Culture and Sustainability in European Cities

Imagining Europolis

Edited by
Svetlana Hristova,
Milena Dragićević Šešić, and
Nancy Duxbury

Culture and Sustainability in European Cities

European cities are contributing to the development of a more sustainable urban system that is capable of coping with economic crises, ecological challenges, and social disparities in different nation-states and regions throughout Europe.

This book reveals in a pluralistic way how European cities are generating new approaches to their sustainable development, and the special contribution of culture to these processes. It addresses both a deficit of attention to small and medium-sized cities in the framework of European sustainable development and an underestimation of the role of culture, artistic expression, and creativity for integrated development of the city as a prerequisite to urban sustainability. On the basis of a broad collection of case studies throughout Europe, representing a variety of regionally specific cultural models of sustainable development, the book investigates how participative culture, community arts, and, more generally, creativity of civic imagination are conducive to the goal of a sustainable future for small and medium-sized cities.

This is an essential volume for researchers and postgraduate students in urban studies, cultural studies, cultural geography, and urban sociology, as well as for policy makers and practitioners wanting to understand the specificity of European cities as hubs of innovation, creativity, and artistic industriousness.

Svetlana Hristova is Associate Professor in Sociology of Culture and Cultural Anthropology at the Faculty of Arts in the South-West University in Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria, and Chair of the ENCATC Thematic Area "Urban Management and Cultural Policies of City."

Milena Dragićević Šešić is Head of the UNESCO Chair in Interculturalism, Art Management and Mediation, and Professor of Cultural Policy and Cultural Management, Cultural Studies, and Media Studies at the University of Arts, Belgrade, Serbia.

Nancy Duxbury is Senior Researcher at the Centre for Social Studies, University of Coimbra, Portugal, and Co-Coordinator of its Cities, Cultures and Architecture Research Group. She is also Adjunct Professor of the School of Communication, Simon Fraser University, Canada.

Routledge Studies in Culture and Sustainable Development

Culture as an aspect of sustainability is a relatively new phenomenon but is beginning to attract attention among scholars and policy makers. This series opens up a forum for debate about the role of culture in sustainable development, treating culture and sustainability as a meta-narrative that will bring together diverse disciplines. Key questions explored in this series will include: how should culture be applied in sustainability policies; what should be sustained in culture; what should culture sustain; and what is the relationship of culture to other dimensions of sustainability?

Books in the series will have a variety of geographical foci and reflect different disciplinary approaches (for example, geography, sociology sustainability science, environmental and political sciences, anthropology, history, archaeology, and planning). The series will be addressed in particular to postgraduate students and researchers from a wide cross-section of disciplines.

Series Editors:
Katriina Soini, University of Jyväskylä, Finland, and
    Natural Resources Institute Finland
Joost Dessein, ILVO, Ghent University, Belgium

Culture and Sustainability in European Cities
Imagining Europolis
Edited by Svetlana Hristova, Milena Dragićević Šešić, and Nancy Duxbury

Theory and Practice in Heritage and Sustainability
Between past and future
Edited by Elizabeth Auclair and Graham Fairclough

Cultural Sustainability and Regional Development
Theories and practices of territorialisation
Edited by Joost Dessein, Elena Battaglini, and Lummina Horlings

"'Imagining Europolis' comes at a moment when more than ever we need – at EU level – to collectively build a common civic space where European citizens can discuss and reflect on crucial issues for the further development of our European project. The book clearly contributes to this endeavour. My thanks to the authors!"

– Sylvain Pasqua, Senior Expert in EU Cultural Policies in the European Commission, Coordinator of the "European Capitals of Culture" Scheme of the European Union

"This is a very timely book that gathers many distinguished contributors on a hot topic such as sustainable culture-led development in small and medium-sized European cities – the true backbone of Europe. Research, fresh ideas, and experiences in this field are much needed in the Europe of today. Warmly recommended reading."
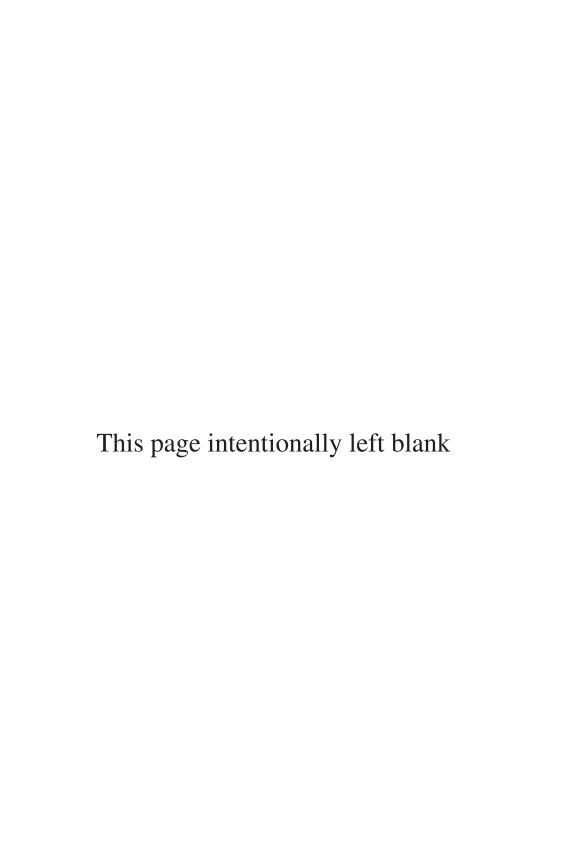
– Pier Luigi Sacco, Professor of Cultural Economics, IULM University, Milan, Italy; Member of the Technical-Scientific Committee on Cultural Economics of the Italian Ministry of Culture and Heritage

"The complex cultural dimensions of the urban condition today and of the theory and practice of sustainability are topics hampered by commonplace as well as wishful if not incantatory thinking. The essays in this truly significant volume on European cities break exciting new ground, however. They provide a rich template for far more informed and fruitful debate."

– Yudhishthir Raj Isar, Professor of Cultural Policy Studies, The American University of Paris, France; Institute for Culture and Society, University of Western Sydney, Australia

"'Imagining Europolis' shows compellingly how a number of the continent's small and medium-sized cities offer key creative, imaginative, and participatory models for a culture-based sustainable urbanism while clearly theorizing ever-present tensions and faultlines. In its models for sustainable city co-creation the book offers valuable lessons for cities everywhere, including the urban behemoth Cosmopolis."

– Greg Young, Associate Professor of Urban and Regional Planning, University of Sydney, Australia

This page intentionally left blank

Culture and Sustainability in European Cities

Imagining Europolis

**Edited by Svetlana Hristova,
Milena Dragićević Šešić, and
Nancy Duxbury**

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

LONDON AND NEW YORK

earthscan
from Routledge

Contents

COST – European Cooperation in Science and Technology

Series introduction

Achieving a more sustainable level of development is the biggest global challenge of the twenty-first century, and new approaches are urgently needed to ensure that development is much better aligned with the environmental, societal, and economic problems we are facing. Scholars and policy makers have recognized the contribution of culture in sustainable development. The issue of culture in sustainable development is also being increasingly discussed in debates in various international, national, and local arenas, and there are ample local actor-driven initiatives. Yet despite this growing attention, there have been only a very few attempts to consider culture in a more analytical and explicit way within the frames of sustainability. The challenge of incorporating culture in sustainable development discourse, both scientifically and politically, is derived from the complex, normative, and multidisciplinary character of both culture and sustainable development. This difficulty should not, however, be any excuse for ignoring the cultural dimension within sustainable development.

The series "Routledge Studies in Culture and Sustainable Development" aims to analyse the diverse and multiple roles that culture plays in sustainable development. It takes as one of its starting points the idea that culture in sustainability serves as a "meta-narrative" which will bring together ideas and standpoints from an extensive body of academic research currently scattered among different disciplines and thematic fields. Moreover, the series responds to the strengthening call for inter- and transdisciplinary approaches, which is being heard in many quarters, but in few fields more strongly than that of sustainability and sustainable development, with its complex and systemic problems. By combining and confronting the various approaches – in both the sciences and the humanities and in dealing with social, cultural, environmental, political, and aesthetic disciplines – the series offers a comprehensive contribution to the present-day sustainability sciences as well as related policies.

The books in the series will take a broad approach to culture, giving space to all the possible understandings of culture from art-based definitions to way-of-life based approaches, and beyond. Furthermore, culture is not seen only as an additional aspect of sustainable development – as a "fourth pillar" – but, rather, as a mediator, a cross-cutting transversal framework, or even as a new set of guiding principles for sustainable development research, policies, and practices.

The essence of culture in, for, and as sustainable development will be explored through the series in various thematic contexts, representing a wide range of practices and processes (e.g. everyday life, livelihoods and lifestyles, landscape, artistic practices, aesthetic experiences, heritage, tourism). These contexts may concern urban, peri-urban, or rural contexts, and regions with different trajectories of socioeconomic development. The perspectives of the books will stretch from local to global and cover different temporal scales from past to present and future. These issues are valorized by theoretical or empirical analysis; their relationship to the ecological, social, and economic dimensions of sustainability will be explored, when appropriate.

The idea for the series is derived from the European COST Action IS1007 "Investigating Cultural Sustainability," running between 2011 and 2015. This network is comprised of a group of around one hundred researchers from twenty-six European countries, and representing many different disciplines. They have brought together their expertise, knowledge, and experience, and based on that they have built up new inter- and transdisciplinary understanding and approaches that can enhance and enrich research into culture in sustainable development, and support the work of the policy makers and practitioners in this field.

Urbanization is one of the major trends guiding and affecting development both in cities, as well as in surrounding regions and rural areas. Therefore, finding sustainable strategies for cities of all sizes is a fundamental challenge globally, but the focus on small and medium-sized cities allows a better understanding of the changing relationship between urban and rural realities. There is ample research on cities and sustainability, but, unlike most of the other contributions, this book brings culture in sustainable urban development to the core: it investigates, in particular, how participatory culture and artistic expression contribute to the sustainable future(s) of the cities. By focusing on various strategies, policies, and bottom-up practices of small and medium-sized cities in Europe, the book offers a perspective to imagine sustainable future(s) for smaller European cities as well as others worldwide.

Ultimately, the book seeks to explore different models of local sustainability that incorporate emotions and attachment to one's living place and move beyond profit-driven approaches, which tend to use culture and cultural policies only as a means for embellishment of the urban environment and propelling economic viability. The book also implicitly reveals path-dependencies of the development of European cities; each city has its history, which affects its future development. At the same time, cities are not "trapped" in their pasts, and, as the cases in this book show, the human agency, imagination, and cooperative efforts of residents can alter local development trajectories. Therefore, as the editors of the book wisely note, there are no copy-paste strategies. Rather, each city should find its own path to sustainability through innovative re-imagination of its own cultural assets and traditions and through creatively applying the lessons learned elsewhere.

<div align="right">Katriina Soini and Joost Dessein</div>

Figures and tables

Figures

Tables

Notes on contributors

Editorial board – The shaping and development of this book benefitted from thoughtful advice received from an editorial board consisting of Prof. Mariusz Czepczyński (University of Gdansk, Poland), Prof. Anita Kangas (University of Jyväskylä, Finland), Prof. Miloslav Lapka (University of South Bohemia and Charles University, Czech Republic), and Dr. Rolf Hugoson (Umeå University, Sweden).

Helmut K. Anheier, PhD, is President and Dean, and Professor of Sociology at the Hertie School of Governance, Berlin, Germany. He also holds a chair in sociology at Heidelberg University and serves as Academic Director of its Center for Social Investment. He is currently researching the role of foundations in civil society. Helmut Anheier is author of over three hundred publications, and he has won various international prizes for his scholarship. His most recent publication is the second edition of his textbook, *Nonprofit Organizations: Theory, Management, Policy* (Routledge, 2005 and 2014).

Rachel Blanche is Lecturer in Cultural Management at Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh, Scotland. She specializes in cultural policy, having contributed directly to cultural policy formation in Scotland through consultancy work with the Scottish government, the Scottish Arts Council, Creative Scotland, and many organizations across the arts and cultural sectors. Rachel remains active in the field of national and international cultural policy formation and currently serves as a member of the United Kingdom National Commission to UNESCO – Scotland Committee.

Aleksandar Brkić, PhD, is a scholar in the fields of arts management and cultural policy. He is a lecturer at LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore, as well as a guest lecturer at the University of Arts in Belgrade and Faculty of Technical Sciences in Novi Sad, Serbia. In 2011, he was the recipient of the Cultural Policy Research Award, and his book *Cultural Policy Frameworks (Re)constructing National and Supranational Identities: The Balkans and the European Union* was published in 2013 by the European Cultural Foundation. He works as a creative producer in the intersections of performing arts, visual arts, and design.

Eva Cudlínová is Associate Professor at the University of South Bohemia, Faculty of Economics, České Budějovice, in the Czech Republic. She is a lecturer on ecological and environmental economics. She was educated at the University of Economics in Prague, and previously employed at the Institute of Systems Biology and Ecology, Czech Academy of Sciences. Among her main fields of interest are problems of sustainable development, resource management, economic methods of valuing nature, and global environmental problems from an economic perspective. She is author or coauthor of about sixty articles in scientific journals and dozens of book chapters.

Milena Dragićević Šešić, PhD, is Head of the UNESCO Chair in Cultural Policy and Management (Interculturalism and Mediation in the Balkans) and former President of the University of Arts, Belgrade, Serbia. She is a board member of the European Diploma in Cultural Project Management (Brussels) and the Cultural Policy Research Award (European Cultural Foundation, Amsterdam), and UNESCO expert for a Technical Assistance Mission (Cambodia). She holds Commandeur dans l'Ordre des Palmes Academiques (France) and is a Member of the National Council for Science (2006–2010). She is a guest lecturer at numerous universities and has published fifteen books – including *Art Management in Turbulent Times: Adaptable Quality Management*; *Culture: Management, Animation, Marketing*; *Intercultural Mediation in the Balkans*; *Neofolk Culture*; *Art and Alternative*; *Urban Spectacle*; and *Horizons of Reading* – and numerous essays. Her work has been translated into sixteen languages.

Nancy Duxbury, PhD, is Senior Researcher at the Centre for Social Studies, University of Coimbra, Portugal, and Co-coordinator of its Cities, Cultures and Architecture Research Group. Her current research examines culture in local sustainability planning, cultural mapping methodologies, and community engagement through environmental-artistic projects. She is a member of the European Expert Network on Culture and an adjunct professor at the School of Communication, Simon Fraser University, Canada. She is published internationally and is editor of *Animation of Public Space through the Arts: Toward More Sustainable Communities* (2013) and coeditor of *Cultural Mapping as Cultural Inquiry* (2015). She cofounded and was Director of Research of the Creative City Network of Canada.

Nelly van der Geest, PhD, is a sociologist, theatre maker, and expert in organizational change. At the University of the Arts Utrecht (HKU), Netherlands, she leads the knowledge programme "Art Education in Context" at the Center of Expertise on Education. She publishes on creative partnerships, creative ability as purpose in learning, and the role of artists and designers in participatory and sustainable projects. She lectures in HKU's master's programme, Art Education, on innovation of education due to societal dynamics such as sustainability or migration. In the Dutch national programme, Leadership in Culture (LinC), she leads the "interventure" track, in which upcoming leaders in culture research the adventure of innovation.

Loreta Georgievska-Jakovleva, PhD, is Full Professor of Cultural Studies at the Saints Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, Republic of Macedonia. She is Editor-in-Chief of the journal *Culture/Култура*, and coeditor of the book *Creative Economies: New Knowledge for New Initiatives* (2014). During the last five years, she has published three books: *Literature and Cultural Transition* (2008); *Identities* (2012); *and Culture and Media* (2014). Her research interests include the areas of identity, cultural memory, cultural policy, and cultural industries.

Michael Hoelscher, PhD, is Senior Lecturer at the Institute of Sociology, University of Heidelberg, Germany. He holds a PhD from the Free University Berlin, and a Habilitation from the University of Heidelberg. From 2006 to 2008, he worked at the University of Oxford, where he still is Associate Research Fellow at the Centre on Skills, Knowledge and Organisational Performance (SKOPE). His main fields of interest are globalization; European integration; cultural, economic, and urban sociology; and higher education. Currently, he is working on a comparative project on "New Inequalities in Creative Cities." His publications include *Cities, Cultural Policy and Governance* (as guest editor with Helmut K. Anheier and Raj Isar) and "Innovation and Creativity" (in the *Encyclopedia of Global Studies*, edited by H. K. Anheier and M. Juergensmeyer, 2012).

Svetlana Hristova, PhD, is an urban sociologist, researcher, and lecturer; Associate Professor at the South-West University, Bulgaria; and the initiator and Chair of the Thematic Area "Urban Management and Cultural Policies of the City" within the European Network of Cultural Administration Training Centers (ENCATC). Her research interests lie in the crossroads of sociology of culture, urban studies, and visual anthropology, as exemplified in numerous projects and publications in English, French, German, Polish, Finnish, and Lithuanian, besides her native Bulgarian. She is author of the books *Border Identity of the Small Town* (2001) and *City: Images, Symbols, Identities* (2002), and is coeditor of *Public Places of European Cities* (2008) and *Public Space: Between Re-imagination and Occupation* (2015).

Rolf Hugoson, PhD, is Senior Lecturer in Political Science at Umeå University, Sweden. He is also a researcher on urban history at the multidisciplinary research centre for regional science, CERUM. He is participating in the research platform "Culture and Cities," focusing on European Capitals of Culture. Hugoson has published two books and a number of articles and chapters on cultural policy, political and rhetoric theory, and diplomatic history. A book in Swedish on the 1950–2010 history of the 2014 European Capital of Culture Umeå is forthcoming in 2015.

Jenny Johannisson, PhD, is Associate Professor at the Centre for Cultural Policy Research, Swedish School of Library and Information Science, University of Borås, Sweden. Her main research interests are local and regional cultural policies understood against the backdrop of globalization processes, and she

has published extensively on these issues. Johannisson chairs the scientific committee of the International Conference on Cultural Policy Research (ICCPR), a biennial research conference which is organized in association with the *International Journal of Cultural Policy* (Routledge), and she was coeditor (2009–2012) of the open access scholarly journal *Culture Unbound: Journal on Current Cultural Research*.

Anita Kangas, Professor, PhD, is the Director of the Unit of Cultural Policy/ Politics at the University of Jyväskylä, Finland. Her publications and research interests include theory and history of cultural policy, models of local cultural policy, cultural participation, cultural sustainability, and action research methodology. She is a member of the European Expert Network on Culture and the ENCATC Cultural Policy and Cultural Management Research Award international jury, and she has conducted many research projects (for example, Local Government Culture and Sport Services – Access and Democracy; Cultural Sustainability in Rural Areas; History of Cultural Policy; and Construction and Reconstruction in Authorship in the Arts).

Charles Landry is an international authority on the use of imagination and creativity in urban change. He invented the concept of the creative city in the late 1980s, which became a global movement and changed the way cities thought about their capabilities and resources. He has written several books, including *The Fragile City & the Risk Nexus*, with Tom Burke; *The Sensory Landscape of Cities*; and *The Origins and Futures of the Creative City and Culture & Commerce*. He is best known for *The Creative City: A Toolkit for Urban Innovators* (2000); *The Art of City Making* (2006); and *The Intercultural City: Planning for Diversity Advantage*, with Phil Wood.

Miloslav Lapka, PhD, has held several leading positions in the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic. Now he is working in the Faculty of Economics, University of South Bohemia, České Budějovice, Czech Republic; and the Faculty of Art, Charles University, Prague. His research interests concern landscape ecology, rural sociology, problems of the human dimension in landscape and global environmental changes, and problems of interdisciplinarity and relationships between sciences and social sciences. Miloslav Lapka is author or coauthor of more than one hundred scientific papers presented in national and international journals as well as chapters and seven books.

François Matarasso is a UK-based freelance writer and researcher with a thirty-five-year career in community arts. He has worked in many European countries, and his work is widely published and translated. His books include *The English Castle* (1993), *Use or Ornament? The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts* (1997), *Only Connect, Arts Touring and Rural Communities* (2004), *Where We Dream* (2012), *Winter Fires, Art and Agency in Old Age* (2012), and *Bread and Salt: Stories of Art and Migration* (2013). For more information see: http:// parliamentofdreams.com

Julija Matejić, MA, is a researcher and the Coordinator at the UNESCO Chair in Cultural Policy and Management (Interculturalism and Mediation in the Balkans), University of Arts in Belgrade, Serbia. Following her career as a pianist, she has developed into a professional in the field of arts management. Currently, she is a PhD candidate in the Department of Theory of Arts and Media, University of Arts, on the topic *Theory of Performing Practices in Music (Performativity of Pianism)*. Her research interests also include art in public space, post-memory, and the concept of sustainable development in the field of culture.

Aldo Milohnić, PhD, is Assistant Professor of the History of Theatre at the University of Ljubljana's Academy for Theatre, Radio, Film and Television, in Slovenia. He is Editor-in-Chief of the *Politike* book series, editor or coeditor of numerous anthologies of texts and special issues of cultural journals, and author of the book *Theories of Contemporary Theatre and Performance* (2009). Over the last twenty years, he has been involved in many research projects dealing with the history and theory of performing arts, sociology of culture, and cultural policy issues.

Mišel Pavlovski, PhD, is Full Professor of Cultural Studies at the Saints Cyril and Methodius University, Skopje, Republic of Macedonia. His research interests include cultural studies, postcolonial studies, media studies, and theatre studies. He is the Head Researcher of "The Macedonian Literature Data Base" and was Editor-in-Chief of the international journal *Spektar* (2010–2012). He has published the following monographs: *From an Original Idea to the Creation of a State* (coauthored with Jovan Pavlovski, 1993); *Macedonia: Yesterday and Today* (coauthored with Jovan Pavlovski, 1996); *Pure Play: Biomechanics in the Theatre System of V. E. Meyerhold* (1998); *Theatre and Myth* (2005); and *Creative Economies: New Knowledge for New Initiatives* (coedited with Loreta Georgievska-Jakovleva, 2014).

Katarzyna Plebańczyk, PhD (management in the humanistic sciences), works as an Adjunct Professor at the Institute of Culture at Jagiellonian University, Cracow, Poland. She is the author of several development strategies for cultural institutions that actively promote the idea of mutual understanding between the sender and the recipient of cultural activities. Her research interests encompass a broad spectrum of cultural management topics, including cultural economics and cultural management (e.g. sustainability of cultural organizations, audience development, cultural and food tourism), knowledge management (e.g. the role of cultural observatories), and the strategic management of culture.

Davide Ponzini, PhD, is Assistant Professor of Urban Planning at Politecnico di Milano, Italy. His research focuses on planning theory and urban and cultural policy, and he has extensively published in international journals and books. He is coauthor (with Pier Carlo Palermo) of the books *Spatial Planning and Urban Development* (Springer, 2010) and *Place-Making and Urban Development: New*

Challenges for Planning and Design (Routledge, 2015); and coauthor (with the photographer Michele Nastasi) of the book *Starchitecture: Scenes, Actors and Spectacles in Contemporary Cities* (Allemandi, 2011).

Sakarias Sokka, PhD, has been researching and teaching in the Unit of Cultural Policy/Politics at the University of Jyväskylä, Finland, since 2004. His research interests belong to the field of historical sociology, and his scientific publications, both in Finland and internationally, consider the historical development of Finnish cultural policy and the justification and implementation of public cultural policies.

David Stevenson is Programme Leader for the MA Arts, Festival and Cultural Management at Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh, Scotland. His research is primarily qualitative, and he is particularly interested in interpretative methodologies as approaches that have the potential to give a greater insight into the inherently complex and pluralist landscape in which policy is destined to function.

Elisabete Caldeira Neto Tomaz is a PhD candidate in sociology at the Centre for Research and Studies in Sociology, University Institute of Lisbon (CIES-IUL), Portugal. She holds a bachelor's degree in communication design and a master's degree in communication sciences. Tomaz has participated in many international conferences and has submitted several articles for publication in scholarly journals. She has collaborated with INTELI, a think tank in Lisbon, in several European and national projects and networks related with development policies and cultural/creative policies. She is a member of the COST Action "Investigating Cultural Sustainability."

Introduction

Svetlana Hristova, Milena Dragićević Šešić,
and Nancy Duxbury

If our time is labelled the "urban age," it is not simply because more than half of the world's population lives in cities but, more importantly, because "our world order comes to be built on cities and their economies rather than nations and their armies" (Khanna 2010). In the global constellation of cities, scale, positioning, vision, and ambition matter. Responding to critical aggravations in economy, ecology, and equity, cities today are acting as autonomous players seeking original solutions to local, national, supranational, and global problems. However, European small cities are facing diverse challenges besides global economic pressures and environmental threats, suffering from structural disproportions due to the demographic crises of quickly aging populations and workforces fleeing to the more promising job markets of metropolises (EEA 2009). During the recent economic crisis, European *small and medium-sized cities* (SMCs) have been challenged to demonstrate their strengths and capacities. It is precisely at this junction that they have displayed new levels of creative civic imagination in their search for specific innovative solutions within the competition for resources on both European and global stages and to find locally resonant sustainable development solutions.

This book was developed to energize and deepen the discussion about how SMCs are creatively addressing with the means of culture the challenges and risks of the contemporary neoliberal world (Lorentzen and van Heur 2012; Bell and Jayne 2006). Although SMCs represent over 60 percent of European urban settlements and give shelter to the majority of the European urban population, they receive disproportionally less attention in scientific analyses, which traditionally focus on global cities and metropolises. This volume addresses both a deficit of attention to the role of small and medium-sized cities in European sustainable development and an underestimation of the role of culture, artistic expression, and creativity for integrated development as a prerequisite for urban sustainability.

Characterized by interdisciplinary richness and geographical diversity, the book presents a broad collection of case studies and good practices from throughout Europe that illustrate how culture contributes to more sustainable models of city making focused on quality of life, local identities, and creating places where people like to live. The selected variety of regionally specific cultural approaches

underline also how local cultural sectors have to be sustainable themselves, in order to operate as engines of integral city development. All these research issues are aspects of the overarching question: what are the roles of culture in sustaining small and medium-sized cities?

On the other hand, although culture is based on traditions, providing continuity "precipitated" into both material and immaterial heritage, still it is not a book about heritage. When the cases in this volume address issues of heritage, it is from the perspective of its contemporary use, reuse, and/or adaptation as a "natural" part of the cultural assets of communities and their places (Fairclough et al. 2015). The book also investigates how participatory culture, community arts, and, more generally, the creativity of civic imagination can contribute to the goal of sustainable futures for SMCs. Ultimately, the book is about European citizens, making their lives through sustaining their cities. In a broader perspective, the cases reveal the intricate and fragile relationships between cultural strategies, economic policies, sustainable development goals, and the national and regional contexts in which cities are embedded. As both Matarasso and Tomaz (in this volume) keenly observe, policy discourses often advocate an economic rationale for cultural strategies, while a community development focus depends largely on actors' power relations and their operating/national frameworks.

From a theoretical point of view, the book represents a conceptual node fusing three dimensions – insights from urban studies concerning small and medium-sized cities, the pressing agenda of sustainability, and cultural policy solutions and recommendations. Within this thematic intersection, the book addresses key issues such as:

- how to move beyond the dominating understanding of sustainability as an ecology-economy-equity balance to a more holistic sociocultural and human-needs-led development conception;
- how to address the contradiction between the profit-driven economic processes of regeneration, gentrification, and commercialization of cities and the emergence of more participatory bottom-up urban cultural movements (i.e. the right to the city);
- how to reconcile the potential contradiction between organizational fields of culture, sustainability, and innovation, which sometimes develops into open tension; and
- how to understand the various ways cities have been "Europeanized" in different national contexts, from simple copy-paste practices to the creative adaptation of European methodologies and innovative applied approaches.

Key concepts and cross-linking themes

The idea of Europolis

Despite the widely spread opinion that many European SMCs have become no more than suburban commuter satellites to the large cities and conurbation

urban regions, the examples in this book reveal another reality: places *sensitive* to their environments, which contribute to a high quality of life, aim to be "safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run," and offer "equality of opportunity and good services for all" (EU 2007). *Europolis* is conceptualized as the emergence of a European model – or model*s*, since it incorporates a variety of local approaches – for urban sustainability involving processes of reimaging and cocreating new city futures explicitly using culture. The term *Europolis* is also used to emphasize that these emerging models may possibly be European-specific approaches to sustainable urban development, in contrast to the development of metropolises and large urban agglomerations as a worldwide practice. *Europolis* is not a utopian concept, but it suggests a need to discern the counterbalancing processes enabled by new urban policies to meet economic, social, and ecological challenges, with sensitivity to the agency of participative culture.

Sustainable urban development – the sustainable city

In this book, the concept of *sustainable city* crystallizes as a consolidation of different coextensive lines in existing interpretations of *urban sustainability*. Understood as an issue of new urban culture with social, economic, institutional, technological, and ecological aspects, the book critically analyses the concept of *sustainable cities* from a sociocultural point of view, pleading for an integral holistic approach. This multidimensionality of urban sustainability bears implicit controversies. One of these is set around the concepts of *sustainability* and *the sustainable development of cities*. The concept of *sustainable city* incorporates the idea of smart space organization, taking account of land use, sanitation, and efficient transport – a kind of technologically perfect, car-free, carbon-neutral, no waste, solar-powered paradise, "full of architectural marvels to house new Guggenheim and Louvre collections in stunning new buildings by Frank Gehry and Jean Nouvel" (Khanna 2010). Cities of this type, newly designed in the non-Western world, may pretend to be sustainable, but they remain artificial assemblages, isolated from the calamities of reality and missing the true social glue: "For these emerging global hubs, modernization does not equal Westernization. . . . Western values like freedom of speech and religion are not part of the bargain" (Khanna 2010). This is certainly not the European model of continuous sustainable growth that aims to attentively manage local natural resources and to provide opportunities for inhabitants to develop their own abilities and collective local potentialities.

In exploring sustainable cities from a cultural point of view, the book suggests at least three interconnected and largely complementary possibilities for consideration: culture-based sustainably developing places, livable places, and ecologically sensitive culturized places (cf. Young 2008). The concept of *culture-based sustainably developing places* serves to introduce the necessity for creatively inclusive neighbourhoods or other types of territorial units with a potential for an evolving *sense of place*, which create their own developmental logic within the city itself but often go beyond city "walls" by expanding their regional, national,

and international networks, thus offering more opportunities and cultural services for both citizens and visitors (Kangas and Sokka; Matarasso; Johannisson; Plebańzcyk; van der Geest). *Livable places* emphasize as their primary "task" ensuring a high quality of life "no longer defined by high material consumption . . . [but] when people can live a healthy, pleasant and safe life" (EEA 2009, 43). In other words, they can enjoy life on two interlinked levels: the satisfaction of everyday life needs and the fulfillment of life-long goals, which collectively create their sense of meaning (Georgievska-Jakovleva and Pavlovski; Dragićević Šešić, Brkić, and Matejić). *Ecologically sensitive culturized places* put greater emphasis on the revitalization of social fabrics in place-based contexts through renewed relationships with the local natural environment and new commitments to places of cohabitation as reimagined aesthetized places of restored cultural traditions and collective memory (Lapka and Cudlínová; Milohnić).

Civic culture and civic urbanity

While urban regeneration research typically focuses on economic dimensions and impacts, the book offers three important layers of debate that are investigating the potential creativity of community in contexts of participatory openness:

- *Civic imagination*, fostered through participatory creative processes, is a necessary prerequisite for the creation of diversified models of sustainable SMCs, which are tightly linked to promoting a specific local identity on global competitive stages, where metropolitan cities are dominating with institutionalized and financially supported "imagination" through numerous cultural and entertainment organizations. When a city or its civil society offers ongoing, context-specific platforms for expression, *civic imagination* can be an inexhaustible source of continuous innovation and experimentation, contributing to the further valorization of SMCs on a global scale.
- *Civic urbanity* refers to processes of creating connection and purpose (Landry) through being a full citizen, meaningfully engaged with his/her city. Culture is an important part of civic engagement as the authors of this book argue: culture is a public good, and a city's public space with its various cultural functions is a crucial element of sustainable city making. Thus, cultural initiatives are regarded as an essential part of civic urbanity, especially taking into account their social relevancy, capacity to contribute to social inclusion, and ability to regenerate a sense of civic pride.
- *Civic–public partnerships* involve civic actors and movements in dialogue with local governments. Through these partnerships, public values of culture are rearticulated and reemphasized. Partnering with civil society in reconceptualizing and creating broader cultural offers is the most important approach for cities wishing to innovate the scope of activities and assure the well-being of their citizens. Cooperation with different partners from civil society (artists, activists, NGOs, experts, and concerned citizens) allows for more prosperous, just, and inclusive societies, creating a city that is more vibrant

and confident in its own developmental capacity. Through partnerships, both sides are empowered and strengthened, so that civil society does not hesitate to offer its help to local government, and local government becomes closer to its citizens and their needs.

Public sphere: culture in the public interest as a public good

As contemporary society has shifted towards neoliberal market regulation, many people have suffered the throes of, first, the industrial/postindustrial crises and, then, the financial/banking crisis. Some authors claim that what we observe today is a cyclic structural crisis of a profit-driven neoliberal economy. As noted in the Brundtland Report, "economic development is unsustainable if it increases vulnerability to crises" (WCED 1987, 38). Although a new sociocultural paradigm is not yet fully formed, public actions are now set within a generalized but strong disbelief in neoliberal solutions, and this situation has led people to go back to something more "stable," generally characterized by solidarity, mutual support, and redistribution of profits and losses. This process of new urban activism, *urbactivism* (Hristova), has been embraced by bottom-up *artivism* (Dragićević Šešić, Brkić, and Matejić); energized by civic imagination (e.g. *Aalborg Charter of European Cities and Towns Towards Sustainability* [*Aalborg Charter* 1994]; European Sustainable Cities Platform 2013); and reinforced by top-down European policies through a series of public documents (e.g., *Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities* [EU 2007]), supported by considerable financial funding (Duxbury). In this context, culture once again is being considered a public good and an activity in the public interest, with a strong focus on the local space where it is "born" and lives. However, this is not a one-way street: as Landry underlines, civic urbanity develops in the "risk landscape" of cities facing a visible decline in engagement.

As the public sphere has diminished, new movements of urban sustainability have tended to focus on the enhancement and growth of the (sometimes limited) remaining public realm. We observe a return of the importance of the public sphere expressed spatially (public space), virtually (public communication, social media), and with close attention to democracy and public dialogue, enhanced with the means of arts and cultural expression as a public good and cultural right. Cities – local authorities and citizens together – are co-responsible for recreating the public sphere, taking into account its need to develop and support platforms for sociability and debates; public spaces for people to meet and gather; and public media or institutions as spaces for social dialogue. As the public and private spheres become more tightly interlinked, both public and private entities are increasingly expected to play roles in enabling, through partnerships and other arrangements, the openness of the public sphere.

In the global context of cultural policies praising the creative economy and emphasizing its financial contributions to urban development (Vilenica and Kuda.org 2012), this book presents a plurality of approaches and celebrates perspectives where culture is offering different sets of values based on the idea of

the public good (necessary for creating conducive conditions for urban sustainability). Contemporary creativity and participatory practices contribute to social inclusion, urban vibrancy and renewal, and the incremental development of meaningful places. In contemporary times when business ideas about efficiency have been transferred into all domains of cultural and civic life, the practices, approaches, and perspectives highlighted in this book illustrate pathways to renegotiating the different values between sectors, accepting the importance of the noncommercial logic of the shared commons (Landry). In this negotiation of values, the importance of culture maintaining its own autonomy is recognized as contributing to public interests (Breznik 2004).

Participatory culture and arts, creative inclusion, and empowerment

Participatory projects are usually self-organized actions that sustain human relations and bonds of trust within a community – they are examples of civic urbanity in action, and they can lead to shared policies (Dragićević Šešić 2006). Acting collectively, these projects not only contribute to the sustainability of a place but also raise civic pride and create collective cultural memories (Assmann and Czaplicka 1995) that are indispensable for sustaining *livable places*. Thus, this book is about *people* making cities sustainable through participatory cultural civic activities. It is also about artistic contributions that inspire and lead many of these actions. As SMCs are usually not highly multicultural (i.e. much less than metropolitan cities), this issue was not often highlighted, but it was not avoided. This is also a book about specificities that shows why SMCs need different approaches and focused investigation, as many of the dominating themes in urban sociology and anthropology do not resonate with SMCs.

Dynamics and tensions

Contemporary cities are battlegrounds of controversial interactions and transversal *tensions* based on different development values and models, which Charles Landry (in this volume) calls *fault lines*: "so deep-seated, intractable and contentious that they shape our entire worldview, such as the conflict between environmental ethics and economic rationality in running countries or cities." This can take the shape of a conflict – for example, between the economic-based gentrification of a city versus the bottom-up "right to the city" movements aiming at community-focused sustainability processes. In many cases, high-level investment policies mean unsustainability for the indigenous inhabitants who cannot afford to continue to live in the upgraded locations. This leads to the disappearance of collective memories and sense of place, and, in the long term, to a new identity for the new inhabitants. The emergence of more participatory processes is the key way to reconcile these different tensions and conflicting interests. Public policies reconceived as developmental strategies *of the community* offer platforms where cultural economics and citizens' interests might go together.