a more rigorous design to be established. Interviews with personnel in home-care services has also been conducted in a small study to explore how they see their role as providers and enablers of cultural activities for seniors in need of help from others.

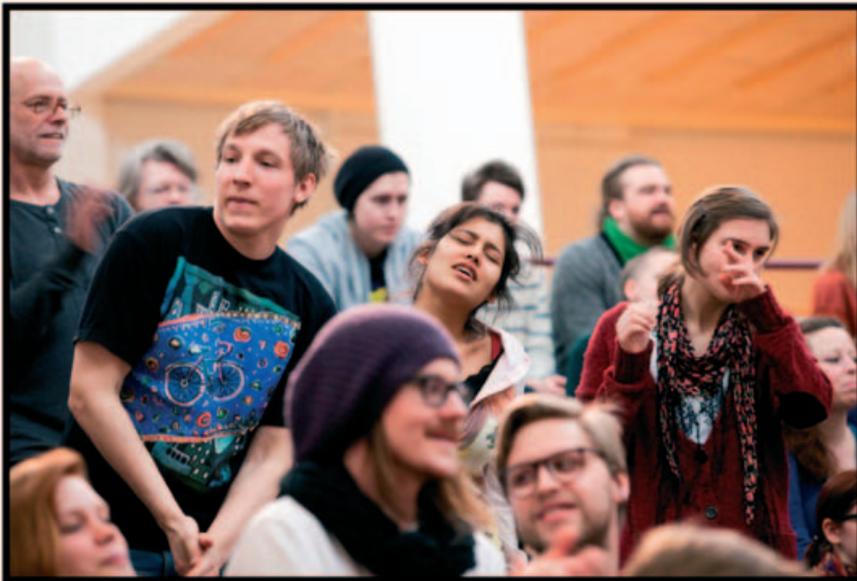
In conclusion, the area of cultural activities is of great interest but also very problematic as the concept has no strict limits in what kind of activities it could include. Here we reported activities from a broad perspective while other more traditional ways might be music, literature and art. It seems as though engaging in activities can be a source of happiness and enjoyment (Nilsson, 2012). It also seems possible to affect emotions in a positive direction through the use of cultural activities. More studies in this area could contribute with further knowledge, with work clarifying the role and need of cultural activities for older people. However, if we acknowledge the positive results found so far, this would mean that, if cultural activity in some sense has equivalent effects on health as has physical activity, it would give seniors a much wider range of options when choosing health promotion activities. For instance, a long walk could be exchanged for an hour of singing.

Together with her research group, Ingeborg Nilsson now aims to deepen these studies. The next step is to develop more systematic, controlled and comparative studies in which participants are selected randomly, studies attempting to evaluate effects of cultural activities on older people.

### 3. *The effect of culture*

Here is an interesting question: what is it in culture that gives these positive effects? We do not know, but in our context, at Culture on Campus, these effects are often obvious. We refer to all the smiling faces in the audience, sometimes people suddenly start to dance, and many are simply having a good time.

Meanwhile, on Campus



In addition, there are more reasons for us to take culture seriously. It works as identification markers in an increasingly diverse society and this can certainly offer comfort when everything becomes more and more digital – and, perhaps, increasingly hard to understand.

Culture, therefore, may indeed be a main theme in a long life – a kind of constant which speaks to the individual's emotions and senses. With an ageing population, we believe that culture is capable of playing a significant role.

4. *Backgrounds; Umeå, Culture on Campus, Culture Trade and Caught by Umeå*

Umeå from above



*Umeå*

Umeå, a future European Capital of Culture (2014) is situated in the northern part of Sweden. We have about 116,000 residents and we are known mainly for three things: our University, our birch trees and our vibrant music scene. Another thing that distinguishes Umeå is our very fast broadband connection. In the "State of The Internet Report" published by Akamai, Umeå is ranked 15 in the world. The next city on that list in Western Europe is to be found in 50th place. And how is that possible, one might ask? How can a small town in the north of Sweden can have such a fast broadband? Let us try to explain.

In the early 1990's, Umeå's local energy company, Umeå Energy, built an underground district heating system in concrete culverts. At the same time they also laid plastic pipes in which they planned eventually to draw lines for the remote reading of their electricity meters. These plastic pipes turned out to be ideal for leading fibre, and without that possibility, it would have been too expensive to expand the fixed urban network in Umeå. Umeå University also plays a major role in all of this since it is through NorrNod, Umeå University's computer centre, that the urban network has a fixed internet connection.

### *Culture on campus*

Culture on Campus is a unique project which produces and organises cultural events.

We deliver high quality culture to students and staff at Umeå University. Free of charge, every week and always at lunchtime. We seek to use the unique power that culture possesses. Our aim is not only to use it to gather people together and entertain them – but to inspire them. Creativity and inspiration are the fuels which we want to help to provide in an academic and diverse environment. Culture is our means to make that happen.

Jay Gilligan from the USA – one of the best jugglers in the world.



We came up with our concept almost 10 years ago, and since then it has grown a good deal. Today we hold about 35-40 events every year – and we have about 25,000 visitors every year.

We believe that the use of culture on unofficial and open arenas fuels the creativity process. We also feel that this brings people from different backgrounds, professional and ethnic, closer together. We offer a lot of music, author visits, theatre, dance, circus, photography, art and so on – and we make an effort to make it easily accessible. Therefore we chose different locations for different events. Today we use about ten different "scenes" all over campus.

Our definition of culture is wide, but there is one thing that we try to keep constant – and that is the high quality of both the events and the artists. Every year we have a large number of national and international celebrities and media coverage tends to be huge. Last year Culture on Campus made the news 45 times in 36 weeks, which is, of course more than once a week.

The fundamental idea in the organisation is cooperation – both inside and outside the university. For example, if someone books an interesting artist for some downtown venue, we book them for a lunchtime gig on campus – or the opposite happens. This means that we both pay less and the performers have two gigs on the same trip – a triple-win situation!.

We have been doing this since 2003 and the platform that we have been building up is a solid one. Lately therefore, we have been taking this a little bit further. Our ambition is cross-border cooperation and cultural exchange. This means that there's an offspring to Culture on Campus and we have named it Culture Trade.

### *Culture Trade*

Culture Trade is a special project within the Culture on Campus framework. As the name reveals, our aim is to trade culture with other parts of the world.

The Swedish rock band Electric Boys cranks up the volume.



European cities, mostly, will be visited by performers from the Umeå region. At the same time, marketing efforts can be carried out for Umeå as Capital of Culture, as well as for Umeå as a student city. Every city visited will pledge to make a return visit to Umeå with a cultural act – Culture Trade is achieved.

We made our first trade back in 2009, with Würzburg, Germany. Number two was with Winnipeg in Canada in 2010, and our third was with Riga in Latvia, in 2012. Collaboration with Riga is of course hugely interesting because they too will be a Capital of Culture in 2014. We wish to highlight local good quality culture and expose it in a different environment abroad, indeed, but we also wish to use culture as a tool for cooperation. Together with our partner city/university we wish to add new European dimensions to our environment. Planned for 2013 is something rather big: we plan to take Culture Trade on tour, as we are going to help Europe to get 'Caught by Umeå'.

### *'Caught by Umeå'*

'Caught by Umeå' is a massive project being organised by the city of Umeå in autumn 2013. It is to create awareness of Sweden and Umeå – as a destination for 'Umeå 2014'. Eight cities will be visited: Copenhagen, Warsaw, Hamburg, Amsterdam, London, Paris, Milan and Barcelona. In each city a large, glass house will be built in the city centre. This house will be surrounded by ice sculptures and smaller buildings made completely of ice. It is the people from Ice Hotel in Jukkasjärvi, some 600 kilometers north of Umeå, who will do the work with the ice – and they will also bring their own ice from the Torne River in Jukkasjärvi. Many things will happen in this environment of ice and glass, including marketing efforts and collaboration of many kinds. Umeå University will, of course, be a part of this too, and our aim is to do one Culture Trade in each city visited.

In conclusion, culture – this giant concept – is enjoyed and consumed in many forms all over the world – which is good. However, there is still more to gain than first meets the eye. The true power of music, art and so on, lies in its built-in ability to reach people in a profound way – and, by doing so, clear the path for emotion to have the upper hand over logic.

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Photographer: Elin Berge, Lars Lind and Jonas Ericson.

# MARSEILLE-PROVENCE 2013 AND THE “CREATIVE NEIGHBOURHOODS”: UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACTS OF THE ECOC ON LOCAL CULTURES AND NEIGHBOURHOODS

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## *Introduction*

Cultural development and the promotion of regional folkways are critical components of the European Capital of Culture (ECOC) programme. These elements are echoed in the French Law of 1998 against Exclusion<sup>1</sup> and the UNESCO Convention for Cultural Diversity of 2005<sup>2</sup>. Furthermore, the selection criteria for a Capital City stipulates that “the programme shall: (a) foster the participation of the citizens living in the city and its surroundings and raise their interest as well as the interest of citizens from abroad and (b) be sustainable and be an integral part of the long-term cultural and social development of the city”<sup>3</sup>.

The programming body of Marseille-Provence 2013 has responded to these requirements with a series of participative projects intended to add a democratic dimension to this yearlong event’s cultural offerings. This suite of initiatives includes Creative Neighbourhoods (“Creative Urban Projects”), The Seafront Factory (Atelier du Large), Collections of Collections, and Living in the Midi (Chercheurs de Midi).

We focus our study on the “Creative Neighbourhoods” (Quartiers Créatifs), the most expansive and multi-modal of the participatory projects, and who get their support not only from Marseille-Provence 2013 but also from Marseille Urban Renovation, the National Urban Renovation Agency (ANRU), and the National Public Funds Trust (Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations).<sup>4</sup> The “Creative Neighbourhood” project entails installing nine localised culture and urban development projects to operate throughout 2013 in order to “integrate art into the process of

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<sup>1</sup> Law Number 98-657 of July 29, 1998, Policy relative to the fight against exclusion; « en priorité dans les zones défavorisées, des activités artistiques, culturelles et sportives, la promotion de la formation dans le secteur de l’animation et des activités périscolaires ainsi que des actions de sensibilisation des jeunes fréquentant les structures de vacances et de loisirs collectifs »

<sup>2</sup> Ferdinand Richard (2012).

<sup>3</sup> Decision No 1622/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006 establishing a Community action for the European Capital of Culture event for the years 2007 to 2019, Part 2: *City and Citizens*. (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:304:0001:01:EN:HTML>)

<sup>4</sup> Marseille-Provence 2013 Pre-programme (2012): 66-67

urban renewal and stimulate participatory approaches [...] in so-called at-risk areas”<sup>5</sup>. Six of these Creative Neighbourhood localities lie within the city limits of Marseilles, the majority of which are based in peripheral arrondissements.

After first defining the word “creative” in this context, we shall look at the potential application of this type of project to implement city policies in contentious areas. We evaluate the possibilities for participation in such a project, including the possible co-opting of the “creative” and “cultural” labels. We subsequently inquire into how opportunities for engagement differ according to the time and space attributes of a cultural offering. Finally, we pose the larger question of sustainability and the potential after-effects of this operation, comparing with some observations from Lille post-2004 and looking into the claim that the ECOC operation (and by proxy, its neighbourhood programmes) can have the structuring effect of bringing about an environment of “culture-by-project”.

### 1. *Creative city and creative neighbourhoods*

At first glance, the designation of this operation as “creative neighbourhoods” works to obscure its analysis. This title is not neutral, as it refers to the vague notion of the “creative city”, that is to say; a semantic and problematic field linking the role of culture and of creativity, linking issues of urban and economic development. However, this is not easily gleaned through a reading of the concept of the creative city.

#### *The Creative City: a culture-led regeneration*

The theory of the creative city and the notions and assumptions grouped under such a heading can be used to describe a city’s conversion trajectory in a time of crisis, for instance when implementing initiatives to renew its urban fabric and economy after de-industrialisation. Given the competitive environment involving cities, this transformation can make their territory attractive for companies and their executives, or, more precisely, a group of professionals categorised as the “creative class” by writers such as Richard Florida<sup>6</sup>.

In this theory of the creative city, an economy based on the production of information and knowledge (“creativity”), portends a comparative advantage for business as well for territories. The presence of the creative class should, therefore, attract high value-added companies. Conversely, to allow for the development of these companies, cities

<sup>5</sup> Marseille-Provence 2013, Dossier de presse: Signature des conventions « Quartiers créatifs » (2012).

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Richard Florida (2003).

should produce satisfactory operating condition for these enterprises and living conditions for creative workers.

Although we will not dwell on the critiques of this theory of the creative class, we have established that this title has predictive effects, to the extent that it guides the development plans of current cities. This raises a new issue concerning the relationship between urban planning, culture, creativity and economic development.

Therefore, applications for the title of European Capital of Culture can be understood from the perspective of infrastructure construction and cultural facilities, but also as motivated by the organisation of cultural events intended to produce a new visibility, a new image for the city. In the case of Marseilles, the application was linked with a long-term strategy of economic and urban development, and with the Euro-Mediterranean operation.

#### *Another problematic*

Among the events and projects planned for 2013, we are particularly interested in the "Creative Neighbourhoods," which, as we mentioned, does not seem to fit with the ideas and expectations of the "Creative City". Why is this?

The Creative Neighbourhood operation mostly relates to peripheral areas: nine territories, not only in Marseilles but also in Arles, Aubagne and La Ciotat. The official programme evokes "artistic interventions designed to question, to improve or change the course of people's lives (...). In 2013, the Creative Neighbourhoods will also host architectural projects and ephemeral installations, meetings, screenings, performances..."

Therefore its primary purpose is not to attract businesses and creatives in the sense of Creative City logic (framework, programmers, professions cultural industries, etc..), but rather to support urban renewal in so-called "at-risk areas", that is to say, areas neglected by urban public investment for many years.

We cannot exclude the effects of valorisation and gentrification related to these operations, but, let us assume for the moment that ECoC-related initiatives characteristic of the Creative City are centrally-sited, and that sensitive areas are not targeted for this "creative" development.

An idea which caught our attention is the intention to integrate people into the process of transforming their neighbourhood and in the dynamics of 2013.

## 2. *The issue of participation*

This is an ongoing investigation, and one which needs further analysis. We do yet not have sufficient information to judge if the artist's residence model and this type of peripheral urban area interventions are designed to support and promote urban transformation, or if they are intended to legitimise and co-opt them. Our interest is to understand the extent to which the participation of inhabitants is at stake in the transformation and activity of their environment.

Some keywords found in the official programme evoke the democratic perspective of citizen participation – that is to say, the dialogue, the exchange of views, the appropriation by inhabitants of the tools of creativity and the co-construction of problems. In short, new modes of relations emerge between inhabitants and developers in development projects.

### *Another distribution of the sensible?*

We cannot therefore rely on the analytic framework of the creative city. Instead, in the case of the Creative Neighbourhoods, the "creatives" become groups or individuals who are not considered as inherently creative themselves. These inhabitants of residential neighbourhoods (which represent a quarter of Marseille's population) are not members of the creative class: they lack the attributed property of being creative.

Here we identify the aesthetic politics of the creative neighbourhoods, in apposition more than in opposition to the aesthetics of urban development and the spectacular urbanism of the creative city.

The political dimension appears here in the sense of Jacques Rancière, for whom "art is not political, first and foremost, by the messages and the feelings it transmits about the world order." However, art becomes political "through the type of time and space that it establishes, by the way it cuts up that time, and by the way it fills up that space"<sup>7</sup>.

In this perspective the "Creative Neighbourhoods" could take the place of another "distribution of the sensible", according to the concept of Rancière; that is to say, of "another division of space and capacity granted to everyone, contesting the a priori distribution of positions, abilities and disabilities attached to these positions"<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> Jacques Rancière (2004): 37.

<sup>8</sup> Jacques Rancière (2008): 18.

At this point of the investigation, this concept remains hypothetical, an analytical framework with which to conduct the investigation. One can detect an issue with aesthetic politics in this operation and its possibilities of intervention in the division of roles and spaces. However, we should also consider the operation in a more critical or cautious way.

The promotion of this participative form differs from the simple development of the cultural offer proposed to spectators, as in the classical sense of cultural democratisation. More precisely, the participative form would be considered if the initiative gave rise to a form of empowerment which beyond the duration of the operation.

One may wonder if this form of participation in artistic and urban projects is not actually a way of avoiding political issues concerning the prior political abandonment of these areas – or if it is a way to establish social ties through habitants' socialising and mutual experience of the ephemeral space the design in whose design they have had no part in creating. In other words, we can view this as a means to produce consensus to avoid conflict over issues on past urban policies, including those that will be put into place once the Capital of Culture event runs its due course.

### *3. Temporal dimension and impact of a cultural initiative*

The Creative Neighbourhood project is firmly rooted in territorial improvement and demonstrates the will to reclaim “abandoned” or “forgotten” spaces to the benefit of those that live around them. However, cultural anchorage and mediation are not necessarily limited to a long-term territorial implantation. As previously experienced in Lille 2004 and evident from the very definition of the ECoC as an event of definite duration, it is expected that the ad hoc event format will continue to drive many cultural offerings during 2013. The event format is preferred for its ability to underscore key points in the life of the project and book-end the public's perception of the project lifecycle.

We pose the question of space versus time: is the ability of a cultural space to effect long-lasting change more incumbent on the ad hoc physical space of meanings' negotiation or on the enduring temporal nature of the action?

In the case of Lille 2004, the tendency to prefer “events” to situated long-term programming attracted harsh criticism from cultural and associative structures claiming cultural instrumentalisation, the tacit insertion of city politics in the guise of a cultural project, impertinent programming, and the failure of one-off programming to consider the “specificity of a public far removed from artistic networks and prac-

tices”<sup>9</sup> by delivering a cultural happening without providing tools for its symbolic decryption. The decision to invest large sums in ephemeral programmes has further deepened the cleavage between temporal and enduring projects.

Other criticism of the format comes from the perception of the mega-event’s inflexible and top-down monumentality as “supporting and reinforcing the image of established power”, with its structuring repercussions for the long term.<sup>10</sup> However, Lille, which in 2004 invested heavily in event-driven programming, also found success with its hybrid event-site spaces called the “Maisons de Folie”, successfully linking inhabitants and cultural initiatives. Can this hybrid event-space model overcome such perceived barriers in Marseille’s complex cultural fabric?

Let us look at two examples of the Theatre of the Merlan and the Friche de la Belle de Mai (two areas inscribed in the Creative Neighbourhoods) as spaces whose work is situated both in ad hoc and enduring programming.

The Merlan Theatre is sited in the city’s peripheral 15th arrondissement and dates back to a 1976 negotiation for the inclusion of “social” space in a new commercial development project. It reached its current proportions in 1992 when former Mayor Robert Vigouroux brokered a project with the Ministry of Culture and Communication to create a “national theatrical scene” in this working-class quarter. The site has found anchorage in the neighbourhood, offering both national touring spectacles and social functions/ workshops with the neighbouring housing projects (Cité de la Busserine). The theatre can be reached by train within five minutes, the main station serving a nearby station, and enjoys a broad range of communication which promotes its cultural and philosophical conferences attracting cultural and academic participants from the region and beyond. The Creative Quarter of the 15th arrondissement and its “Garden of Possibilities” is a part of the Merlan’s action portfolio located between the theatre and local train stop.

Three kilometers south, below flyovers carrying trains into Marseille’s main railway station, is the Friche de la Belle de Mai. This multi-centred art project in a repurpose-built industrial space which was the first of its kind in France, and is the outcome of collaboration between the former city culture chief Christian Poitevin and theatre directors Philippe Foulquié and Alain Fourneau. The space began in another location in the city’s “Neighbourhoods of the North” and found its current location in the post-industrial 3rd arrondissement two years later in 1992. Thanks to its vast spaces, it is able to host large concerts with interna-

<sup>9</sup> Isabelle Estienne & Marie-Thérèse Gregori (2008).

<sup>10</sup> Laurent Dréano cited in *Libération* (2005): 33.

tional touring groups, theatrical performances, and it also houses an array of artists' studios and two independent radio stations. The site enjoys certain cultural renown and yet has a limited reach to those living in more remote neighbourhoods.

Both spaces, created in the midst of the dynamism of Marseille's mid-1990's cultural "movida", aim to develop an artistic practice, all while considering their role as cultural implantations in a host neighbourhood. Perhaps these two hybrid institutions have been able to outlive their peers from Marseille's cultural golden age because of their ability to engage both the alternative and legitimate cultural communities. However, these spaces are not immune from the challenge of broaching the perception of implantation and irrelevance; nor does their willingness to engage the neighbourhood guarantee the narrowing of the psychological difference between local and visiting publics.

#### 4. *Sustainability of the project*

Whether it takes the shape of a long-term implantation or of an ad hoc event, each format has a bounded set of opportunities for those implicated in its establishment, organisation, course of operation, and for those who must live with its after-effects. The field of possibilities in an ad-hoc event format gives more framing power to the organiser, whilst the long-term implantation allows for room to manoeuvre for the public/consumers. Might one consider, then, that the desire to emphasise short-term "event-based" cultural offerings, even when inscribed within a long-term territorial initiative, reflects a growing tendency towards the making of the city by way of the time-delimited project?

This phenomenon has been theorised by Boltanski & Chiapello<sup>11</sup> as the result of a process of the disengagement of traditional hierarchical systems in capitalistic theory/practice, and portends a movement towards the "general organisation of society by the project". In this model, the "project" has taken on the magnitude of organising principle above the specificities of organisations, and individuals in a network owe their very inclusion to their persistent actions taken within a succession of projects.

The idea of a Year of Culture and the implementation of cultural projects within this framework may imply the manifestation of this global trend and raises the question of sustainability.

In fact, the sustainability of the Creative Neighbourhoods implies the ability of these projects to thrive and to co-exist with associations and

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<sup>11</sup> Luc Boltanski, Eve Chiapello (1999): 258.

organisations not included in the official programming of the year 2013. With the coming of the ECoC, new forms of criteria-making, funding, selection and evaluation may be put in place which abruptly change the playing field for a great number of actors not officially involved in this event. For this reason, it is important to consider how such an event can re-structure future pathways of action, or even modify existing paradigms.

There is a risk to sustainability of the cultural sphere, represented by the introduction of jury-framed funding request processes that require all cultural actors to fit their offering to the current theme in order to receive funding. In the example of Lille 2004, a post-ECOC perpetuity project entitled "Lille 3000" re-creates a series of events every 2-3 years according to a changing theme for each occasion (the most recent in 2012, "Lille Fantastique", emphasises exuberance, surrealistic fashion, and the spectacular). The centrality of such an event to cultural politics means that a great deal of funding will be allocated through application processes delineated by the given theme's requirements. Should all cultural actors be required to correspond to an externally imposed (and possibly arbitrary) theme in order to continue the funding of their diverse activities?

The relative ability (or its lack) of small organisations to compete—to adapt – is linked to their ability to "network" and to create relational ties with key actors, in a cultural world run "by project". This implies that the work of culture is becoming the work of organisational management and marketing, with the focus of the work becoming more and more diffuse. The mediation of relationships and ties has become foundational: "in the last third of the 20th century...the activity of the mediator...has become autonomous, detached from other forms of activity, and valued for its own sake"<sup>12</sup>. What does this mean for the work at hand—the difficult work of effecting culture despite the social forces of diffusion, differentiation, and exclusion?

### *Conclusion*

We have attempted to create a general problematic for the type of operation that has begun to take place in Marseille, which is by no means fixed or determined. This is an operation that has already proved itself dynamic and changing according to risks inherent in such a complex scheme. Nevertheless, a conceptual model of action, of the "distribution of the sensible", of the place of "dissensus"; of the temporal/spatial aspect of the cultural offering, and of the sustainability of the

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<sup>12</sup> Pierre-Michel Menger (2002): 166-167.

operation allows us a clearer objective lens through which to observe the much anticipated coming year.

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# THE UTRECHT APPROACH: CO-PRODUCTION IN ECoC EVALUATION DEVELOPING AN INNOVATIVE MONITORING AND EVALUATION METHOD FOR IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND LEARNING

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## *Summary*

The city of Utrecht, the Netherlands, has been working on a bid to be designated the European Capital of Culture (ECoC) in 2018.<sup>1</sup> A Monitoring and Evaluation System (M&E) is a crucial element of the bid-book. Candidates are asked to state how they will assess the effects of their efforts and activities, and Utrecht will build on existing systems of former ECoCs (i.e. Liverpool, Turku) since these have provided relevant and insightful assessments. At the same time, the city developed some new, innovative aspects of the M&E method, supplementing existing systems by (a) the strengthening of the learning process and (b) by further elaborating the European dimension in M&E. This paper highlights how both aspects can contribute to M&E Systems of future ECoCs.

## *1. Introduction<sup>2</sup>*

The city of Utrecht in the Netherlands has been working on a bid-book targeting nomination as European Capital of Culture (ECoC) 2018. Commissioned by the municipality and province of Utrecht, Utrecht University is developing a new monitoring and evaluation (M&E) method, 'In this context' evaluation' being the assessment of content, processes and effects of policy on the basis of certain criteria<sup>3</sup>, and the M&E method will build on the proven experience of Liverpool, Turku and other ECoCs. Previous ECoCs have developed robust systems to assess the impacts of cultural activities. We make good use of the huge work that has already been done on M&E in ECoCs and build further on this knowledge base. At the same time, the Utrecht M&E approach will supplement these solid methods with two major innovative elements:

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<sup>1</sup> At the end of November 2012 it turned out that Utrecht will not be selected as ECoC in 2018, but this paper can inspire coming ECoCs.

<sup>2</sup> The authors would like to thank Thomas Schillemans, Hans Sakkers, Bram Buyze and Thomas Nova for their constructive and valuable comments on previous versions.

<sup>3</sup> Bressers (1998)

(a) a focus on the use of 'communities of knowledge' (process) and (b) the elaboration of the European dimension (content and effects).

This paper highlights how these two design elements can result in even richer M&E systems for ECoCs. Our objective is to develop an efficient approach that is based on state-of-the-art scientific knowledge and independent expertise, an approach that actually contributes to processes of internal and societal learning and to the legitimacy of the ECoC.

This paper starts by amplifying on the conventional and participatory methods of M&E as distinguished in academic literature, and discussing the already existing knowledge on ECoC M&E. We describe the advantages of combining conventional methods of ECoC assessment with participatory approaches (section 2). The idea of participatory approaches is then specified in the proposed use of 'communities of knowledge', globally based on Wengers' community of practice concept (section 3). Next, we introduce three approaches to the European dimension of the ECoC, and introduce some first suggestions for its measurement (section 4). We conclude in section 5, by summarising our suggestions for supplementing existing ECoC impact assessments through the strengthening of learning processes and the European dimension.

## *2. Conventional and participatory monitoring & evaluation*

To unravel the state of the art literature on monitoring and evaluation (M&E), we will draw from two bodies of literature: (a) the conventional literature on M&E and (b) more specific literature on participatory monitoring and evaluation (PM&E).

### *2.1 Conventional monitoring and evaluation (M&E) literature*

In general, three types of evaluation can be distinguished<sup>4</sup>: plan evaluation (focused on future interventions or policies, using desk research and systematic group interviews); process evaluation (guiding the implementation process of an intervention by closely following it) and product evaluation (measuring the effects of an intervention, impact assessment).

Plan, process and product evaluation are sometimes conducted together in a 'comprehensive evaluation'<sup>5</sup>, but often one type of evaluation is emphasised. Every evaluation has to be preceded by problem analysis (including the description of persons, organisations, place, time and

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<sup>4</sup> Swanborn (1999); Kudo (2003)

<sup>5</sup> Kudo (2003)

other circumstances for which the intervention is meant), a diagnosis of the existing situation and the specification of the objectives<sup>6</sup>.

Several functions of M&E are highlighted in the literature. M&E systems are traditionally used for internal and external control of organisations. Within these, M&E is used for impact assessment, for project management and planning. Decision-makers and managers use information from these systems to plan and control activities<sup>7</sup>. Additionally, M&E serves the function of facilitating external control by providing relevant stakeholders with information about organisational performance. Public accountability – has the money been used properly? – is another important function of M&E<sup>8</sup>.

M&E can have other general functions also, such as organisational strengthening, institutional learning and the understanding and negotiating of stakeholder perspectives<sup>9</sup>. Internal and external learning rather than control are then the central functions of the M&E system. These last functions are less straightforward and much less often put into practice. The literature highlights that designing M&E systems for both control and learning is challenging<sup>10</sup>.

M&E systems which focus exclusively on control and accountability could undermine rather than strengthen trust<sup>11</sup>. Trust may both be threatened on the side of the producers of cultural activities since they may interpret the M&E system as an indication of a lack of trust. It can also undermine the trust of stakeholders who may come to the conclusion that the yields of all these cultural activities fall short of the expectations which had been created at the start. Formal systems of performance measurement may be created to generate trust, but if they are imposed on actors they may produce the opposite effect. Engaging stakeholders in processes of mutual learning is propagated as a means to strengthen trust<sup>12</sup>.

## *2.2 Conventional M&E in ECoCs: the examples of Liverpool and Turku*

Within the context of the ECoC, the function of impact assessment for internal control and external accountability was developed very well in Liverpool – and later in Turku. Liverpool developed the Impacts 08 study as a research program to evaluate the impacts of Liverpool as an ECoC in 2008. It was a five-year initiative for the period 2005-2010,

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<sup>6</sup> Swanborn (1999)

<sup>7</sup> Anthony & Govindarajan (2007)

<sup>8</sup> Bovens (2005)

<sup>9</sup> Swanborn (1999)

<sup>10</sup> Bovens et al. (2008); Guijt (1999)

<sup>11</sup> Grimmelikhuijsen (2012)

<sup>12</sup> Koppenjan & Klijn (2004)

unique in the history of the ECoCs<sup>13</sup>. The aim of the Impacts 08 study was to provide a longitudinal impact analysis, covering Liverpool's pre-bid period, the bidding and nomination stages, the event lead-up, the event year itself and beyond. It focused on economic, social and cultural dimensions of impact, grouped in thematic clusters<sup>14</sup>.

The Impacts 08 study made an important contribution to the existing ECoC M&E systems since the approach went beyond the usual quantitative indicators. It recognised the breadth of areas of impact by developing a holistic model with inter-related thematic clusters, it explored processes as well as outcomes, and it understood the challenges of impact disaggregation by placing the object of study in a wider context, acknowledging the effect of related initiatives and assessing lines of causality over time<sup>15</sup>. The study of the Turku 2011 Foundation built upon the experiences from Impacts 08 and several other ECoCs<sup>16</sup>. Turku developed a research framework with six thematic clusters and a small core set of priority indicators<sup>17</sup>. The Turku impact study is the first ECoC using these internationally comparable indicators<sup>18</sup>. This is the second longitudinal approach in evaluating the ECoC year. As in Liverpool, the local universities played an important role. The research was led by the University of Turku; ten other universities also participated<sup>19</sup>.

Earlier, the focus of impact assessments of ECoCs was internal and external control. Although the approaches in Liverpool and Turku have taken advantage of learning from each others' best practices, learning as such is not explicitly mentioned as a core purpose of evaluation. The European Commission (EC) states that to 'bring people from different European countries into contact with each other's culture and promote mutual understanding' is one of the central purposes of the ECoCs.<sup>20</sup> This can be achieved in individual projects, but we argue that this can also be part of the ongoing M&E-process in each ECoC. This approach is related to literature on participatory monitoring and evaluation (PM&E).

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<sup>13</sup> ECoC Policy Group (2010)

<sup>14</sup> I.e. (1) cultural access and participation, (2) economy and tourism, (3) cultural vibrancy and sustainability, (4) image and perceptions and (5) governance and delivery process

<sup>15</sup> Impacts 08 (2010): 4-5

<sup>16</sup> ECoC Policy Group (2010)

<sup>17</sup> The thematic clusters are based on the clusters used in the Impacts 08 study. Three clusters were renamed ('Image and perceptions' became 'Identity, image and place', 'Governance and delivery process' became 'Philosophy and management of the process' and 'Economy and tourism' became 'Economic Impacts') and they added a sixth, the European dimension (ECoC Policy Group, 2010).

<sup>18</sup> Saukkolin (2012)

<sup>19</sup> Sevón (2012); Saukkolin (2012)

<sup>20</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/doc413\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/doc413_en.htm) (October 30, 2012)

### 2.3 Participatory monitoring and evaluation (PM&E)

Whilst today there is a growing interest in PM&E, attention to the subject had already started in the 1970s. PM&E was often studied and carried out in agricultural research and community development<sup>21</sup>. It reverses the top-down, conventional M&E with its focus on accountability<sup>22</sup>. It is about radically rethinking M&E and not about simply adding some participatory elements to conventional methods<sup>23</sup>. PM&E is characterised by 'the inclusion of all stakeholders in all aspects of the process'<sup>24</sup> and is therefore essentially a communication process, including the perceptions of the target populations<sup>25</sup>. More precisely, PM&E is 'a process of evaluation of the impacts of interventions which is carried out under the full or joint control of local communities in partnership with professional practitioners (...) Community representatives participate in the definition of impact indicators, the collection and analysis of data etc.'<sup>26</sup>. The PM&E-process, therefore, incorporates local knowledge: it can 'enable the voices and priorities of hidden stakeholders to emerge'<sup>27</sup>. It also entails empowerment: it 'builds the analytical capacity of participants to evaluate, prioritise, decide and address problems'<sup>28</sup>. In general, an increased use of M&E for learning and improvement can be observed<sup>29</sup>.

PM&E can be understood as Fourth Generation Evaluation<sup>30</sup>. The first generation of evaluation was focused on measurement. Evaluators were preoccupied with measuring the results of efforts in factual terms. The second generation of evaluation was essentially about description: evaluators were the 'describers' of what was happening. The third evaluation can be seen as the judgment-generation. The worth of a programme became a central element in evaluation studies. Finally, the fourth generation evaluation 'is defined by a shift in epistemological positions, from a predominantly positivist to a constructivist paradigm'<sup>31</sup>. The emphasis is on evaluation as a process of negotiation, incorporating various stakeholders more centrally into the evaluation process: evaluation as a joint venture. PM&E is not a process carried out by external experts, but by involved stakeholders. People's diverse perspectives and interests are taken into account. The evaluator is primarily a facilitator in the negotiation process, with stakeholders as full

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<sup>21</sup> Estrella & Gaventa (1998)

<sup>22</sup> Gaventa & Blauert (2000)

<sup>23</sup> Guijt (1999)

<sup>24</sup> Holte-McKenzie et al. (2006)

<sup>25</sup> Guijt (1999)

<sup>26</sup> Jackson (1995): 6

<sup>27</sup> Gaventa & Blauert (2000): 7

<sup>28</sup> Holte-McKenzie et al. (2006): 371

<sup>29</sup> e.g. Guijt (1999)

<sup>30</sup> Guba & Lincoln (1989)

<sup>31</sup> Cacuzzella (2009)

partners<sup>32</sup>. PM&E provides a framework for discussing and managing different interests and priorities. It is about learning to work across differences, to resolve conflicts and to create new kinds of collaboration<sup>33</sup>.

The literature points at some significant benefits of PM&E, especially for the second function of M&E systems: internal and external learning. With respect to the central position of youth in the Utrecht bid-book, it is, for example, relevant to know that youth were effective evaluators in foregoing PM&E-processes<sup>34</sup>. Other benefits mentioned are the improved information provision through high levels of participation 'on the ground', which can boost project performance and public accountability<sup>35</sup> and the earlier stated empowerment of stakeholders<sup>36</sup>. The key features of conventional as well as participatory M&E are summarised in the table below<sup>37</sup>:

Table 1. Key features of conventional and participatory M&E systems

|         | Conventional M&E  | Participatory M&E  |
|---------|---|--|
| 1. Who  | External experts  | Community members, facilitator                                       |
| 2. What | Predetermined indicators (mainly cost and production outputs)                         | People identify their own indicators of success                      |
| 3. How  | 'Scientific objectivity', distanced evaluators, procedures, delayed access to results | Self-evaluation, methods adapted to local culture                    |
| 4. When | After programme or mid-term   | More frequent, small-scale evaluations, immediate sharing            |
| 5. Why  | Internal and external control and accountability                                      | Empower local people to initiate, control and take corrective action |

Gaventa & Blauert<sup>38</sup> argue that 'the most significant innovations are found where participatory methods and principles are being combined with conventional approaches to achieve systematic and effective learning within institutions, while enhancing accountability towards stakeholders outside the organisation'. This was the ambition in Utrecht

<sup>32</sup> Estrella & Gaventa (1998): 15

<sup>33</sup> Gaventa & Blauert (2000)

<sup>34</sup> Holte-McKenzie et al. (2006)

<sup>35</sup> Gaventa & Blauert (2000); Guijt (1999)

<sup>36</sup> Guijt (1999)

<sup>37</sup> cf. Narayan-Parker (1993): 12

<sup>38</sup> Gaventa & Blauert (2000): 14

for the M&E of the ECoC in 2018. Combining both approaches asks for an awareness of the tension between different stakeholders and their views on what constitutes 'trustworthy' data, and conventional norms of rigour. It is about ensuring both local participation and external validity. The combination – although the task is challenging – aims to take advantage of the benefits of both approaches. The conventional approach can be highly praised for its clarity and makes comparison with former ECoC impact assessments possible, while participatory methods make use of local knowledge and engage the community in the M&E process.

### *3. Process of the M&E method: communities of knowledge*

In line with the participatory approach to monitoring and evaluation and complementary to conventional methods, the Utrecht M&E of the ECoC suggests the deployment of 'communities of knowledge'. Local social institutions, youth and knowledge centres participate in these communities.

The idea of 'communities of knowledge' is roughly inspired by Wengers' 'communities of practice'<sup>39</sup>. Lave and Wenger<sup>40</sup> first used the term to describe learning through practice and participation – which they called 'situated learning'. The concept of 'communities of practice' is increasingly used to improve (inter)organisational performance<sup>41</sup>. Communities of practice are formed by people who engage in a process of collective learning in a shared domain of human endeavour; these people share a concern for something they do and learn how to do it better by regular interaction.

Communities of practice have three common features: (a) the identity of such a community is defined by a shared domain of interest; (b) members actively engage in joint activities and discussions, help each other, and share information and (c) the participants in the community of practice develop a shared repertoire of resources (experiences, stories, tools, and ways of addressing recurring problems) – in short, a shared practice<sup>42</sup>. This takes time and sustained interaction. In contrast to a project team, a community of practice is often organically created, with as many objectives as members of that community wish to formulate. Community membership is defined by the knowledge of the members. Membership changes and members may take on new roles within the community as interests and needs arise, and a community of

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<sup>39</sup> Wenger (1998)

<sup>40</sup> Lave and Wenger (1991)

<sup>41</sup> Wenger (2006)

<sup>42</sup> Wenger (2006)

practice can exist as long as the members believe they have something to contribute to it, or gain from it<sup>43</sup>.

The central assumption is that learning is central to human identity. Learning takes place in communities of people with similar interests; participants in this way construct their identities. By bringing together diverse insights, team wise reflectivity produces more knowledge than the sum of its parts. There is not one unambiguous measure for performance<sup>44</sup>: stakeholders have different standards for success. The co-creation of knowledge provides the input for relevant practical knowledge, participation on problem definitions and solutions and a mutual learning process<sup>45</sup>. It is situated learning in the same context as it is applied<sup>46</sup>. The form of communities of practice can be online, such as within discussion boards and newsgroups, or in real life, such as in a lunch-room at work, in a field setting, on a factory floor<sup>47</sup>.

Lindkvist<sup>48</sup> suggests two ideal type notions of knowledge communities: a community can exist out of individuals with similar backgrounds, or out of individuals with highly specialised competences. In the latter case, 'rather than resting on communal background knowledge, or individual knowledge base similarity, concerted action is here a matter of the well-connectedness of individual knowledge bases'<sup>49</sup>. Expert accounts and experiential accounts form additional inputs for learning in these communities.

In the Utrecht M&E system, it is suggested that central communities be formed, meeting on a regular basis, with participants central in the ECoC in the city. It is, for example, about project coordinators, museum directors and representatives of the municipality as well as of the county or province. Other central communities will exist comprising representatives of the university, the university of applied sciences and other central knowledge institutions in the city. Next to key communities, more peripheral communities will be facilitated, whose contribution will be less regularly, but similarly, dealt with as the key communities. Participants' particular knowledge forms the basis for selection<sup>50</sup>, but communities can also arise and grow more organically.

The following activities are crucial in forming and managing the communities of knowledge<sup>51</sup>:

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<sup>43</sup> Wenger (2006)

<sup>44</sup> Koppenjan & Klijn (2004)

<sup>45</sup> Merx (2012): 9

<sup>46</sup> Wenger (2006)

<sup>47</sup> Wenger (2006)

<sup>48</sup> Lindkvist (2005)

<sup>49</sup> Lindkvist (2005): 1207

<sup>50</sup> e.g. Holte-McKenzie et al. (2006)

<sup>51</sup> cf. De Bruijn et al. (2002)

1. Community constitution. The community manager needs to identify and invite members for the central and peripheral communities. He will do this in close cooperation with members who have already been selected. Organisations and individuals will be selected on the basis of knowledge, capacities, competences and influence<sup>52</sup>.
2. Community content. The community manager needs to facilitate the process in which the playing field is determined. Which topics will be discussed within the community and which ones are outside its scope? These topics are related to cultural activities but also to broader impacts such as urban development and social trust.
3. Community rules. The functioning of communities is governed by implicit and explicit rules for entry/exit, decisions, frequency of meetings, information exchange, etc.<sup>53</sup>. The community manager needs to facilitate debate within the community about these rules to ensure that the rules contribute to the functioning of the community.
4. Community management. The basic idea is that community management is a function that needs to be carried out by one or several individuals. It seems preferable to select an independent community manager.

These communities of knowledge serve various functions. Firstly, they will generate information for M&E systems and could thus result in a more efficient such system: data that can be gathered by members of the community do not have to be collected by independent researchers. Secondly, members of these communities engage in mutual learning. They discuss the information and give meaning to it. Shared meanings can form the basis for collective action in the form of adaptations of programs and activities. Thirdly, trust can be generated in the central and peripheral communities since new relational patterns and interactions are established between cultural producers, local government, stakeholders and individual citizens.

At the same time, we are aware of the potential risks of working in communities of knowledge. There is, for example, the possibility of 'group think': instead of critically evaluating information, the group members begin to form quick opinions that match the group consensus or the opinions of a strong leader in the group. Another – related

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<sup>52</sup> Merkx (2012): 31

<sup>53</sup> De Bruijn et al. (2002): 85

– risk is ‘negotiated nonsense’: the process eliminates the content and academic/robust criteria for results are no longer central in the discussion<sup>54</sup>. We would, therefore, claim that a combination of conventional and participatory approaches is needed. Data triangulation will enhance the reliability of the results, by utilising the clarity and uniformity of the conventional approach and the locality and room for learning of the participatory approach.

The preceding section dealt with the process of M&E in 2018. The next section will pay attention to another aspect of Bressers’ definition of evaluation<sup>55</sup>. By elaborating the European dimension, some part of the content of the ECoC will be discussed.

#### *4. Content of the M&E method: the European dimension*

One of the main purposes of the European Commission in setting up the ECoC initiative was to foster a feeling of European citizenship<sup>56</sup>. The ECoC Policy Group, consisting of several ECoC’s, defined this European dimension as: ‘[the] theme [which] attempts to understand how the local ECoC programme and host city engage with Europe and incorporate a European dimension in the year. Areas of investigation may include: activities organised by the ECoC in cooperation with organisations from other European countries; citizen engagement in European projects and exchanges; the number of participants and artists from other European countries, or the changing perceptions of Europe amongst citizens’<sup>57</sup>. Yet, ECoCs are still struggling with this European dimension<sup>58</sup>. The second part of this paper therefore provides some suggestions to be taken into account with regard to the European dimension in M&E.

The European dimension displays tension between global, European results and, more precisely, local legacies. The ECoC M&E system is meant not only to contribute to local developments and a strong set of cultural activities, but also to contribute to ‘Europe in the making’. The Utrecht M&E system therefore builds upon previous experiences with M&E in the context of ECoC (M&E in Europe). Next, it is carried out together with other ECoCs in previous and coming years (M&E with Europe) and it generates information about the contribution of the ECoC to the European Project (M&E for Europe).

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<sup>54</sup> e.g. De Bruijn et al. (2002)

<sup>55</sup> Bressers (1998)

<sup>56</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/doc413\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/doc413_en.htm) (October 30, 2012)

<sup>57</sup> ECoC Policy Group (2010):23

<sup>58</sup> e.g. Palmer (2004); Immler & Sackers (2014); European Commission (2010)

#### *4.1 M&E in Europe: European input in the M&E system*

It is important that M&E systems lead to outputs that can be compared to analyse the successes and shortcomings of certain approaches. A certain degree of similarity in the approaches contributes to the accumulation of knowledge about the contribution of cultural activities to societal and European developments. We think it imperative to develop a system which links to previous approaches and so we will build upon the research framework developed by previous ECoCs in the ECoC Policy Group<sup>59</sup>. Information from reports and direct contacts with experts in cities that have successfully developed M&E systems have to be used to develop the M&E system.

#### *4.2 M&E with Europe: European learning*

Several ECoCs will be in the process of developing an M&E system at the same time. For one thing, there are always two European Capitals of Culture in one year and these two cities need to learn from one another. Furthermore, cities will start applying the M&E system in the years before they become the capital (to measure the baseline) and also in the years after they have been the ECoC (to measure long-term effects). This means that effectively a group of at least six cities are working on M&E systems in parallel. These cities should develop a network to learn together on the successes as well as the shortcomings in used M&E-methods. The network is meant to diffuse strong ideas and to help one another to develop strong M&E systems. The type of learning should be understood as an extension of Wenger's<sup>60</sup> ideas to create a community of learning at international level.

#### *4.3 M&E for Europe: Contribution to 'Europe in the making'*

The Utrecht M&E system suggests not only to measure the impact of the activities on local developments, but also how these activities contribute to 'Europe in the making' or 'sharing elements of European culture'<sup>61</sup>. We have used Van Middelaar's ideas<sup>62</sup> about the European Project to highlight how the activities of the ECoC can contribute to 'Europe in the making'.

Van Middelaar distinguishes three approaches to the European Project (see also the table below)<sup>63</sup>. Firstly, the Identity Approach: the European Project will only become a success when Europeans develop a shared sense of identity. Secondly, there is the Client Approach: Eu-

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<sup>59</sup> ECoC Policy Group (2010)

<sup>60</sup> Wenger (1998)

<sup>61</sup> e.g. Immler & Sakkers (2014)

<sup>62</sup> Van Middelaar (2009)

<sup>63</sup> Van Middelaar (2009): 308 a.f.

rope deserves support since it delivers good value to European citizens. Thirdly, the Citizenship Approach focuses on the carrying out of the European Project by fellow citizens who have been appointed for a fixed period of time.

The identity approach seems to be most closely related to the ECoC since the basic premise of an ECoC is that there is such a thing as a shared European culture. The client approach may also be helpful to highlight that the European Project contributes to creating a strong cultural climate in Europe. The citizenship approach can be interesting in the sense that citizens will develop a sense of European citizenship. Those three approaches can form starting points for the monitoring and evaluation of the approach of the ECoC to 'Europe in the making'.

Table 2. European dimensions of M&E systems

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| Identity approach    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- People define themselves as European</li> <li>- People recognise European symbols</li> <li>- People mention European values</li> </ul>                                     |
| Client approach      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- People value the contribution of Europe to the development of a cultural climate</li> <li>- People value the idea that countries influence each others cultures</li> </ul> |
| Citizenship approach | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- People define themselves as European citizens</li> <li>- People know their rights as European citizens</li> </ul>  |

Strong, direct effects of certain activities can hardly be expected. M&E needs to be targeted at identifying specific effects of specific forms of activity. Developing this conceptualisation into an instrument which can be used is the next challenge.

## 5. Conclusion and discussion

The design principles that we have presented in this paper have consequences for both the process of M&E development and the contents of the ECoC M&E system.

Let us first consider the process of M&E development. The M&E system should be developed in close contact with an international community of scholars and experts in M&E. It is about learning from others, with others and also contributing to the learning of others. International networks will form an important dimension of our European approach to M&E. At the same time – more locally oriented – the M&E process can employ ‘communities of knowledge’, next to more conventional methods of M&E, in which different stakeholders have a say. This participatory approach needs to be reconciled with traditional evaluation data and methods.

Second, let us consider the contents of M&E. In addition to the standard list of evaluation criteria (see footnote 14 and 17), thematic evaluations of the impacts of cultural activities on people’s connections to ‘Europe in the making’ in terms of identity, client satisfaction and citizenship need to be carried out. The following design principles can be summarised:

1. M&E for accountability and learning. Enhancing legitimacy through impact assessment is important but an additional focus on learning is crucial for generating mutual trust.
2. M&E by experts and (lay) stakeholders. The M&E system needs to tap into the local intelligence of organisations and individuals – empowerment and smart city – to boost its performance.
3. M&E for and by local and international communities. Local and international networks need to be linked to position cultural activities and impacts in a European context.

In the development of an M&E system, these principles raise several challenges. The approach needs to indicate how accountability and learning can be balanced, it needs to present ideas about the management of (central and peripheral) communities and it needs to further conceptualise the European dimension and indicate how this European dimension can be measured in practice. The re-orientation of M&E means that the reliance on standard approaches to data collection is not enough: managing social processes are a core activity in the Utrecht M&E system.

The Utrecht M&E system focuses on accessible outputs of the ECoC, so that European cities can learn from each other both in organising the ECoC and designing and implementing an M&E system. In short, ECoC M&E needs to be elaborated with some innovative elements: the extensive use of ‘communities of knowledge’ and a further conceptualisation – both in content and in process – of the European dimension.

We hope that these additions will help to strengthen the contribution of ECoC programmes to both local urban development and the creation of a shared – even if fragmented – European identity.

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# **THE EFFECT OF CULTURE-LED REGENERATION ON LOCAL COMMUNITY IDENTITY: THE CASE OF VALLETTA**

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## *Abstract*

The role of culture in regeneration is playing an increasingly important part on government agendas. The European Capital of Culture (ECoC) title has been transformed into an opportunity for cities to regenerate, allowing and promoting community development and involvement. Valletta, Malta's capital, will be an ECoC in 2018. It is a city rich in 'feelings' and has notable and strong community characteristics. People from Valletta have very strong feelings of community ownership, possibly the strongest, as a group, within the Maltese Islands. People hailing from the city often tend to contribute to various calendar events on a voluntary basis, including Carnival, the Easter festival, local feast-days and football occasions. The city saw a serious decline in population after World War II, but its population is now stable although it suffers from a low level of habitable housing stock. The city also suffers from a negative external perspective within the Maltese Islands associated with its community, including a strong social stigma.

The main objective of this paper is to understand the effect of regeneration on local community identity and how the ECoC can allow and foster culture-led regeneration. The paper aims to explore the current needs of Valletta's residents and the issues which can encourage people from Valletta, and outside, to take up residence within the city and make Valletta a truly liveable and creative city again. This paper will also look at how the local community can participate in the ECoC event, to ensure that Valletta's citizens do not feel excluded and are fully encouraged to participate actively by developing their own projects.

## *Key words*

Local community, ECoC, Valletta, culture-led regeneration

## *1. Introduction*

Culture-led regeneration is regarded as an important model for many cities preparing to host large-scale events. Culture-led regeneration

looks at putting culture at the heart of the regeneration process, combining physical and urban regeneration with social development and involvement.

Valletta, one of the host cities of the ECoC in 2018, and a city with many strong characteristics, is looking to adopt a culture-led regeneration process to ensure culture and creativity is at the heart of the agenda.

Such a process is encouraged and facilitated by the recent appearance of important documentation, schemes and incentives within the Maltese cultural and creative sector promoting a culture-led regeneration process leading to 2018, a process which will give the city the chance to flourish as a cultural and creative city. Finally, the paper will also examine the perceived requirements of Valletta's local community which should enable the city to be once more a truly creative and liveable community.

## 2. *Culture-led Regeneration and Local Community Identity*

Quality of Life relates to the relationship between social interaction and the urban environment<sup>1</sup>, whilst the role of culture in regeneration plays an increasingly important role on government agendas. There are three main models associated with regeneration and the involvement of cultural activity.

'Culture and regeneration' is the first: here cultural activity is present but not recognised as being a full part of the process, often coming at a later stage.

'Cultural regeneration', the second, involves cultural activity as one of the sectors enabling regeneration, often combined with other areas and often linked to the creative city model<sup>2</sup>.

'Culture-led regeneration' is the third model, and the focus of this paper. In this, culture is the catalyst of regeneration through the reuse of buildings and the use of open spaces for cultural activity, with culture being a key component of the regeneration process.

However, it must be said that the term is often misused – particularly in cities preparing for mega-events where it is often allotted to regeneration processes which have focused on aesthetic and larger-scale displays of regeneration rather than on smaller, local community-based

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<sup>1</sup> [www.labkultur.tv](http://www.labkultur.tv)

<sup>2</sup> Evans (2005): 1-25

signs. When this happens, little is left to the local population when the hyperbole of the big event is over.

Amongst the main issues which concern the local community in adopting a culture-led regeneration approach are issues of social inclusion and social cohesion, of neighbourhood renewal, the well-being of the local community and issues of ownership and identity<sup>3</sup>.

Evans<sup>4</sup> argues that communities need hope and trust in the regeneration process, a practice which should allow them fully to own and participate in the process. He argues that culture-led regeneration goes beyond the development of so-called 'flagship projects' and includes a social dimension to address social exclusion, community participation in the cultural sphere and residents' wellbeing, where cultural activity is seen as a key indicator of a city's and the local community's quality of life. This process should be more centred on smaller cultural and arts projects which allow for cultural expression and which entail full community ownership and participation. Besides the provision of spaces and facilities, culture-led regeneration must also include human capacity development, aimed at allowing local skills to flourish and facilitate the professionalisation and internationalisation of local creative spirits. Investment in human capacity is as important as investment in physical infrastructure<sup>5</sup>.

Culture is not an instrument, but a way for peoples' fulfilment<sup>6</sup>. Culture-led regeneration sets a framework in which the local community can enhance its sense of ownership, its sense of pride and its sense of place and space. It can help locals feel their history flow through themselves and on into their future.<sup>7</sup>

### 3. *The role of the ECoC and the Local Community*

Originally established in 1985 as a festival to celebrate European cities, the European Capital of Culture (ECoC) title developed into a programme to help less established European cities to generate a change, mainly focussed on urban regeneration, image change and increased tourism levels. The ECoC is now a programme of cultural events held annually in two European cities and with two main aims: the European dimension and that of the city and the citizens. The first looks to highlight the similarities and differences in European culture, whereas the

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<sup>3</sup> Evans (2005): 1-25

<sup>4</sup> Evans (2005): 1-25

<sup>5</sup> Garcia (2004): 312-326

<sup>6</sup> Barroso in European Commission (2012)

<sup>7</sup> Bailey et al (2004): 47-65

second looks both to involve the local community and to implant the feeling of ownership of the process.

A good example of the results generated by the ECoC in the local community is the case of Glasgow 1990. Glasgow managed to change the scope of the ECoC title, developing the ECoC as a means for regeneration and image changing. For many Glaswegians working in the arts and cultural groups, 1990 is regarded as a point of reference as the ECoC was a means to learn and develop, helping them to discover funding possibilities, to look more widely and to develop collaborations and networks with the private sector. The result helped many to continue developing to this very day. In her work, Garcia<sup>8</sup> analyses the opinion of young people in Glasgow, many of which were still young children at the time of the ECoC. Although the title was not a major reference point to them, many see Glasgow today as a city with a strong arts scene and with a strong sense of community, where a good environment for creative development exists. Although not associating it with 1990 themselves, it is clear that most of the feelings mentioned are a result of the ECoC years later. However, although most people in business recognise that the product of this cultural, creative, and eclectic process was due to the development generated by the ECoC, others working in the artistic field have tended to disagree, saying that 1990 was only a way to put Glasgow on the cultural and creative map, and that this environment already existed. Nonetheless, years later, the intangible effects of Glasgow 1990 are still felt.

Examples such as Glasgow demonstrate the success of the ECoC title. Yet for the ECoC to be sustainable and successful in every city, culture needs to return to the centre of every city's vision<sup>9</sup>. Although a focus on the effects which the ECoC brings to the economy or the environment, for example, is important, if culture is not at the centre of action, the ECoC can easily be replaced by another event, or merely by a business conference. The true meaning of the ECoC is that it does not just bring urban or economic regeneration, but that this regeneration is based and centred on cultural activity, allowing those in the cultural and creative field to take centre stage.

Similarly, Liverpool was awarded the ECoC title for 2008 and aimed to replicate the Glasgow effect. The city, suffering from the same social and safety problems affecting Glasgow pre-1990 and sought an image change as one of the main factors on which its bid was based. The internal ECoC bid was part of a process for city centre regeneration which aimed to tackle the social problems afflicting the city, a bid backed by most of the local population. Nonetheless, although social inclusion and

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<sup>8</sup> Garcia (2005): 841-868

<sup>9</sup> Garcia (2005): 841:868

community involvement were key terms which helped Liverpool win its bid, the actual community involvement and tackling of social problems were less successful than planned due to the 'elite vs. popular' divides. These affected many places and the nature of public culture (in the programme) and other alternative, more populist performances which really encouraged community participation.<sup>10</sup>

A study conducted by the Impacts 08 team, a joint programme of the University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University Commissioned by Liverpool City Council conducting a longitudinal evaluation programme for Liverpool 2008, showed mixed feelings about the ECoC by Liverpoolians. 'neighbourhood Impacts' showed that overall, Liverpool residents attended ECoC events and supported the ECoC, as they viewed the ECoC as a means to generate positive outcomes for the city in terms of image change and regeneration. The study however reflected more scepticism about the likelihood of ECoC making a great difference in their neighbourhoods. Two thirds of Liverpool residents took part in events, and the surveyed population felt that their needs were widely catered for. The study showed that residents felt the ECoC programme allowed for regeneration and city improvement; image change; increased numbers of tourists visiting Liverpool; a varied events programme; increased community cohesion and pride, and; created more opportunities for shopping in the city. Nonetheless, the study shows a strong feeling that only the city centre benefited from the event (56% in 2009), and the confidence that the ECoC made a difference to their neighbourhoods was also low (50% in 2009)<sup>11</sup>.

Derry, nominated as the first ever UK City of Culture to host the title in 2013, aims to create active community participation. The city has launched 'Culture for All', a scheme supported by The Lottery Fund and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland with a £1.35 million programme. The scheme is a small grants programme offering grants of up to £10,000 to communities across Northern Ireland to run arts and culture projects and activities that link in with the historic event, encourage talent and improve the lives of people in communities to create their own cultural programmes in a bid to include the local population directly<sup>12</sup>.

However, the ECoC and other programmes originating from the ECoC, have not had the same degree of influence in all European countries, and this is also true of other large scale events such as the Olympic Games. Developments have often disregarded the social and cultural needs of the local community and have had a limited impact on local economy over the long term. Barcelona, host to the 1992 Olympic

<sup>10</sup> Jones & Wilks-Heeg (2004): 341-360

<sup>11</sup> Impacts 08 (2010)

<sup>12</sup> Newswire (2012)

Games is an interesting example of culture-led urban regeneration. The 'Barcelona model', 20 years later, is still an exemplary model of city regeneration, which combined physical restructuring (road network, waterfront development), promotion of local cultural identity and the creation of cultural and business hubs rooted in strongly defined communities. However, Balibrea (2001)<sup>13</sup> notes that such form of regeneration, although one of the most successful forms ever, ultimately led to displacement of the local community with 'politicised' gentrification. The author argues that spatial changes which took place in Barcelona in the years preceding the 1992 Olympic Games did provide positive effects to all of its residents, including a new sense of cleanliness and an increased sense of pride. This creation of space was ultimately intended for the benefit of the residents which however were often forced out of their neighbourhood as a result of price increases for residential space. Hence, although a regeneration of the physical fabric of the city took place, Balibrea argues that the social fabric of the city failed to be regenerated and was ultimately forced out of its local area.

London, recent host to the 2012 Olympic Games is an example to be monitored. The Olympics, mainly won after a bid which focussed on the regeneration of the East London area, have created development and hype around them. But one asks what happens now? There have been reports of locals being forced out in order to develop areas to host the event. Now, once the lights are off one sees that there are still decisions to make that will have a vast impact on the future of the area and its people and being involved in this process is crucial for the locals. Yet this is not an easy process. Locals might not be as willing to get involved and the right structures might not be in place to enable local involvement. Nonetheless, without community projects, projects will struggle. In this process, the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) is working at ensuring that the Olympic developments are fully integrated within the local area and is currently developing a strategy to 'interim uses' on future developing sites within the Olympic Park. This strategy is referred to as 'Learning from Others' and is aimed at learning 'how to' and 'how not to' based on local and international grassroots and community precedents.<sup>14</sup>

In Malta, the National Cultural Policy (NCP), launched in 2011, bases itself on the principle of culture-led regeneration to enable the development of an inclusive culture. Valletta, and the Grand Harbour area, is the stage for some of the richest concentrations of built heritage in the country, which includes a heterogeneous mix of different social groups. Culture-led regeneration may be used as a catalyst to facilitate the reintegration of marginalised communities, and the promotion of

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<sup>13</sup> Balibrea (2001):187-210

<sup>14</sup> [www.labkultur.tv](http://www.labkultur.tv)

access to culture as well as to the discovery and promotion of talent in underprivileged environments<sup>15</sup>.

It is to Malta, and more specifically Valletta, that this paper now turns to understand the current situations and how culture-led regeneration can influence local community identity.

#### 4. *The Case of Valletta*

##### 4.1. *Valletta's residents*

Situated at the heart of the Mediterranean Sea, an ideal bridge between Southern Europe and North Africa, the Maltese Islands comprise an area of 315.12 square kilometres, with an official population at the end of 2010, of 417,608.<sup>16</sup>

Malta has a rich concentration of heritage as a result of the various civilisations which have dominated the Islands through the years, including heritage from the Neolithic, Phoenician and Roman periods, to the Knights of St. John and the British period amongst others. The Islands receive an average of over a million visitors annually. A Market Profile Survey indicated that around 13.5% of tourists who visited Malta and Gozo were interested in the Islands' heritage and culture<sup>17</sup>.

Valletta, built by the Knights of St. John as a fortified city after the Great Siege of 1565, is the governmental and administrative centre of the Maltese Islands and a city with different characteristics. A walled city and a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the city is visited by the vast majority of tourists coming to Malta. Some 92.4% of tourists hosted in Malta visited Valletta during their stay during 2010.<sup>18</sup>

Valletta had a population of 22,779 residents in 1931 (9% of the national population). Today, the population stands at 6,309 people, occupying 2,576 dwellings, comprising merely 1.5% of the Maltese population<sup>19</sup>. The city has experienced a consistent decline in population, yet over the recent years this has been fairly stable, considering the level of habitable building stock in the city. There are also trends indicating an ageing population, with lower birth rates than the national average and with a significantly higher proportion of single parent families. (32% of new Valletta mothers were registered as single in 2005, compared to the national average of 19%), and a similarly higher proportion of

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<sup>15</sup> Parliamentary Secretariat for Tourism, the Environment and Culture (2011).

<sup>16</sup> NSO (2007)

<sup>17</sup> MTA (2010)

<sup>18</sup> MTA (2010)

<sup>19</sup> NSO (2009)

single person households than the national average (35% as opposed to 18%)<sup>20</sup>. This is part of a complex social ecosystem within the social fabric of Valletta and the Greater Valletta area. The social stigma on Valletta and its residents is slowly decreasing but is still visible.

Valletta is a city of many feelings and has particular and strong community characteristics. People from Valletta have a very strong feeling of community ownership, possibly the strongest, as a group, within the Maltese Islands. People from the city often contribute to calendar events voluntarily. These include Carnival, Easter, local festivals and football occasions.

#### *4.2. Valletta's Community Ambassadors*

A workshop was held in December 2011 with 'Valletta Community Ambassadors'. The aim of this workshop was to understand and record their vision for Valletta. The scope of this workshop included:

- To start the local-community planning process for the Valletta 2018 ECoC;
- To bring a group of community ambassadors together – people who are recognised and respected within their sector of the community and within Valletta overall;
- To understand the community in Valletta and the differences between parishes, community and rivalry, homogeneity and identity;
- To discuss issues affecting people living in high density, mixed-use locations and potentially conflicting land uses;
- To ask what are the perceived areas of economic development and what threats are affecting Valletta's residential community;
- To identify key strengths and areas of potential linked to socio-cultural events that are organised by members of the community.

The Community Ambassadors included people both born or living in Valletta, representing some of the most popular spheres in Valletta community life such as football, fiesta, carnival and music, as well as those not from Valletta itself but who operate a business in the city. The workshop lasted for two hours and eleven participants attended. They

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<sup>20</sup> Valletta 2018 Foundation (2011)

were first introduced to the topic and given some pointers to the area of discussion. The workshop moderator was there to ensure that the discussion did not lose its main direction, but participants were allowed to talk freely and discuss their issues, concerns and needs.

The participants immediately stressed that, before any planning addressing cultural events and activities took place, basic needs should be met, though they agreed that culture can indeed be a tool to facilitate this. This includes providing an adequate level of education in the local community school and improved accessibility to and inside Valletta, including alternative means of transport. The people from the business sector also criticised the bureaucracy involved in operating in Valletta and accessibility concerns.

One of participants remarked that, what made the city a local community is its people, those who want to live in the city to the fullest. Small things, daily rituals and interaction with neighbours are what create a community feeling. Over the years, the issues of property prices and accessibility are issues which have negatively affected the life and liveliness of Valletta.

Although there are declining population levels, many young people would love not to move out of Valletta, or to return. However, there are many factors which hamper their return. This includes inflated property prices as well as the type of property available – which often deters people who are looking to start a family from living there. The lack of playing fields and safe open spaces is another factor, together with the overall lack of family-friendly facilities, the level of education provided locally and an overall feeling of insecurity, especially at night.

Other resources are also important and complement daily life in the city. One important factor is the availability of quality food. A lively food market selling genuine, authentic products reflects the liveability of a city. Other factors also improve liveability and make it feel more comfortable and secure. This includes providing tourist accommodation by converting abandoned buildings and creating 'Bed and Breakfast' pensions and boutique hotels. This can help in refurbishing abandoned buildings, activate and regenerate socially deprived areas, open the way for more tourist activity after dusk – when the city is less busy, but highly atmospheric and even, at times, quite eerie!

In relation to cultural activity, participants also commented that Valletta suffered from a shortage of open spaces where creative activity might live and flourish.

The conclusion of the workshop, however, was that, no matter what cultural events and programmes were held, Valletta residents still have the most basic needs, namely:

1. Good level of education;
2. Easier access to and inside Valletta;
3. Quality food markets;
4. Help for business by reducing bureaucracy;
5. Affordable property;
6. Provision of tourist accommodation;
7. Playing-fields and safe open spaces and
8. Family-friendly facilities.

#### *4.3. Involving Valletta's residents through V.18*

Given the declining population trends and the social issues, some of which were mentioned earlier, it is clear that Valletta needs an injection of life and a vibrant community which would fill the city with life. Regeneration, led by culture and supported by the EcoC, could help to achieve this.

The draft 'Strategy for Malta's Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs)<sup>21</sup> shows the ECoC in Malta through 'V.18' (the working title of the Valletta 2018 programme) as 'Malta's most ambitious international creative project', where Valletta is seen as a hub for creative exchange, and where creative clusters are, ideally, hubs for this exchange to flourish. The strategy talks of a number of schemes and incentives to support culture-led regeneration in Valletta by fully involving the local community. These include developing creative studios to allow the local community to express their talents to the fullest, with other creative spirits from outside the city who would also operate in the same cluster. This could be a prime process of culture-led regeneration if the creative clusters were set up using abandoned buildings – particularly in the lower area of Valletta, an area much in need of urban and social regeneration, where a process of culture-led regeneration could be critical.

Various cities have successfully adopted a process of re-utilising abandoned buildings to support culture-led regeneration, by re-developing

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<sup>21</sup> Creative Economy Working Group (2012)

them into creative clusters. Amsterdam's Westergasfabriek, formerly a coal-gas plant, was converted into a creative cluster, where the original gasholders, surrounded by pools, were transformed, and where both cultural and business activities cater for different audiences<sup>22</sup>. In Riga, the VEF is a creative cluster consisting of former factory buildings, one of the most distinctive quarters of Riga, outside the city centre, where artists and other creative people are challenged to find fresh ways to attract audiences<sup>23</sup>.

Locally, various other schemes and incentives have also been introduced recently. The 'Create'<sup>24</sup> programme is a scheme set up by Malta Enterprise to encourage the founding of creative businesses; enterprises are invited to open studios in Valletta, to operate in many areas including visual and performing arts, crafts, film and video, music, literature, digital media and design. These enterprises are offered tax credits to incentivise investment in their skills and in the creative industry within Valletta, the whole of the city being covered. The possibility of having a partnership involving government, the private sector and creative people could also encourage people to feel more involved and to ensure that the development of such a quarter is suitable for the long term. The development of creative clusters to facilitate networking targeting new collaborations and partnerships can help young people who wish to start up to have a solid reference point.

However, involving residents is not just about organising a space and setting up the financial mechanisms for the creation of creative clusters. It is also about improving standards of living, promoting educational opportunities and creating jobs which ultimately allow for improved quality of life and lead to a renewed sense of community and pride.

V.18 is a tool to promote culture-led regeneration in Valletta and its vision is one where culture is the engine for supporting individual creative careers through the professionalisation of the sector, allowing local skills to be internationalised, promoting a sense of well-being and enhancing local community relations, as,

*"V.18 is the catalyst to a long-term, culture-led regeneration that sees cultural and creative activity as the most dynamic facet of Valletta and all Malta's socio-economic life".<sup>25</sup>*

Over the past few years, the cultural and creative sector in Malta has been increasingly recognised. A number of schemes, incentives and programmes have been created and/or strengthened in order to al-

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<sup>22</sup> Marciszewska (2001) & WGF BV (2010)

<sup>23</sup> Foundation Rīga 2014 (2011)

<sup>24</sup> Malta Enterprise (2012)

<sup>25</sup> Valletta 2018 Foundation (2012), pg. 11

low creatively minded people to exploit their talents and skills. These measures are considered by V.18 as an important building-block in the bid to make Valletta an ECoC.

The CCIs do not generate exclusive benefit to the sector in itself but have the power to deliver benefits to a wider society outside its own field, including the social issues to be addressed in Valletta.

V.18's mission statement rests on three main pillars: capacity building through investment in human capacity, a built infrastructure to complement the development of the human capacity available and allow for regeneration in socially deprived areas, and a digital infrastructure, where virtual spaces and platforms allow Valletta to overcome its territorial limitations, showcase the talent of its people and expand its audiences.

In the development of its objectives, V.18 used the Malta's NCP<sup>26</sup> were formulated using the NCP as a base document. The NCP itself was drafted with the possibility of the ECoC in Malta in mind.

Malta's NCP is targeted to "transform cultural and creative activity into the most dynamic facet of Malta's socio-economic life in the 21st century" (pg. 86). It is governed by basic principles, amongst which are the need to empower the public to participate in cultural activity through a people-centred approach by developing an inclusive culture, as this encourages improved well-being and quality of life.

*"Access to culture empowers people and enables them to enjoy, participate in and contribute to the development of their society, not just for their own personal well-being, but for the enrichment of the whole community" (pg. 86).*

Hence, V.18's objectives are (i) making careers of culture through the development of local human resources in the CCIs; (ii) growing internationally from the world within us, engaging with communities across and beyond Europe's borders to understand and explore new cultural identities; (iii) establishing Valletta as a creative city, where Valletta is at the heart of Malta's creative economy, using the ECoC as a stage to display social, economic and cultural regeneration, where enhancing the life of the people is key and (iv) nurturing sustainable relations with our environment.

Nonetheless, provision of physical and human development facilities might not be enough to ensure local community involvement, although cultural inclusion involves social, physical, intellectual and economic

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<sup>26</sup> Parliamentary Secretariat for Tourism, the Environment and Culture (2011)

accessibility, access to culture may often be hindered by one's background. The Culture Participation Survey<sup>27</sup> highlights the lack of participation of the Maltese population in cultural events and activities. Of the population surveyed in this study, 87.3% stated they had not attended a dance performance in the 12 months preceding the study, 69.5% had never attended a theatre performance, 68.7% a live music performance and 75.2% had never visited an exhibition or an art gallery. On the other hand, more popular forms of cultural event, such as the local parish feast, Good Friday processions and plays and carnival ranked highly amongst the events mostly attended by those interviewed. This shows the attachment of the Maltese (especially Valletta residents) to their local community and the activities which come from within the community – at times from their own quarter within the community. It is a point of debate whether people mostly attend events they feel belong naturally to their community and are reluctant to participate in events which they feel are 'imposed' to them.

Away from the islands, the importance of culture and of creative industries is also evident. London accompanied its Olympics sports programme with a parallel arts and culture 'London Festival' as a part of the so-called 'Cultural Olympiad'. This had a budget of £55 million, and more than 20 million people attended. The London Festival's main achievement was probably getting people engaged with the arts who might otherwise never have been involved. Many of the artistic programming came with the condition that the local community should be taken into account, involving them fully in the festival<sup>28</sup>. The programme involved mega-events such as concerts with international stars, but also smaller-scale exhibitions or workshops involving young children. The London Festival also served as a way to encourage more young children towards a possible future in the creative sector, where it is hoped that they are provided with the best tools and means to develop.

Although concerns on what happens to the urban infrastructure post-Olympics are important, planting in young peoples' minds a possible future and offering an alternative future would be the most valuable legacy of London 2012. Similarly, V.18 hopes to be the same catalyst for children and people in Valletta to unleash their creative skills and fully own 2018. This also would be one of the best possible legacies which Valletta could receive from V.18.

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<sup>27</sup> NSO (Malta) (2011)

<sup>28</sup> Masters (2012)

## 5. Conclusions

Valletta will be an ECoC in 2018. The city has a special place in local history and can also play a special role in the future, including the post-2018 years. The ECoC event is expected to be used as a catalyst to enable culture-led regeneration and, ultimately, to ensure that Valletta will once more have a special role in the history of Malta and Europe as an example of culture-led regeneration which facilitates and encourages – and is based on – the development and total involvement of its residents.

Nevertheless, the outcomes from literature and from the community workshop reflect two important realities. The right spaces, mechanisms and incentives must be in place to allow Valletta to flourish as a creative city through a process of culture-led regeneration, a process which will be spearheaded by the ECoC. However, a culture-led regeneration process needs, firstly, to take into account the basic needs of its community. These needs can be addressed and developed through a culture-led regeneration process, although one needs to understand that, for the community to live well, and own V.18, the elaboration of a high-quality cultural programme in itself is not enough. The city must have its basic needs satisfied, to ensure that it can be a city in which people want to live, operate and create – to become a truly liveable, creative city.

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# **THE COMING OF AGE OF ECoC – MICRO-REGIONAL FACTORS AND THE FINANCIAL AND CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY OF THE ECoC PROGRAMME IN PÉCS**

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## *Abstract*

To be able to investigate the issues relating to the cultural industry, it is important to define the concept. Given an accepted model, we can for example, analyse the effects of cultural development on the cultural industry of a specific region or settlement.

When presenting its budget for the ECoC project (Pécs2010) the City announced that it aimed to develop not only the one sub-segment (tourism) and from a study of the various investment projects, it was evident that the goal was general cultural economic development.

The LEADER area surrounding Pécs is extremely interested in culture and its positive impact on the related sectors. For this reason, the LEADER projects which began in 2010 also focus on investment in culture-related industry.

We investigate the financial and cultural sustainability of the ECoC project in Pécs – what we see as the main problems and what we see as good decisions. Although at this point in time (Autumn 2012) it is still too early to draw final conclusions (the major investment in the Zsolnay Cultural Quarter was only completed this year) the model can show what should be sustainable, although such corporate structures require a proactive approach.

## Introduction

*"In our conception, one part of the cultural economy consists of traditional cultural services (from education and public cultivation, by way of Arts-related services to tourism). The importance of these sectors has intensified in developed countries (these sectors employ many people and attract significant capital investments), has become more commercialised and has developed a more significant cultural content.*

*The other part of the cultural economy consists of the cultural product industry... Products produced by this industry have*

*a stronger symbolic and cultural value than utility. This, however, is not a new phenomenon: jewellery, decorative clothes have been produced for thousands of years... the novelty is the fast development of the cultural product industry and its distinguished role in dynamising the large urban economies" (Enyedi, Gy 2004).*

György Enyedi's definition of the newly developing cultural economy is just one of several. Many studies distinguish between education and the culture industry and refer to it as an individual sector. There are definitions which restrict themselves to the arts only, and efforts are being made to limit the term to elite culture, totally neglecting mass culture. However, it must be noted that the clear separation of elite and mass culture can also help to distinguish them – a process which may result in competition and finally lead to the defeat of the purely elite culture. The challenge of the cultural economy is also to connect the two; on the one hand, to strengthen mass culture, and, on the other hand, to help elite culture to find the general public once again.

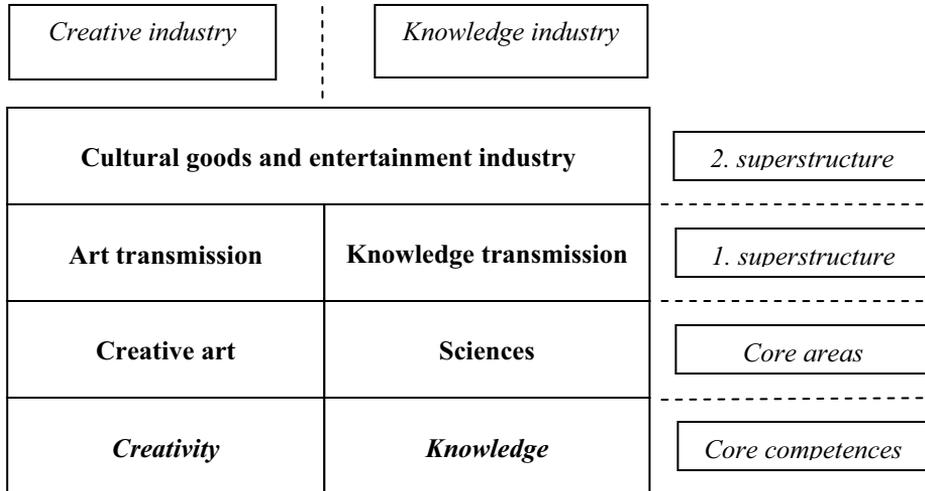
In order to investigate the issues relating to the culture industry, it is important to define the concept. Once a model has been created and accepted, we can for example, analyse the effects which cultural development has on the cultural industry of a specific region or settlement; and whether this development is general or concentrated.

Expectations of the model were to show how the culture industry is organised; to separate (but also to connect and integrate) its sub-sectors; to differentiate between elite and mass culture without separating them firmly from each other. What should also emerge is the latent nature of the economy, not only by noting but also by highlighting where the innovation comes from and what the conditions are for creating a developed cultural industry.

## Modelling the Cultural Industry

Based on earlier research and logic modelling, we created the model presented in Chart 1.

Chart 1: The superstructure approach to cultural industry



This model (known as the cultural industry construction approach) divides the cultural industry into two separate segments and 5 sub-segments. As shown in the chart, the cultural sector is based on two core competences: creativity and knowledge. These constitute the two core areas of the industry (creative arts and knowledge). On these are based, firstly, the transfer or transmission of knowledge of the Arts and Sciences, and, secondly, cultural goods and the entertainment industry. The two core competences determine the two basic areas of cultural industry – the creative and the knowledge industries – which are directly connected and cannot be clearly demarcated. The concept of high culture includes the core areas and the superstructure.

Whilst the first core area of model 1 and the 2nd superstructure can be easily understood, the 1st superstructure needs to be explained:

- Transfer of the Arts relates to: the Performance of 'Goods' and the Transfer of 'Goods' (in general) as a service. These 'Goods' are made by the Creative Arts. These differ from the Performing Arts, as, among Music and Drama performances, they also include: Galleries, Art Museums, High Literature (and their transfer via libraries and bookshops). Transfer-of-the-Arts as a sector requires a more careful definition than does the 'Classical' sector, since the former does not clearly

list what is included. The importance of Regional Management is shown here, as one of the main duties of a Regional Cultural Manager is the transfer of Regional Arts, the mapping and explanation of the sector and Regional Utilisation. To achieve this, there are available today different methodical elaborations, such as the model created by Luciana Lazzeretti of 'Cultural Destructuralisation' (Luciana Lazeretti, 2008.). The results were made by bringing together many different models, which helped to map the measurement of the extent of clustering and the potential of interference in the cultural industry. To make a rational, universal and objective interpretation is almost impossible as the structure differs in every region.

- Transfer of Knowledge relates to: the performance or transfer of scientific knowledge (in general) as a service. It covers education (general, secondary and also higher education), professional conferences and forums, scientific books and their transfer, archival collections. It requires the same complex approach as does the Transfer of the Arts sector.

One advantage of the model is its complexity. It reveals the latency (the hidden nature) of the field, i.e. what is built on what. It shows the core competences on which individual sectors are built, and in this way it is able to separate the creative and knowledge industries. It does not draw a clear distinction between sub-sectors; it rather stresses their points of linkage.

Profitability and automation typically rise on a 'down-to-top' basis, whilst uniqueness increases in the reverse direction. There is no point, however, in constructions 1 and 2 having more revenue since the only way to be truly profitable is to have a solid base on which to build. Hence the model also takes production factors into consideration.

The creation of a knowledge-based society made it evident that the basis of serious industrial development is R&D. This also appears as a core competence on the knowledge industry side. The chart, however, shows that the key to the creative industry is creative art – which must be considered as the equivalent of R&D in the former case. Hence it must be recognised that, although it is not able to generate income on its own but simply provide support for production, this is crucial; without this the entity cannot innovate and is likely to lose its competitiveness in the long term. Other factors can also be listed: for example, the fact that there are today no major innovators is accepted. Innovations are developed by a well-formed team coordinated by a leader. Even in the creative arts it is also possible to achieve a better result if

it is accomplished by a team. Perhaps this is an opportunity to offer an example which aims to enhance the value of art.

*Sectoral factors of the European Capital of Culture project in Pécs*

A further advantage of the approach is that it emphasises that the cultural industry does not only focus on tourism; it goes much farther. In this case we do not include tourism among the creative industries, and refer to it only as a special form of return. The budget statement for the Pécs2010 EcoC project declared the intention to develop not only one sub-segment (tourism). If we examine the investment projects, it becomes clear that the real goal is general cultural development. Nevertheless it must be acknowledged that in certain cases (for example, the Revival of Public Spaces and Parks) the limits of categorization are approached.

Table 1: Budget Sectors

| <b>Items</b>                          | <b>Original allocation (million HUF)</b> | <b>Sector</b>   |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| Cultural programmes, management       | 9,071                                    | Art transfer, Cultural goods and entertainment industry                     |
| Revival of Public Spaces and Parks    | 8,563                                    | Cultural goods and entertainment industry                                   |
| Conference and Concert Centre         | 7,418                                    | Art transfer, Knowledge transfer, Cultural goods and entertainment industry |
| Regional Library and Knowledge Centre | 6,110                                    | Knowledge transfer  |
| Zsolnay Cultural Quarter              | 10,899                                   | Creative industry   |
| Exhibition Hall                       | 1,757                                    | Art transfer  |

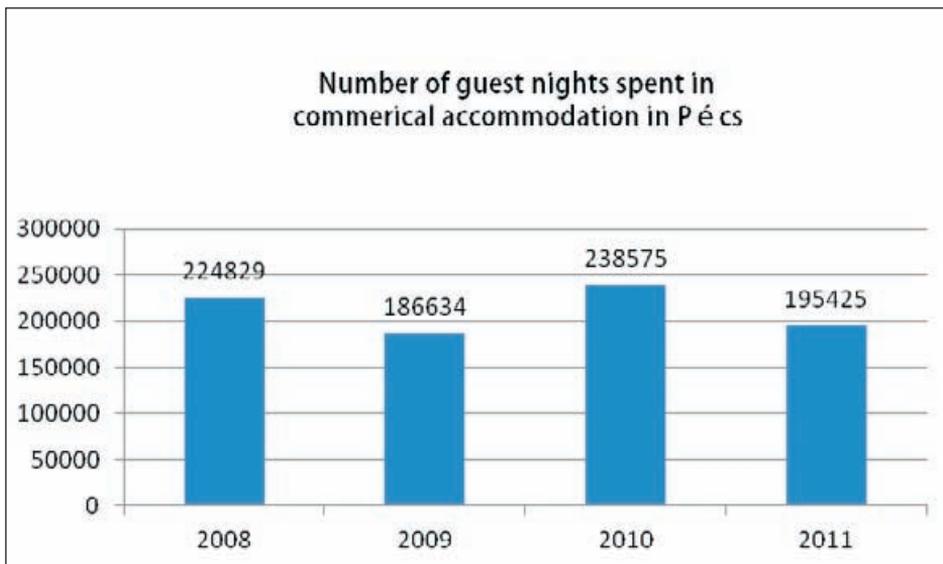
Table 1 shows that the Zsolnay Cultural Quarter is a well thought-out project. The development fully and precisely covers the creative industries sector, whilst having regard to the interdependent sub-segments. Complexity on this scale is not visible in the other major projects.

The Regional Library and Knowledge Centre could serve a similar purpose for the industrial field of knowledge as the Zsolnay Cultural Quarter does for creative industries. However, what is probably the most important aim was omitted – the direct return producing area – and,

consequently, much related to cultural tourism, the entertainment and goods industries.

The Revival of Public Spaces and Parks project is a typical example of direct return. The main intention is to enhance the living standards of the inhabitants, so making the city attractive to quality human resource, stimulating skilled workers to come into the area. It is, therefore, possible that the project supports the knowledge industry, and not the creative industries.

Table 1 also raises some questions. For example, it is possible that – even if the developments in the project are in the general category – the direct return expected in respect of tourism could be 10-15 billion forints for 2010-2011. Optimistic estimates talked of some 1 million tourists visiting Pécs in 2010. The expected level of spending per capita was 15,000 forints (€55). Below are some charts with actual tourism-related data.



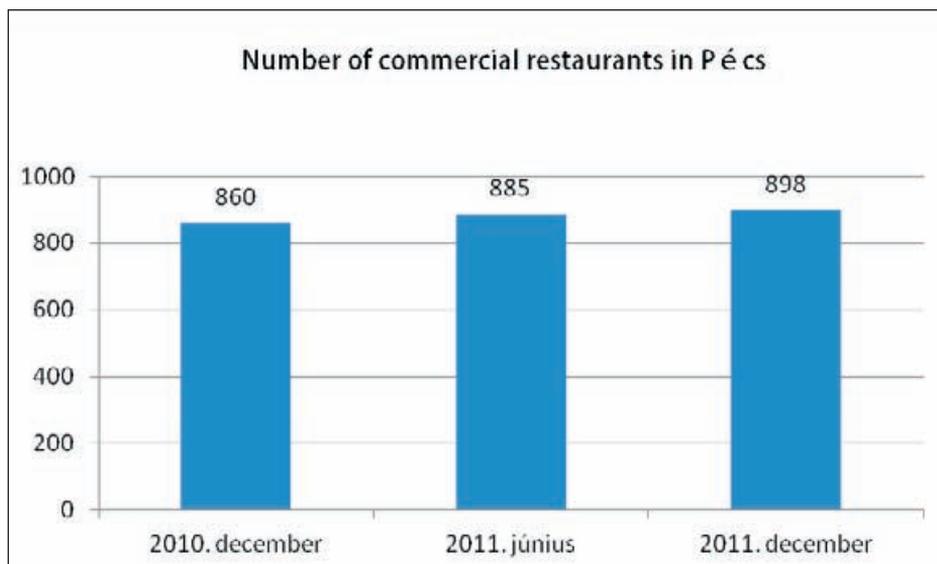
Source: Central Statistical Office (2012) Information database

The tourist nights spent in the region of Pécs and in the other adjacent tourist regions (Mecsek and Villány) increased by over 50,000 nights in 2010 compared with previous years, but in the following year (2011) the demand fell back to its old level. Further, no significant positive change is expected in 2012. (In the first half of 2012 only 91,000 tourist nights were spent in Pécs).

Looking at the trends, we can see that revenues do not differ from the number of nights spent in the city. In 2010 there was a slight increase,

but after that the income from accommodation returned to its original level. According to the data it is even questionable whether the actual investments had any effect on tourism whatsoever, as the ECoC title itself had a positive effect on tourism.

The number of commercial catering facilities increased slightly, but the level of increase was not significant and so it cannot have contributed to increased tourist demand.



Source: Central Statistical Office (2012) Information database

### *The impact of the ECoC project on the surrounding area*

It is worth considering the fact that the development of the cultural industry did not focus on one city – on one spatial point – when Pécs won the right to organise the ECoC programme. This particular development target had begun to expand territorially at national, regional and micro-regional level. The LEADER area surrounding Pécs has considerable interest in culture and its positive impacts in the related sectors. For this reason, these projects, which also began in 2010, also focused on investment in the cultural industry, such as:

- activities in connection with the creation of thematic tourist routes,
- local events aiming to preserve traditions, combined with the ECoC,

- preserving local monuments and memorials,
- organising creative camps and camps for preserving traditions,
- founding democracy centres, creating development programmes,
- starting and implementing a series of activities related to fostering culture and local traditions.

It is notable that, even for a basically rural area, the cultural industry can be a good evolutionary alternative if closely linked to a city's agglomeration. It is important to recall that the cultural industry – mainly focusing on cities – has strengthened its position in the region with the help of LEADER, focusing on the rural areas.

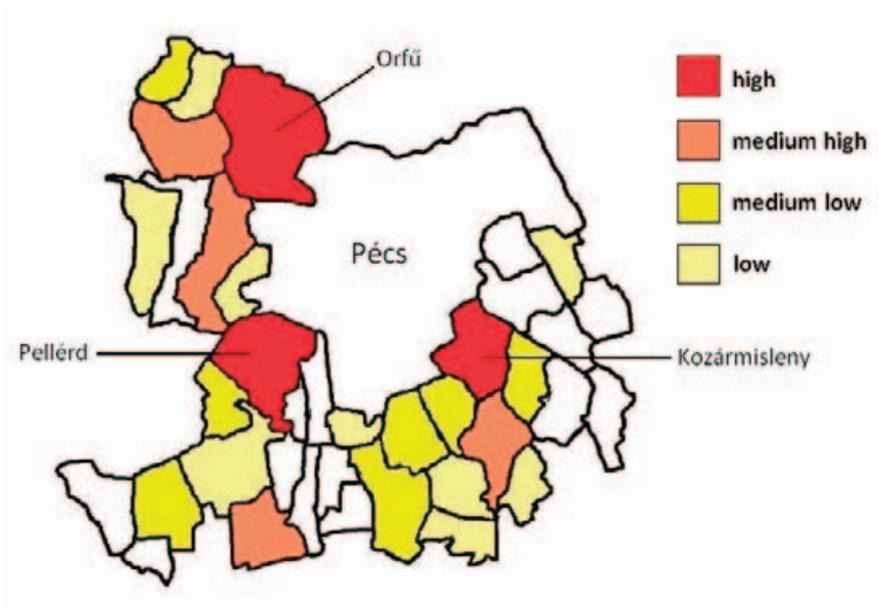
By measuring the resources required, we can see the direction of the expansion and the spatial concentration of cultural investment in the surroundings of Pécs.

The spatial concentration of the developments suggests that there are two main types of location for major cultural investment.

The first consists of the settlements which earn significant revenue from tourism (Orfű, Abaliget, Kővágószőlős). In these settlements, cultural services are to be added to a tourism industry based on natural resources. In this way, targets in the Western Mecsek will most likely offer visitors a wider range of services, as the main aim is service enhancement.

The second consists of the settlements which have a significant number of inhabitants due to suburbanisation (Kozármisleny, Pellérd). In these settlements, the preliminary objective is to satisfy the increasing number of the residents – who are more active (given the nature of suburbanisation) and who have greater cultural needs. A further purpose is to make suburbanisation more dynamic – which means attracting people from the centre to the smaller settlements. If easy accessibility is linked to cultural events and services, and the settlement has an appropriate image, it is likely to produce stronger suburbanisation.

Chart 2: The spatial concentration of cultural developments in the surroundings of Pécs



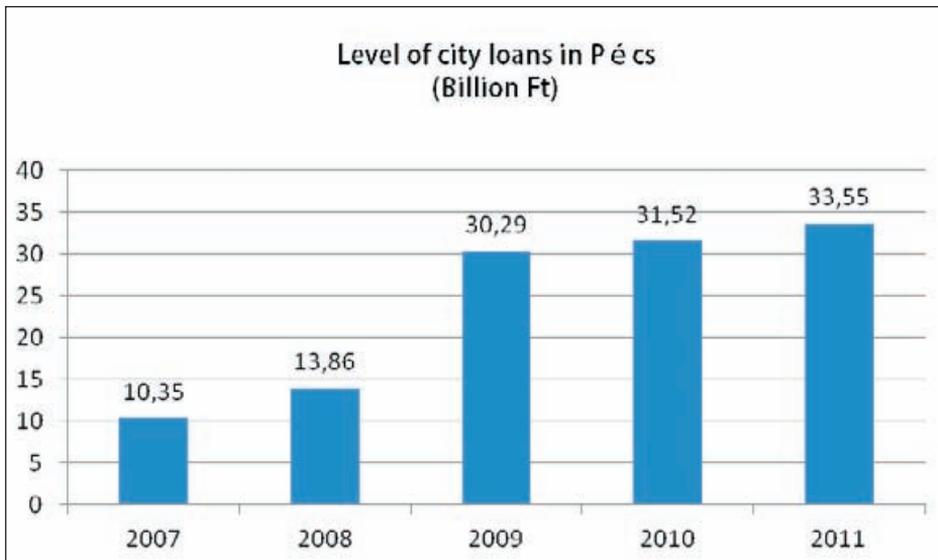
In the area around Pécs LEADER grant opportunities in 2012 did not change significantly; cultural services continued to have a significant role, although it was obvious that the importance was declining:

- Commodification of local products, promoting access to markets
- Non-governmental organisations in the establishment, minority language support
- Non-governmental and local initiatives and cooperation in promoting guides to good practice
- Healthy and harmonious environment for living and eco-conscious generation in the habit of supporting education and pilot projects, demonstration Economy
- Catch-up, location and labour market programmes to promote compliance, training, organising, conducting and teaching traditional crafts
- Traditional camps and events organisation and support management

- Local Development Programme of small villages with ability to improve
- Local Presentation and cataloguing of historic artefacts and natural heritage
- Local arrangements for trade-marks
- Touristic thematic routes by expanding activities

*The government debt problem*

Contrary to most touristic and economic indicators, one indicator showed a significant increase: the indebtedness of the City of Pécs. The increase is shown in the table below:



Source: Attachments of Financial Regulations of Pécs. 2007-2011

The city's debt increased three-fold between 2007 and 2010 – which would inevitably have caused serious liquidity problems. Fortunately for the city, central government has assumed responsibility for much local authority debt in 2012.

## *Conclusions*

Overall, the success of the ECoC year is highly questionable and the return was lower than expected. The main problem was that, although an increase in tourism earnings was planned for the year (and did, in fact, occur), neither space nor activity paralleled this. Another problem was that two major investments (the Knowledge Centre and the Conference/ Concert Hall) provide no more than current facilities and are simply more expensive versions. They produce no return but increase costs to the city. In other developments – especially in the public sector – it should be acknowledged that the new service operates much more cheaper than the old services.

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# DISCOURSES ON URBAN REGENERATION IN EUROPEAN CAPITALS OF CULTURE: THE CASE OF TALLINN2011

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## 1. *Introduction*

Over the years, the significance of ECoC has been transformed from a high culture initiative into a significant social, political, and economic factor in urban development. To describe this change, Robert Palmer and Greg Richards have identified three distinct periods in the history of the designation.<sup>1</sup> In the 1980s, the emphasis in the programmes of the designated cities was mostly on high-cultural events. Palmer and Richards describe this phase in the history of the ECoC designation as an 'expensive festival'. According to them, the next phase, lasting from 1990 to 2004, was characterised by investment in cultural regeneration. The ethos of a high-culture festival changed after Glasgow was selected as the ECoC for the year 1990. Since then various ECoCs have followed the example of Glasgow and used the designation as a tool to revive the city by investing in different branches of culture. Following the example of Glasgow, a number of ECoCs wanted to induce transformation and regeneration of the urban space through the promotion of creative industries.<sup>2</sup> Further, Kathrin Oerters and Jürgen Mittag described Glasgow's ECoC year as a turning point in re-directing the aim towards a city-marketing event.<sup>3</sup> According to Palmer and Richards, the last phase in the history of the ECoC, from 2004 is characterised by investment in infrastructure.

In practice, ambitions to regenerate the urban space and invest in the (cultural) infrastructure usually merge in the plans and programmes of the ECoCs. Various cities have used the programme as a tool to revive the city and develop its urban space – for example, by upgrading cultural institutions and their facilities. They also reshape or modernise squares and parks, revitalise underused areas or districts in decline – perhaps by preparing and cleaning their environment and setting public works of art there. They construct new buildings for cultural use, renew streets, roads and the transportation system and renovate old estates and heritage sites. In particular, old and derelict industrial estates close to the inner city have been transformed for the use of cultural industries and as places for culture and leisure time. The EU's

<sup>1</sup> Palmer & Richards (2010): 205–205.

<sup>2</sup> Palmer (2004): 103; Oerters & Mittag (2008): 88–92.

<sup>3</sup> Oerters & Mittag (2008):70.

latest ECoC declaration emphasises that the cultural programme in the designated cities should “be sustainable and be an integral part of the long-term cultural development of the city”.<sup>4</sup> Diverse regeneration and infrastructural projects in the ECoCs usually leave a concrete and lasting mark on the urban environment. However, creating sustainable cultural projects, establishing an active ongoing participation by the local citizens to cultural production and cultural consumption, and fostering long-term cultural education in the city are profoundly challenging tasks for ECoCs.

The designation has particularly influenced the development plans and the transformation of city space in a number of recent cases in the new EU member states in Central and East European countries, although a similar kind of influence on cities in the old Member States was also experienced earlier. The transformation plans in the Central and East European ECoCs, however, have usually been more comprehensive: several smaller cities suffering from a declining industrial base or other economic difficulties either implemented (or at least planned) large-scale physical changes to the city space in order to reach ‘the European standard’. Cities carrying the physical and mental heritage of the old socialist regimes aimed to strengthen their belonging to the European cultural and social sphere through the ECoC programme and the regeneration which it enables.

The empirical focus of the paper is on Tallinn, which celebrated its ECoC year in 2011. In my paper I investigate the discourse on regeneration in the planning and promotional material of Tallinn2011 produced during the preparation and implementation of the ECoC year. I will analyse what kinds of meaning were produced for the urban regeneration processes in Tallinn2011 and discuss what kinds of meaning are lacking in the planning and promotional material. The primary research data of the paper consists of the Application Book, the Programme Book, various promotional leaflets, booklets and newsletters, and the official web page of Tallinn2011. In addition, I will utilise the information elicited in discussions with various local cultural agents and citizens during my visits and field research in Tallinn before, during, and after 2011. The primary data is analysed with the help of discourse analysis.

## 2. *Urban regeneration at the crossroads of diverse public domains*

These regeneration processes are interlinked with – and influence – several domains: cultural production, cultural policy, the economy, place promotion, identity construction, image building, social well-being, media and features of everyday life in the city, such as transpor-

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<sup>4</sup> Decision 1622/2006/EC.

tation and the use of leisure time. In particular, the domains of culture and the economy merge in the discourse of urban regeneration. The concepts of creative economy and cultural economy – which are actively used and promoted in current policy and management talk – are based on the idea of a correlation between cultural and economic development. In these discussions, culture has become an economic keyword.<sup>5</sup> In addition, the economic dimension of culture and creativity has been intertwined with the emphasis on ‘urbanity’ (in the less figurative sense!) – cities have been considered as drivers of economic growth, and the urban environment as a factor supporting that function. The quality of urban space has become an instrument to support the competitiveness of cities.<sup>6</sup>

The economic emphasis of recent cultural policy and creativity discourses is closely linked to the practices of image building, place promotion, place marketing and city branding. In public management, place promotion and place marketing have emerged as key concepts associated with planning for urban and regional development, attractiveness, and competitiveness. In practice, place promotion and marketing are often equated with branding and promotional activities which are based on identifying and promoting distinctive qualities of the place in order to attract new residents, visitors, and investment.<sup>7</sup> In city branding and image building, the collective image of the city is taken for revision. In this kind of deliberate image creation, the identity of the place and its imago – the image which the place has for its recipients – seem to intertwine: the physical environment, social interaction in the city, and different meanings and symbols related to the city influence both the identity of the place and its imago. Physical environments and material sites function as handy imago resources which can be used, renewed, and re-narrated for the needs of city branding and image building.

Sean Zielenbach has identified two distinct approaches to urban regeneration: individual-based approaches focus on people and the improvement of their living conditions, while place-based approaches stress local economic development and the increase of real estate values.<sup>8</sup> The recent trends in urban regeneration emphasise, in particular, the role of local communities in the planning and implementation of regeneration projects. As a consequence, community regeneration has become an integral part of urban regeneration. The success of such projects is not only measured in terms of physical transformation or its economic impact but it also produces viable, vibrant, and sustainable communities.

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<sup>5</sup> Näss (2010).

<sup>6</sup> Taipale (2009): 42.

<sup>7</sup> Olsson (2010): 253–254.

<sup>8</sup> Zielenbach (2000).

### 3. *The waterfront in the focus of urban regeneration in Tallinn2011*

Post-socialist and Western cities provide two distinct economic and institutional contexts in which urban regeneration and revitalisation can be understood. The arena for these in central and inner zones of cities in Central and Eastern Europe opened only at the beginning of the 1990s, after the collapse of the socialist regimes. During socialism the inner and central parts of the cities often declined in economic, physical, and social terms. New political and economic conditions, however, created opportunities for the regeneration and revitalization of urban zones which offered good potential for commercial and residential development.<sup>9</sup>

After Estonia gained its independence in 1991, Tallinn faced various changes to the townscape: new commercial, office, and residential buildings were constructed in the vicinity of the medieval Old Town. The Old Town itself was largely renovated, attracting a great number of foreign tourists. However, some parts of the inner city and near-by areas remain in a poor condition. Even though Tallinn is one of the biggest ports on the Baltic and is as a destination for many cruise ships, parts of its waterfront bear the marks of industrial decay and dereliction. This area used to be closed to the population – due to its industrial and military use under the Soviet regime – forming a barrier between the inner city and the sea. The reopening and redevelopment of the area has been debated in Tallinn for years, but development was hampered by the diversity of land ownership, political differences, and the economic crisis starting in 2008.<sup>10</sup>

In Tallinn, the ECoC designation was used to transform the city image and its identity into that of a 'maritime city' and so regeneration and urban transformation plans focused largely on the closed and decayed waterfront. Besides various initiatives to transform the old industrial estates, warehouses, and unused spaces in the area for cultural and leisure use, the promotional material of Tallinn2011 strongly relied on waterfront themes. The overall theme – Tallinn2011 – "Tales of the Waterfront" – emphasised the potential of culture to open up the area. In addition, the main logo of Tallinn2011 showed a silhouette of the city seen from the sea, and in the Programme Book the locations of all the ECoC events were introduced with the distance of the event from the sea. Some events were organised in the unused areas or wasteland along the waterfront.

The major regeneration projects in the area include constructing an urban promenade (the Cultural Kilometre – fig. 1), setting up a creative

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<sup>9</sup> Temelová (2009): 12.

<sup>10</sup> Rampton et al. (2012): III.

hub (the Cultural Cauldron), renovating the old Seaplane Harbour as an addition to the Estonian Maritime Museum (Fig. 2). In addition, the old Patarei (Battery) Sea Fortress (used as a prison) was made into a cultural and leisure centre to form the Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia (CAME), and a refurbishment of the Tallinn City Concert Hall (in decay) was planned. The Cultural Kilometre was built in Spring 2011 as a 2-km-long promenade penetrating into the previously closed port area, and the cultural organisations are located along its length. The work on the Cultural Cauldron started in 2011 in a large, old Power Station complex. CAME is located next-door to it in the old office building of the Power Station, and is due to simple, civil activism! A group of local artists squatted in the empty building in 2007 and set up an alternative museum with changing contemporary art exhibitions – as a protest against the failure of Estonia’s cultural policy to establish two separate institutions – one for modern art and one for the national heritage, whose paths were thought rarely to cross by contemporary artists. The new exhibition of the Estonian Maritime Museum was opened in May 2012 in the old Seaplane hangars built in 1916 and 1917. The museum was one of the flagship projects of Tallinn2011. The Concert Hall, built in 1980 as a venue for the Sailing Regatta of the Moscow Olympic Games, remains in its state of decay, even though plans for its regeneration were suggested in the Application Book. The Concert Hall was the only place offering local citizens access to the sea in the city centre in the Soviet era.

During 2011 the waterfront was enlivened by environmental and community art by the Lift2011 project. For example, the project “Kalarand” by Toomas Paaver, Teele Pehk, and Triin Talk, which provided changing cubicles and benches on a beach near the Cultural Kilometre, tried to attract bathers and local citizens to the unused (the only) beach in the city. On the walls of a changing cubicle there were photos of urban life in the area from the beginning of the 20th century. In the work “Pier” (Figure 3) by Siiri Vallner and Indrek Peil, the artists covered the old and decayed concrete pier along the Culture Kilometre with timber to transform it “from a place for docking to a place for sitting, sunbathing, spending time at.”<sup>11</sup>

Besides the waterfront, the Tallinn2011 programme also included separate regeneration projects and cultural infrastructure developments in other parts of the city. Several of these did not, however, take place, and the vision of redeveloping the waterfront was not fully achieved during the ECoC year because of the length of time involved, practical difficulties such as the sheer number of land-owners, a lack of political will and cost.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Information sign at the “Pier”.

<sup>12</sup> Rampton et al. (2012): 29.

Figure 1. The urban promenade of the Cultural Kilometre, the creative hub of the Cultural Cauldron (left), and the Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia (right) are located in the old Power Station area on the waterfront of Tallinn. Photo: Tuuli Lähdesmäki.



Figure 2. The renovated Seaplane Harbour opened as a part of the Estonian Maritime Museum in May 2012. Photo: Tuuli Lähdesmäki.



Figure 3. "Pier" by Siiri Vallner and Indrek Peil by the waterfront in Tallinn. Photo: Tuuli Lähdesmäki.



#### 4. *Regeneration discourses in the planning and promotional material of Tallinn2011*

The regeneration projects on the Tallinn waterfront are introduced and discussed in various ways in the planning and promotional material of the ECoC year. The aims and impacts of the projects are described in a variety of ways in the texts and in 'artists' illustrations' – to 'sell' them to both citizens and stakeholders. I define these various strategies and practices as different regeneration discourses. These form an interrelated structure, in which meanings overlap and are interdetermined rather than distinct and exclusive.

In general, investment in the cultural infrastructure, improvements to cultural venues and buildings, and the development of public spaces recreate the cities with a modern and groomed look and up-to-date atmosphere. In Tallinn, as in several other ECoCs in the new Member States of the EU, the regeneration projects and the transformation of urban space during the ECoC year were often related to the idea of 'Europeanness' and becoming 'more European'. In this, 'European' meant modernisation, welfare, and quality of environment. The Application

Book symptomatically entitled one of its chapters: "The Dream of Europe – Quality of life".<sup>13</sup> In this discourse, the authors often referred to other European cities and their improved and renovated environments as examples for Tallinn to follow. The history of the Soviet era was brought to a symbolic end by transforming its physical marks in the urban environment to modern, restored, and open spaces for cultural and leisure functions. As Jaanus Mutli, the director of the Tallinn 2011 Foundation, wrote in a programme magazine of Tallinn2011:

"Just as previous Capitals of Culture, such as Linz in 2009 and Essen in 2010, shed their image of bleak industrial dots on the map and become bright and welcoming centres of culture, so too is Tallinn hoping to show that the dictatorial reign of the 'No-Man's Land' at the heart of the city, left to its own devices for the past fifty years, is over, and that the city's waterfront is once more home to an enviable cultural scene."<sup>14</sup>

Related to the discourse emphasising the meanings of Europeanness in the regeneration projects, the planning and promotional material of Tallinn2011 thrust forward modern urban culture as the basis and justification for the regeneration projects. In this discourse, public spaces were considered as 'urban living rooms', to which people come to spend their free time, meet friends, and enjoy various leisure activities. The city was seen as being obliged to offer clean, safe (i.e. planned and built) spaces for the citizens to use. The discourse particularly stressed cultural leisure activities and enabling cultural consumption in the regenerated areas. As the regeneration projects on the waterfront show, the main focus of the projects was on culture. The promotional materials of Tallinn2011, however, also brought other features into focus, such as sport, for the regeneration plans of the waterfront:

"Extending from the historic Patarei Prison on the West round to the Song Festival Grounds on the East, the waterfront will be an attractive place with opportunities for people to enjoy their leisure time. The Kilometre of Culture will be a public space which includes cafes, art galleries, cycle-paths, concert halls, sports facilities and recreation areas for all age groups."<sup>15</sup>

The emphasis on urban culture is related to the meanings of creative industries and the creative economy, which were often referred to in the planning and promotional material. The new regenerated area on the waterfront was expected to boost creative industries in the city, and further, to increase the employment of cultural operators and artists. Through the demand for cultural consumption in the area, cultural

<sup>13</sup> Tarand (2006): 24.

<sup>14</sup> Mutli (2010): 1.

<sup>15</sup> Tarand (2006): 35-36.

production was expected to rise. Culture was clearly closely linked to economic functions. As the Application Book described the regeneration plans of the Cultural Cauldron:

“Its mission is to use the power of creativity to establish an independent, self-functioning and vital centre for culture. Artists will be offered information, facilities and favourable conditions to help them survive and achieve success in the cultural and business environment.”<sup>16</sup>

Related to the economic functions of urban regeneration, the waterfront area was also discussed from the point of view of property-led regeneration and real-estate values. However, this topic was rarely directly stressed in the materials, but rather discussed in the frame of overall planning, and as something which automatically emerges in the regeneration of an area as a whole. Other discussions also seemed to avoid it: perhaps other factors were considered more important; perhaps it may have been felt to be a little tasteless to regard to it as so important; perhaps (‘softer’) arguments should be stressed in the planning and promotional material. This is, however, understandable, since property-led regeneration is not discussed in the EU’s decisions on the ECoC nor in the EU’s instructions to candidate cities. On the contrary, the EU stresses diverse cultural and social values as the main functions of urban regeneration.

In the following quotation, Jaanus Rohumaa, Programme Manager of Tallinn2011 describes in a newsletter the aims of changing Tallinn’s image and environment into that of a comfortable, modern maritime city by comparing it to other Western coastal cities. His expectations for the waterfront area include both residential and cultural uses:

“Of course we would want Tallinn to be Venice or at least Helsinki – or Stockholm. In Helsinki you can easily sail a boat into the city centre and anchor there. We are a long way from this kind of practice; the recent occupation hindered us from visiting the waterfront, and worst of all, it hindered our possibility to go to the sea. [...] Now is the time for new residential areas to rise on the waterfront together with cafes, marinas, boatyards and workshops and all kinds of related things.”<sup>17</sup>

The challenges of the planning the waterfront area from the point of view of real-estate values was, however, recognised early. As the first ECoC Application from the city to the Ministry of Culture says: “The area bordering the port of Tallinn has to become the city’s visiting-card,

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<sup>16</sup> Tarand (2006): 36.

<sup>17</sup> Sihvart (2011): 4–5.

and so new buildings in this area have to be designed carefully. There are enough cities in Europe whose lead we can follow.”<sup>18</sup>

As the previous quotations indicate, changing the city image was the meaning most often referred to in relation to regeneration projects. Through the new cultural buildings and pleasant public spaces by the waterfront, the city was seen to be changing its old image into that of a vibrant and modern maritime European city. This city image discourse was closely related to that of tourism. The texts in the Application Book in particular focused on boosting tourism and increasing the attractiveness of Tallinn as a cultural destination. The regeneration projects by the waterfront were harnessed to boosting tourism; projects were justified by expectations of increasing visitor numbers. As written in the first application from the city to the Ministry of Culture: “We also hope that Tallinn provides valuable experience for many Europeans who have the chance to see for themselves how closed and unused areas can become the centre of the city.”<sup>19</sup>

Even though, the urban planning of the waterfront area was conducted by experts in cooperation with various cultural stakeholders and local authorities, the planning and promotional material also brought to the fore the local communities and citizens and their role in the urban transformation. As the application book notes:

“As it improves the city’s infrastructure, Tallinn will support small-scale investment programmes in order to be ready for the European Capital of Culture. This will provide every resident of Tallinn with an opportunity to contribute to the process of providing the city with the necessary facelift.”<sup>20</sup>

Related to the transformation of the urban space in the city, the application book suggests setting up a pedagogical project in order to influence urban participation and civil activism:

“[A] unique city planning project for Tallinn will be designated that can later be used as training material for the residents of Tallinn in order to develop their sense of civic duty and local identity. The programme will also enlarge upon new concepts of direct democracy in the field of public governance.”<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Tallinn – European Capital of Culture 2011. Application to Estonian Ministry of Culture (2005).

<sup>19</sup> Tallinn – European Capital of Culture 2011. Application to Estonian Ministry of Culture (2005).

<sup>20</sup> Tarand (2006): 35.

<sup>21</sup> Tarand (2006): 39.

In the planning and promotional material, however, the discussion on civil participation is subordinated to control from above. Neither the local communities nor the citizens living in near-by districts were directly offered a chance to participate in planning the regeneration of the area. They were rather seen as groups to whom the civic duties and principles of direct democracy had to be taught, as the quotation indicates. In practice, several urban activists and interest groups were concerned by the plans which aimed to develop a large residential and port area on the waterfront. Artistic projects, such as the “Kalarand”, aimed to draw attention to the use of land in the regeneration of the area and its significance for the construction of communality. The residents of the near-by district objected to the regeneration plans.

Although urban regeneration often aims to strengthen the identity of the chosen area and foster its historical strata in order to include the idea of continuity in the transformation, the planning and promotional materials in Tallinn did not discuss developing the waterfront area in these terms. The previously closed, decayed area did not appear to have any spatial identity which should be recognised and taken into account in the regeneration projects. The materials referred neither to the area’s local identity, nor to that of the neighbouring districts. Similarly, the meanings of the preservation of history were not emphasised. Even though there were references to sustainability in urban development, there was nothing related to sustaining the historical strata and continuity. Sustainability was rather discussed in relation to different ecological and environmental ideas. The painful history of the Soviet occupation in Estonia can be interpreted as simply reflecting the question of regenerating the waterfront area.

## 5. *Conclusions*

Ex-post evaluations of Tallinn2011 show that the (over)-ambitious objectives regarding the development of the city’s creative economy and its cultural infrastructure, as well as the projection of a new image, were not fulfilled during Tallinn’s ECOC year on the scale expected in the application.<sup>22</sup> However, it is too early to evaluate the results and impacts of urban regeneration in Tallinn only one year after the ECoC year ended. Regeneration projects are long processes which cover various domains of society and involve a variety of stake-holders in the city. In Tallinn, the ECoC designation only functioned as the starting-gun for long-term urban regeneration and for the re-development of the waterfront area. Its further, more mature functions and uses are still forming.

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<sup>22</sup> Rampton et al. (2012): 32.

The investigation indicated several discourses through which the regeneration projects at the waterfront of Tallinn were defined in the planning and promotional materials. They emphasised, for example, Europeaness, urban culture, creative industries, real-estate values, city image, tourism, and civic participation as the bases of urban regeneration. However, regeneration may include various other meanings as well. These, aimed at its users, near-by residents and local citizens will develop slowly and may even change with time. Hence, the planning and implementation of regeneration projects has to be prepared thoroughly: the different values and needs of the different stakeholders have to be analysed and communication and interaction between them should be encouraged. There needs to be a chance to develop and change the regeneration plans and their implementation if the cultural, social, economic, or environmental conditions in the area change. In general, the changing meanings of the regenerated areas in the ECoCs should be investigated more broadly and by means of longitudinal research also.

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# THE EFFECTS OF THE CANDIDATURE OF THE CITY OF OSIJEK FOR THE TITLE "EUROPEAN CITY OF CULTURE" ON LOCAL IMAGE AND IDENTITY

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## 1. *Introduction*

In our presentation, we start from the thesis that the whole of political and social reality is a result of discursive and/or symbolic structures. Hence, the same can be applied to the establishment of the nation, to tradition, culture, or to the whole of political and social reality. If so, then this thesis can be also extended to the "city". This means that the identity of the city is not a permanent fixture, but subject to change – by virtue of its history of those political, economic and other factors on and from which it was built! This process of construction is the only constant in certain (political) circumstances: it may well slow down or even come to a halt, and it may give the impression (false, of course) that the current structure is eternal. However, political changes may show that all previous attempts to hold or preserve an identity at a single point in time were simply an illusion... The events following the fall of the Berlin Wall were a very clear demonstration that "everything that was solid [was] converted [back] into smoke again" (M. Bermann)!

Those who have control over symbolic-discursive practices or strategies can determine those elements (dates, events, individuals) which are more or less important in the history of the city.<sup>1</sup> It may, however, be significant whether we define the city of Osijek as a Central European or Balkan city. (There are not many citizens of Osijek who are familiar with the historical fact that Osijek was under Turkish rule for more than 150 years). The number may have increased after the TV serial "Suleiman the Magnificent" was screened, but it still means almost nothing to them!

We prefer to define the city of Osijek as a Central European city, but it still means little. If we want to have this concept of Central Europe as more than an empty phrase, we need to "empower" it with relevant content, with specific attributes that should confirm our conclusion that, when it comes to the identity of the city of Osijek, then it is truly a Central European city!

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<sup>1</sup> Hence, post-WW2, some dates, events, individuals were "expelled" from the official collective memory of the city, and then the same thing happened after the 1990s (the official 'Day of the City' is now December 2nd rather than April 14th)

It is also important to make it clear whether these attributes come from the political or from the cultural sphere. In this Central European region, culture, in one way or the other, must mainly contend with the policy of 'the powers that be'.

When we talk about our culture as opposed to culture, we must be very careful since sometimes we are not even aware of all the influences which are reflected in what we consider to be our tradition. This is particularly important in multicultural societies and in countries in which national minorities participate in creating a common cultural heritage – which is the case in most of the countries of South-East Europe. Each country considers its culture to be an instrument for promoting its own identity and heritage.

## 2. *Events and dates*

Taking into consideration the rich history of the city of Osijek (the first documented record of the city dates from the year 1196)<sup>2</sup>, there several events and dates which stand out:

### Osijek under the Turkish rule

In 1525 Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent decided to invade Hungary. The fate of Osijek was, in that case, decided in advance. Fearful of the looming action and in an attempt to persuade the Ottoman army commanders to spare the city and its inhabitants, a delegation from Osijek, on 8 August 1526, handed the keys of the city to the Vizier Mustafa Pasha. Following the construction of a wooden bridge and the battle of Mohacs, Osijek was given one of the most important positions in the strategic concept of the Ottoman Empire. Since Osijek had not suffered any serious destruction, extensive building works followed until mid-1528 and the beginning of 1529, when Suleiman the Magnificent decided to take his Army towards Vienna.

All further Ottoman campaigns against the West went by way of Osijek. On 19 July, 1566, the construction of the famous Suleiman Bridge was completed (in only 17 days!). In fact, it was a road made of oak logs, some 8 km long over the River Drava near Osijek over the swamps, marshes and streams as far as Darda. It was a bridge which, until then, was unique in Europe. In contemporary eyes, it was the Eighth Wonder of the World.

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<sup>2</sup> In the document, King Emeric (1196-1204), confers on the Cistercian convent the right to collect customs duties across the river Drava.

After the construction of the bridge, Osijek developed rapidly and it became the most important city of Turkish Slavonia. During the Ottoman era the city population was made up largely of immigrant Turks and a smaller number of local residents who converted to Islam. City life had the characteristics of a true oriental city with several mosques. The best known are Kasim Pasha's Mosque (on the site of the present parish church of St. Michael the Archangel) and Suleiman-Han's mosque (on the site of the present Franciscan monastery). At that time Osijek was two parts: the city was made up of two parts, surrounded by walls and towers and protected by palisades.

The defeat of the Ottoman Empire at Vienna in 1683 significantly decreased their power in these territories. Osijek was liberated from the Ottomans on 26th September, 1687, after 161 years of rule. When the Turks heard that the Christian imperial army led by General Hans Dünnewaldom and John Draskovic was approaching, they began to flee in panic, the Imperial army entered an empty city, where it found the mosques, public buildings and many homes suitable for housing, stock-piles of weapons and of food.

There was practically nothing left of the economically powerful city. A new era started for a small town which suddenly found itself far away from the events of that time in Europe. It was somewhat lost on the fringes of the Austrian Empire, although its position close to the new border with the Ottoman Empire was to affect further development. of the city.

Reforms of Maria Theresa (1740-1780) and Joseph II (1780-1790), which significantly influenced the development of the city

The largest immigration of Germans (and members of other Central European nations) took place, however, as an organised colonisation of the Danube region during the 18th century. The entire Pannonian plain was at that time (after the expulsion of the Turks south of the Sava and Danube), a region of intense migration. The Germans settled in three major waves within the state immigration policies of newly conquered border regions. The colonists (mostly dispossessed peasants, prisoners who had been promised pardon and adventurers of various kinds) were faced with disastrous living conditions: dense oak forests and swamps, where malaria was rampant. The terms of land and tool purchase were not favourable, and the sufferings of the settlers gave birth to the proverb "Death to grandfather, affliction to father and bread to son" which symbolically proved that only the third generation of immigrants could begin to enjoy the fruits of their painstaking efforts. Already domiciled people did not like strangers, and especially not the Germans. A further obstacle was the language barrier and the fact that the newcomers mostly formed their own villages. In that way they brought with them

their customs, more advanced and more efficient ways of farming, livestock, construction and food preparation, modern technology and a way of organising social solidarity by mutual assistance. The immigrants built modern mills, reading rooms, schools and churches, and founded cultural societies. Some wealthier ones built the first industrial plants in the region. The Germans were pioneers of a large number of activities.

By 1910 Germans had settled around 15 000 farms with around 134 000 inhabitants. In Osijek alone (where the first German theatre was established as early as 1750) there were about 10 000 Germans.

From the end of the 17th century both Croatia and Hungary accepted the new monarchy, the Habsburgs, and from then until 1918, Osijek was a part of the Austrian Empire. When the Austrians came, three independent municipalities – the Upper Town, the Lower Town and The Fortress became one entity on 2 December 1786. This date is (as decided by the then Mayor Franjo Blažić) is celebrated (once more) as Osijek Day.

The year 1809, when Osijek was declared a Free royal city;

The multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-faith and multi-lingual character of the city is very important for the identity of the city;

The revolutionary events of 1848;

The Croatian-Hungarian Settlement (1868), and its implications for political, economic and cultural life in the city – the beginning of modernisation, industrialisation, which significantly influenced the quality of life in the city: a new architecture, new institutions (theatres, museums, and schools), and new factories. Urban centres of continental Croatia (hence the city of Osijek) were strongly influenced by Germans and Hungarians, the nobility was Europe-oriented, there were foreign traders, soldiers, clerks, tradesmen and intellectuals. From a historical perspective, it was clear that the urban, economic culture was less Croatian and more European.

The First World War and the implications for the future development of the city

The First World War interrupted the rise of the city, bringing stagnation and the tragic loss of human life. The end of the war in 1918 brought the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the end of a long historical period and the end of intensive connections with Austria and Hungary. A political coming-together of South Slavic countries adjoining Croatia, aiming to secede from Austro-Hungary and to become

an independent state, was concluded by the decision of the Croatian Parliament on October 29, 1918 and the creation of the State of Slovenians, Croats and Serbs. Just one month later, in December 1918, the Regent Aleksandar proclaimed, on behalf of his father, King Peter Karadjordjevic, unification with the Kingdom of Serbia "in a single Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes." With this illegal and undemocratic act, Croatia lost its statehood and Osijek became a part of the common state of Croats, Serbs and Slovenes.

The period after WWI was burdened with many problems. The dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and unequal distribution within the country seemed to be the major social problem, but there was also an opportunity to remove completely the old nobility – not only politically, but also financially (as the sole possessor of Croatian statehood and historical tradition).

The structure of the estates was a constant source of social tension, and at the end of WWI poor peasants burned castles and destroyed holdings, believing that the nobility was of foreign origin, although it was, in fact, mostly Croatian.

Between 1910 and 1921 the increase of the population in Osijek slowed down somewhat to a mere 0.74% per year. This was related to the losses in the War, with the post-war emigration of Hungarians (and the Germans originally from Hungary) and with increased mortality due to the outbreak of Spanish 'flu in 1918.

The ethnic composition of the population of Osijek, according to the 1910 census, shows that almost 75% of the population are either Croats or Germans, the two largest nations.

Relative economic backwardness in the development of the city between 1918 and 1941

WWII, political and other changes which significantly changed the identity of the new demographic structure, the new architecture, different from that of the late 19th and early 20 centuries, a new political system

During the Second World War and after the dissolution of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia there was severe destruction in some parts of the city, especially the Lower City, with a large number of human casualties. The city entered a deep crisis. Hungarians occupied Barany County and Osijek was then a border city. Many functions simply died and the population was both divided nationally and impoverished.

According to the 1948 census, there were 78.8% Croats and 4% Hungarians, whilst the number of Germans was only 0.2%. Part of the increase in the number and proportion of Croats in this period can be explained by the fact that a certain number of Germans declared themselves Croats for political reasons.

The period following WWII brought about a revival of the economy. New processes of industrialisation and urbanisation were set up and this created a certain level of optimism among the citizens.

Osijek is a city of beautiful and valuable cultural monuments and great Baroque and Art Nouveau architecture. In its post-WWII urban development it did not accept the concepts and ideas of 'Socialist Realism' and it was one of the first European cities to adopt and implement 'humane' urban space principles.

The year 1990, which should be looked in the context of the fall of the Berlin wall and of the events taking place in Central and Eastern Europe;

The war in 'The Former Yugoslavia' – Osijek was one of the largest urban centres directly involved in the Patriotic war.

### *3. Conclusion*

If Osijek gains the status of "European City of Culture", then this will have a significant impact on building a new identity for the city. After that nothing will be the same, since the city will have a new attribute which will identify the city on the national and international political and cultural scenes. The city will also give birth to a new institutions, whilst many of the old ones will undergo a radical change.

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# THE IMPACT OF THE EU'S AGEING SOCIETIES ON THE "EUROPEAN AGENDA FOR CULTURE"

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## 1. *Abstract*

In the year when WWI ended, Oswald Spengler published the first volume of "The Decline of the West". This book prophesied the end of the power of European culture for the war-weary European people. Prior to this, culture had been seen as a constant, more or less linear, development process towards self-improvement. Spengler's ideas brought the teleological concepts of Idealism (Hegel) and Materialism (Comte) together with Darwinism. In this model, culture is as transient as life itself.

Consequently, WW II Europeans started to deal with the recurrent rhythms of times of war and times of peace by introducing a common policy built on the principles of sustainable peace. In order to prevent war and avoid the decline which always follows war, the European Union was built to seek sustainable peace. European culture was, and still is, politically contrived and economically based to achieve long term peace. Nowadays in the European Union, and indeed in all parts of the world, economic growth rather than peace has assumed greater political and cultural importance.

Over the last two decades, however, we have become aware of a new challenge: all the societies of the EU are ageing, and so Europeans are challenged to develop a culture which is peaceful, enjoys economic growth and meets the needs of an ageing population – and doing all of this in a sustainable manner.

The paper will discuss this challenge and analyse how this theme has acquired such significance for the European Commission with its "European Agenda for Culture".

## 2. *Background*

The term 'ageing society' is problematic since it opens doors to interpretation. It implies that a society can – potentially – age, or is – necessarily – ageing. Despite the biologism and anthropomorphism detectable in such a perspective (namely that society is seen as a living, human being, the term is also charged with the philosophy of history).

In order to understand the driving forces in genesis and further development of the European Union (EU), we have to remember that Europe was a continent whose states constantly fought against each other, their fights culminating in two World Wars. Already by the end of WWI, Oswald Spengler had prophesied in "The Decline of the West", published in 1918, the end of the power of European culture. According to him culture is not to be viewed in the tradition of rationalism as a constant linear development process towards self-improvement and enlightenment. In contrast to the teleological concepts of Idealism (Hegel) and Materialism (Comte, Marx and other Left Hegelians) the culturally Darwinian approach is a shocking counter-model. According to this, culture is as transient as life.

After WWII, the European nations, particularly France and Germany, felt the need to put their hostility and mutual thirst for revenge behind them. Before Europe became a union, its history was a series of times of war followed by times of peace – which served as time for preparation for the next war. The idea of rebuilding Europe as a Union was to overcome this permanent process of change and instability by introducing a common policy built on the principles of sustainable peace. The EU was born of the intention to prevent future wars and the decline which inevitably followed. In consequence, the EU was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2012 in order to "ensure that we do not lose what we have built on the ruins of two world wars", as Thorbjørn Jagland, the Chairman of the Norwegian Nobel Committee pointed out in his presentation speech.<sup>1</sup>

Nowadays, however, economic growth – more than peace – is the paradigm which rules not only Europe, but almost the whole world. The Union, in fact, changed its character, in that, after an era of peace-keeping, the EU's new strategies were primarily economy-oriented. This became clear most recently in the Lisbon Strategy launched in March 2000:

*"The Union has today set itself a new strategic goal for the next decade: to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion."*<sup>2</sup>

The priorities of the union changed paradigmatically from seeking peace to seeking prosperity. Economic growth is equated to the creation of "more and better jobs" and social cohesion. In this regard social aspects were reduced to cohesion and viewed from a more or less purely

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<sup>1</sup> Jagland (2012)

<sup>2</sup> Lisbon European Council (23-24 March 2000).

economic perspective. In this paper, therefore, will be analysed if and how the EU's policy of culture is independent of economic perspectives.

Further, this analysis will be carried out from the perspective of an on-going cultural change caused by an external, non-cultural and non-economic factor – demographic development and change: the populations of all EU member states are ageing. The European Commission (EC) is aware of this fact, at least since 2006, but tries to see it more as an opportunity than a threat: "With Europe currently facing a demographic challenge, the Commission wishes to turn this key issue into an opportunity".<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, as the EU's strategies for the 21st century were and still are oriented economically, we need to question whether the EC has introduced its culture policy, as addressed in its "European Agenda for Culture", appropriately.

### 3. *Ageing as a most important Challenge*

As the populations of all EU member states are ageing, Europeans have to find a new concept of man and culture which integrates: firstly, peace both inter-nationally and intra-nationally; secondly, economic growth and, thirdly, a society with many more people living longer – what is now becoming known as also named ("Society of longer Lives").<sup>4</sup> In this regard, it seems that, in future, we will have to shift our focus and concentrate more on sustainability and life experience than on repeating the mantra of youth and growth as the two key factors for safeguarding our future.

According to Eurostat, there are two main demographic challenges: First of all, the median age of the population of the EU27 will further increase. It has already increased continuously from 38.9 years in 2003 to a provisional 41.2 years in 2011 and "is projected to rise to 47.6 years" by 2060.<sup>5</sup> In consequence:

*"The population of working age is expected to decline steadily, whilst older persons will likely account for an increasing share of the total population – those aged 65 years or over will account for 29.5% of the EU-27's population by 2060 (17.4% in 2010)."*<sup>6</sup>

*Secondly, and maybe even more significantly:*

*"the progressive ageing of the older population itself, as the relative importance of the oldest people, is growing at a faster*

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<sup>3</sup> European Commission (12 October 2006).

<sup>4</sup> Federal Ministry of Education and Research (2011), p. 5.

<sup>5</sup> Eurostat (21 November 2012); Eurostat (1 December 2011).

<sup>6</sup> Eurostat (1 December 2011).

*pace than any other age segment of the EU's population. The proportion of those aged 80 years or above in the EU-27's population is projected to almost triple between 2010 and 2060".<sup>7</sup>*

As our populations in Europe age dramatically, we need to redefine our "images of ageing in society", as the Sixth German Government Report on the Elderly states it. Until now, the elderly are still and almost exclusively seen by EU member states governments as objects of policy concerns, and not as people actively involved in society.

For instance, even futurologist Birgit Gebhardt illustrates in her recently published book "2037 – Our daily life in the future" by telling short stories of three main protagonists of which the 63 year-old Geoffrey is the oldest.<sup>8</sup> The other two main characters are women. Entrepreneur Nana with whom Geoffrey starts a relationship is 45 years old; Romina from the Ukraine who has to decide between self-employment and employment is 11 years younger than Nana.<sup>9</sup> Although Geoffrey is a relatively old "hero", what is missing is the view from a person in the 80s. It is hardly conceivable that the elderly will accept to ghettoize themselves or, even worse, be ghettoized in cities in which they are just among themselves, as it is partly portrayed in the book.<sup>10</sup> In contrast, Gebhardt believes that:

*"In the year 2037, extremes with high conflict potential will evolve in Germany: old and young, rich and poor, educated and uneducated. In between, a heterogeneous middle-class struggles for a standard of living which they believe they are entitled to such as education and descent."<sup>11</sup>*

As this scenario could become true not only for Germany, but for almost the whole of Europe, will be, sooner rather than later, it will be necessary to develop and implement policies which help to bridge the gaps between old and young, rich and poor, educated and uneducated – and prevent the current gaps from growing.

#### 4. *The Impact of the Demographic Change on Culture*

Particularly in times of crisis, it is important to reflect on the cohesion of a union. It is not mere coincidence that the EU was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2012 by the Norwegian Nobel Committee. Particularly in view of the on-going debt crisis and the threat of the collapse

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<sup>7</sup> Eurostat (1 December 2011).

<sup>8</sup> Gebhardt (2011), p. 16.

<sup>9</sup> Gebhardt (2011), pp. 16-17.

<sup>10</sup> Gebhardt (2011), pp. 211-12.

<sup>11</sup> Gebhardt (2011), p. 17.

of the Eurozone, we Europeans have to remember that it was – and is – only the EU which guarantees peace, freedom and relative political stability in our region. Nevertheless, it is not just economic instability in some of its member states which is challenging the EU today. Economic crises come and go, but to date they have not lasted very long, and particularly not for decades. The demographic change is in fact, more challenging, since, first of all, it applies to the EU as a whole and, secondly, will have a long-term impact – for, that is, a few generations at least.

The EU, therefore, has to find a new concept of man and culture. Its policy has to guarantee social peace, economic growth and long-life engagement and inclusion for elderly Europeans. The latter is already addressed, as far as education is concerned, in the Life-Long Learning (LLL) Programme.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, it is insufficient to limit the long life perspective to education. In this regard a complete, paradigmatic change in policy will be needed which favouring sustainability and life experience rather than constantly repeating the mantra of youth and growth in all fields of society.

##### 5. *The “European Agenda for Culture” as the EU’s Culture Policy*

Viewing the EU’s culture policy, it is important to note, first of all, that the EU does not wish to define the term ‘culture’. For instance, the “Treaty of the Functioning of the EU”, published in the Official Journal of the EU on 9 May 2008, says in Article 167, which refers to “Culture”:

*“The Union shall contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore.”<sup>13</sup>*

According to this article, culture policy is the task of the EU member states. They have to define, develop and support their own cultures. Due to this concept, the cultures and the culture policies of the EU member states are independent, unique and diverse. Furthermore, the culture policy of the EU has to accept this diversity and promote a policy which supports and strengthens it. Only in terms of its past, its heritage, does the EU feel obliged to enhance homogeneity. One could say the EU sees itself as a forest-like entity of trees, nations built on common soil but growing in different directions.

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<sup>12</sup> European Commission (12 September 2011).

<sup>13</sup> European Union (9 May 2008), pp. C115/121-122; European Union (March 2010), pp. 121-22; firstly formulated in: European Union (29 December 2006), Article 151, pp. C321 E/113-114.

This self-image makes it difficult for the EU to define overall, common "growth strategies"<sup>14</sup>, since such strategies must be acceptable to, and accepted by, all member states and must not conflict with their particular national interests. Nevertheless, the elaboration and acceptance of the "Lisbon Strategy", launched in 2000, and its follow-up "Europe 2020", adopted by the European Council in June 2010, show that it is possible.

On the one hand, the "European agenda for culture in a globalizing world" (Agenda), published on 10 May 2007, referred to Article 151 of the "Treaty Establishing the European Community" (Treaty), launched in 2006.<sup>15</sup> On the other hand the Agenda did refer to the Lisbon Strategy which had to define the institutional setting of the EU according to the Treaty. This double reference is clearly expressed in the Agenda's "Purpose of the Communication":

*"Awareness is growing that the EU has a unique role to play in promoting its cultural richness and diversity, both within Europe and world-wide. There is also acknowledgement that culture is an indispensable feature to achieve the EU's strategic objectives of prosperity, solidarity and security, while ensuring a stronger presence on the international scene."<sup>16</sup>*

Nevertheless, the main task of culture is introduced in the Agenda by citing Dario Fo. According to him "it was culture that united all the countries of Europe. The arts, literature, music are the connecting link of Europe".<sup>17</sup> Culture is needed to unify Europeans: "Through this unity in diversity [...] lies at the very heart of the European project."<sup>18</sup>

## 6. Purpose and Objectives of the "European Agenda for Culture"

The purpose of the Agenda is to start "Communication" which focuses "on the importance of the various facets of culture in developing strategies both within the EU and with third countries."<sup>19</sup> The Agenda is new as it builds "on past achievements and reinforce on-going activities". This would be built on three interrelated sets of objectives:

### 1. Promotion of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue;

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<sup>14</sup> European Commission (20 December 2012).

<sup>15</sup> This Article was later verbatim incorporated in Article 167 of the "Treaty of the Functioning of the EU", published on 9 May 2008.

<sup>16</sup> European Commission (10 May 2007), p. 3.

<sup>17</sup> European Commission (10 May 2007), p. 2.

<sup>18</sup> European Commission (10 May 2007), p. 2.

<sup>19</sup> European Commission (10 May 2007), p. 3.

2. Promotion of culture as a catalyst for creativity in the framework of the Lisbon Strategy for growth and jobs and,
3. Promotion of culture as a vital element in the Union's international relations."<sup>20</sup>

The first objective is justified as follows:

*"As we live in increasingly multicultural societies, we need, therefore, to promote intercultural dialogue and intercultural competences. These are also essential in the context of a global economy with regard to enhancing the employability, adaptability and mobility of artists and workers in the cultural sector as well as the mobility of works of art."*<sup>21</sup>

This justification shows that the intercultural dialogue is mainly determined by, firstly, economic reasons and, secondly, the EU's education policy:

The first target group of the EU-internal culture policy comprises "artists and professionals in the cultural field".<sup>22</sup> The importance of this is later on expressed in the programme "Creative Europe" as "the new EU programme dedicated to the cultural and creative sectors, proposed by the EC on 23 November 2011."<sup>23</sup>

Besides the mobility of artists and workers, the intercultural dialogue aims, secondly, at "lifelong learning identified by the European Parliament and Council in 2006".<sup>24</sup> As the EU's culture policy is dealt with by the Education and Culture Directorate-General, it is no surprise that culture is also defined from an education perspective.

The second objective clearly refers to the Lisbon Strategy. This indicates that the EU's culture policy is not an independent policy. Both EU internal objectives are determined for economic reasons. The Agenda is part of the Lisbon Strategy developed in order to make the EU "the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world"<sup>25</sup> And it is the Lisbon Strategy which determines the EU's culture policy.

The third objective of the Agenda refers to the EU's external policy. It is, therefore, at first sight, irrelevant in our context, as demographic

<sup>20</sup> European Commission (10 May 2007), pp. 7-8.

<sup>21</sup> European Commission (10 May 2007), p. 8.

<sup>22</sup> European Commission (10 May 2007), p. 9.

<sup>23</sup> European Commission (12 November 2012).

<sup>24</sup> European Commission (10 May 2007), p. 9.

<sup>25</sup> Lisbon European Council (23 and 24 March 2000).

change occurs within the EU27: it is, first of all, an internal problem. Nevertheless, the demographic change also has an EU-external component, since as it will influence relationships with the EU's neighbouring states – at least as mobility policy is concerned.

## 7. *The Role of Ageing in the Lisbon Strategy*

Demographic change is not addressed at all in the Agenda. None of its objectives refer to the challenges caused by the ageing factor. The reason behind this is that the Lisbon Strategy as the main basis of the Agenda is mainly driven by the economy. Its overall aim was “preparing the transition to a competitive, dynamic and knowledge-based economy”.<sup>26</sup> Further, it aimed at global and not merely at EU-internal competitiveness:

*“The Lisbon Strategy was born as a European commitment to overcome the differences in growth and productivity between the EU and its leading global competitors of the time, USA and Japan.”<sup>27</sup>*

The Lisbon Strategy also referred only to one decade, the years from 2000 to 2010, and did not concern itself with related, longer-term trends and challenges.

Only once is demographic change addressed and it is presented in the Lisbon Strategy as a subordinate factor in the context of “Modernising social protection”:

*The “systems of social protection [...] need to be adapted as part of an active welfare state to ensure that work pays, to secure their long-term sustainability in the face of an ageing population, to promote social inclusion and gender equality, and to provide quality health services.”<sup>28</sup>*

Demographic change was seen as not relevant to the economy, despite its importance for employment. Particularly in the “Final Report” on the “results achieved” by the Lisbon Strategy, the “evolution of employment” was named in first place.

*“One of the most original elements in the way employment was approached was the move to set (in 2000) quantitative employment rate targets to be reached by 2010; namely, 70% in over-*

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<sup>26</sup> Lisbon European Council (23 and 24 March 2000).

<sup>27</sup> European Parliament (2010), p. 11.

<sup>28</sup> Lisbon European Council (23 and 24 March 2000), Art. 31.

*all employment and 60% for women, complemented in 2001 with a 50% target for older workers.”<sup>29</sup>*

The importance of the employment policy is even underlined by the EC’s initiative to establish a European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound) as a tripartite EU agency in order to provide expertise on living and working conditions. In 2008, Eurofound published a report on “Working Conditions of an ageing Workforce”. The first sentence of the Foreword, written by Eurofound’s director, Jorma Karppinen, reads:

*“Over the last decade, the issue of Europe’s ageing population has emerged as a central priority for policymakers in the EU. This demographic shift calls into question both the sustainability of pension systems and the future of Europe’s labour supply, which in turn pose serious challenges to prospects for economic growth.”<sup>30</sup>*

This statement once more shows that, for the Lisbon Strategy, the EU did not see demographic change as an opportunity for cultural development, but simply as an economic problem related, more precisely, to employment issues.

## 8. *Changes in the “EU 2020” Strategy*

In its analysis and evaluation report on the Lisbon Strategy, Maria João Rodrigues, Special Advisor to the EU Institutions on the Lisbon Strategy, concluded in May 2010: Despite all positive achievements “our development model is unsustainable”.<sup>31</sup> He bases his argumentation on three grounds:

1. “our patterns of consumption and production are undermining the climate and the ecological balance of the planet”;
2. “our ageing trends are undermining the financial basis of our social protection systems”;<sup>32</sup> and
3. “our financial system is undermining the conditions for the long term investment which is necessary to ensure sustain-

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<sup>29</sup> European Parliament (2010), p. 12.

<sup>30</sup> European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (2008), p. V.

<sup>31</sup> Rodrigues (5 January 2010), p. 4.

<sup>32</sup> Rodrigues (5 January 2010), p. 4.

able growth and jobs in the transition to a low-carbon and knowledge intensive economy.”<sup>33</sup>

The second item refers explicitly to demographic change. According to Rodrigues, we, the Europeans, need a much “larger and deeper concept of well-being [...] To be greater and not simply to be richer and stronger should be the underlying aspiration of our culture.”<sup>34</sup> In contrast to the Lisbon Strategy, Rodrigues sets culture first rather than economy. In consequence, demographic change would no longer be just an employment-related issue, but would become important as an issue which influences EU development in total.

Although Rodrigues declares that “we need to build a developmental welfare state, supporting the transitions all over the life cycle, making the best of people’s potential and reducing social inequalities”<sup>35</sup>, he does not interfere in the set of objectives, and the fields of action as laid out in the Lisbon Strategy:

*“Nevertheless, the general orientation of the Lisbon agenda is provided by the integrated guidelines for growth and jobs, based on the Treaty instruments called “broad economic policy guidelines” and “employment guidelines”, which enable the Council and the Commission to organise a coordination process, the Commission to issue “country specific recommendations” and the European Parliament to make a follow-up, including a formal opinion in the case of the employment guidelines.”<sup>36</sup>*

One might say that Rodrigues lost the courage to redesign the Lisbon strategy. Instead of developing and outlining a new culture-related strategy, “Europe 2020” remains in principle like its previous model. The new strategy, under implementation from 2010 to 2020, is just a set of economy-driven, growth-oriented objectives whose targets were defined by the member states. In the words of José Manuel Barroso, President of the EC, this reads as follows:

*“Europe 2020 is the EU’s growth strategy for the coming decade.*

*In a changing world, we want the EU to become a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy. [...]*

*Concretely, the Union has set five ambitious objectives – on employment, innovation, education, social inclusion and cli-*

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<sup>33</sup> Rodrigues (5 January 2010), p. 5.

<sup>34</sup> Rodrigues (5 January 2010), p. 6.

<sup>35</sup> Rodrigues (5 January 2010), p. 7.

<sup>36</sup> Rodrigues (5 January 2010), p. 26.

*mate/energy – to be reached by 2020. Each Member State has adopted its own national targets in each of these areas.”<sup>37</sup>*

Demographic change is again reduced to an employment issue. This became clear particularly in the making of the year 2012 the “European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations”. This initiative “seeks to promote active ageing in three areas”: “Employment”; “Participation in society”; and “Independent living”.<sup>38</sup> The first area is, by definition, related to employment, but the other two areas are also strongly economy-driven and indirectly connected with employment. The second area focuses on the “contribution of older people to society” after retirement; it aims at long-life working.<sup>39</sup> The third area aims at “empowering us as we age, so that we can remain in charge of our own lives as long as possible.”<sup>40</sup> In other words, “active ageing” is an employment policy which aims to keep us Europeans employable as long as possible. Together with its long-life education programme the EU’s active ageing initiative concentrates on employability: to make and keep us employable.

## 9. Conclusion

In the EU’s policies, culture is still seen from a strategic economic perspective. EU strategies primarily aim at the economic development of the EU. In particular, the Lisbon Strategy aimed at making the EU the world’s most important knowledge economy. According to this approach, culture is subordinated to the economy. In consequence, demographic change was and is seen only in terms of its importance for employment – not as something which affects all European societies similarly, but differently, according to country-specific contexts and circumstances.

Societies which refer to the long-life aspects of life – as the EU rightly started to do – should not adhere to the traditional concept of dividing a lifespan into three separate stages governed by work and money for work: the (unpaid) pre-work, the (paid) work and the (mainly unpaid) post-work periods of life. Furthermore, strategies based on economic growth must be superseded by strategies which focus on sustainability, which take into account much more complex interactions for these three phases of life.

To design a concept which fully respects demographic change, the EU should rethink its culture policy. As all EU member states are affected

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<sup>37</sup> Barroso (20 December 2012).

<sup>38</sup> European Union (21 December 2012).

<sup>39</sup> European Union (21 December 2012).

<sup>40</sup> European Union (21 December 2012).

by demographic change, the EU should define a common culture policy based on mutual understanding of the existential need of living today but preparing constructively for tomorrow – a cultural strategy. Only when such a concept has been designed, should a culture strategy reflecting all facets of social life be formulated.

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# THE IMPACT OF THE EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE TITLE ON INTERNATIONAL STUDENT RECRUITMENT

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## 1. *Introduction*

According to the official website of the ECoC programme, the European Capitals of Culture initiative was set up to reach certain goals, specifically to

- highlight the richness and diversity of European cultures,
- regenerate cities,
- raise their international profile,
- give new vitality to their cultural life,
- boost tourism.

(EU ECoC website [http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/capitals/european-capitals-of-culture\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/capitals/european-capitals-of-culture_en.htm))

As we can see from these goals, a successful ECoC programme should regenerate the cities culturally as well as economically. In this paper we will examine how common are the aims of a European Capital of Culture and a university located in the city and how the ECoC programme can have a likewise positive effect on the city and its university.

The impact of their European Capital of Culture programmes on the host cities and their citizens has been examined from many different angles since the birth of the programme. The cities have also realised the importance of the programme as a tool for strengthening their relationships with their universities during both the bidding and implementation phases. However, what benefits do universities gain from the programme in respect of their internationalisation? Can they increase student recruitment – and so their income – through the ECoC programme?

Internationalising the university and efforts to increase the international student population have been identified as being among the top priorities of Higher Education institutions in the EU during the last

5-10 years. The growing number of international students can help to balance both decreasing government financial support and the demographic decline. The study aims to determine whether the ECoC programme has a positive impact on international student enrolment at the universities. Does the ECoC title stimulate applications to a certain university from abroad? The base of a successful student recruitment strategy is to examine the decision-making process of international students when choosing their place of study. Are international students aware of a city's ECoC title? The paper analyses whether universities use the ECoC title in their international student recruitment efforts.

## 2. *Theoretical overview*

The world of Higher Education (HE) has undergone a significant paradigm change during the past 10-15 years from a number of perspectives. The universities are no longer the sacred temples of knowledge with unchanging rules and a seemingly perpetual hierarchy but modern knowledge centres, open to the needs of their students and their social and economic environments, and one of the most characteristic changes witnessed in the HE market is the rapid growth in the number of international students.

The statistics on international student numbers show that, whilst in 2001 there were one million international students worldwide, their number grew to 3.3 million by 2009. According to the estimate by UNESCO, by 2025 there will be 8 million students studying abroad – which means that we must calculate on a constantly growing number of foreign students in future years.

What are the benefits which universities and their cities can gain from the presence of international students? In general, of course, a university has a positive effect on local economic development. These effects can be classified into two categories (Garrido-Yserte- Gallo-Rivera 2010):

1. supply-side effects—related to human capital and research
2. demand-side effects—related to expenditure and its multiplier impact on the local economy

The benefits of the presence of growing numbers of international students can also be examined at institutional as well as at societal level. At institutional level the significant tuition fees which foreign students pay help to balance the growing institutional costs and decreasing government support, and so it has become a major (and increasingly nec-

essary) source of revenue for universities to target. The high number of enrolled international students can also provide universities with a solution to the problem of demographic decline, a phenomenon which many European universities suffer from today. At societal level the presence of foreign students is also an important financial factor. An analysis of the contribution of international students to the US economy shows that this generated US\$ 19 billion revenue in 2010, whilst the UK economy benefited by US\$ 14 billion. In 2010 in Canada the international students spent in excess of US\$ 7.7 billion on tuition, accommodation and discretionary spending; they also created over 81,000 jobs and generated US\$ 450 million in government revenue. In addition, still in Canada, US\$ 34 million was spent on tourism by international students and their families and friends (Economic Impact of International Education in Canada – An Update 2012).

As is clearly seen from these data, a new type of tourism is emerging – educational tourism. International student mobility is crucial not only from an educational point of view, but also for tourism. Educational tourism can revitalise a city, especially if other economic activities and the other types of tourism do not develop strongly enough. Analysing the relationship between education and tourism, we can see that students often choose their universities not simply on the basis of the perceived educational advantages of the university, but also because of the attractiveness of the cities. Since educational tourism has a high financial impact on the university and the city, effective marketing strategies and effective marketing tools have to be developed to enable HE Institutions to attract more international students. The common aims of the university and its city in attracting foreign students mean that the marketing activities of cities and universities should be harmonised. It is crucial to meet and serve the needs of foreign students at the highest possible level within the university and the city also. (Árva – Könyves 2010)

A parallel between the impact of an internationalised university and the ECoC programme on the economy can also be explored. As we could see among the aims of the programme, the ECoC year should stimulate the local economy – as does an international university through the spending of its foreign students.

It is important to examine and analyse what universities gain through a city's title of European Capital of culture title. These can be summarised as:

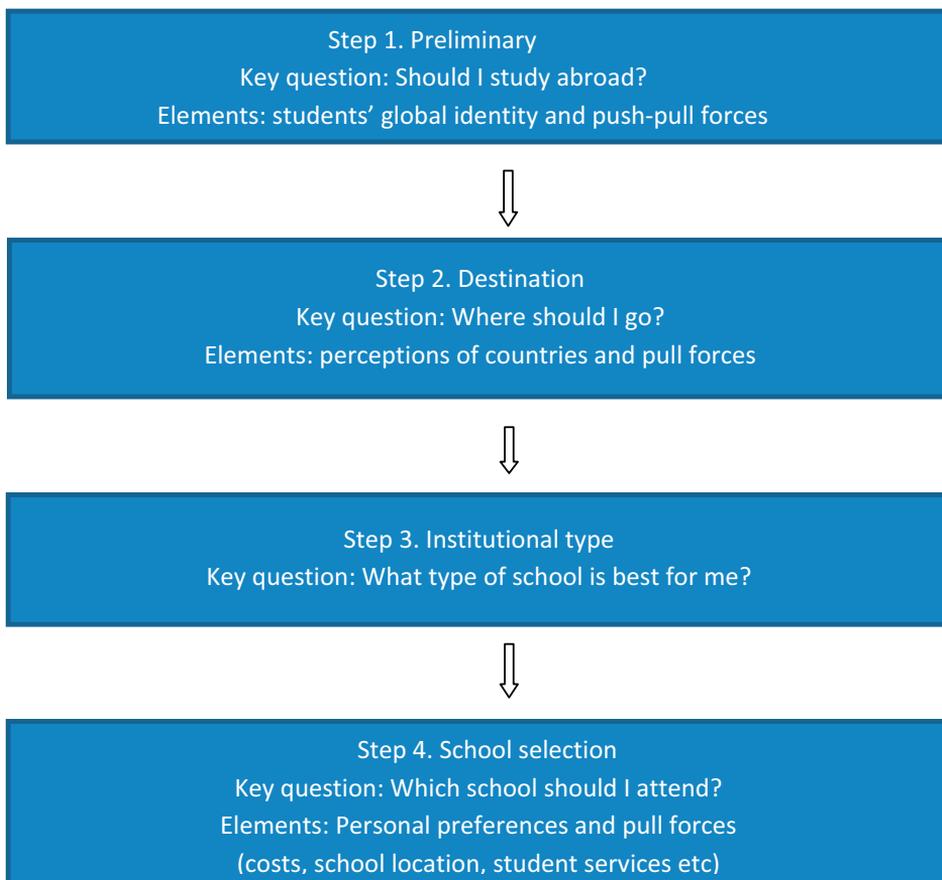
1. The location of the university is more widely known nationally and internationally – crucial in domestic and international student recruitment
2. The ECoC programme boosts the cultural life of the city – which appeals to all students
3. The more successful the ECoC programme of a city, the more attractive the city becomes internationally, greatly helping the university to attract more foreign students.

In summary, the success of the ECoC programme can increase the effectiveness of the international student recruitment of the university. Because of this correlation, it is very important to examine whether universities have understood the importance of the ECoC programme and whether universities make use of the ECoC title of their cities in order to recruit more international students.

The decision-making process of international students when choosing their places of study is very complex and can be affected by different factors. This is described in the literature as a 'push and pull' process. The 'push' factors are the economic and social forces within the home country which serve to 'push' students abroad, whilst the 'pull' factors include the decision as to which host country they will select. This depends on a variety of 'pull' factors such as the student's prior knowledge and awareness of a host country or institution, and also the recommendations made by the student's family and friends. International students tend to select a country first and then an institution within that country.

Bohman (2012) also examined the international student decision process and created a model which determines the levels of possible influence on a student's decision.

Figure I.: Bohman international student community college decision model (2010)



During the first preliminary stage students make decisions about whether they want to study abroad, examine its benefits and costs from many different viewpoints. What affects them at this stage is their global awareness and different push and pull forces. During the second stage, after the decision has been made to study abroad, they investigate which country they could/should study in. The country choice is influenced by their knowledge of different countries and various pull forces. The next phase is to choose the type of institution they wish to study at – and, finally, they select the university itself. At this stage they are influenced by their personal preferences and various pull forces such as tuition fees, the location of the university, student services etc. This is the phase when universities can influence the students' decision quite strongly as this is when they have to provide the students with all relevant information about the university to assist them in their selection and to turn their attention towards the university to reach the

final goal of enrolment. This is also the stage when the attractiveness of the city where the university is located can have a positive influence on their choice. Knowledge of the decision-making process is vital for universities in their student recruitment activities.

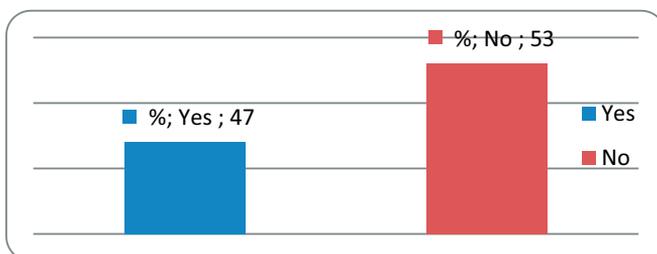
Beneke-Human (2010) suggests that, in the greatly changed education market, the traditional recruitment strategies no longer work. We can witness constantly growing competition among the universities for both domestic and international students. This competition becomes increasingly serious and complex when universities have to choose their recruitment strategies very carefully. Today universities need much more than simple reliance on their reputation or on aggressive promotional campaigns and sales techniques, These are no longer enough for successful international student recruitment. Today's international student recruitment activities are based on the capability and openness of the universities to understand student mobility trends and the university selection processes of potential students (Choudaha – Chang, 2012).

In the increased competition the need to differentiate each institution from the others, to heighten its visibility and its perceived relevance increases also. (Gregersen-Hermans 2009). The visibility and reputation of a university and a city are key pull forces; as we could see earlier, location has a very important role. A better known location can attract more international students and so it would seem likely that a city's ECoC title can be a determining distinguishing feature of a university, an advantage in the face of competition.

### *3. Survey among Erasmus students in Pécs*

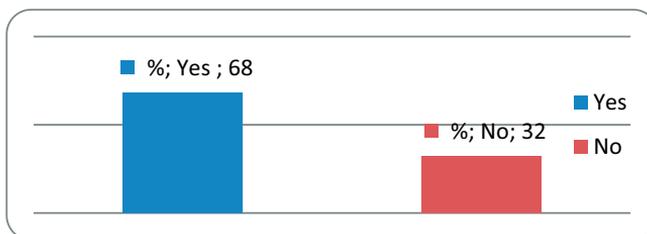
In September 2012 we carried out a survey among the incoming Erasmus students of the University of Pécs. The methodology applied was based on an on-line questionnaire. We had 200 completed questionnaires serving as the basis for our analysis. The research was carried out to explore the motivations of the incoming Erasmus students when choosing the University of Pécs for their studies. Among the many questions we asked about their source of information and decision-making process we were also interested to explore their knowledge of and attitude towards the Pécs ECoC title. For this reason we asked the following question: Before applying to Pécs University, did you hear that Pécs was a European Capital of Culture in 2010?

Diagram 1: Before applying to the University of Pécs did you hear that Pécs was a European Capital of Culture in 2010?



As can be seen in the diagram, 47 % of the respondents answered 'Yes' to this question, although 53 % had not heard about the Pécs 2010 ECoC title before they applied to the University. Afterwards we asked those students who answered 'Yes' whether their knowledge of Pécs 2010 had had a positive effect on their choice.

Diagram 2: Did it stimulate your application to the University of Pécs?



As we can see from the diagram, 68 % of the respondents said that their knowledge of Pécs 2010 stimulated their choice of the University for their Erasmus studies. By way of conclusion we can say that, although more than 50 % of our Erasmus students had no information about the Pécs ECoC title, once they knew, this stimulated their application.

#### Survey amongst international students of the University of Pécs

In 2011 we carried out an on-line survey among the enrolled degree-seeking international students of the University of Pécs. These completed 75 on-line questionnaires to provide the basis for this particular analysis. The primary goal of this survey was to explore the information channels and the decision-making process of the degree-seeking international students when choosing their place of studies.

What are the most important advantages of the University of Pécs?

- I can study subjects here that match my interest.
- A University with a high reputation
- The degree I receive here helps me to get a good job
- The city where the university is located is attractive
- Traditional university with long history

The survey results show how international students ranked the importance of the different advantages of the University of Pécs. The sequence of the answers indicate that the location of the university is of high importance during the decision making process of international students, but the most important factor for them is connected to their fields of studies, the reputation, the value of the degree which is followed by the attractiveness of the city where the university is located.

#### 4. *Classification of European Capitals of Culture*

If we analyse the cities which have been awarded the ECoC title, an interesting feature emerges. European cities with very different backgrounds, populations, history etc. apply for the title but the winners have certain interesting similarities which can be put into 3 main categories:

##### *4.1 Well-known place with active cultural life (famous for its cultural life)*

Among the European Capitals of Culture we can find a group of cities which are famous places with a very active cultural life and are visited by very many tourists on a constant base. The ECoC designation does not help to increase the fame of the place (since it is very well known already), nor does it increase the number of cultural events taking place since there are always many going on throughout the year. The ECoC title seems to be a reward for the ongoing cultural boost of these cities (and most probably for the best application of that year). Cities in this category include Antwerp, Avignon and Luxemburg.

##### *4.2 Well known place with a previously different (industrial) image*

In the second category we can find cities which used to have an industrial image. These are also famous in Europe and worldwide. However, for some reason (mostly for economic reasons) these cities wanted to

change this image and it was their main motivation when applying for the ECoC title. The ECoC designation did help these places to change the industrial image of the city to a culturally vibrant place image and to create a cultural industry there. If we examine the list of ECoC cities we find Essen, Liverpool and Marseille in this category.

#### *4.3 Less known place with an active cultural life*

On the list of ECoC cities we can see places with little or no reputation before they were given the ECoC title and so the title was a huge asset for increasing awareness of the city. It could put the city onto the map of Europe, could help to increase EU- wide recognition. By raising the international profile of a city the European Capital of Culture programme boosted tourism and also helped to create a cultural industry. In most cases it was based on constructing new cultural facilities, which these cities lacked. Cities falling into this category include Sibiu, Pécs, Maribor and Kosice. Through the ECoC programme these cities were given a huge opportunity to promote their own existence.

#### *5. Survey on the use of the ECoC title in university marketing communication*

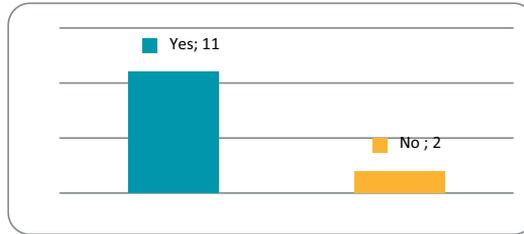
In 2012 we carried out a survey among the member universities of the University Network of the European Capitals of Culture. It was based on an on-line questionnaire and was completed by 13 universities from different European countries. The respondent universities were located in Sibiu, Maribor, Pécs, Liverpool, Avignon, Luxemburg, Antwerp, Brugge, Graz, Vilnius, Essen, Krakow and Stavanger

In terms of the above ECoC categories, we can classify the cities of the responding universities as:

1. Well known places with active cultural lives – Luxemburg, Avignon, Antwerp, Krakow, Brugge
2. Well known places with a previously different (industrial) images – Liverpool, Essen, Stavanger
3. Less known places with an active cultural lives – Sibiu, Pécs, Maribor, Vilnius, Graz

During the survey we were interested in exploring whether the universities use the cities' ECoC title in their marketing communication.

Diagram 3: Does your university use in its marketing communication the fact that your university is located in a past/future ECoC?



The chart clearly shows that the great majority of the respondent universities (13) use the ECoC title in their marketing communication. The 2 universities which do not are located in well-known places which are already famous for their cultural life. In other words, the ECoC title of the cities is more important to promote those universities located in less known places.

We were also curious to find out which type of recruitment communication is used by the universities as when using the cities' ECoC title – for domestic or international recruitment purposes.

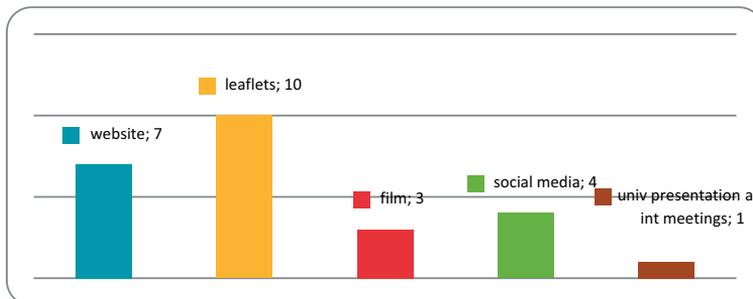
Diagram 4: If yes, in which student recruitment communication



As can be seen in the diagram, once the universities feel it important to mention their cities' ECoC title, the majority use it in both their international and domestic marketing communication. It is, therefore, clear that, when a university realises the importance of the promotional value of the title, it is used in all student recruitment activity; it represents added value for both domestic and international students as a subject for discussion.

With the help of the survey we also tried to discover the marketing communication tools in which the title is used.

Diagram 5: In which marketing communication tools do you mention it?



As the chart shows, most universities (10) mention the ECoC title in their leaflets, 7 refer to it on their websites, 4 in the social media, 3 their university films and 1 university mentions it in every university presentation.

What we can clearly see is that universities from less known cities use ALL marketing communication tools to promote the fact that the university is located in an ECoC.

We were also interested to explore how the responding universities evaluated the importance of the ECoC title during the decision-making process of the Erasmus and the degree-seeking students.

Diagram 6: In your opinion was it an important factor in the decision-making process of your incoming Erasmus students that your university is located in a past/future ECoC?

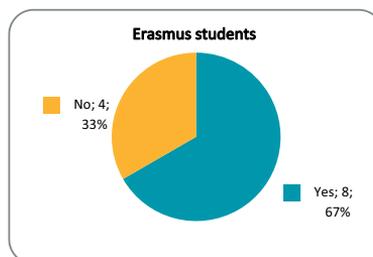
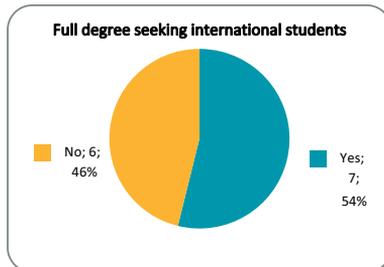


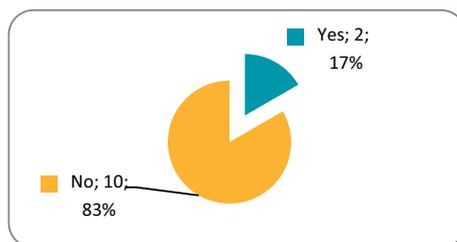
Diagram 7: In your opinion was it an important factor in the decision-making process of your degree-seeking international students that your university is located in a past/future ECoC?



The data proves that 67 % of universities think that the Erasmus students found it crucial that the university was located in an EcoC, whereas only 54% of universities are of the opinion that degree-seeking international students find it important. We can affirm that the experience of the universities is that the European Capital of Culture title is more important for the decision-making process of the Erasmus students than for the degree-seeking students. Although the attractiveness of the city is also crucial for degree-seeking students (as we saw in in the University of Pécs survey), their main motivation is derived from the field of studies and the value of the degree. Erasmus students, who stay for one semester or, at most, one year, seem to prefer enjoying the cultural attractions and events of the cities more than the degree-seeking students.

We were also interested to discover, with the help of the survey, whether the universities had ever considered the role of the ECoC title during the university selection process of the international students.

Diagram 8: Have you ever asked your international students whether your city’s ECoC title was important for them in their selection of a university?

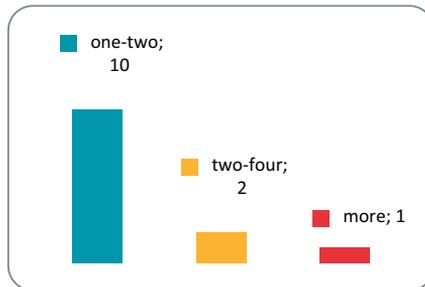


The data clearly show that, although the universities have a definite opinion about the effect of the ECoC title on the decision-making pro-

cess of the international students (as was seen in the previous answers) the majority did not survey the question. We can, however, conclude that universities from less known cities questioned their international students on the topic which strongly suggests that institutions located in less known places are much more eager to analyse the effect of the ECoC title than those located in well-known cities.

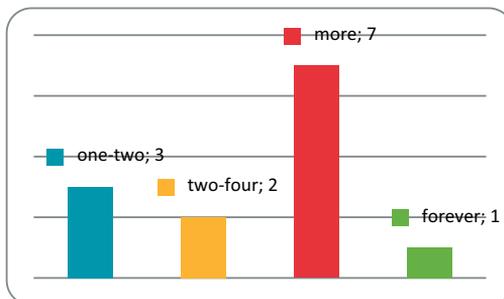
When speaking about a city’s ECoC designation, it is also interesting to find out for how long a university is likely to refer to it in its communication campaigns.

Diagram 9: For how many years before the ECoC year of your city is it worth mentioning in communications that your university is located in an ECoC?



The majority of the respondent universities share the opinion that for 1-2 years before the ECoC programme year it is worth promoting the fact that the university is located in a European Capital of Culture.

Diagram 10: For how many years after the ECoC year of your city is it worth mentioning in communications that your university is located in an ECoC?



As the survey results clearly indicate, most universities believe that the ECoC title should be used in their marketing communication for more

than 2 years after the programme year. One university is of the opinion that it can be usefully communicated permanently.

## 6. *Conclusion*

The above findings lead us to the conclusion that the competitiveness of a university is largely influenced by the competitiveness and attractions of the city where the university is located, and the marketing activity of the university should be in harmony with that of its city. University cities should harmonise their tourism destination management activities with the aims of their universities and university cities should serve the needs of the potential foreign students at their universities. In marketing activities both the universities and their cities should work together more actively and more efficiently. A good ECoC year can produce a much more effective collaboration between a city and its university (between Town and Gown!) which may well have a positive effect also on international student recruitment.

We should also insist that the European Capital of Culture title awarded to a city is a unique distinguishing feature to be publicised forcefully. Universities today must work under the pressure of growing competition for both domestic and international students, and under these circumstances it is a MUST to:

- Distinguish our universities from competitors,
- Use the ECoC title in all our marketing communication activities,
- (Thus) help students to make their choice.

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# URBAN DEVELOPMENT BEYOND THE EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE PROGRAMME. THE LOCAL PROJECT CLASS AND LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS: ALLIES, RIVALS OR FOES?<sup>1</sup>

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## 1. *Introduction*

European Capital of Culture (ECoC) programmes usually play an important role in reinforcing a common trend in European societies: that of project proliferation.<sup>2</sup> Whereas this new form of redistributing money and power within the European realm is arguably more readily perceivable in rural areas,<sup>3</sup> urban development too has been reshaped in the wake of the “projectification” of development regimes. ECoC cities experience this in an intensive manner due to the very large scale of projects that cities often run in the framework of their ECoC title.<sup>4</sup> Pécs, an ECoC in 2010, is no exception to this trend and this paper studies the social impacts of running large-scale urban development projects for local society in Pécs: the rise of the local project class and the participation of local society in urban development processes.

## 2. *The role of social capital in the nexus of project class and partnerships*

As the theoretical framework of the study, our research employs one of the most successful social science concepts of recent times, that of social capital. Social capital is a sociological theory which concentrates on the interplay of networks in society, the trust which holds them together (or separates them) as well as the social norms which they animate. However, social capital has also become an increasingly powerful policy concept in the context of economic and social development. These two faces of social capital, one scientific and the other policy-oriented, make it a useful paradigm with which to study the social context and consequences of urban development.

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<sup>1</sup> The research project was funded by the Hungarian Scientific Research Fund (OTKA PD 104050).

<sup>2</sup> Sjöblom et al. 2006, Sjöblom et al. 2012, Böröcz & Sarkar 2005, Kovách & Kristóf 2007.

<sup>3</sup> Csurgó, Kovách, Kucerova 2008, Kovách 2000.

<sup>4</sup> Greg & Palmer 2010.

Social capital has been a dazzling success in the academia of the social sciences: the late 1980s were marked by the contributions of Pierre Bourdieu and James Coleman, whilst the major inspirations in the 1990s came from Robert Putnam and Francis Fukuyama. By the turn of the millennium, more than 100 academic articles had been published on social capital, and this figure almost tripled in the following three years.<sup>5</sup> In the world of development policy also, social capital became a success story: besides international development agencies such as the OECD (2001), or the World Bank,<sup>6</sup> several countries' national development policies have relied on social capital. These included the UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Ireland. In the US, the social science doyen of social capital, Robert Putnam, initiated a nation-wide social capital development strategy in the form of the Saguaro Seminar<sup>7</sup> as well as stream of concrete projects.<sup>8</sup>

Triumph, however, was followed by a wave of criticism. The concept of social capital was criticised<sup>9</sup> for its under-theorised background and for attempting too much in explaining a great variety of social phenomena such as health condition, educational attainment, success on the labour market, quality of life, government performance and, of course, economic development<sup>10</sup>. In the practical world of development policy, social capital received criticism<sup>11</sup> for the way in which it was treated as a panacea for all social problems. Much of this criticism is well-founded, for the standard theory of social capital lays the thrust of its emphasis on distinguishing its approach from that of social network analysis, and, in doing so, relies on three established concepts of sociological theory: trust, networks and social norms. The problem is that it handles these concepts both theoretically and, especially, empirically – rather casually. In the policy world, on the other hand, we see that the programmes for the development of social capital are considered to be relatively inexpensive solutions for complex problems such as poverty or economic backwardness. This means that the optimism attached to social capital promises a less expensive alternative and a complement to other, very expensive, means of development.

In response to criticisms, one of the most promising developments in the theory of social capital has been the introduction of distinctions among three types of social capital: bonding, bridging and linking.<sup>12</sup> This move

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<sup>5</sup> Halpern 2005:9.

<sup>6</sup> The World Bank's task force on social capital is at <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTSOCIALDEVELOPMENT/EXTTSOCIALCAPITAL>. (visited on 10/01/2013)

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.hks.harvard.edu/saguaro>. (visited on 10/01/2013)

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.bettertogether.org>. (visited on 10/01/2013)

<sup>9</sup> E.g. by Portes 1998:1, 8.

<sup>10</sup> For pro arguments cf. Fukuyama 1995, Putnam 2000.

<sup>11</sup> E.g. by Woolcock 2000.

<sup>12</sup> Woolcock 2001:13-14, Field 2003:42-43, Halpern 2005:26-31.

has allowed for reconnection to the sociological theories which stand in the background of social capital and which have made possible a more complex and robust re-theoretisation of how trust, networks and social norms intertwine in the three forms of social capital. This development gives new impetus to empirical research also and should certainly be integrated into instruments of urban policy, where such a distinction has been almost entirely missing, one notable exception being Gittel and Vidal (1998:13-23).

Bonding social capital is inherent in networks which build on a high degree of personal trust as well as honesty, reciprocity and trust-worthiness in such relationships as family, relatives and close friends. Those who do not belong to these networks are closed off from them. Bonding social capital plays a vital role in the lives of all social groups, since it is a guarantee of wellbeing, interpreted as realising various levels of satisfaction with life, as opposed to the material dimension of welfare.

The relations belonging to bridging social capital are predicated on generalised trust among people and require a considerable degree of honesty and reciprocity. These relations connect us to people belonging to social groups other than our own (e.g., classmates, acquaintances or colleagues). Bridging social capital is, on the one hand, vital to social integration and, on the other hand, constitutes a resource which is supportive of progress in terms of both the individual career and of household status.

The concept of linking social capital is applied to relations within the hierarchical structures of society which connect us to people in positions of influence ('good connections'). Expectations of honesty and reciprocity prevail in such cases, but in very different configurations compared to the two previous types. Linking social capital can, for example, thrive in a web of favours which can be interpreted as a system of corruption – a witness to the warning that social capital does not always and necessarily have only positive social implications.<sup>13</sup> It is evident that, in any society, linking social capital plays a central role in attaining and retaining advantageous social positions. This type of social capital is predicated on a mix of trust in the formal, institutional structures of society as well as on trust in informal connections which often override formal hierarchies.

The three types of social capital offer an adequate framework for understanding the workings of project proliferation and the rise of the project class.<sup>14</sup> The social and political function of the project

<sup>13</sup> Field 2003:71-90, Whitehead 2004, Füzér et al. 2005.

<sup>14</sup> For a similar application of the social capital framework to study development processes, albeit in the rural context, cf. Megyesi 2011.

class is mediation:<sup>15</sup> the project class provides access to funds and networks which would otherwise remain beyond the reach of potential beneficiaries. This connection therefore, embodies a prime example of linking social capital where the relationship is predicated on a high level of confidence in the institutional structures which serve as resource providers – for example, EU funds and national development agencies. Also required is a high level of trust between members of the project class and beneficiaries, since this enables long-term cooperation among the actors, whose position is very different in the social and political hierarchy. Members of the project class occupy positions of influence: they are positioned not only above potential beneficiaries but also next to traditional political elites – with whom they share power due to their vital mediator role.

Members of a well-functioning project class are held together chiefly by bridging social capital which relies on the trust emanating from a professional ethos. Long-term, effective cooperation is predicated on the expertise, management skills and reliability of project class members, skills which are often tested to extreme under normal conditions. This refers to managing projects which, by definition, require optimal performance in the short-term from non-permanent organisational forms. These are usually complicated but have to perform within tight budgets.

Partnerships are formed from networks of potential beneficiaries and stakeholders, whose very presence vis-à-vis the project class depends upon the stock of bridging social capital shared among these “lay actors”. Should they be able to develop a mutual trust to cooperate with each other and to exercise reciprocity within their circles, partnerships can be able partners in project class endeavours. Otherwise “public” or “community” involvement remains a matter of complying with project indicators.

Development policy schemes of the EU envisage non-problematic, smooth cooperation among the three chief actors in the project-related field, the political elites, the project class and partnerships. Political elites share power with the project class to the extent of the latter's role of providing access to development funds, all to the benefit of communities more or less organised into supporting partnerships. This ideal is often challenged when looking at empirical cases in tension- and crisis-ridden contexts.

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<sup>15</sup> Kovách & Kristóf 2007, Sjöblom et al. 2006, Sjöblom et al. 2012.

### 3. *Local project class and local partnerships in the wake of the Pécs 2010 ECoC programme*

Even though relatively large-scale projects had already appeared in Pécs during the 1990s (most notably “the” ISPA project funded by the EU via its Pre-Accession eponymous fund), it was the ECoC title and the associated five large scale infrastructural investment projects<sup>16</sup> which created the local project class. Professionals from all potential recruitment bases for the project class<sup>17</sup> had a role to play in the EcoC 2010 programme in Pécs:

- the bid was proposed and assembled by local professionals (with backgrounds in the regional sciences, literature, architecture, political science and international relations)
- the project proposals for ERDF funding (European Regional Development Funds) were compiled by the Pécs2010 Consortium made up of international and Budapest-based consulting firms
- ERDF funds were administered by the South Transdanubian Regional Development Agency
- the investment projects were managed by Pécs2010 Management Agency (which in 2011 became the Pécs Urban Development Agency and Zsolnay Heritage Management Agency)
- the Pécs 2010 ECoC programmes were managed chiefly by Fesztiválszervező Kht., a Budapest-based public cultural management agency.

The ECoC title of Pécs, therefore, stimulated not only the local project class but much wider interests also and benefited both regional and national project class actors also.

The local project class not only increased its size in the wake of the ECoC title award, but its influence also. Due to the novelty of a large scale project which had to be managed in an integrated manner as one complex urban development project,<sup>18</sup> the local political elite pushed most of the decision-making into the hands of experts, i.e. managers in the Pécs2010 Management Agency. This was to cause tensions between the local elite and the local project class as time went on (2007-2010)

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<sup>16</sup> The five projects were: Zsolnay Cultural Quarter, Kodály Concert and Conference Hall, Knowledge Centre (integrated library), renovation of exhibition halls, revitalization of a public squares.

<sup>17</sup> Kovách & Kristóf 2007.

<sup>18</sup> Füzér 2011.

and the details of the five investment projects became more and more blurred for the local political elite, which, from time to time, wished to oversee and influence the projects at strategic points. Daily project management, however, gained the upper hand. The local political elite during this time was unable to organise itself as the strategic manager of urban development processes. This manifested itself also in urban strategy planning, since even the updating of Pécs's Integrated Urban Strategy in 2011 (the first version of which in 2007 was put together by the Pécs2010 Consortium's Budapest-based consulting firm partners as a project proposal annex for the ECoC) was managed by ex-ECoC investment project managers, now working for Pécs Urban Development Agency.

A subtle change, however, occurred, in the relationship between the local political elite and the local project class of Pécs during 2012. In order to take the most important decisions regarding urban strategy planning into its own hands, a so-called Coordinating Committee was set up at the City Hall. This was made up of leading politicians and heads of municipal administrative departments (such as the Chief Architect with an international background in urban development), as well as representatives of county and regional public authorities, and the organisation of local professionals. The planning of Pécs's new long-term urban development strategy (Pécs2030) is carried out under the strategic management of this new body, and not by the managers of the Pécs Urban Development Agency. The professed ideal of current planning is one of the wide participation of the local community -- including local professionals, whose organisation is represented in the body responsible for strategic management of urban development processes.

#### 4. *The local project class and local partnerships: allies, rivals or foes?*

In contrast to the EU ideal of cooperation in development regimes, where local partnerships are ALLIES of the project class in accessing and using development funds, the ECoC project in Pécs gave rise to a situation where the local project class had a tense relationship not only with the local political elite analysed above) but also with the local community. They turned FOES into a two-way process: the ECoC project was perceived to have been "taken away" from local professionals, and hence from local society writ large, which made potentially influential members of the local partnership bitter from the very start. The building up of supportive local partnership constructs was attempted in various forms (such as a bid for civil initiatives in 2007 to be included into the Pécs 2010 ECoC programme – inclusion never happened with any of the winners), the majority of which brought more frustration

than cooperation. As the local management of the Pécs 2010 ECoC investment projects had a legendarily bad press, the local project class became defensive and viewed both the local political elite as well as the local partnership as potential hindrances to their management tasks that they had to perform under truly extreme schedules. The syndrome of an embattled fortress and the brotherhood of the trenches emerged among managers of the local project class (even today, they have no website for the Pécs Urban Development Agency as a precautionary measure to ward off potential attacks).

Under the new circumstances of the political elite taking the upper hand over strategically managing urban development processes in the post-ECoC era, the relationship of the local project class and the local political elite is becoming normalised, with the division of tasks and of power becoming more and more fixed. In the course of planning the Pécs2030 strategy, the local political elites professed to open up the process to the local community. This move is viewed with much scepticism by the local project class, an attitude that was also put into writing by the chief director of the Pécs Urban Management Agency in a letter he submitted to the strategic management body. The local project class clearly perceives local partnerships as their RIVALS in the local division of influence over urban development: as the letter makes it all too clear, they try to convince the political elite to accept their scepticism on the merits of broad participation.

This conflict is to be read as the mobilisation of the local assets of linking social capital against those of bridging social capital: the stage is set for the local political elite to closely cooperate (under fixed arrangements) with the local project class in an effort to access much needed development funds -- an undertaking chiefly mobilising linking social capital. However, the ideal of broad local partnerships appeals not only to the main beneficiary of such constructs, the local community and its professionals, but also to the local political elite: the linking social capital between the local political elite and the local community that such a scheme is predicated on needs to be backed by strong assets of bridging social capital among the local community, as well as between its members and the members of the of the local political elite. A crucial precondition of community based urban development in a projectified EU.

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# AN EXPLORATORY ANALYSIS OF ECOC TOURISM AS A NICHE PRODUCT IN CULTURAL TOURISM

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## 1. *Research background*

The research presented in this paper is part of a 3-year research project (2011-2014) entitled "Creativity and its added value in niche tourism – following and creating trends in Hungary", supported by the Bolyai János Research Scholarship of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. The principal aim of the project is to analyse the actual and the potential added value of niche tourism products in the successful development and the international competitiveness of Hungarian tourism.

Niche tourism<sup>1</sup> (also known as special interest tourism) is a relatively new phenomenon in the history of tourism and which has emerged during the last two decades, in parallel with the globalisation of mass tourism, as a new, opposite trend based on specialisation instead of homogenisation<sup>2</sup>. The increasing ratio of experienced travellers has produced new demand patterns and has significantly influenced the services offered by many destinations and companies. The importance of alternative tourism products such as festival tourism or ecotourism has been increasing<sup>3</sup>, and the gradual fragmentation of the supply led to the creation of highly specialised niche products, such as "birding" within ecotourism. Although niche tourism products are highly diverse, they all satisfy the unique needs of very narrow segments, particularly in comparison with the mass demand and relatively standardised supply of traditional tourism products (such as waterside holidays, winter holidays/winter sports or general interest urban tourism). Consequently, in niche tourism, the basis of product development is uniqueness and a personal, tailor-made approach, often with the tourist's active involvement in the product design and the service delivery process<sup>4</sup>. Since the major distinguishing factor of niche tourism products is their unique and innovative quality, niche tourism should be considered a destination-specific concept, for various reasons. On the one hand, certain tourism services may satisfy the needs of narrow niche segments in one destination, whilst being in relatively high demand in other places. On the other hand, the natural and cultural

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<sup>1</sup> Novelli (2005)

<sup>2</sup> Hall & Weiler (1992)

<sup>3</sup> Michalkó (2007)

<sup>4</sup> Ritchie & Hudson (2009)

resources of a country also have a major influence on the potential development of new products.

The 3-year research project aims to map the current situation of niche tourism development in Hungary, using both secondary and primary methods to understand the nature and characteristics of the concept in Hungary. Among the main questions of the overview are the transformation and innovation potential of traditional Hungarian tourist products, together with the success factors of niche product development and the Hungarian travelling population's propensity to buy new types of experience. Currently, contrary to West European trends<sup>5</sup>, analysis of the Hungarian population's tourism demand indicates a dominance of VFR (visiting friends and relatives) travel and water-based leisure holidays. Compared to this even alternative tourism products – e.g., health tourism or cultural tourism – seem to enjoy relatively low popularity, whilst the actual demand of niche tourism is practically invisible due to the lack of relevant statistical data<sup>6</sup>.

The research discussed in this paper was inspired by my long interest in tourism development and cultural innovation in European Capitals of Culture<sup>7</sup>. Its aim is to explore, as part of a pilot project, whether visiting ECoC cities is mainly motivated by a broad interest in cultural experiences – and it is the richness of these cities' cultural programme which acts as a pull-factor for visitors – or whether the unique status of being a European Capital of Culture is able to add an attraction beyond the general value of the cultural supply. In other words, may ECoC tourism be considered as a niche segment within cultural tourism?

## 2. *Cities as destinations for cultural tourism*

The major destinations for cultural tourism worldwide are cities<sup>8</sup>, whose milieu and cultural attractions may have a significant influence even on the national tourist image of their countries. In order to satisfy the constantly changing needs of visitors, co-operation is essential between a city's cultural sector and its tourism industry<sup>9</sup>. However, in an optimal case, the quantitative and qualitative development of cultural services and institutions primarily aims to improve the local population's quality of life and to increase the residential attractiveness of a given place. The growth of visitor numbers will be a partly indirect positive impact of such development.

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<sup>5</sup> ETC (2006)

<sup>6</sup> Magyar Turizmus Zrt. (2012)

<sup>7</sup> Rátz (2006ab)

<sup>8</sup> Richards (1998)

<sup>9</sup> Michalkó & Rátz (2005)

Based on a product-oriented approach to tourism, cultural tourism mainly includes travel to cities and towns where the core attraction component consists of tangible heritage resources and cultural events. In the system of cultural tourism, cities and town provide an urban scenery for visitors' cultural experiences, embodied in the physical-geographical space and the built environment. In addition, a cultural destination features key attractions, tourist amenities and a unique milieu, i.e. a distinctive manifestation of the experience components of the tourism space<sup>10</sup>.

Cultural tourism demand is mainly concentrated in historic cities and national capitals<sup>11</sup>, although the recent trend of regenerating industrial areas through culture also led to the development of many former industrial cities as international destinations of contemporary cultural tourism<sup>12</sup>. Although new lists and rankings of cultural destinations are published regularly by a variety of travel magazines and professional organisations, the following cities are generally included on virtually every map of European cultural tourism: Paris, Rome, London, Athens, Venice, Florence, Vienna, Prague, Barcelona, Amsterdam, Dublin, Madrid, Berlin, Budapest and Brussels<sup>13</sup>. Although ranking varies by year and by source, what these cities all have in common, besides their high-level amenities and heritage resources, is a constant reinvention of their cultural attractions, a characteristic atmosphere and a strong cultural destination brand, based on these actors. Several of these cities have also gained ECoC status during the history of the project, further enhancing their cultural destination image<sup>14</sup>.

Nevertheless, culturally motivated travellers' interest in less-known and less-visited cities has been growing significantly during the last decades<sup>15</sup>. Since the majority of ECoC cities after 2000 belong to this category, the changing trends in visitation, together with the additional impact of attraction development and the consequently increasing media attention, have contributed to a growth in cultural tourism demand, as well as local cultural consumption, in these destinations. Although most cities used an event-oriented, purposefully multicultural approach<sup>16</sup>, the development of iconic cultural institutions and the general revitalisation of urban areas were also included in every ECoC programme, and so most capitals of culture experienced significant direct economic benefits and less marked medium-term impacts<sup>17</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> Michalkó & Rátz (2006)

<sup>11</sup> Smith (2003)

<sup>12</sup> Campbell (2011)

<sup>13</sup> Richards (2001), [www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com), [www.tripadvisor.com](http://www.tripadvisor.com), [www.cntraveler.com](http://www.cntraveler.com)

<sup>14</sup> Palmer/Rae Associates (2004)

<sup>15</sup> ETC & WTO (2005)

<sup>16</sup> Lähdesmäki (2009)

<sup>17</sup> Filipić, Gluić & Vukorepa (2010)

### 3. *Research methods*

In order to explore the potential of ECoC tourism as a special niche product within the more general cultural tourism experience, a questionnaire survey was carried out by the Tourism Department of the Kodolányi János University of Applied Sciences on a sample of 300 persons in Hungary using multi-stage sampling. At the first stage, in order to be included in the sample, respondents were required to be at least 18 years old, have an above-average cultural consumption level (based on indicators – but extending the concept of cultural consumption – defined in the 2003 survey of the Sociological Research Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences<sup>18</sup>), and at least 50% of the participants were expected to have visited Pécs ECoC 2010 between 2007 and 2012; at the second stage, convenience sampling was used by the interviewers until they reached their personal quota.

In addition to their overall cultural consumption habits, the survey focused on respondents' experiences in and attitudes towards selected ECoC cities, with special attention to the perceived impacts of the ECoC year in the city of Pécs.

Considering their demographic characteristics, 50.7% of respondents were male and 49.3% female. 19.7% considered their income as lower than the Hungarian average, 59.0% as average and 19.7% as higher than average (1.6% did not wish to share this information). While 80.3% visited Pécs within the specified time period, 49.7% did so in 2010, specifically with the motivation to experience the ECoC programme. 43.3% of respondents had a BA/MA degree or higher, and 45.8% had finished secondary school (the above-average education level<sup>19</sup> may be attributed to the similar cultural consumption level which was used as a requirement for participation in the survey).

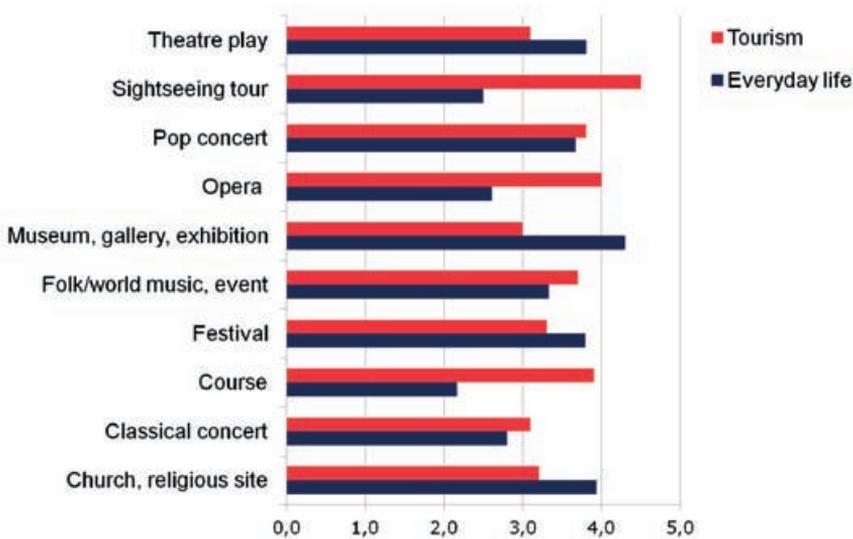
Figure 1 summarises respondents' involvement in cultural activities, both in everyday life and as part of their leisure travel experiences. As the results of the paired-samples T-test indicate, being a tourist significantly increases respondents' willingness to join sightseeing tours, to participate in courses and to watch opera performances. Theatrical performances and museum visits are predominantly leisure activities, as is visiting churches and other religious sites. (In the latter case, of course, everyday consumption may be more closely associated with practising one's religion, whilst tourism consumption is probably related to visiting historic monuments and sites of religious significance).

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<sup>18</sup> Dudás & Hunyadi (2005)

<sup>19</sup> Medgyesi (2009)

Figure 1 – Characteristics of respondents’ cultural consumption\*,\*\*



\*Tourism: 1=never, 2=rarely, 3=occasionally, 4=often, 5=always

\*\*Everyday life: 1=never, 2=every few years, 3=1-2 times/year, 4=3-4 times/year, 5=once a month

Culture generally plays a significant role in respondents’ leisure travel consumption: on a 1-5 Likert scale (with 1=absolutely unimportant and 5=absolutely important), survey participants on average attributed a value of 4.0 to cultural experiences. However, the significance of cultural attractions seems to be embodied by complex destinations (historic centres, architectural complexes) as opposed to specific events: in order to visit a destination famous for its cultural-historic heritage and sights, respondents were willing to travel 711 km on average, while cultural events would only motivate them to travel 326 km. This attitude is partly reflected in the list of culturally important Hungarian destinations selected by the respondents as places worth to visit. Budapest received 23.6% of all the votes, followed by Pécs (19.5%), Szeged (12.6%), Debrecen (11.5%) and Sopron (5.2%). Budapest, the capital, offers a concentration of heritage resources and contemporary cultural institutions and has been the centre of the country’s cultural and urban tourism for decades. In the case of Pécs, the increased media attention before, throughout and immediately after the ECoC 2010 year certainly contributed to the city’s favourable ranking in the survey of participants’ perceptions. (However, of the above five highly recommended cultural centres, only Budapest and Sopron are listed

among the most visited Hungarian cities in 2011, illustrating Hungarian domestic travellers' preference for spa destinations)<sup>20</sup>.

#### 4. Respondents' interest in ECoC cities

In the survey, participants were asked to list those three European cities which they would most like to visit in 2013. Of the 826 responses, in harmony with the list of popular European urban destinations mentioned above, Paris ranked first (mentioned by 19.6% of the sample), followed by London (17.3%), Rome (10.1%), Prague (6.5%) and Barcelona (6.0). The top five cities accounted for 59.5% of all the answers. However, neither Marseille nor Košice (ECoCs 2013) were mentioned at all, despite the relatively active promotional efforts of the latter among the Hungarian population.

In order to explore whether ECoC status has a special attraction among people who are generally active cultural consumers and consider cultural experiences influential in their travel decisions, respondents were provided with a list of selected ECoC cities. and were asked to indicate whether they visited the place at least once for any reason between 2007-2012, whether they travelled to the given city during its ECoC year with the specific motivation to enjoy the ECoC programmes and atmosphere, or if they were planning to visit the destinations in the near future. In addition, they were also asked to describe those characteristics and ideas that they most strongly associated with these cities (Table 1). ECoCs were selected from the period 2007-2013, taking into consideration their geographical and cultural distance and the characteristics of Hungarian tourist demand to the given countries (e.g. Istanbul 2010 was not included since Hungarian outgoing tourism to Turkey is predominantly seaside-oriented, Sibiu 2007 was included due to its location in Transylvania and its multicultural Hungarian-Saxon-Romanian heritage).

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<sup>20</sup> Magyar Turizmus Zrt. (2012)

Table 1 – Interest in the ECoC cities (2007-2013)

| <b>Visited<br/>(2007-12)*</b> | <b>Visited in<br/>ECoC year**</b> | <b>Plan for<br/>(2012-13)</b> | <b>Main associations</b>  |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| <b>Sibiu (ECoC 2007)</b>      |                                   |                               |   |
| 8.3%                          | 0.0%                              | 14.7%                         | Transylvania<br>German & Hungarian<br>culture<br>Education<br>Common heritage |
| <b>Linz (ECoC 2009)</b>       |                                   |                               |   |
| 24.3%                         | 26.7%                             | 25.7%                         | Danube<br>Welcoming city<br>Orderly, clean<br>Linzer (cake)<br>Museums        |
| <b>Essen (ECoC 2010)</b>      |                                   |                               |   |
| 1.7%                          | 0.0%                              | 18.0%                         | Ruhr region<br>Beer<br>Industrial<br><b>ECoC</b><br>German culture            |

Table 1 cont. – Interest in the ECoC cities (2007-2013)

| <b>Visited<br/>(2007-12)*</b> | <b>Visited in<br/>ECoC year**</b> | <b>Planning to<br/>(2012-13)</b> | <b>Main associations</b>  |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Pécs (ECoC 2010)</b>       |                                   |                                  |   |
| 80.3%                         | 59.3%                             | 67.7%                            | <b>ECoC</b><br>Zsolnay ceramics, factory<br>Turkish heritage<br>University<br>Basilica<br>Colourful |
| <b>Tallinn (ECoC 2011)</b>    |                                   |                                  |   |
| 3.3%                          | 1.7%                              | 9.3%                             | Nothing at all<br>Baltic state<br>Cold<br>Fortress<br>Russian/Soviet                                |
| <b>Turku (ECoC 2011)</b>      |                                   |                                  |   |
| 0.0%                          | 0.0%                              | 8.7%                             | Nothing at all<br>Cold<br>Relatives<br>Sauna<br>Probably Turkish/Asian                              |
| <b>Guimarães (ECoC 2012)</b>  |                                   |                                  |   |
| 0.0%                          | 0.0%                              | 6.7%                             | Nothing at all<br>Unknown<br>Exotic<br>Mediterranean  |

Table 1 cont. – Interest in the ECoC cities (2007-2013)

| <b>Visited<br/>(2007-12)*</b> | <b>Visited in<br/>ECoC year**</b> | <b>Planning to<br/>(2012-13)</b> | <b>Main associations</b>  |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Maribor (ECoC 2012)</b>    |                                   |                                  |   |
| 14.8%                         | 33.3%                             | 19.7%                            | River Drava<br>Sea<br>Slovenian culture<br>Wine-tasting<br>Sports                         |
| <b>Košice (ECoC 2013)</b>     |                                   |                                  |   |
| 8.2%                          | N/A                               | 22.9%                            | Cathedral<br>World War 2<br>Beer<br>Common heritage<br>Ferenc Rákóczi<br>Close to Hungary |

\* % of all respondents

\*\* % of those who visited the city between 2007-2012

As Table 1 shows, Pécs, not surprisingly, proved to be the most visited ECoC both in the 2007-2012 period and during the ECoC year. Pécs's favourable position is explained by its unique situation and its recent status as the only Hungarian ECoC in the project's history, its (cultural) significance in Hungarian domestic tourism, as well as the survey sampling method. Linz (Austria) and Maribor (Slovenia) followed Pécs: both countries are among the traditional target areas of outgoing Hungarian travellers, and both cities are located within the roughly 700 km distance which respondents specified as the limit of a culturally motivated trip. (It should be noted that both cities may be included in the itinerary of winter sports enthusiasts also). Comparing the two cities, a higher percentage of respondents visited Maribor during the 2012 ECoC year than Linz during 2009, which, to a certain extent, may be attributed to the increased awareness of the ECoC project following Pécs 2010.

The associations reflect a low level of awareness of the selected cities' ECoC status: the concept is only mentioned in the case of Pécs and Essen (a city which shared the 2010 ECoC year with Pécs, and the selection and programmes of which were covered, to a certain extent, by the Hungarian media). However, Essen's perceived image is strongly

affected by its industrial heritage and its “Germanness”, as implied by the associated stereotype of beer.

Even though the research methods do not allow for broad generalisation, the findings of this pilot study seem to suggest that, in general, the ECoC status of a city by itself offers little attraction for even relatively highly educated, active cultural consumers who acknowledge the importance of culture in their tourism experience. This seems to be particularly true in the case of less traditional and practically unknown cultural destinations: the (lack of) popularity of Tallinn, Turku or Guimarães in the Hungarian market was not affected by their ECoC programmes. Hungary, likewise, was not listed among the major target markets of either of these cities (as opposed to neighbouring Košice, for example, where the ECoC 2013 programme includes specific elements based on the city’s Hungarian heritage). It is also obvious that the survey participants were not sufficiently motivated by the overall European Capital of Culture concept to follow the subsequent years’ programmes after 2010.

When analysing respondents’ willingness to visit a city in the near future, the “common heritage” factor also seems to play a limited role. Distance, the perceived overall image of the destination, timing and the marketing efforts of the given city also had an impact. Even though both Sibiu and Košice are perceived to have a connection to a Hungarian heritage, the totality of the former variables act as a stronger pull-factor for the Slovakian city (which also appears to have run a more focused marketing campaign among potential Hungarian visitors).

Table 2 summarises the perceived overall attraction of the ECoC cities among respondents. The data seem to reinforce conclusions drawn from the analysis of visitation characteristics and associations, in that, although the survey participants generally believe in the cultural richness of the ECoC cities cultural offer, in general they have no stated preference for visiting ECoC destinations. However, the results of the Chi-square analysis suggest that those who visited Pécs in 2010 with the specific objective of enjoying the ECoC experience are more likely to choose former or current ECoC cities as their next destination (Chi-square=10.472, sig.=0.03). (The analysis did not prove any statistical relationship between the rest of the statements included in Table 2 and the respondents’ visit to Pécs in 2010).

Table 2 – The overall attraction of ECoC cities\*

| <b>Statement</b>  | <b>Mean</b> | <b>St. dev.</b> |
|---|-------------|-----------------|
| Being ECoC significantly increases a city's attraction for me                     | 3.4         | 1.3             |
| I prefer to visit (former or current) ECoCs                                       | 2.7         | 1.3             |
| The ECoC cities are likely to have a rich cultural product                        | 3.7         | 1.0             |
| The ECoC cities offer creative, exciting cultural programmes also in the long run | 3.5         | 1.2             |
| To visit a current ECoC is a special experience for me                            | 3.6         | 1.2             |

\*On a 1-5 scale with 1=totally disagree, 5=totally agree

Table 3 – Impacts of being ECoC on Pécs\*

| <b>Pécs....</b>                      | <b>Mean</b> | <b>St. dev.</b> |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Has become a better place            | 3.8         | 1.0             |
| Has become a more creative city      | 3.7         | 1.0             |
| Has become a more exciting city      | 3.6         | 0.9             |
| Has become a more international city | 3.8         | 1.0             |
| Has become a more visited city       | 4.0         | 0.9             |
| Has become a more colourful city     | 3.8         | 0.9             |

\*On a 1-5 scale with 1=totally disagree, 5=totally agree

As Table 3 indicates, there seemed to be a general agreement among the participants that the impacts of the ECoC year on the city of Pécs were mainly favourable. The extent of the perceived changes was relatively modest (only the increase in visitor numbers reached a mean value of 4.0 on a 1-5 scale). Slightly surprisingly, no statistical relationship was shown between one's visit to Pécs in 2010 and the mean values of perceived changes. However, in the light of the rather negative media campaign surrounding the Pécs 2010 ECoC project, the acknowledgment of positive changes may be considered a major achievement in itself.

## 5. *Conclusions*

As the survey results show, cultural consumption plays a generally important role in respondents' life, both in an everyday, leisure context and in their travel experiences. However, their involvement in cultural tourism seems to take place within a relatively traditional framework where classical sightseeing and visiting built heritage attractions dominate the experience, and the range of preferred destinations is rather limited to established cultural centres with strong, historic brands, such as Paris, London or Rome. By itself, the ECoC status of a city does not seem to be sufficient to counterbalance its relatively unfamiliar position in the Hungarian market. Although cultural events (especially opera performances, but also concerts) feature among the most frequent tourist activities of the respondents, and most ECoC cities offer an exciting variety of both classic and contemporary cultural events, several of the recent ECoC cities seemed to be so invisible on the average respondent's mental map that they did not even reach the information search phase of the destination choice process with respect to these cities. To a certain extent, this attitude and behaviour might be explained by social and economic factors: although the participants of this survey travel more frequently for leisure and cultural purposes than the average Hungarian, even their travel habits are affected by the generally low level of propensity to travel and the lack of travel experience of the Hungarian population.

Altogether, the research findings suggest that visiting ECoC cities is mainly motivated by a broad interest in cultural experiences, especially by the given city's cultural-historic image and the strength of its brand in the European cultural tourism market. The main factors which affect visits to ECoC cities are not different from the variables influencing travel decisions and destination choice in general: accessibility, distance, cultural (and natural) resources, image, familiarity with the country, characteristics of tourist services, etc. Consequently, an ECoC city does not seem to become significantly more attractive for the survey participants as a result of the ECoC year, although the original-pull effect of its milieu and attractions may be increased by ECoC events (as happened in the case of Pécs in 2010). Hence, the status of being a European Capital of Culture is only able to create additional attraction beyond the general appeal of the city's cultural product in the case of those destinations which are already rather well established in the Hungarian market. This pilot survey was, therefore, unable to verify the existence of ECoC tourism as a niche product, although, since niche tourism's potential relies in its ability to satisfy the needs of very narrow customer segments, further research could be done using more refined sampling techniques to explore multi-layered characteristics of culturally-motivated tourists.

From a destination-marketing point of view, the research reinforced the importance of long-and medium-term strategies in image building and brand development: the timeframe of the ECoC programme, even if attempts are made to extend it beyond the actual calendar year, is relatively short to attract the attention and change the image perceptions of many potential visitors. However, if adequately planned, the (re-)construction of cultural institutions and the regeneration of the urban environment as part of most ECoC projects will contribute, both directly and indirectly, to increasing an ECoC city's brand value in the long-term, bringing about a positive impact in visitor numbers also.

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# EFFECTIVE LEARNING PARTNERSHIPS. THE EXPERIENCES OF LEARNING CITY / LEARNING REGION PROJECTS

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## *Changing concepts in urban studies*

Urban theorising has escalated in recent years. Cities have been called the dynamic actors of the late modern world of the knowledge society, the engines of innovation. Their growing influence on the flow of economic and cultural goods, their policy agenda for revitalising and developing their capacities for change and culture-led transformation, together with numerous initiatives shaping government structures and involving resident communities in public policy are praised. They are over-valued in the prevalent climate of "new urban revolutionaries"<sup>1</sup> as key common features in this era of globalisation. The theorists of the new urban advocacy rank cities and metropolitan regions as strategic sites where

*major trends happen, reconfiguring the social order where the presence of culture in struggles involving political, economic, technical and legal issues ... can become catalysts for change in a whole range of institutional domains – markets, participatory governance, judicial recourse, cultures of engagement and deliberation and the rights of members of the urban community, regardless of lineage and origin.<sup>2</sup>*

When contemporary social theorists are trying to capture relevant transformations within societies generating changes in society, they have produced key themes and labels such as 'Late-modern' / 'Post-modern' (J. F. Lyotard), 'Post-industrial' (Daniel Bell, Alain Touraine), 'Knowledge Society'/'Economy' (Alvin Toffler, Nico Stehr), 'Information Society' (Frank Webster), 'Network Society' (Manuel Castells), 'Creative Society' (Richard Florida) and 'the Consumer Society' (Zygmunt Bauman). The 'Learning Society' is seen as transforming the culture of society.

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<sup>1</sup> Gleeson (2012):931

<sup>2</sup> Sassen in Anheier et al. (2012):xxiv

*A new feature is the intensive use of City Branding.*

Many city networks have been established in recent years with the expressed goals of learning from each others' experiences, sharing best practices and strategies and identifying the best ideas in current circulation.

*Smart cities; Digital cities; Educating cities; Science cities; Knowledge cities; Creative cities; Healthy cities; Sustainable cities; European Cities of Culture; and my theme: Learning cities/ Learning regions have evolved and Quickly started to connect and build networks.*

These labels represent similar development strategies, not targeting a unique, but, rather a type of homogenous city profile, although still claiming distinctiveness.

The chosen brand name itself expresses how a given city wishes to be perceived by its residents and by the outside world. Reputational capital, as reflected by a city's image, has always been important, but today a growing sense of place-competitiveness encourages a city's leadership to use branding as a vision-led complex, policy strategy to drive city renewal and growth as a way to re-invent the city in these global times of transition. These brands have become widely used tools for creating an appeal to attract specific target groups and investment. Good branding is always based on the core assets and values which the city stakeholders identify with and which can develop steadily towards the profile selected for future use. It is interesting that all participants in this UNEEC conference have come from European Capitals of Culture and their cities still participate, or have participated in other networks – as above; the different label-led policies – together or sequentially – are very familiar to them.

*What are the key ingredients of a Learning city or Learning region?*

#### *Definitions*

Trying to map the scene, it is immediately apparent that there are many sizes of learning city – with large or small populations. Some expressly call themselves a 'learning city', whilst others have no such label even though their practice fits the concept. Learning theory declares that learning in its broad sense is embedded in the social processes of life; keeping abreast of changes demands constant learning.

Formal, non-formal, informal learning, action learning, dialogue of active players, collective self-reflection, deliberation, genuine change of ideas can only generate transformation as an outcome.

The culture of change, the social and economic need for transformation at all levels (whether individual, community, organisation, company, city-wide or regional) triggers learning city projects.

Their main feature is the way in which they work through the various segments of the city-community and organisations, collaborating creatively on jointly selected themes which address their common concerns. The learning city is a network of collaborators acting as a competent system which reaches a critical mass of social learning. Chains of influence create a sufficient level of effective renewal.

Despite certain common features, all learning cities, or learning regions have their own special structural and action pattern based on their own particular characteristics. 'No one size fits all' is a general principle shared by all experts.

*The learning city concept has been shaped by three main "discourses":*

*Discourse on Knowledge-intensive Capitalism and its demand for New Skills and Competences*

The objective of this direction emphasises investing in human and social capital and also in creating enabling social structures which will produce innovative, new knowledge forms – and profit in the long term. The changing nature of work and the competitive economy both require people to upgrade their skills and knowledge throughout their lives. The OECD was a strong player in recommending from the first the concept of recurrent education, work-related training in flexible forms and, later, learning cities and regions as knowledge pools.

*Regions must adopt the principles of knowledge creation and continuous learning; they must, in effect, become learning regions. Learning regions provide a series of related infrastructures which can facilitate the flow of knowledge, ideas and learning<sup>3</sup>*

*" is a city in which communities attempt to learn collectively as a means of changing their own futures" (OECD 1993)*

*Discourse on Lifelong Learning*

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<sup>3</sup> Florida, 1995 :532

In 1972 UNESCO published the very significant Fauré Commission Report "Learning to Be" whose basic principle was to strengthen the old humanist position serving the individual's human growth.

*(...the complete fulfilment of man, in all the richness of his personality, the complexity of his forms of expression and his various commitments—as individual, member of a family and of a community, citizen and producer, inventor of techniques and creative dreamer.)<sup>4</sup>*

The Report laid stress, above all, on two fundamental ideas: lifelong education and the learning society.

Lifelong learning has become a major focus of policy attention since the 70s.

International organisations (UNESCO, OECD, and, very prominently, the EU) have been keen to promote the idea and make it a reality from the 90s. Major programmes were created and funded to support the emerging practice.

*A Learning City provides both a structural and a mental framework which allows its citizens to understand and react positively to change. As cities grow into lifelong learning cities, the interaction and inter-dependence between the different sectors will become more marked, more urgent and more fruitful. The process of creating a learning city potentially offers substantial benefits and opportunities for every citizen, but it needs inspirational management and a communicated sense of purpose and direction, preferably using modern communications technology and media support. A symbiosis of mutual interest lies at the heart of the learning city. It promotes productive partnerships and the development of projects aiming to improve learning opportunities. Thus, Lifelong Learning encourages interaction between international and local, public and private, educational and industrial, governance and people as essential components. They need to be nurtured and fostered with care, commitment, cooperative intent and enlightened education for all within a caring community.*

*... as a geographical concept, and encompasses towns regions and even villages, which harness and integrate their economic, political, educational, social, cultural and environmental struc-*

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<sup>4</sup> Fauré et al (1972):vi

*tures toward developing the talents and human potential of all its citizens.*<sup>5</sup>

The following definition originating in the European Lifelong Learning Initiative (ELLI) and adopted by the European Commission (EC) for its R3L (Regions of Lifelong Learning) Programme states that:

A Learning city, town or region goes beyond its statutory duty to provide education and training for those who require it and instead creates a vibrant, participative, culturally aware and economically buoyant human environment through the provision, justification and active promotion of learning opportunities to enhance the potential of all its citizens.<sup>6</sup>

*Discourse on Creative Milieux, Creative Society, Innovation Systems*

Another discourse put learning regions at the forefront: The Innovation and Creativity Discourse. The rising interest in relationships between creativity, innovation and various socio-cultural contexts, especially the city, metropolis or region, are seen through the use of concepts such as the learning city, clusters, innovation milieux, networks, development partnerships, innovation hubs.

According to Florida, plural settings, multicultural milieux trigger out-of-box thinking, links and dialogue-prompted reflective learning, searching for new insights and alternatives. Spatial proximity, innovation-generated interaction opportunities, dynamic connectivity across these fields is a promise learning cities aimed at offering, among good lifestyle components and services, to hold on highly skilled people.

*"Learning regions" are best understood as virtuous regional systems of innovation*<sup>7</sup>

*Evolution of the "Learning Cities" movement*

The movement started in Europe, the historical narrative marking the birth at a Barcelona Conference of Educating Cities in 1990. The network produced a Charter in 1994 which has been able to attract many members. By the end of 2012, the number had reached 453. (368 European, 58 American, 22 Asia-Pacific and 5 African cities) which cooperate within the network.

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<sup>5</sup> Longworth, 2001. <http://www.longlearn.org.uk/paper3.html> (8.12.2012.)

<sup>6</sup> [www.eurolocal.info](http://www.eurolocal.info)=<http://eurolocal.info/knowledgebase/glossary> ( 8.12.2012).

<sup>7</sup> OECD, 2001:12

The key ideas focus on the rights of the individuals (children and youth specifically) and their communities to have access to integrated educational and cultural services to increase their abilities to express, affirm and develop their own human potential.

*"The municipal policies of an educational character shall always be understood as referring to a broader context inspired by the principles of social justice, democratic community spirit, quality of life and the edification of the individual citizen." Charter of Educating Cities(4)*

*The transformation and growth of a city must be governed by a harmony between its new needs and the preservation of buildings and symbols of its past and of its existence. City planning must consider the enormous impact of the urban environment on the development of all individuals, on the integration of their personal and social aspirations, and resist the segregation of generations and the segregation of people from different cultures, who have much to learn from each other. Charter of Educating Cities(8)*

Lifelong learning experiences of 140 cities were shared at the 2nd Congress of the Educating Cities Network where an expert from the OECD Centre for Educational Research and Innovation made a study report on seven cities' experience with an attempt to investigate whether a city wide, city-led lifelong learning strategy and practice is viable. (Edmonton, Pittsburgh, Bologna, Vienna, Gothenburg, Kakegawa and Adelaide are the cities featured). The value of a coordinated approach and public-private collaboration for the planning and provision of adult learning was emphasised.

"The idea of lifelong learning as a means of mobilising the community to change the city.." <sup>8</sup> was singled out as a very good potential for the realisation of the concept. The analysis produced another result in that each city shaped a unique learning culture for itself, mainly determined by their historic pathways and varied social, political, geographical and cultural factors

### *Lifelong Learning in the European Union*

The EU embraced the concept of Lifelong Learning. 1996 was designated as the European Year of Lifelong Learning and several programmes were created to support the learning cities initiatives.

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<sup>8</sup> Hirsch 1992:23

Liverpool claims to have been the first learning city in 1996 and the label has tended to be increasingly used since the mid-90s in the UK. In Germany the Federal Ministry of Education and Research launched the programme between 2000-2006 and 2006-2008 and during these two phases 161 learning regions were established. (Thinesse-Demel, 2010). The movement spread at the turn of the century both in Europe and world-wide.

TELS project (Towards a European Learning Society) between 1999 and 2001 investigated the understanding of leaders in 80 European municipalities and regions concerning the concept of the "Learning City".

The PALLACE project (Promoting Active Lifelong Learning in Australia, Canada, China and Europe) extended links with non-European cities and regions and increased knowledge on the nature of learning cities. (Adelaide and Brisbane region, the Auckland region, the city of Beijing, Edmonton, Espoo, Edinburgh, Sannois).e

In 2012, according to Jin Yang's estimation, (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) the number of learning cities reached 1,000 world-wide. Recently this institute has informed the interested public of its intention to establish the UNESCO Global Learning Cities Network (UNESCO-GLCN). According to the briefing: "A global network of learning cities would provide technical backstopping to many cities, and promote policy dialogue and peer-learning among them, as well as capacity development."<sup>9</sup>

### *Quality In Developing Learning Cities and Regions*

#### Results of a Research Project<sup>10</sup>

I had the chance to be involved in a European Project (The R3L+ Quality Framework, EU LLP) (with the objective of identifying those elements that enhance quality in learning-city partnerships, The project started from two simple questions: What are the most important quality areas to be taken into account by learning city promoters during the lifetime of their networks? What aspects might indicate quality in each area identified? A good deal of research evidence was reviewed, together with empirical investigations of case studies of learning regions and cities in Europe. Taken into consideration were their overall strategy, aims and objectives, the framework of action, network architecture and organisational setting as well as quality issues and the solutions found. On this basis the items most frequently listed included:

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<sup>9</sup> PASCAL 2012

<sup>10</sup> Eckert et al 2012

- Enabling structures to learn together from each other;
- Real life-issues, action learning;
- Across boundaries: Channels for Dialogue and Cooperation;
- Team working, stakeholder representation and networks, synergy, cross-organisational participation;
- Binding together a community with a diverse population mix;
- Shared values, principles, goals and concerns;
- Learning climate in the community; The Culture of Change; Network Culture;
- Proactivity to the needs of the environment;
- Wider supporting legal and policy contexts (convergence);
- Funding;
- Engagement, participation;
- Publicity/ Accountability; Transparency;

It was not the purpose of the project to present a detailed blueprint or set of prescriptions for learning city developers to follow, although it was possible to identify four core quality areas, which function as quality criteria:

- Partnership,
- Participation and
- Progress as three strands to build a learning city or region, and
- Learning culture as a key strand to ensure the embedding of adult and lifelong learning in local development initiatives.

These criteria are focused on the creation and development of collaborative partnerships or networks; participation and involvement of members and the wider community of these networks; progress and sustainability of partnership and the promotion of a “learning culture” within it where all actors have a unique contribution to make, but have to work together.

R3L+ research here could build on the past experience of the UK Town and Cities initiatives, which proposed 5 dimensions (purpose, people, plans, processes, performance) and three stages of learning (building, dialogue, reflection). R3L+ work was also influenced by the policy developments at European level in the area of quality assurance, in particular the EQAVET Recommendation of European Parliament in 2009.

Our project team developed a set of specific indicators for each quality criterion, assuming that quality depends upon and is built through a complex range of interventions producing a continuous cycle of (self)-improvement.

The starting point of our approach included the main areas of quality assurance: planning, implementation, evaluation, and review.

Core quality criteria describe the main aspects important for quality assurance in a certain area, such as partnership and network, participation, progress and sustainability and learning culture.

Indicative descriptors (core and additional) prompt for a structure or process, which might indicate quality in the partnership.

Finally, the R3L+ matrix calls for evidence available to support the inclusion of the indicators. In order to ensure common understanding of key terms, used along with core quality criteria, the R3L+ matrix provides basic definitions and key questions.

A full repository of R3L+ quality criteria, indicators and evidence to include the indicators can be found at our collaborative workspace:

[www.learningregion.pbworks.com](http://www.learningregion.pbworks.com)

I shall now give one single example in connection with PARTNERSHIP.

Learning city partnerships are essential, but difficult to build. This means setting up, developing and sustaining them. Several elements were mentioned in the talks and interviews:

The core group's willingness and belief is the starting point. Without committing time and effort, even resources for working out the initiatives to enable a successful start cannot be achieved. A firm commitment is needed on the part of all partners to placing learning and collaboration centre-stage. Agreement on common aims needs a good deal of discussion. Relationships based on trust need building up – which demands skill in cooperation. Learning city partnerships are made up of diverse stakeholders, each with their own agenda and interests (initially), different working styles and cultures – and so clear roles and

structures and new ways of working together need to be established to deliver the mutually agreed goals and objectives.

In the Quality Framework, for example, for the core quality criteria “Common and shared vision/mission of the partnership/network explicitly defined and promoted” the definitions and questions are formulated as follows:

**Definition:** The vision statement describes what the network wants to be. The vision focuses on the future, gives shape and direction to the future, inspires people, groups and communities and above all is to be relevant for many years to come. // **Key questions:** What is the future you want to create for the network? Such as collaborative action and building long lasting relations among network members.

**Definition:** The mission statement describes the reasons for existence, fundamental purpose and values of the network. It describes the means that will be used to achieve the desired future. It defines the target group and the critical processes. It informs about the desired level of performance. // **Key questions:** What do we do? For whom do we do it? What is the impact?

## *PARTNERSHIP*

### *Quality Cluster*

#### *Common and shared vision of the partnership/network explicitly defined and promoted*

#### INDICATIVE DESCRIPTORS

What might indicate quality in the partnership?

- Opportunities are created to map in common and exchange expectations and scenarios about future potential
- There are clearly defined principles and methods to seek/gain input on hopes and aspirations for the partnership and to gain, analyse and prioritise common themes likewise
- The vision statement is easy to understand: clarity and lack of ambiguity, a vivid and clear picture, description of a bright future, memorable and engaging wording, realistic aspirations, alignment with organisational values and culture.

- There is a clear public expression of the vision statement and a clear responsibility to communicate the vision regularly, creating narratives illustrating the vision.
- It ensures that the vision statement of the partnership/network is reviewed and revised if necessary, based on achievements and progress.
- Statutory document of partnership expressing joint agreement

*Common mission of the partnership/networks explicitly defined describing the reasons for existence, fundamental purpose and values of the network.*

- There are working methods in place to stimulate discussion and gain input on aims and objectives.
- Availability of founding document of partnership / network expressing joint agreement
- Clear public expression of aims, objectives and target groups of the partnership/network
- Objectives and quantifiable targets specified and commonly shared
- Principles and protocols to govern ongoing collaboration are explicit and shared
- Clear channels of communication between partners and networks exist
- Formal structures exist for managerial and operational responsibilities

*Coverage: scope of stakeholders represented in partnership. Stakeholder roles and trust amongst partners*

- Key stakeholders. Primary and secondary stakeholders are identified and determined
- Governance principles are formulated, and agreed by all partnership members
- Conditions and communication channels ensure that information is shared among partners

- Conditions ensure that disagreements which may occur are managed by a constructive dialogue by all members of the network
- Self-organisation of partnership
- Equal opportunities for visibility
- Equal opportunities to access relevant information
- Disclosure of relevant information, both internal and external (among partners and for a wider audience)

The act of stimulating actors to form a partnership and keeping them motivated on an ongoing basis throughout the cooperation, the ability to adapt and re-shape as unforeseen circumstances emerge is both important and a pre-condition to keep partners on board, adapting to THEIR needs even if not initially identified:

*At our present stage the emergence of learning city/regions as well as other networks and partnerships promise the potential to meet and become acquainted with other views and perspectives, possibly understand and accept those rationalities in their right and then attempt to work out mutually agreeable solutions.*

*The real voyage of discovery consists not of seeking new landscapes but of having new eyes. (Proust).*

*That is the prize for learning in partnerships.*

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