People climate
Intangible urban qualities in local economic policy

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Introduction

Fundamental to the creative city thesis is the observation that in an age of increasing global competition, cities have to be innovative on a permanent base. Particularly cities in the Western world have lost most routine production to lower-cost environments. Meanwhile, an economy has emerged in which consumption of symbolic values, experiences, diversity and authenticity of goods, services and places are very important. It is 'only through the superior innovative capacity of the labour force and favourable immobile assets that higher cost environments can be afforded without losing global market competition' (Reichert, 2006:7; cf. Florida, 2002:44). Hence, qualities such as knowledge, innovativeness, imagination and creativity are replacing more traditional resources for future urban wealth.

The above implies that the cities of today have one crucial economic resource – their people. Hence, it becomes increasingly important to focus not just on firms, but also on 'creative' and knowledge workers. This implies that besides the production milieu, the consumption milieu becomes increasingly important, socially as well as in terms of built environment and even including 'intangibles' such as tolerance and authenticity. Therefore, in the creative city debate intangibles such as tolerance, liveliness, urbanity or authenticity are considered a crucial factor of the attractiveness of cities for the creative industries. Richard Florida's concept of 'quality of place', for instance, is founded for a considerable part on these intangible urban qualities. As such, urban quality is an important element of the attractive urban climate that cities need to attract and retain creative talent and, thereby, jobs (Florida, 2002). Also authors that apply the more common 'people follow jobs' perspective pay increasing attention to the importance of urban quality as a factor of competitiveness (Rykwert, 2002; Gospodini, 2002; Clark, 2011).

Why this targeted study?
Activity 6.4 of the Creative City Challenge project entails a 'targeted study on the role of urban quality in urban competitiveness'. The raison d'être of this study is found in the structure of the CCC project. The core of the project consists of three working packages dealing with different aspects of the creative city, reflecting diverging perspectives. From a production-oriented perspective, the project focuses on creative entrepreneurs, their skills and the networks that connect them. From a (mostly) consumption-oriented point of view it pays attention to urban quality and the development and meaning of places. The project does not address these issues separately, but emphasises the need for a comprehensive approach as mentioned above. Moreover, a framework of common dissemination, research and learning activities unites the three core working packages. Nevertheless, we felt that the role

of urban quality, in particular of the so-called 'intangibles', had been underrated in the project and deserved more attention.

Structure of the report

Based on a series of in-depth interviews with a number of key persons involved in creative city development, the next sections discuss the various elements of urban quality, and the possible role urban quality can or should play in urban-economy policy. This is illustrated by a number of examples, throughout the text as well as by way of a number of images. A brief reflection on the previous sections concludes the report.

Interviews

This report is based on a series of in-depth interviews, rather than on literature review. We interviewed a number of key persons who have somehow been involved in creative city development, and who were able to reflect on the topic of urban quality from different perspectives. Thus, we spoke to economists, sociologists, publicists, consultants, policy-makers, creative entrepreneurs, spatial planners and architects. Interviews were semi-structured, guided by several main topics:

1. the relative importance of intangible urban qualities as location factors for creative industries, on a building, neighbourhood and urban level;
2. the possible role of these intangibles in urban-economic policy versus the presumed vulnerability of these qualities;
3. the role of 'best practices' in urban-economic policy versus the need for uniqueness and authenticity;
4. the additional investment required for measures to increase urban quality;
5. the role of competence disputes, in particular between municipal policy-making departments.

In addition to the interviews carried out specifically within the context of Activity 6.4 we made use of a series of older interviews. These have been carried out in recent years for purposes other than the current report, but for a substantial part also discuss the above issues.

The interviews are carried out in the Netherlands, partly for practical reasons of language and time, but their relevance goes beyond the Dutch context. The interviewees selected have a distinct international profile, as they work in and for cities worldwide and are part of global science and policy networks. The interviews partly refer to cases in the Netherlands, which have the advantage that they are for the most part familiar to the interviewers, enabling them to delve deeper than might have been possible with an unknown city or region; also, these cases include many small and medium-sized cities that are comparable to the cities typical for the North Sea Region. Partly, also, the interviews refer to cities and regions worldwide, mainly in Europe, North America and Australia.

The interviews provided extremely rich and diverse information. The structure of the next sections was based on the content of the interviews themselves, rather than on our previous ideas about what urban quality should entail. Apart from brief introductory or summarizing passages and occasional references to literature, the text of these sections goes back directly to the interviews. However, partly because of the possible problems of translation, and the aim to cluster similar statements from different interviews, we did not use direct quotes.

The Appendix presents a list of interviews, including place and date of the meetings, and particulars of the discussion partners. Throughout the text, small figures between square brackets refer to the interviews in the Appendix.

Exploring urban quality

Target groups

Urban quality for whom?
Many cities that apply urban quality as a means to attract creative and knowledge workers fail to identify the most important target groups. As a consequence, their policies lack the right focus. The question what urban quality actually entails is therefore preceded by the question 'urban quality for whom?' Working, living, different branches of the creative industries, entrepreneurs depending on a local network or working internationally all require a different urban quality.[1]

Broadly spoken, the most important target groups are people who have the potential to contribute to a city's creative economy, and who can be attracted or retained. This implies, first of all, that people must be potentially interested in locating in a city or an area. If we talk about urban quality in the inner city, which is often the case, only the perhaps ten per cent of the people who want to live in the inner city are relevant. These tend to be entrepreneurs or entrepreneurial people, who need the inner city for their network and for the variety of amenities.[2] Furthermore, in terms of age most important are young people, age 24 to 36, who have no problems moving for a jobs. It is important to retain graduates, since by far the most start-up business emerge from this group. This means that, despite all criticism, Richard Florida has a point when he focuses primarily on the young. Older people have their network, family and relatives, their social life. These tend to stay where they are, in Europe even more than in the US (on which the ideas of Florida are based).[5,15] The importance of urban quality as a location factor may be put into perspective, therefore.

'Nerds' and 'bohemians'
A wide-spread misconception is that creative people are a homogeneous group, who all share the same preferences. They differ in age, family situation and preferences. Substantial differences exists also between workers and entrepreneurs in various subsectors of the creative industries. A common distinction, also made by for instance Kotkin (2000), is between 'nerds' and 'bohemians'. More nuanced, we may differentiate between creatives working in science, ICT and technology, and those working in languages, humanities, design, communication and arts.[3] The first group mostly works and lives on separate locations and prefers to live in a green environment, either in an attractive suburb or in the countryside. The 'bohemians' on the other hand are more likely to work from home, and have a more urban lifestyle. As a result, working and living often is more intertwined. They more often

favour living in an urban environment, in or close to the inner city. A third, separate group found for instance around Amsterdam are the 'captains of creative industry', for instance in music and television production, who work from their residences in the countryside but often have a sub-office in the city.[6]

In the next sections the emphasis tends to be on the bohemians, for the simple reason that they are assumed to value urban quality more or at least more explicitly than nerds. Nevertheless, the difference between 'bohemia' and 'nerdistan' ran though many of the interviews.

'Old' location factors and amenities

Just like 'normal people'
The location factors of creative businesses, in particular of somewhat larger businesses, are not necessarily very different from those of other businesses. They value accessibility, sufficient supply of affordable working spaces, and parking facilities for employees and clients, besides some factors that are more specific for the creative industries.[1,9] Particularly the availability of affordable working spaces such as ateliers is an important asset of a city such as Berlin.[3] Furthermore, most creative entrepreneurs and workers are 'just like normal people' who want to live and work in a safe and well-functioning city where there is clean water, electricity and public transport, and where they can bring their children to school safely and do not have to look for shops. This is no problem in most European cities, but one interviewee mentions the example of Casablanca as an exciting, but fully dysfunctional city.[5,8]

Riskless risk
It is not a new insight that creative entrepreneurs and workers value such 'traditional' location factors, but it tends to be overlooked because of the focus on 'new' factors such as image, liveliness, tolerance and authenticity (cf. Krätke, 2011). Nonetheless, the emphasis put on public safety in several interviews is noteworthy. Because creative people have a reputation for being adventurous and somewhat anarchistic, it is often assumed that they loath safety regulations, for instance in creative zones. Nevertheless, research shows that this is not necessarily the case, especially when their personal safety may be at stake. A basic level of public safety is required also in edgy, grungy creative zones.[3,5] 'You make a survival trip to the Ardennes, but you make sure you have a bad weather insurance.'[3] Likewise, inner city neighbourhoods should be safe for families and children to live.[2] Pubs, restaurants and the like must be safe also for women on their own, which partly explains the success of less exciting, but predictable coffee bars such as Starbucks and the Coffee Company. Transparency and a clear identity are important, as they enable visitors to 'scan' the area and judge whether they will feel at home.[5]

Culture and education

Florida initially drew a direct relation between investments in performing arts and the creative economy in a city. Florida is more nuanced now, but creative industries will not flourish in a city where there is no place for culture.[6] However, culture is more than art, as it includes high culture as well as popular culture, festivals, events and even social manners and etiquette.[2,4,6] As such it makes up a large part of a city's identity. Developers and urban planners deliberately apply culture to make places attractive and interesting, for instance by planning events or including a museum or a music halls. Museum clusters are particularly en vogue, and they make some sense in that they attract a variety of cultural tourists and other visitors. In practice, this popularity may lead to a focus on spectacular buildings, rather than on the contents and use of these buildings.[3,6] Moreover, cultural tourism may lead to protests from the local creative community, for instance in Rotterdam and Hamburg (cf. Die Zeit, 2009); but these find little support among the interviewees.[3,7]

Creativity is important, but creativity is nothing without knowledge and entrepreneurship.[6] Knowledge institutions are important, as they attract creative talent, who after graduation might either start a business or find employment in an existing firm.[3,5,15] Nevertheless, having a university of polytechnic in itself is not sufficient if creative talent leaves the city after graduation. Indeed, retaining graduates proves a huge problem for many university cities. Location decisions by starting entrepreneurs are not always made explicitly. It is the easiest to locate in the city that the young entrepreneur knows, where he has his friends and network; but if he does not find the city attractive for some reason, he will locate elsewhere. Part of the problem is that attractive student cities are not always attractive for graduates, who no longer have access to student facilities and culture.[4,5]

Accessibility and distance

The distance of a city to economic and demographic core areas is a factor mentioned in several interviews. Groningen, Enschede, Eindhoven and Maastricht are mentioned as examples in the Dutch context, but also international examples such as Perm, Seattle and Perth.[5] Although the creative economy is mostly associated with larger cities, interviewees consider a peripheral location in itself not necessary a disadvantage, and certainly nothing to be afraid of. Distance of a city to core areas certainly plays a role, but it is only of a relative importance, and may occasionally even be a positive factor. But for a distant city it may be even more important to be an attractive city.[4,5,15] More important than distant is whether a city has sufficient mass and potential, and knows how to make use of it. Thus, relative enclaves such as Groningen and, internationally, Perth and Seattle all have a reputation as attractive cities, while Perm has not. Particularly Seattle has a strong image, based on for instance its fame as the origin in the 1980s of grunge music (the 'Seattle sound').[5]

Secondary, if not necessarily peripheral, cities may also benefit as core areas become increasingly crowded and expensive. A city like Leeds may be an attractive alternative location for creatives, even if London still is 'the place to be'.[5] A similar process is taking place in the Netherlands, both within the Randstad from

Amsterdam to Haarlem or Leiden, and between the Randstad and the cities surrounding it.[6]

Intangibles

Choice

To appeal to creatives, cities must be dynamic, places where nice and exciting events can occur.[5] One interviewee simply refers to this as 'city', or 'centre'. It is the place where things are happening, and where there a full range of amenities − the possibility to choose from numerous types of restaurants, pubs, cultural venues. Even if few people actually make use of such a broad selection very often, it is important that the possibility exists.[2,13,17]

Variety is important, therefore, as well as clustering. Interesting, unexpected combinations of amenities or events can emerge only where there is sufficient mass and density of both. This is important on the scale of the city as a whole, but also on the level of the individual neighbourhood. A neighbourhood such as Greenwich Village in New York, known worldwide for its vibrant creative scene, provides a choice of interesting shops, pubs, venues and amenities which is unequalled anywhere in the Netherlands, and in most European cities for that matter.[3,7,9,16]

Encounters

An important aspect of living and working in cities is the possibility of frequent planned and unplanned meetings. Creativity on its own is hardly relevant; the creative economy happens where people meet. The essence of the economy, including the creative economy, is the market, which basically is a meeting place for people, and for supply and demand. Despite the increased role of social media, therefore, face-to-face meetings still are very important in the creative economy.[5,7,8,15,16] This involves scheduled meetings with clients or fellow entrepreneurs, but also unplanned encounters. Serendipity is an important element of this. As one interviewees states, an unplanned five minute talk may provide the same inspiration and new insight reading a book may, and occasionally may provide knowledge that, with hindsight, proves to be vital.[2]

For the chance of unplanned and useful encounters to be realistic, it is important that there is a sufficient concentration of relevant people. Diversity of people is another factor, as new ideas typically emerge from meetings between members of different sectors; this is why Peter Hall, discussing successful and innovative cities throughout the centuries, emphasises 'the ability to transfer ideas from one circuit into another'. This requires that there are 'many such circuits' (Hall, 1998:19). Another factor is the presence of public and semi-public meeting places, the 'third spaces' emphasised by Richard Florida. In view of the above, these should preferably be meeting places visited by people from divers sectors or circuits.[7,13,12] It is relevant, therefore, to have insight in which groups visit which amenities, and why (cf. Clark, 2011).

Both with regard to choice and encounters, interviewees refer explicitly to possibilities, rather than actual achievements. Cities should provide the possibility to choose from a wide range of amenities such as shops, cultural venues, sports facilities etc. regardless of whether individual people actually make use of this wide range. Likewise, cities must make it possible for people to meet relevant others and build a network, even if not everyone uses these possibilities in practice.

Identity and authenticity

Creative city literature mentions authenticity as one of the crucial 'intangibles' needed to attract and retain creative people. Events, places, cityscapes, people and experiences must be authentic rather than phony or themed. However, being intangible, authenticity is much easier to experience than to pin-point or define. It is interesting therefore that interviewees do not frequently mention authenticity as such, but rather jump directly to the factors that are assumed to make a place or experience authentic, such as identity, narrative, image and more in general 'what's there' (cf. Florida, 2002).

Your image is how you are perceived by others, but your identity is defined by what and who you are; ideally these two closely correspond. That does not mean, however, that every authentic city has a strong and attractive identity. Imagine a picture of a city; for cities such as Amsterdam and Rotterdam, London or Paris you can fill in the picture, in your mind, but for a smaller provincial town you mostly cannot. It may be cosy and authentic, but it has no strong identity. But also cities or towns of the same size may differ in the extent to which they have a strong identity. Furthermore, scale is important, as the identity of cities is defined by the 'cumulative' identity of specific places within that city.[2,5,6]

The story of a place

An important aspect of the identity of places and cities is found in the 'story' of a place. Rather than 'story', terms such as 'meaning', 'narrative' or 'DNA' are frequently used as well, but all refer to roughly the same thing. How did a place become what it is today? What is happening in a place? This is not necessarily a linear story; more often various processes have intertwined and left 'layers' of traces of the past.[10]

Obviously, visible history in the form of cultural or industrial heritage is an important aspect of a city's story. Well-preserved historic cities often tell their story quite easily. Nevertheless, interviewees mention heritage as such less than might have been expected, and when they do so, it is not necessarily as a positive factor. Indeed, a focus merely on heritage may be counter-productive.[3] A story that consists merely of history not necessarily appeals to an audience of creative people. One interviewee refers to the example of picturesque Bruges, Belgium, as a city that has been 'renovated to death'; a décor where tourism dominates, expensive, and where preservation regulations prevent new developments. This in contrast to lively, and nearby, Ghent.[3,5] Although this may be a somewhat blunt comparison of the two cities, examples such as these are easily found in every country. Not everybody may appreciate these differences – Bruges is indeed a beautiful city,

which is understandably visited by large amount of tourists – but many creative people tend to be particularly sensitive in this respect.

Old industrial sites with derelict factory buildings, harbours, railways etc., or previously deprived neighbourhoods prove high attractive for creatives, particularly if they have a rough, edgy character. Examples are former seaport areas that are being redeveloped in cities such as Hamburg, Bremen and Rotterdam, or the neighbourhoods in Chicago and New York described by for instance Lloyd (2006) and Zukin (2010). Even cities that are on the brink of disaster, such as Sarajevo in the 1990s, have an appeal to certain groups. [3,5,9,11,12]

The above may to some extent be a simplification of the broad range of locational preferences that exists among various groups of creatives. Nevertheless, a few general observations emerge from the interviews. First, heritage does not have to be very old to be attractive for creative. The industrial heritage mentioned above often dates back only to the period from the late nineteenth to shortly after the mid twentieth century. More important than age or beauty is whether the area has an authentic rather than a constructed identity. Second, attractive places not only show their history, but also give a hint of their potential future. Kreuzberg, in Berlin, is an example of this. The neighbourhoods still shows its past as a poor area populated largely by Turkish immigrants, but at the same time there are some signs of a limited gentrification. Places like these are in a precious phase in-between of what has been and what is to come.[7] There is something unfinished about them, which appeals to creative as it enables them to make the space 'their' space. 'Finished' cityscapes do not have this potential, as their development tends to be brought to a standstill.

People

To recognize the potential of places
People are an important factor in the development of creative cities and places, in several ways. As mentioned above creatives tend to be imaginative and sensitive to the qualities of places, more than average people. Accordingly, they are quite good in recognizing the potential of places, even if these places are, at that moment, not very attractive.[1,4,12,13] They may be true pioneers in an area, which means they cannot connect to existing networks and communities. Still, the development of many successful creative cities and neighbourhoods shows that in many cases 'creative pioneers' played an important part in the very first stages of redevelopment.[9,12]

Since creative people are relatively good at recognizing the potential of an area, an existing concentration of creatives in a certain area might be considered an indication of an attractive location. For many other creative workers and entrepreneurs it points at an attractive area in terms of urban climate, amenities and possibilities for cooperation, and at least a certain amount of congenial people.[4,6]

Networks

Creative entrepreneurs are attracted by existing networks of creative entrepreneurs. They are looking for a sense of solidarity with local creative communities. Moreover, they need to develop (and experience) a connection to the local networks of production, and they are looking for possibilities to cooperate.[1,2,9] It may be a problem if these networks are not there. For instance in an architecture cluster, you have your architects, design engineers, educational institutions, and you need them. The paradox is: in order to strengthen the cluster, it must already be there.[3] It is very hard to create out of the blue.

In contrast, in cities with well and long-term established creative production networks the entry for starting entrepreneurs may be equally difficult as networks may be 'closed', i.e. there are no vacant positions in the network left and there is hardly any dynamism within the existing production structures. This is to a certain extent the case in Amsterdam.[9,11] Likewise, it is a problem in the Milan fashion industry, which is controlled by 'big names' such as Trussardi and Prada (d'Ovidio, 2010).

Key persons

Several interviewees emphasis the role of key persons or 'icons', both within and outside the local creative industries. In the Netherlands, for instance, Rotterdam lags behind Amsterdam in all branches of the creative industries except architecture. Rotterdam's architecture cluster is quite strong, as the city includes various renown architecture firms, a number of architecture institutes and, in the nearby Delft University of Technology, the Netherlands' main architectural education institute. Nevertheless, pivotal in this architecture cluster is the person of Rem Koolhaas, being arguably the Netherlands' internationally most renown 'starchitect' (cf. Kloosterman, 2008:550). Koolhaas is important for the image of Rotterdam as a city of architecture, but his Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA) also provides a prestigious place for internships for young architects; a parallel is drawn to certain Michelin-starred restaurants that are the breeding ground for future chefs. Whether such icons are present or not is largely arbitrary however.[3,14,15]

Other people play a comparable role in other creative sectors, or in a city's cultural climate. Still in Rotterdam, 'night mayor', poet and jazz musician Jules Deelder and dance club owner Ted Langebach were such icons in the local night life. In particular Deelder's fame extends far beyond Rotterdam's city borders, and he for the local jazz scene he might have had a role comparable to that of Koolhaas for the architectural sector.[3] In some aspects these people resemble the gateway keepers identified by Elisabeth Currid in New York (Currid, 2007).

Fostering urban quality

Pitfalls

Vulnerability

It is often assumed that urban qualities, in particular the intangible qualities emphasised in the previous sections, are vulnerable. Not only are they hard or even impossible to plan or to construct, but in places where they exist they can also easily be destroyed by rash interventions by planners, policy-makers or developers. We might compare these urban qualities to a butterfly, which is said to die when one touches its wings. In reality, though, it will not be hurt if touched gently. Likewise, delicate urban qualities may perhaps not necessarily disappear when the become the object of policy; but a subtle touch is required.

Interviewees recognize the vulnerability of urban quality. Authenticity, the story of a place, the balance between a visible past and signs of future development are hard to construct artificially or, where they exists, to maintain. As a planner, it is very hard to know which developments to prevent, which to invest in, to which extent to influence processes, and whether or not to influence them at all. Conventional policy instruments such as zoning plans are not subtle enough for this, as zoning categories tend to be defined much too broad to affect undesired developments.[7,8] Some cities effectively destroy the authenticity of places. In particular 1960s modernist urban development is blamed for much harm done to cities by the construction of mono-functional areas and large-scale automobile infrastructure in and near inner cities. Nonetheless, it may be illusionary to assume that current ideas about 'good' urban development are still considered 'good' in twenty years.[3]

The vulnerability of urban qualities, or rather of urban 'ecosystems', poses a dilemma as policymakers who want their city to be a breeding ground for talent - something which tends to happen spontaneously, or not – typically feel the urge to intervene, to decide what should and should not be there.[3,13] Municipalities and developers who try to develop such a creative ecosystem all by themselves, in a top-down manner, are most likely to fail. This does not mean that municipalities should adopt a strict laisser-faire policy. They may not be able to define the outcome of processes, but they may influence the direction in which they evaluate.[12] Instead, policy should facilitate an 'organic', bottom-up development. As an example one interviewee mentions the do-it-yourself housing project in Rotterdam.[3] Deprived housing blocks are partly renovated and sold for low prices to individual buyers, provided that these complete the renovation themselves. This often creates a sense of community and shared ownership among buyers. Moreover, the sense of

something affordable and unfinished, literally in this case, tends to attract young entrepreneurial people who contribute to an improvement of the deprived neighbourhoods in which these housing blocks are situated.

Such a facilitating approach requires that policy-makers listen to initiatives that emerge from the inhabitants of an area. Creatives in particular can be helpful in this as, different as they may be, they tend to have a keen eye for the potential of an area. Current practice, however, indicates that many of them feel neglected and discouraged by urban development schemes.[4,5,6]

Gentrification

Gentrification may be another threat. The evolution of attractive places in the city resembles the hog cycle used in economic theory. Inhabitants, creatives in this case, are attracted by affordable housing and working spaces, and authentic urban quality. After some time other groups, with more spending capacity, enter the neighbourhood and rent start to rise. The initial settlers leave, retail chains pop up. This seems to be an autonomous process. The initial authenticity gives way to a more tidied-up, polished environment, which is too expensive and often too boring for many creatives.[5,7]

Image and branding

Image building and city branding is another policy field many interviewees refer to. Opinions differ, however, on the relationship between a city's image and identity, and on the question to which extent a city is able to create the image it desires. Some interviewees state that a city's image, even its 'story', can be constructed by policy; this suggests that the image would be the starting point for local economic policy, as image is likely to be a more influential location factor than identity, which is often less well known. Others express more doubts about this.[1,3,5]

For all, however, it is obvious that any image a city pursues must be related to its identity – how you are seen by others should be related to what you really are. Cities must search for their own strengths and use these as a starting point for their image. To do this, it often is useful to look at the city through the eyes of an outsider, who is less familiar with it and often better able to discern its specific qualities.[1,2,6,10]

The alternative, 'fake it till you make it', is mostly not the best option. Cities which too much boost their image run the risk to be ridiculed at some moment. Cities should ask themselves what they want to be – rather than what they want other to think they are – and how they are going to achieve this. Authenticity is important, therefore, more tangible measures may also contribute to a city's image, such as pimping the underground or constructing beautiful buildings.[1,3,6]

Developing projects

The 'commons'
Several interviewees emphasize the importance of the control and ownership of development projects aimed at creatives or the creative industries. This involves ownership in legal terms, as well as the feelings of shared ownership and responsibility people involved in the project may have to different extents.

Attractive places give their users, whether inhabitants or visitors, the impression that they are 'owned' by someone, that someone cares.[5] This is one of the reasons creatives tend to like unfinished areas, as finishing them in their own way gives them the opportunity to claim ownership - again, not necessarily in legal terms, but emotionally. Many projects in this field emerge from bottom-up initiatives, as a group of people settles in for instance an old building and claims ownership. These initiatives often get bogged down after some time because they are privatized and stakeholders start to claim their own part of the project, and the projects starts to fall apart. It is important, therefore, to stay focused on the 'commons', such as the common spaces that are part of the project, and the sense of solidarity between stakeholders.[4,12,13] Ideally, projects should be organized as stakeholder organisations, in which participants are on the one hand entrepreneurs, but on the other hand also feel a common responsibility towards each other (resembling the concept of the social enterprise). This is the way a community functions, in a project, but also for instance in the creative communities in New York, described by Currid (2007). But is it not the way policy normally functions.

The question is how to organize this, as many legal systems do not recognize such new types of ownership. Existing types such as coops or foundations are mostly not ideal. Perhaps a system of certificate holders might work, but this is still an ambiguous field.[4]

Flexibility
Besides the role of stakeholders, interviewees also point at the importance of a flexible, incremental development process. This is another way to involve stakeholders in the process. Mutual trust and shared responsibility are essential. This also brings about shared investment.[6]

The redevelopment of the station area in Rotterdam for instance, is strongly focused on the improvement of urban quality (albeit it is not focuses specifically at creative industries). The municipality made all developers involved responsible for the quality of the area as a whole, requiring them for example to include public functions in the plinths of their buildings, and obliged them to invest in the quality of the public space in the area. Developers accepted these conditions unanimously.[8] Thus, the municipality created a shared responsibility and ownership, whereas normally each developer would have been focused strictly on his own plot.

Development projects aimed at the creative industries typically are of a smaller scale and have a stronger bottom-up character. Nevertheless, similar mechanisms may be at work here. For instance crowd sourcing or crowd funding may be applied, as well as the concept of revolving funds.[6] Municipalities may provide land

and other stakeholders may subsequently become involved and invest in a small part of the project. For example the Westergasfabriek in Amsterdam was redeveloped in a similar way, although the first plans foresaw a more traditional way of development. In the first stage of the project spaces were rented on a temporary base to various firms, but as this proved to be quite successful – the break-even point was reached with an occupation rate of only 30 per cent – the 'temporary was made permanent'. Meanwhile the largest buildings, such as the former gasometer, remained vacant; these serve as a venue for cultural events and television recordings.[5]

The role of the municipality in this is facilitating, or, as one interviewee expresses it, to be a good innkeeper, who listens to you but also leaves you alone. Or as another puts it, the municipality facilitates and grants.[4,5]

Here again people are important. In most cases the pioneers who choose to settle in an area because they see a potential are artists or creative entrepreneurs, but occasionally developers may play a comparable part if they have a more than average sensitivity to the less obvious possibilities a location may offer. Nevertheless, practice indicates that most developers still focus on developing real estate like 'boxes'. Few would even consider to accept responsibility for the way their building is used when completed.[4,8]

Best practices and copycats

Guggenheim
Cities are inspired by each other's successes. This has occasionally led to copycat behaviour. A recent example is the Guggenheim museum in Bilbao, which inspired cities worldwide to invest in spectacular museum buildings, often filled with less than spectacular works of art. Other cities tried to copy the success of Barcelona, for example by constructing 'Catalan' squares. In practice this rarely works. Cities want something which has been an evident success elsewhere, and they want something unique. However, most success stories are unique partly because they are rooted in a specific local context, which implies they cannot just be copied to another city. Moreover, in many cases the focus is on copying buildings, and less attention is paid to the content. For a small or medium-sized city filling a museum or theatre with first class content can be hard and costly.[2,3,9]

Cities still inspire each other very much. Nevertheless, interviewees largely agree that the heydays of the real copycat are over. The role of iconic buildings also seems to have diminished, partly due to the current financial austerity many cities have to practice.[1,2]

Every city a creative city?
Cities copy each other buildings, but also concepts. The creative city concept in particular has been a hype for about a decade, and it seems like every city declares itself a creative city. Unfortunately this is not realistic.[6,7] Richard Florida's 'spiky' theory also points at this: his analyses indicate that there are a number of successful

creative cities, but also a large number of less successful or mediocre ones. In many European countries, such as Germany or the Netherlands, the picture may be more blurred due to the more dispersed urbanisation pattern; effectively there would be concentrations of smaller 'spikes' rather than a few large ones. In a country such as the Netherlands, typically one or two main creative centres exists, along with a number of second and third tier cities that specialize in one or two branches, such as fashion in Arnhem, design in Eindhoven and architecture in Rotterdam.[7,12]

Every place – a city, village, region – has 'something' special. It just is not always something which is relevant for the creative industries. It may be 'green' or ecological. Cities must look beyond the obvious concepts that prevail at this moment. For instance, urban agriculture may be an interesting focus; does it matter whether or not it falls within the definition of creative industries? [1,6] More important is whether it is realistic and authentic, based on a city's own strength and identity, on what a city has and can.[3,4]

Investments and willingness to pay

Urban quality comes not for free. It brings about expenses, either by way of additional investments in the development of urban space, or by lost income if it requires abandoning more profitable functions. Should governments bear these investments themselves, or should they try to shift their expenses to the users of the area?

It is likely that an improvement of urban quality leads to an increase in the value of real estate (e.g. UCL, 2001; Kuethe, 2012). This means local government could gain additional income from real estate taxes, depending on the different tax systems involved. [1,4] Interviewees express their doubts about other ways in which municipalities might try to recover their investments, for instance because apart from firms and inhabitants the users of the area are an ill-defined group. The additional benefits they would gain from urban quality are difficult to assess and to attribute to specific groups, and willingness to pay is mostly unknown. The impression exists that most successful cities, which would be an a position to make demands, hardly worry about this.[2,5,9]

More in general, however, the very idea of shifting the expenses to other groups may be undesirable.[7,9] Cities must should accept that investing in urban quality costs money, and that the payback may come in ten years, or perhaps only partially.[1,4]

Role and attitude of government

Administrative fragmentation
The tendency, indicated throughout the previous sections, is that policy-makers must not plan and decide too much beforehand, but facilitate initiatives and processes, bottom-up rather than top-down. This appears simple, but it implies a

rather different attitude from the traditional 'we know what's good for you' mentality. Moreover, it entails a much broader repertoire of approaches, including the decision not to intervene.[14]

Several concrete factors may contribute to this shift in attitude. For entrepreneurs, cities should apply a one-stop approach: one face, one voice.[2,5] Also within the municipal organisation, administrative fragmentation should be prevented. Municipalities all over Europe are streamlining their organisation at the moment, reducing the number of municipal bodies and departments involved in for instance economic policy or spatial planning.[2] Nevertheless, at the moment this fragmentation is a major problem, as well as the competence disputes between municipal departments it often brings about. Interviewees have experienced such competence disputes in many projects, between many policy fields and on many levels of government, from civil servants to aldermen. For example one department may focus on maximizing immediate profits from the sale of land, while economic development agencies may focus rather on economic growth on the longer term. Also, spatial planners tend to have other preferences than economists.[5,8,9] Regarding creative city development, it is remarked that culture, in a broad sense, should prevail over other policy fields, including economic development – and that culture *is* economy.[4]
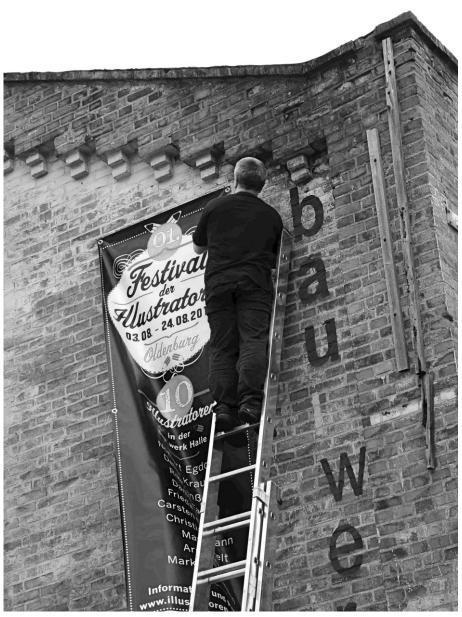
Making clever combinations
Urban quality, especially regarding the creative city, requires clever and interesting combinations of places and amenities, on a neighbourhood but also on a city scale. For instance, a knowledge institution may be linked to creative industries, to an incubator, or to the development of a specific place. This process could starts on a very small scale and may turn out to be a kind of 'knitting' urban patterns; it should also be continued in all stages of urban redevelopment. Policy-makers, planners and developers in most cases have to learn how to make these combinations. This requires that they develop a keen eye also for less visible development going on in their city.[3,12]

Likewise, municipalities should make surprising combinations of policy-makers from different policy-fields, if only on a temporary or project basis or as an experiment. The complex nature of urban quality requires an integral approach; if only because it is not sufficient to have a single element of urban quality – cities must provide an 'ecosystem' of a biotope'.[18]

Whereas it is increasingly common for cities to combine economic and cultural portfolios, from the perspective of the creative economy culture, in a broad sense, should probably be leading in decision-making over economic and social portfolios, which are instrumental.[4] However, the combination of culture and economy is hardly surprising anymore, but why not combine culture and spatial planning, or economy and health care?[3]

Urban quality in pictures and words

Cultural events provide opportunities for planned and unplanned meetings. Here the Illustrators' Festival in the bua_werk Halle, the Oldenburg centre for architecture.
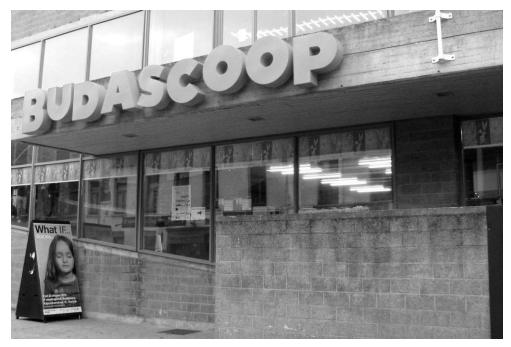Picture: © Norbert Egdorf | www.egdorf.com.

Groningen, 19 September 2009: Mayor Peter Rehwinkel – just one day in office – inaugurates *Het Paleis* ('The Palace'), a former chemistry lab converted into a cultural venue including working spaces for artists and creative firms, a hotel for artist in residence, conference facilities, catering and apartments.
Picture: by courtesy of Municipality of Groningen.

The *Wilhelm Wagenfeld Haus* in Bremen is a cultural centre dedicated to the design sector. Part of the former gatehouse, it now accommodates municipal offices, exhibition space and an event platform. Together with the nearby art gallery it is part of Bremen's 'Cultural Mile'.
Picture: Jan Jacob Trip.

Budascoop in Kortrijk. The former Penascoop cinema complex is part of the Buda art centre and accommodates venues for movies and theatre, as well as Buda Libre, a monthly networking event for creative entrepreneurs in the city. The opening of the Budascoop has a distinct positive effect on the neighbourhood.
Picture: Jan Jacob Trip.

Derelict industrial buildings are abundant in many cities. They may provide an edgy, 'unfinished' atmosphere that is attractive to many creatives, who tend to be particularly good in spotting the potential of such places.
Picture: Jan Jacob Trip.

Toffee Factory in Ouseburn, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, before and after renovation. The derelict buildings have been transformed into working spaces for creative businesses, meeting rooms and a conference venue. Rather than traditional office features, advertising emphasises qualities such as waterside views, biomass heating, apple and fig trees, mooring post, bike racks and exposed brickwork. Two 'giant lobsters' welcomed visitors during the 2012 Ouseburn Festival (www.toffeefactory.co.uk).
Pictures: by courtesy of Newcastle City Council's Regeneration Team.

Effective but artificially visualisation of the 'story' of a place in a highly commercial environment: projection of former east Berlin streetscape in the Sony Centre at the Potsdamer Platz.
Picture: Jan Jacob Trip.

Rebuilding the city while maintaining old facades as part of the historical character of a place, here in Glasgow's Merchant City.
Picture: Jan Jacob Trip.

Noorderhaven in Groningen is a place with a 'story'. Warehouses and elevators remind of the time when this was one of the main seaports of the city, which included for instance the municipal carpenter's yard. Many of the old warehouses are now transformed into apartments, several with a monumental status. Noorderhaven is one of the favourite spots among creative entrepreneurs in the surrounding area (Smit, 2008:8).
Picture: by courtesy of Municipality of Groningen.

Catch the ball statues at lake Selsmosen, Taastrup. The lake has been expanded to provide storage capacity for heavy rains, expected due to climate change. At the same time the lake has been developed into an area for leisure and outdoor sports.
Picture: by courtesy of Høje-Taastrup Municipality.

Stakeholder involvement in city development. When Høje-Taastrup Municipality begun formulating a growth strategy, a think tank was established including a wide range of public and private stakeholders, in order to identify and prioritize the potential present in the town.
Picture: by courtesy of Høje-Taastrup Municipality.

Parks and green areas are important, not always acknowledged elements of urban quality. The Bürgerpark in Bremen is a public park stretching as a green corridor all the way to the inner city.
Picture: Anne Havliza.

Skateboarding is widely acknowledged as important exponent of street life and street culture, but in practice skaters are barely tolerated and are often banned from shopping malls, business areas and public spaces.
Picture: Jan Jacob Trip.

Millennium Park in Chicago is known as a successful planned public space, including green and water, art and cultural venues.
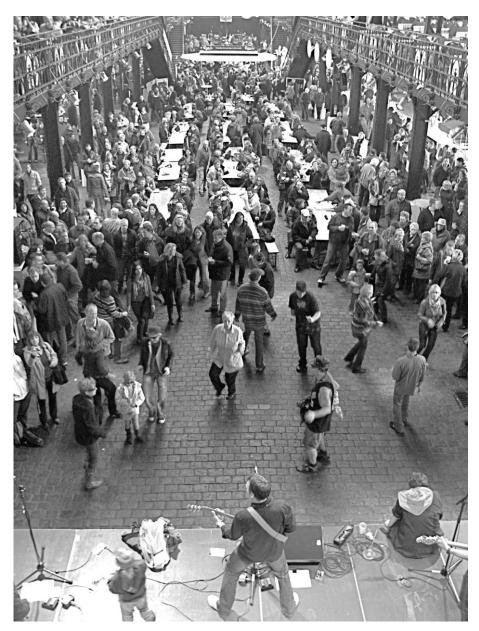Picture: Jan Jacob Trip.

Art and spectacular architecture as drivers of urban regeneration: the role of the Sage Gateshead music centre in Newcastle is comparable to that of the Bilbao Guggenheim.
Picture: Jan Jacob Trip.

High culture, but not in an ivory tower. An urban redevelopment project in Madrid serves as a podium to advertise an exhibit in the city's famous Prado museum.
Picture: Jan Jacob Trip.

Street culture and popular culture are important components of a city's urban quality. Graffiti and posters announcing popular music events in Altona, Hamburg.
Picture: Jan Jacob Trip.

Every Sunday morning a crowd gathers at Hamburg's *Fischmarkt*, attracted by not only by the vibrant market on the quays of the river Elbe, but also by live music and dancing inside the old market hall. In Summer, events start as early as 5 AM with party-goers returning from the nearby Reeperbahn (www.hamburg.de/fischmarkt).
Picture: Jan Jacob Trip.

Concluding remarks

> Cities with a long history may be called "deep" or "thick" cities in the sense that they are the historical product of a vast number of people from all stations (including officialdom) who are long gone now. It is possible, of course, to build a new city or a new village, but it will be a "thin" or "shallow" city, and its residents will have to begin (perhaps from known repertoires) to make it work in spite of the rules (Scott, 1998:256).

The preceding chapters indicate that culture *is* indeed economy. They also show that culture is not merely 'art', but also include things such as street life, events, social conventions, and the ethos of a city: 'the characteristic spirit, the prevalent tone of sentiment, of a people or community' (Bell and de-Shalit, 2011:2). All these are related to people and human behaviour. Finally, they make clear that for culture, in this broad sense, to flourish, a city does not need just houses, shops and offices. It requires a much broader concept of urban quality, including many intangibles.

Highlights
No startling insights emerge from the interviews discussed in the preceding chapters. Interviewees confirm much of what creative city literature says about the role of urban quality. However, they mostly do so on the basis of their own practical experience and involvement in planning and policy-making in creative cities, rather than by compiling the known literature on creative city development, or citing the creative city 'gurus'.

As the focus in the interviews was on 'soft', intangible urban qualities, urban design as such (architecture, density, scale) was not mentioned that much, other than by urban designers and architects.

Authenticity, also, is mentioned less then might be expected considering the focus on the interviews and the prominent role it holds in creative city literature. In this case, however, there is ample mentioning of the elements that make up authenticity, such as history, identity, 'a story' and, less explicitly, people. Authenticity is not just a matter of buildings and places but also, or even mostly, of the people and activities that use these buildings, and that used them in the past (cf. Zukin, 2010).

This implies that time is another important factor. As the above quote illustrates, the story of a place has to evolve, mainly by the use of that place, whether it is over hundreds of years or a decade. Creatives tend to favour places with open end stories, that provide starting points for further continuation, over places where history is frozen.

Finally, an aspect that emerged from the interviews quite strongly, but somewhat unexpectedly, is the ownership of places. This concerns the feeling that someone 'owns' the place, and cares about it, as well as the way legal ownership must be arranged.

People vs. bricks

The above suggest that, in the end, people make urban quality, perhaps more than buildings. Nonetheless, interviewees indicate a strong focus of policy-makers on the physical built environment rather than on its uses – on bricks rather than people. This may be a main reason that many copycat adventures in the past did not work, while free inspiration between cities seems to be more successful. It is easy to copy a building, a successful museum or a Barcelona-style square, but it is harder to copy or even understand the way it is used, the meaning it has for people, and the ideas behind it. The interviews once again make clear that cities can adopt each other's successful ideas, but must implement them on the basis of their own specific context and potential.

This implies that, now that the creative city hype seems to have lost at least some of its momentum, it may be time for some expectations management. Not every city is or can be a creative city and, consequently, not every city should strive to become a creative city. Furthermore, even in successful creative cities the size of the creative sector will remain relatively limited, rarely sufficient to compensate for the loss of jobs in the manufacturing industry (cf. Krätke, 2011).

A new attitude - 'metis'

Creative city development is often said to challenge 'conventional' ideas about urban development, most of all the top-down modernist planning approach based on mechanistic quantifiable rules. In the creative city, urban development often takes place in an organic, bottom-up or even temporary way (cf. Oosting, 2010). Users of a place may also be co-producers of that same place, for instance when they occupy and renovate an old factory for new uses. Nevertheless, the creative city has its own clichés – dating back as far as the work of for instance Jane Jacobs – that require frequent challenging.

Interviewees above all stress the importance of flexibility, an in incremental approach, listening to the users of an area, and being responsive to informal and underground developments in the city. Planners and policy-makers must develop a knack of this, more or less resembling the concept of 'metis' as described by for instance James Scott (1998). Metis refers to the knowhow and skills acquired not by learning rules, but by practice, observation and experience. In an natural ecosystem, metis tells a farmer where and when to plant his crop. In an urban ecosystem, it may tell a planner where, when and how to tweak the development of an area. Rather than providing rules as such, metis is about 'knowing how and when to apply the rules of thumb *in a concrete situation*' (Scott, 1998:316, emphasis from the original). In contrast to generic rules, this type of knowledge is mostly local and able to adapt to a specific and constantly changing urban context. Moreover, because of its

contextual and fragmented nature, it is open to new ideas, in particular to new combinations of existing ideas (Scott, 1998:324, 332).

Take small steps, make small mistakes
The above suggests a long-term approach, including long-term involvement of different kinds of planners, developers and policy-makers in creative city development. Moreover, applying a flexible, incremental approach rather than following one based on blueprinting and the rules of a strict doctrine may not reduce the risk of making mistakes, but they are more likely to be small and possibly reversible mistakes than capital ones. There is no reason to assume that the present ideas on urban planning are necessarily right and that they will not in forty years be denounced in the same way much of the 1960s urban development is rejected now.

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Appendix

This report is largely based on a series of in-depth interviews with people involved in the development of creative cities and creative city policy. The following persons have been interviewed:

A: persons interviewed within the context of the Targeted Study (Act. 6.4)

1. Jeanne Dekkers, owner and architect at Jeanne Dekkers Architectuur (11 April 2012, Delft).
2. Martin Aarts, Head of Urban Planning at the Municipality of Rotterdam (13 March 2012, Rotterdam).
3. Jack Burgers, Professor of Urban Studies at the Department of Sociology of Erasmus University Rotterdam (8 March 2012, Rotterdam).
4. Arjo Klamer, Professor in the Economics of Art and Culture at Erasmus University Rotterdam (13 February 2012, Rotterdam).
5. Evert Verhagen, owner of REUSE BV, manager at Creative Cities, project manager at Stadsdeel Noord, Amsterdam (10 February 2012, Amsterdam).
6. Vera Cerutti, owner of C2Concept; author of *Creatieve Fabrieken* ('Creative Factories'; Cerutti, 2011) (10 February 2012, Utrecht).
7. Tracy Metz, publicist/journalist at NRC Handelsblad (9 February 2012, Rotterdam).
8. John Westrik, Associate Professor at Faculty of Architecture of Delft University of Technology; former Head Urban Design of the Municipality of Rotterdam (6 March 2012, Delft).
9. Paul Rutten, owner of Paul Rutten Onderzoek; Visiting Professor at University of Antwerp (7 February 2012, Haarlem).

B: persons interviewed previously (affiliations mentioned are affiliations at the time of the interview)

10. Peter Nas, Professor of Sociology at the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences of Leiden University (6 October 2009, Leiden).
11. Patricia van Ulzen, Lecturer at the Faculty of Cultural Sciences of the Open University Netherlands; author of *Imagine a Metropolis* (Van Ulzen, 2007) (18 March 2009, Rotterdam).
12. Jeroen Saris, consultant and owner De Stad BV, and as such involved in the redevelopment of the Ebbinge Quarter in Groningen; former Alderman of the Municipality of Amsterdam and editor of *Nieuwe ideeën voor oude gebouwen*

('New ideas for old buildings', Saris et al., 2008) (11 March 2009, Amsterdam).

13. Jos Gadet and Koos van Zanen, head and spatial planner at Department of Spatial Planning of the Municipality of Amsterdam; Jos Gadet is author of *Terug naar de Stad* ('Return to the City', Gadet, 2011) (10 March 2009, Amsterdam).

14. Jan van Teeffelen, Senior Advisor City Development at the Municipality of Rotterdam; co-author of the *Sense of Place* (Dudok *et al.*, 2004) (27 February 2009, Delft).

15. Martin Aarts, head of Design at Urban Development & Public Housing of the Municipality of Rotterdam (14 June 2005, Rotterdam).

16. Pi de Bruijn, architect at De Architekten Cie; former Urban Design Supervisor of the Zuidas redevelopment project in Amsterdam (13 April 2005, Amsterdam).

17. Mariëtte van Baaren, urban planner at Department of Spatial Planning of the Municipality of Amsterdam (15 April 2009, Amsterdam).

18. Renée Hoogendoorn, Director of Strategic Projects at ING Real Estate (5 April 2005, The Hague).