Neiva Ganga, R, Wise, N and Perić, M

 Exploring implicit and explicit cultural policy dimensions through major-event and neoliberal rhetoric

http://researchonline.ljmu.ac.uk/id/eprint/15614/

Article
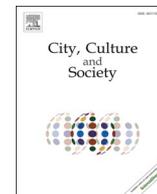
Exploring implicit and explicit cultural policy dimensions through major-event and neoliberal rhetoric

Rafaela Neiva Ganga [a,*], Nicholas Wise [b], Marko Perić [c]

[a] *Liverpool John Moores University, United Kingdom*
[b] *Arizona State University, USA*
[c] *University of Rijeka, Croatia*

A B S T R A C T

This paper is conceptually positions the emergence of the neoliberal city in the context of transitions to late-capitalism. The aim of this study is to understand intersections between explicit and implicit cultural policy dimensions focusing on the Rijeka2020 programme as intended and how it was restructured as a response to COVID-19. Through cultural policy analysis, this ex-ante qualitative case study of the Rijeka2020 programme illuminates overlapping explicit and implicit policy priorities of the ECoC—offering a unique insight into what could potentially be the future of the European cultural policy. Rijeka2020 can be seen as a changing point amidst different rhetoric, analysed around three themes (regeneration, legacy, and participation). Results examine how Rijeka's culture-led urban regeneration agenda was shy on creative industry oriented programming, yet reinforced through capital cultural infrastructural projects. Through attempts to avoid event-led spectacle, officials planned to engage more at the neighbourhood-scale using participatory art practices that concentrated on capacity building. Important take-away points address shifts from culture-oriented regeneration to local participatory art practices is a step towards reconstructing the cultural sector upstream (based on production) and downstream (through reception).

1. Introduction

The designation of Rijeka as the first Croatian European Capital of Culture (ECoC) in 2016 saw the city undergo extensive preparations for 2020 (Wise, Đurkin, & Perić, 2019). Ready to host the event in 2020, Rijeka was planning to deliver a programme consisting of public cultural and artistic events. What ensued shortly after of event began was the coronavirus disease pandemic [hereafter: COVID-19] significantly brought the event a temporary halt. This paper addresses Pratt's (2020) above mentioned concern by focusing on Rijeka's 2020 ECoC (hereafter: Rijeka2020) and in times of COVID-19host programme. We argued that culture is a vital resource for many European countries (Xuereb, 2016; Rubio Arostegui & Rius-Ulldemolins, 2018); however, tensions exist when we consider cultural policies from different scalar perspectives (see Borén, Grzyś, & Young, 2020; Primorac, Obuljen Koržinek, & Uzelac, 2017). Locally, the ECoC bidding city should adjust their cultural policy to accommodate common perceptions of a winning bid. Nationally, the ECoC is treated as an aid programme for post-industrial cities in transition. Then, at the supranational level, the 'Lisbon Strategy'

(European Union, 2007) and 'A New European Agenda for Culture' (European Commission, 2018) institutionalise culture as a growing catalyst for economic regeneration. The latter scale concerns the emergence of new economic activities that combine creativity with innovation to improve a city's attractiveness (see Stipanović et al, 2019; Pintossi, Ikiz Kaya, & Pereira Roders, 2021). Such scaled perspectives position the need to assess implicit and explicit cultural policy dimensions. This is important given the assumed irregularities of what it means to host the ECoC, and in times of COVID-19, this becomes an even more pressing to issue. Rijeka2020 can be seen as a changing point amidst this rhetoric, which questions us to ask: have we reached the end of the ECoC as a vehicle for the neoliberal/creative city?

This paper draws on policy and qualitative primary data analysis to understand the intersections between explicit and implicit cultural policy dimensions (Ahearne, 2009; Bennett, 2011; Zan, Baraldi, & Onofri, 2011). The paper focuses on the case of Rijeka2020, and also considers how the event had to restructure due to COVID-19. Rijeka2020 represents a unique case given when we consider cultural policy and neoliberal rhetoric for several reasons: 1. Rijeka's bid to host

the ECoC was oriented to a culture-led regeneration agenda (Ri, 2020; Liu, 2019); 2. The strategies adopted did not entirely fulfil the 'ready-made' formula of the neoliberal creative city (culture led-regenerating, clustering, and creative citizenship) (Grodach, 2017; Landry & Bianchini, 1995); and 3. Rijeka is experiencing the damaging social, cultural and economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic (as is Galway). Pratt, 2020, p. 1) refers to the impact of COVID-19 on events as a 'cultural heart attack'. The outbreak of COVID-19 forced the World Health Organization to declare a global pandemic in March 2020, bringing the world to a standstill. Any analysis of the impact of this unprecedented and unforeseen crisis on culture policy and major events is quickly surpassed by the fast-changing reality (Seraphin, 2021). Still, this paper provides an early reflection on how COVID-19 – 'The Great Unequalizer' (Centre for Cultural Value, 2021) – might be an opportunity to press the reset bottom on cultural policies. Recently, Pratt (2020), highlighting how the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbates existing inequalities (Comunian and England, 2020), interrogated how cities would embrace the moment to address change.

The following section situates conceptual debates in the literature concerning creative cities, neoliberal dimensions of change, and ECoC cultural policy and legacy implications. The methods section accounts for the research design as an ex-ante qualitative case study of the Rijeka2020 programme, addressing data collection both pre- and amid-COVID-19. The results and discussion section addresses three Conceptual Themes across the primary and secondary datasets (regeneration, legacy, and participation). Data analysis illuminates overlapping explicit and implicitly policy priorities of the ECoC and Rijeka2020 programme—base on how local policymakers interpret them. While acknowledging the limitation, the paper concludes that the Rijeka2020 modified COVID-19 pandemic programme continued to prioritise local artists and participatory art practices. This commitment provides insight on how Rijeka was able to adjust and maintain an upstream (production) and downstream (reception). This enabled the city to supplant recurrent ECoC rhetoric and create a political space where decision-makers redesigned the role of the event during COVID-19.

2. Literature review

2.1. Creative cities and neoliberal dimensions of change

Landry and Bianchini (1995) and Landry (2000) offer early urban planning theoretical contributions on the creative city. These works emerge from late-1980s/early-1990s UK cultural policy and urban regeneration movements. Landry and Bianchini (1995) present a broad concept of creativity beyond artistic dimensions, moving towards a more decentralised way of thinking. With the rise of events and desires to use creative measures to drive change, Peck (2005a, 2005b) saw urban creative change as a performative attempt to market cities in a way that reinforces urban politics and neoliberal agendas. To Flew & Cunningham (2010) and Wise and Clark (2017), these foundation debates remain pertinent, challenge scholars to distinguish between cultural production and urban innovation.

As cities become territories for critical cultural and creative production (Borén et al., 2020; Pintossi et al., 2021), tangible urban regeneration persists. The intention to regenerate means promoting an elective affinity led by a newly emerged creative class with an inherently neoliberal ethos (Florida, 2002; Pratt, 2008; Waitt & Gibson, 2009). To Florida (2002), the emergence of new economic specialisations allows for places to creatively present nascent consumption practices, value creation, and a competitive advantage. It can be argued using culture to transcend past associations or imaginations reinvents a new service economy and a new entertainment machine to promote and highlight creativity (Clark, 2011). To Pratt (2005, 2010, 2011), these issues run deep and cause tensions between local stakeholders who attempt to produce culture but find themselves needing to conform to political and socioeconomic planning agendas with intended cultural results. Zan

et al. (2011, p. 190) add such cultural policy of optimism is coupled with an "astonishing degrees of abstraction and naiveté". Such ethos surrounding contemporary creativity changes how creativity and cultural participation were initially perceived (see Bishop, 2012; Jameson, 1998; O'Neill & Wilson, 2010. Cultural policies increasingly prescribe participatory art practices as technologies of creative citizenship to mobilise cultural participation as "an etho-politics of civic renewal and self-actualisation" (Grundy & Boudreau, 2008, p. 351). However, in the creative city, this raises ethical concerns (see Koefoed, 2013).

Consumption increasingly drives contemporary urban development (Collins, 2019). Additionally, Vivant (2013) argues leveraging creativity creates new products for consumption. In the post-industrial city, culture-led regeneration is a way to overcoming recession and decline (Wise and Jimura, 2020). Notably, Florida's (2017) recent work recognises the fallacies of his earlier prophecies and acknowledges negative impacts. Hénaff (2016) adds scholarly efforts assessing urban change and local impacts need to be continuous. However, when considering urban regeneration as a creative change process, where change is directed and supported by a few powerful actors and decision-makers, others (may at least initially) resist change. Degen and Garcia (2012) point to governance structures and how competitiveness guides decision-making, putting pressures on residents who want to address social problems locally. This is why Aquilino, Armenski, and Wise (2019) argue more considerations of competitiveness need to be assessed locally. As a result, cities become stages where growing approximation between economic dimensions of culture and cultural dimensions of the economy (Jameson, 1998). Some argue that this reinforces place brands (Németh, 2016), using culture fashionably to guide urban transformation (Boland, Murtagh, & Shirlow, 2019; Pavel & Jucu, 2020).

Attempts to build and develop creative cities has long-stimulated needs to adopt standardise cultural policy agendas with urban development (Grodach, 2017). This often means new art galleries, ethnic festivals, cultural district, co-working spaces, and public art displays or contemporary art biennials (Lazzeretti, 2008; Pratt, 2021; Vivant & Morteau, 2020). However, mimetic formulas tempered by local specificities are aimed at urban reconversion. This can lead to metaphorical conventions that shape host slogans (e.g. Liverpool's 'A World in One City') that integrate marketing strategies that affirm future intentions (or projections) without forgetting to glorify selected pasts (e.g. UNESCO World Heritage sites). Belfiore (2020) argues conflicts over cultural representation, social inclusion and economics/arts begin to clash. Wise and and Harris (2019) also critically demonstrate whose and how culture is represented – primarily through attempts to display/disseminate culture based on an expected precedence without real inclusion or representation how a place is changing or contemporary demographics. As argued, there are more dominant players influencing policy directions. A concern is this can result in value-added disruptions, misrecognitions and marginalisation (Belfiore, 2020; Steiner, Frey, & Hotz, 2015).

2.2. Cultural policy debates and ECoC legacy interpretation

Insights presented above coincide with new interpretations facing the role of culture in European cultural policy. The set of values and beliefs associated with larger-scale cultural events and how cities can successfully bid is firmly grounded on the instrumental and economic value of culture (O'Brien, 2014). The ECoC's 35-year history is accepted as the most visible manifestation of EU cultural policy, but also as a "readymade" formula for post-industrial cities to set in motion an aggressive revitalisation of city identity and image (Ferrari & Guala, 2017; Harvey, 2001; Huovinen, Timonen, Leino, & Seppälä, 2017; Liu, 2019). Such cultural policy is meant to tackle urban decline and decay, instigating the emergence of the neoliberal city in the context of the transition to late-capitalism (Mandel, 1975). If, initially, the event sought to unify Europe through cultural heritage, a host-city would

instead realise its symbolic importance and attract financial investment and leverage new solutions (Bowitz and Ibenholt, 2009). Glasgow 1990 (Garcia, 2005), Porto 2001 (Ganga, 2011, 2012; Savic, 2017; Richards, Hitters, & Fernandes, 2002), Liverpool 2008 (Garcia, Cox, & Melville, 2010), Marseille 2013 (Andres, 2011), and many others, presented themselves as what Corijin and Van Praet (1997) deem urban enno-blement projects, where cities use culture as a regeneration instrument. However, arguably, cultural policy and cultural value research has been demonstrating the opposite (Mangset, 2018; Papazoglou, 2019, pp. 2625–2639). Any hope of interchangeable features of capitals (Bour-dieu, 1979) has been challenged. Given these critical and conceptual directions, there is a need to address why and how the ECoC perpetuates post-industrial culture-led regeneration rhetoric, especially when such rhetoric has been continuously disproved (Belfiore, 2009; Liu, 2019).

The urban regeneration assumption was an implicit part of European cultural policy since Glasgow 1990, but made explicit in 1999—as observed in the following objective: "to explore the urban historical and architectural heritage" (European Parlament and of the Council, 1999). Consequently, the economic effects of urban regeneration became cen-tral policy objectives. The lines of cultural policy were assumed but frequently blurred, which contested explicit or implicit implications (Ahearne, 2009; Bennett, 2011; Zan et al., 2011). Commissioned eval-uation reports often praise economic dimensions, and highlights how the ECoC boosts relationships between the economy and culture in post-industrial cities, thereby conforming to late-capitalism (Garcia et al., 2010; Urbančíková, 2018). While academic studies voice ethical concern over the evaluation methodologies that cherry-pick results (Campbell, Cox, & O'Brien, 2017). Scholars argue that findings often underline concurring ECoC objectives (O'Callaghan, 2012) by overly emphasising an events economic nature (Belfiore, 2009) or impacts on resident wellbeing (Steiner et al., 2015). Baker, Bull, and Taylor (2018) posit more consideration is needed to explore how these contradictory approaches have been absorbed within ECoC explicit and implicit cul-tural policy dimensions. To Collins (2019) it is necessary to evaluate how the rhetoric of the neoliberal city is perpetuated, which have eco-nomic (burst of the market bubble) and societal (disruption, mis-recognition and gentrification) implications. Noted points of concern has profound implications concerning cultural and social policy and impacts locally, which this paper aims to discuss.

The European Council did later recognise the validity of these dis-tortions, asserting in the past 20 years, the event has been very suc-cessful in terms of cultural and socioeconomic development (European Capital of Culture, 2010). But this only reinforces the critical positions mentioned above. The ECoC is the oldest and most strongly institu-tionalised explicit form of EU cultural policy. Cultural policies pre-exist political power, in which the instrumental value of culture is evident (Belfiore, 2012). The 2018 EC official evaluation guidelines acknowl-edge the multiplicity of policy objectives. These range from improving cultural infrastructures (tangible) to capacity building (intangible). Capacity building aims to create new opportunities for citizens to develop their artistic skills. As O'Callaghan (2012, p.189) notes, these guidelines are not "readily reconcilable with each other, primarily in that they presuppose the importance of a European integration agenda at the local level". Garcia (2004, p.115), who recognised difficulties, states ECoC hosts struggle to balance "local community needs with the interests of external visitors and media viewers/readers". Beyond being an intrinsic problem, Belfiore (2009) argues part of the problem is how academics and policymakers interpret cultural value. To this regard, this academic research study is based on knowledge and insights directly from policymakers.

Relevant considerations in this paper include Ahearne's (2009) and Bennett's (2011) emphasis on intrinsic contradictions between explicit and implicit cultural policymaking. Explicit cultural policy refers to the mere labelling of something simple as 'cultural'. In contrast, implicit cultural policy refers to "deliberate courses of action intended to shape cultures, but are not always expressly described as such" (Bennett, 2011,

p. 213). This binary approach helps researchers elaborate on distinctions between what is viewed as nominal or effective, given that stakeholders create culture-shaping decisions and recommendations to maintain symbolic legitimacy (Ahearne, 2009). However, this cannot be assumed or presumed, so this paper develops an argument demonstrating how recurrent implicit policy can skew an event towards neoliberal rhetoric and how that rhetoric falls short in times of crisis.

3. Methods

The research strategy adopted is framed within current cultural and urban policy debates. This paper focuses in on a local cultural policy development context, and builds on recently published research on the ECoC by Ganga (2021) and Wise et al, (2021a, 2021b). An ex-ante qualitative case study of the Rijeka2020 Programme uses a kaleido-scopic approach to interpret explicit and implicit cultural policy di-mensions of the programme as intended and with this impact of COVID-19.

In-depth qualitative data were collected between July 2019 and May 2020. Through ethnographic observations and social photography in Rijeka, the researchers adopted a phenomenological approach to mini-mise bias and conducted a series of unstructured focus groups. Perspective gained from focus groups helped build understanding around programme aims and interconnections with Rijeka cultural policy intentions and the ECoC selection committee recommendations. The first focus group was conducted with the Rijeka2020 Programme Team (hereafter FG1) in July 2019. The second focus group was con-ducted in Liverpool in January 2020. Here, a purpose sample (Tongco, 2007) of fourteen Croatian national policymakers (hereafter FG2) included members of Osijek and Dubrovnik city councils representing unsuccessful Croatian ECoC 2020 candidate cities (Campagna & Jelinčić, 2018). These focus groups explored policy links between bid-ding for the ECoC and local cultural policy and urban development. Interpretations around implicit perceptions of success and legacy stra-tegies of the bidding process are assumed to have positive effects (Richards, 2015). Focus groups allowed for a discussion of these points. To supplement focus group findings, a semi-structured virtual interview with the CEO of Rijeka2020 was conducted in May 2020 soon after the COVID-19 led to alterations of the event programme. The interview explored the shifts in the programme imposed by the pandemic, with a particular emphasis on the priorities and criteria for reshaping Rijeka2020.

Data was transcribed verbatim and the analysis used open coding (Burawoy, 2000). The content analysis initially generated 11 conceptual themes, and these were then categorized to build discussions around three considerations: cultural participation, culture-led regeneration, and legacy. From the focus groups and subsequent interview, data from six operational themes: COVID-19 imposed shifts, ECoC monitoring and evaluation, Rijeka cultural policy, Rijeka2020 programme, and per-ceptions; and twenty-five sub-themes are considered across the three conceptual themes. Primary data were analysed using QSR International N'Vivo Version 12. Any disagreements were resolved by consensus discussion amongst the researchers.

Aiming to shed light on the intricate web of policymaking that in-terlinks macro-level (European-wide) and local level (city) culture-shaping decisions and recommendations, another dataset of secondary data was constituted. Here we aggregated a series of policy documents, divided into explicit and implicit policy documents. Seven identified documents: 'Guidelines for a City's ECoC evaluation' (European Com-mission, 2018), 'A New European Agenda for Culture' (European Commission, 2018), 'Cultural Policy in Croatia–the National Report' and 'Croatia in the 21st century: Strategy of cultural development' (Primorac et al., 2017), 'Strategy of the Cultural Development of the City of Rijeka, 2013–2020' (City of Rijeka, 2013), 'Rijeka2020 bid document' (Ri, 2020, 2016), and 'Kultura u Doba Korone' ['Culture in the age of Coronavirus'] (Ri, 2020), are considered because they present and detail

explicit policy. The ECoC 2016 Selection Panel Report is analysed as an implicit policy document alongside the primary dataset. This division is set as the Selection Panel Report not only accounts for how an ECoC bid matches the necessary criteria but also provides an insight into the European expert perceptions of what an ECoC is or should focus on: cultured-led regeneration strategies.

The next section presents illustrative extracts from the focus groups, interview and policy analysis are provided in the results and discussion section.

4. Results and discussion

4.1. National and local cultural policy

Three decades of Croatian independence saw significant development and transformation in national cultural policy. Earlier cultural production was centralised in Zagreb, with Croatian cultural policy focusing predominantly on supply rather than demand (Primorac et al., 2017). In 2020, with the Council's Presidency, national cultural policies were revised and aligned with EU priorities. Transition to a new millennium brought with it two national cultural policy documents ('Cultural Policy in Croatia – the National Report' and 'Croatia in the 21st century: Strategy of cultural development') which favoured a more holistic approach to cultural policy rather than the sector-focused one. The national government as well as cities and municipalities are responsible for the core funding of arts and culture programmes in Croatia—but budgets are often limited. This may align with why Croatia was long associated with low levels of cultural consumption (Rius-Ulldemolins, Pizzi, & Rubio Arostegui, 2019).

Joining the EU brought positive changes. Some challenges faced however did relate to inconsistencies in development strategy at different policy levels (Primorac, Uzelac, & Bilić, 2018) and discrepancy between EU and national culture policy (Bilić & Švob-Đokić, 2016). Furthermore, a prerequisite for EU funding requires the adoption of some strategic documents and participating in common EU policy initiatives such as the ECoC, and this funding was necessary because 'we invested in culture quite a lot last years. Investing in culture was brought to us like a big economic development' (FG2). Furthermore, there has been an increase in local (city) level cultural planning and development, recognising that culture should be approached as a target and an instrument of social and urban transformation. The city of Rijeka developed a cultural strategy 2013–2020 (City of Rijeka, 2013) aiming to increase the accessibility to culture, strengthening the capacity and modernising cultural institutions, increasing the quality of cultural production, and promoting cross-sector networking. By establishing Rijeka as a city of culture and creativity, a step to achieve this cultural strategy intention would be reinforced by bidding for and hosting the ECoC.

4.2. Rijeka2020 – port of (a)Diversity

Rijeka saw a turbulent 20th century. Since 1913 Rijeka experienced six different state changes, each with vastly different political systems. Post-WWII, Rijeka was the main maritime port and an important industrial city in socialist Yugoslavia. A maritime traffic centre and proximity to Italy, Rijeka was always open to different cultures, religions and worldviews, including Western progressive, liberal and democratic ideas. Towards the end of the 20th-century, political tensions across Yugoslavia caused political disintegration, resulting in the war for Croatian independence in the early-1990s. Although Rijeka experienced no armed clashes, subsequent economic consequences were devastating. The country lost export markets and experienced industrial declines. Then, controversial privatisation processes contributed to some industries collapsing, ~25,000 industrial jobs were lost in Rijeka alone (Ri, 2020 2016). Rijeka's unemployment rate in 2016 varied between 10 and 13% above the EU average (Eurostat, 2020). As a traditionally left-wing governed city, Rijeka has a history of opposition to national right-wing governments, which often side-lined Rijeka from national political/financial decision-making. As the country moved towards a service-oriented and tertiary economy in the 21st-century, Rijeka was faced with a limited capacity to recover.

Rijeka's multicultural European identity and post-industrial remnants remain. The city has since adjusted policies and gained funding for culture-led regeneration based on the assumption that, apparently, like other European cities, it is possible to convert symbolic capital into economic capital (Bourdieu, 1979). Such developments encourage new investments in destination image, heritage and culture. The 'Cultural Development Strategy of the City of Rijeka, 2013–2020' is focused on balancing cultural and economic outcomes on the one hand, and the contemporary cultural sector needs on the other hand (upstream and downstream). The strategy introduced changes to cultural resources management and how culture systems were financed, while pointing to the need for cross-sectorial networks and upskilling stakeholder contributions. The need for culture-led regeneration and nascent place marketing made Rijeka a strategic ECoC selection for Croatia. Moreover, other potential candidates such as Zagreb, Split and Dubrovnik are already well-known destinations. Thus, regeneration policies, cultural investment and new promotional networks would better benefit Rijeka, giving the city a chance to build rebrand (Stipanović et al., 2019), enhance social impacts through increased civic pride and new interaction opportunities (Wise, Đurkin Badurina, & Perić, 2021b) and upgrade infrastructures (Campbell & O'Brien, 2019).

Following past ECoC biding strategies, Rijeka's bid document emphasises the city's post-industrial milieu, "with vibrant industrial heritage, full of charisma and artistic" intention (Ri, 2020, 2016), yet a 'somewhat tired city' (Selection Panel, 2016, p. 15). A key focus was put on how Rijeka is still a 'Port of Diversity'. The Rijeka2020 programme was structured over eight flagships and six auxiliary fleet initiatives (Ri, 2020, 2016). Each had topical, socioeconomic and historical issues to tackle. These are specific issues for the city and the region, linked to contemporary European matters, but were features of the bid that were praised by the selection panel: as "the panel appreciated that the seven main programme streams each address a current European issue" (Selection Panel, 2016, p. 15). However, the ECoC Selection Panel (2016) did acknowledge three major issues concerning Rijeka's bid: 1. a lack of investment in creative industries; 2. unambitious and weak impact indicators; and 3. a lack of high visibility projects to attract non-local audiences. These issues addressed by the Selection Panel needed to be understood in the scope of panel experts, as Rijeka2020 was deviating from fulfilling the readymade formula of the neoliberal creative city (Grodach, 2017; Landry & Bianchini, 1995).

4.3. Cultural strategies and values in times of crisis

Following two months of intended programme delivery, the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown bought Rijeka2020 to a halt. In April 2020, Rijeka2020 and the City of Rijeka announced the cancellation of the majority programme, which consequently led to the Rijeka2020 team being furloughed. The Rijeka2020 CEO mentioned "we knew immediately that we needed to restructure as a company, and also restructuring of the program. There are going to be new frameworks, financial frameworks, timeframe frameworks". The epidemiological measures set by the Republic of Croatia and Primorje–Gorski kotar County, along with a public spending ban imposed by the City of Rijeka resulted in a complete restructuring of the ECoC programme and budget. However, with the cancellation of the 2021 ECoC, Rijeka2020 could hold the title until April 2021.

The Cultural Participation Monitor (The Audience Agency, 2021) provided initial insight into the potential impact of the pandemic on cultural engagement, providing evidence to what was already expected, point to how the pandemic is likely to accentuate existing inequalities in cultural engagement. Pratt (2020, p. 1) questioned how city

policymakers and citizens would embrace the COVID-19 moment, given the need to address the "systemic problems of precarity and injustice in the urban cultural economy". At the time of writing and revising these points are considered as the pandemic reinforces workforce inequalities (Comunian & England, 2020), but we can also cast some light on potential avenues to unseat those inequalities. Examining the criteria that led to the restructuring of Rijeka2020 provides an insight into how cities, in the face of a pandemic, are revisiting cultural strategies and values (Walmsley, 2018).

Rijeka's initial bid aimed to use the ECoC title as a culture-led regeneration tool. The Rijeka2020 bid document states clear aims, objectives and programme strategies oriented around investing in cultural infrastructure to revitalise the city. Emphasis was put on economic restructuring to show a shift from an industrial past to a new service economy using events to drive culture. While unsuccessful counterparts focus on intrinsic values of culture (Belfiore, 2012; Fitjar, Rommetvedt, & Berg, 2013), FG2 respondents noted:

> Obviously, we didn't win […] Rijeka did a very good job focussing on regeneration. Ours was all about the music, theatre […] I thought it was enough to have this background to bid. But, it was more important to have a perspective of what you can achieve. I think this change the regeneration plans of the city of Rijeka.

Programme restructuring imposed by the pandemic led to a reductions, but they maintained a focus on: 1. capital investment in cultural hardware and upskilling the culture and creative workforce; and 2. local audience development. Highlighting these points, the Rijeka2020 CEO adds:

> We put the focus on the local and national scene. There are also programmes that support the participation of citizens, […] because we feel it's something that's very important, not just for the culture, but for the preservation of the democratic processes. We think this is a very important legacy.

Here, the CEO of Rijeka2020 speaks about legacy as not just buildings but as a whole infrastructural package. Rijeka2020 COVID-19 reduced the event to the following flagship programmes: The Kitchen, 27 Neighbourhoods, Children's House and Lungomare Art (directly managed by Rijeka2020); Dopo Lavoro (managed by an NGO); and

Sweet and Salt (managed by the University of Rijeka). Investments in cultural infrastructural managed by the City of Rijeka, including the regeneration of the Rikard Benčić complex, the Galeb ship, and RiHub, were preserved flagship programmes (these will be addressed in the next section).

The ECoC has been perceived for the past thirty-five year as a momentum of change that might help create tangible and intangible legacies, through: renewed urban infrastructures, opening new economic opportunities, and fostering lost senses of civic price and increased cultural participation (Koefoed, 2013; Rius-Ulldemolins et al., 2019). Rijeka2020 revised COVID-19 programme seemed much more oriented to the social and intrinsic values of culture, as alluded to by the CEO of Rijeka2020. Still, it is worth examining the intersections between initial and revised programmes addressing core values visible in each explicit and implicit cultural policy manifestation. Fig. 1 provides a visual representation of how multiple elements of the primary and secondary dataset overlaps, guiding the data interpretation that follows.

4.3.1. Culture-led urban regeneration: neoliberal rhetoric

The Selection Panel (2016, p. 16) observed the absence of a clear strategy to boost local creative industries as a weakness in the Rijeka2020 programme, stating they:

> expect a stronger inclusion of projects and programmes aimed at the creative and cultural industries, especially given the comments about high unemployment and the need for the city to move beyond its industrial past.

Across Croatia, creative and cultural industries generate more than €2 billion (~2.3% of GDP, with a gross value added of €900 million) and employ 42,000+ people (Institute of Economics, 2015). The Cultural and Creative Cities Monitor placed Rijeka behind Pula, Zagreb, Osijek and Split (European Commission, 2019), leaving room for Rijeka to boost cultural development and realise creative potential (Stipanović et al., 2019). Despite the culture-led urban regeneration being a recurrent theme across most of the Rijeka2020 programmes (namely Sweet and Salt, Seasons of Power, Children's House, RiHub, Dopolavoro, and Rikard Benčić complex), none focussed on creative industries development.

The revised pandemic strategy seemed to focus on cultural districtualization processes (Lazzeretti, 2008) and clustering the culture and creative industries (Pratt, 2021; Vivant & Morteau, 2020), which is
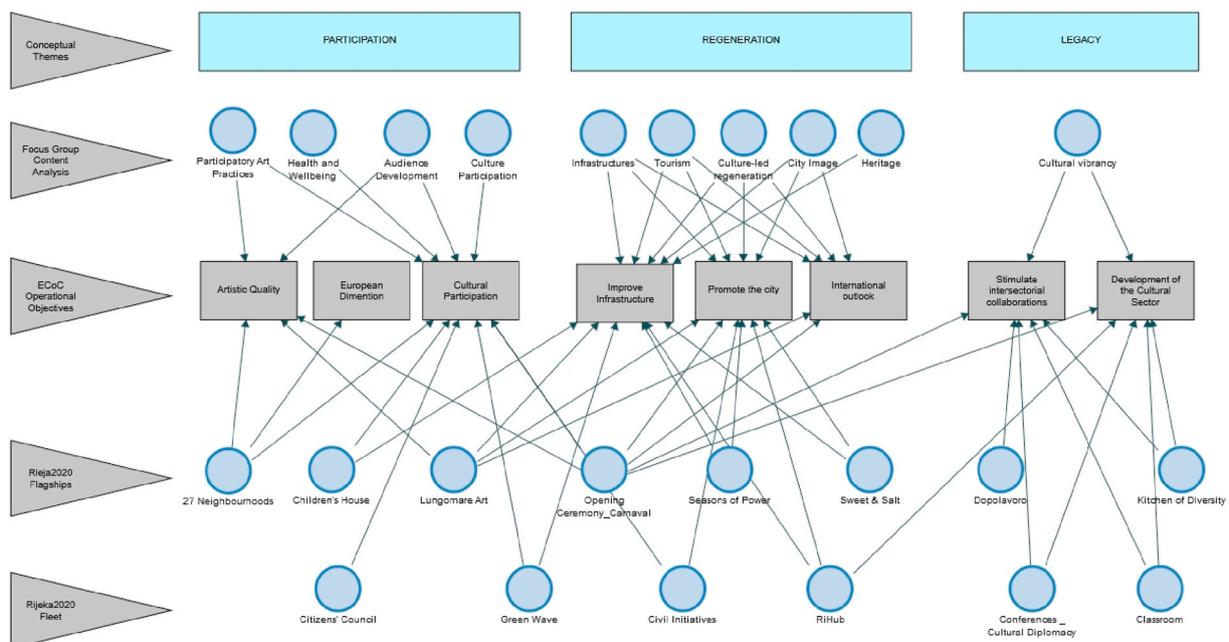

Fig. 1. Rijeka2020 programme conceptual analysis map.

a well-tested strategy of the creative city, with imprecise outcomes (Comunian, Chapain, & Clifton, 2014). The Rikard Benčić complex was converted from an administrative building of an old tobacco factory into Rijeka's new cultural district (constituted by the Rijeka Civic Library, Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Rijeka Civic Museum, and Children's House). This cultural district emerges in an area of the city that has been derelict for 20-years. In this same scope, the infrastructure and fleet programme RiHub is a multifunctional, co-working space with pop-up creative and cultural activities. Here, according to FG1, is part of 'the main activities here at RiHub is co-working, which is one of the products of Rijeka2020'. Through refurbishment and repurposing of semi-derelict buildings, the Rikard Benčić complex and RiHub are infrastructures that aim to forge networks between stakeholders across public (local government), economic (urban developers) and the cultural sectors (cultural industry stakeholders). According to the (European Commission (2018, p. 10), new cultural planning agendas incentivise cities to invest in creative hubs, so to "enhance the role of culture for innovation-led territorial development". Although, as Vivant and Morteau (2020, p. 1) puts it, "policies are sometimes out of touch with the realities", and the adoption of mimetic formulas tempered by local specificities can lose meaning. Cultural flagship developments and creative industries hubs are both part of local cultural and creative sectors ecology with intrinsic merits. However, it is assumed events will generate significant economic returns, but as (Comunian, Chapain, & Clifton, 2014 p. 67) explain: "this is partly due to political pressure and rhetoric that pushes through cultural regeneration".

Rijeka2020's culture-led urban regeneration agenda was reinforced by implementing capital cultural infrastructural projects (Sacco & Vella, 2017) supported by EU funds to catalyse urban improvements—thereby fulfilling ECoC operational and infrastructural improvement objectives. Not surprising, this champions neoliberal creative city rhetoric, as alluded to by FG2: 'investing in culture, it's something that will be a good return on investment'. This arguably contributes to the detachment of cultural values for the public good in exchange for socially spatial and temporary circumscribed economic impacts (O'Brien, 2014). Although Rijeka's bid was shy on creative industry oriented programming, even the COVID-19 restructuring preserved creative city neoliberal rhetoric fuelled by culture-led urban regeneration.

4.3.2. Legacy building: 'incendiary outcome' rhetoric

The Selection Panel (2016, p. 15) found a 'target of 70% of indicators to show an improvement to be unambitious and weak'. This can be interpreted in the scope of what O'Callaghan (2012) claims to be incendiary outcomes. Another concern is consultancy evaluations tend to be dangerously inflated, but do lead to cultural policy optimism (see Ahearne, 2009; Bennett, 2011). Once again, Rijeka2020 deviates from the readymade formula of neoliberal cultural mega events and prioritise different definitions of success grounded on creating cultural value (Walmsley, 2018). The bid document highlighted: "success will also depend on value created for the citizens of Rijeka and the region […], and we expect the public to recognise positive effects of the ECOC on community life" (Ri, 2020, 2016, p. 16).

To achieve its own definition of success, Rijeka2020 seems to follow (even during COVID-19) a complementary strategy towards investment in infrastructure. A programme of capacity building for the cultural sector lays the foundations for the future city cultural possibilities, which speaks to insights noted by Comunian and England (2020) and Pratt (2020). FG1 participants speak to a number of programmes:

Programme Plus: We started to work on it in 2017 because they are horizontal and the foundations of our legacy

Classroom Programme: is a base of preparing our team and the whole culture sector in running this kind of project

Kitchen of Diversity: wanted to upgrade it, to make it more professional

These three programmes according to FG1 participants represent the Rijeka2020 programme response to the following Selection Panel (2016, p. 10) concern, where "The panel shared doubts, recognised in the bid document, on the capacity of the city's arts and cultural sector to manage such a demanding event as an ECOC". The Rijeka2020 programme pre and post-pandemic seem to combine bottom-up (existing) with top-down (new) initiatives across the city to guarantee a culture programme legacy. This is explained by FG1 and by our interviewee:

I'm sure this will stay because, at some point, they got their new centres to develop and build on existing programmes. I trust that this new social movement is really happening. We don't know yet what to expect, but the need was there. (FG1).

I hope that the Department of Culture team will regard what was done and the legacy moments Rijeka2020 and implement those moments into the new cultural strategy (Rijeka2020 CEO).

Campbell et al. (2017) voice concern that a continuation of (apparently) problematic practices make it difficult to demonstrate accolated regenerative outcomes—which again underline neoliberal city rhetoric. Boland, Murtagh, and Shirlow (2020) take these insights further and argue that culturephilia drives creative and cultural policy decisions, which increasingly emphasises competitiveness (see also Wise et al., 2021b). In fact, Rijeka2020 embraced similar evaluative strategies to evidence the event's impact; however, the COVID-19 pandemic forced a shift in priorities and the perceived value and legacy of the mega-event, with the CEO of Rijeka2020 says, we 'won't be measuring the impacts of Rijeka2020, but the impacts of COVID-19'. O'Callaghan (2012) claims ECoC objectives are untenable, unrealistic and contradictory. In such a 'catch-all' event, issues are only exacerbated by a pandemic. Here-O'Callaghan (2012) would advocate for more relaxed interpretations. However, Rijeka's explicit and implicit legacy policies contrast dramatically with the headline-making 'incendiary outcomes' expected by the Selection Panel.

Still, the pandemic brought resilience as another policy buzzword, the Ri, 2020 CEO mentions 'resilience':

I don't think this is the only crisis we're going to face. Tomorrow, it can be global warming […] So this resilience moment, or how resilient we manage to be I think it's very important to tell this story.

A rhetoric of resilience in periods of crisis needs to be integrated into sustainable and structural changes in the sector (Beirne, Jennings, & Knight, 2017; Gupta & Gupta, 2019). Instead of cancelling all events, the Rijeka2020 CEO acknowledges how they made contingency plans to swiftly move retained parts of the programme online:

We are not producers so we could not produce immediately […] I think there is a lot of high-quality content. A lot of things that were posted online [, but] this is not digital art. Digital art is very difficult to make and takes time.

Abrupt change to a programme not only increase pressures for digital up-skilling, but can be seen as an opportunity to align with local and European cultural policy which aims to 'strengthen coherence between cultural, digital and audio-visual initiatives' (European Commission, 2018). Upscaling the capacity of the cultural and creative sector is a foundational initiative beyond 2020. Such direction moves beyond cultural policies of optimism (Ahearne, 2009; Bennett, 2011). Furthermore, this also positions an opportunity to move beyond long-term patterns of neoliberalism that constitute structural hindrances in the cultural and creative sector (Friedman, 2014; Pratt, 2017).

4.3.3. Participatory art practices: event-led spectacle rhetoric

The Rijeka2020 programme continues to heavily invest in civic values, with a focus on the arts to 'empower locals to continue buying on their own initiatives' (FG1). However, the Selection Panel (2016, p. 16) 'was less convinced with the plans to attract wider European audiences. There was a risk that the programme would appear more relevant to a

smaller regional audience'. The only flagship that addressed a spectacle to attract larger audiences was the opening ceremony, and this coincided with Carnival which is a popular pre-existing event (Gotham, 2011).

Grounded on participatory art practices (Bishop, 2012), 27 Neighbourhoods and Lungomare Art are two flagship programmes preserved in the COVID-19 programme. These flagships aim to increase local creative capacity, by responding to the challenges of network society (Castells, 1996) and addressing local urban subjectivities (Savic, 2017). Relevant here is what FG1 discussed around the aim of these programmes: 'the idea is to empower the community to be self-sustainable in cultural production'. This approach is supported by the literature, as this is also seen as an attempt to foster a European-wide network (Huovinen et al., 2017). This dialogue was reinforced in the bidding document, with intentions to:

> empower communities to develop long-term relations with one neighbourhood in each EU member state, gathering knowledge, transforming our cultural habits, people to people […] with neighbourhood-based cultural and civic associations in all EU member countries. (Ri, 2020, 2016, p. 7)

Responding directly to European Dimension of the ECoC, FG1 added to the point from the bidding document that this 'will be our best-case practice for the ECoC'. 27 Neighbourhoods, especially, captures the essence of the original ECoC aim to foster European identity by sharing common cultures (Lähdesmäki, 2012).

Another project was Lungomare Art commissioned ten *in situ* installations of well-known Croatian and International contemporary artists to help stimulate cultural tourism (Stipanović et al., 2019). Lungomare Art follows the same elements observed in 27 Neighbourhoods—to develop participatory art through diverse strategies with mixed outcome potential. Similarly, the aim is to ask local communities to work with artists to understand and represent their stories, myths and particular situations. Each collaborative outcome would be an object to collectively develop a new touristic route spread throughout the region. Participants from the focus groups add perspective:

> We're aiming to be the spark and leave for the economic sector, and the touristic sector to take the spark and develop it into something that can have a market value. (FG1).

> [Overcome the] language barrier concerning the work on culture. This flagship, beyond articulates artistic quality' and cultural participation' inscribed in the participation theme, also addresses regeneration objectives with potential impact in the county next to Rijeka. (FG2).

Once again, there seem to be a different interpretation of to whom is the ECoC programme developed and which culture should be celebrated (Belfiore, 2020; Fitjar et al., 2013).

The Rijeka2020 programme appeals for participatory art practices, embracing a narrative of art against passivity from the masses. The opposite is advocated by the Selection Panel remarks. However, participation is art is neither linear nor does it recognise in itself so many other aspects of the new spirit of capitalism (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005). Such an argument attends to the language used by FG1 to describe their good intentions:

> We are educating the local citizens through participation […] They don't have cultural content there, or it is very traditional cultural content. So, we are also trying to build their capacities relating to contemporary art […] Rijeka doesn't have cultural heritage […] We do not have links to cultural heritage.

Such a call for active cultural citizenship seems to be a veiled intention for political and civic education, incorporating even social engineering and symbolic domination strategies (Grundy & Boudreau, 2008). Still, even if the creators of the Rijeka2020 programme advocate for participatory art practices as a strategy to enhance active citizenship and culture participation, the Selection Panel will continue to advocate

that the purpose of large-scale events are to attract international audiences and boost the visitor economy. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the existing contradictions within ECoC explicit and implicit forms of cultural policy. This particularly concerns concurring objectives, in terms of cultural ownership, social inclusion and economic regeneration (Koefoed, 2013).

5. Conclusions

Rijeka2020 bided to consolidate a cultural and creative sector in two ways: upstream with capital investment in cultural hardware and upskilling the (culture and creative) workforce and downstream to develop a local audience (participatory art is understood here as contributing to both ends). Nonetheless, the Rijeka2020 programme is inscribed in contradictions. On the one hand, it seeks to fulfil the neoliberal city agenda through culture-led regeneration while, on the other hand, it advocates for participatory art practices. Participatory art practices represent a resistance against neoliberal urban development agendas. Although instead of engaging in a large-scale event-led policy to attracting international audiences and boost the visitors economy, Rijeka2020 seems to prioritise the development of the city's local and regional audiences with initiatives that foster intensive rather than extensive cultural engagement. Potentially, the combination of both tangible and intangible outcomes support shifts towards news directions, especially given the impacts of COVID-19. Thus, for a city such as Rijeka, the ECoC must not only leverage culture, but foster place marketing, tourism and local capacity building to provide national opportunities that will, potentially, be reflected internationally (and not only on Rijeka, but also on Croatia).

Critical stances that challenge perceived impacts surrounding the role and influence of the ECoC Selection Panel in perpetuating the interpretation of the event as an aid programme to cities in need that will solve post-industrial and post-socialist economic challenges, as also addressed by Pavel and Jucu (2020). Recently, claims for transparency in the selection process have started to emerge (Green, 2021). The key consideration to take forward is have we reached the end of the ECoC as a vehicle for the neoliberal and creative city? Potentially, the COVID-19 pandemic accelerates this. Despite the contemporary COVID-19 disruption, as Rijeka2020 revisits its future cultural policy and event agendas it is believed they will focus on strengthening local creative and cultural industries as well as active cultural participation. This strategy demonstrated that cities can embrace times of crisis, to change and tackle structure inequalities (Comunian & England, 2020). Perspective into how arts and culture can be used as a soft power to achieve a cultural and political democratic European project is another way forward in future research, and is a way of overcoming defensive instrumentalism (Belfiore, 2012). However, the long-term repercussions of the pandemic to the cultural and creative sector are still to be fully acknowledged. Expectations of deep structural transformations following periods of crisis still need to recognise previous systems and sustainability frameworks. The rhetoric of resilience associated with a diminished welfare state is short-sighted to fully address the current times as an opportunity to reset tiered cultural policies and plan for sustainable and inclusive cultural opportunities (Comunian & England, 2020).

The contributions/implications of this paper are manifold. First, is a contribution to the analysis of the cultural policy of optimism and critical ex-ante cultural policy developments. From the practical side, in-depth insight into the Rijeka2020 planning documents benefits event planners and policymakers who seek to develop and integrate critical and responsible strategies at local, regional and national scales. Thus, the transferability is positioned in the scope and direction of the approach to collect data on cultural policy prior to hosting events. The findings thus frame overlaps and contradictions concerning explicit and implicit policymaking. This shines light on the understanding of participation, urban regeneration, legacy and capacity building in post-

industrial cities in times of late capitalism. Also important to note, while a research strategy grounded on a particular case study does not grant generalisation, it does instead allows for nuanced analysis of multiple levels of policymaking and cultural programming. This encourages researchers to gain an in-depth understanding of key stakeholder perceptions pertinent to the symbolic legitimacy at multiples level of policymaking (Ahearne, 2009). Future research would benefit from a cross-ECoC analysis adopting the same framework used in this paper. A multisource conceptual map where explicit cultural policy documents are mapped against implicit ones will allow researchers to see what trends across cases exist. Applying this conceptual analysis to other ECoC host cities while also including ex-post analysis would allow a comprehensive overview of potential implicit trends and shifts of the most visible EU cultural policy manifestations.

Declaration of interest

All authors declare no conflict of interest.

Funding

CRediT authorship contribution statement

Rafaela Neiva Ganga: ConceptualizationConceptualisation, Methodology, Investigation, Data Collection and Analysis, Data Visualisation, Writing – original draft. **Nicholas Wise:** Funding acquisition, Conceptualisation, Supervision, Validation, Writing – review & editing. **Marko Perić:** Resources, Validation, Writing – review & editing.

Acknowledgements

References

Ahearne, J. (2009). Cultural policy explicit and implicit: A distinction and some uses. *International journal of Cultural Policy, 15*(2), 141–153.

Andres, L. (2011). Marseille 2013 or the final round of a long and complex regeneration strategy? *Town Planning Review, 82*(1), 61–76.

Aquilino, L., Armenski, T., & Wise, N. (2019). Assessing the competitiveness of matera and the basilicata region (Italy) ahead of the 2019 European capital of culture. *Tourism and Hospitality Research, 19*(4), 503–517.

Baker, G., Bull, A., & Taylor, M. (2018). Who watches the watchmen? Evaluating evaluations of el sistema. *British Journal of Music Education*, 1–15.

Beirne, M., Jennings, M., & Knight, S. (2017). Autonomy and resilience in cultural work: Looking beyond the 'creative industries'. *Journal for Cultural Research, 21*(2), 204–221.

Belfiore, E. (2009). On bullshit in cultural policy practice and research: Notes from the British case. *International Journal of Cultural Policy, 15*(3), 343–359.

Belfiore, E. (2012). "Defensive instrumentalism" and the legacy of New Labour's cultural policies. *Cultural Trends, 21*(2), 103–111. https://doi.org/10.1080/09548963.2012.674750

Belfiore, E. (2020). Whose cultural value? Representation, power and creative industries. *International Journal of Cultural Policy, 26*(3), 383–397. https://doi.org/10.1080/10286632.2018.1495713

Bennett, O. (2011). Cultures of optimism. *Cultural Sociology, 5*(2), 301–320.

Bilić, P., & Švob-Đokić, N. (2016). The pendulum model of Croatian media policy: Swinging between public interests and market competition. *European Journal of Communication, 31*(5), 503–518.

Bishop, C. (2012). *Artificial hells: Participatory art and the politics of spectatorship.* New York: Verso Books.

Boland, P., Murtagh, B., & Shirlow, P. (2019). Fashioning a city of culture: 'life and place changing' or '12 month party'? *International Journal of Cultural Policy, 25*(2), 246–265.

Boland, P., Murtagh, B., & Shirlow, P. (2020). Neoliberal place competition and culturephilia: Explored through the lens of Derry~Londonderry. *Social & Cultural Geography, 21*(6), 788–809.

Boltanski, L., & Chiapello, E. (2005). *The New Spirit of Capitalism.* London: Verso.

Borén, T., Grzyś, P., & Young, C. (2020). Spatializing authoritarian neoliberalism by way of cultural politics: City, nation and the European Union in Gdańsk's politics of cultural policy formation. *EPC: Politics and Space.* https://doi.org/10.1177/2399654420965239

Bourdieu, P. (1979). *La distincion.* Paris: Minuit.

Bowitz, E., & Ibenholt, K. (2009). Economic impacts of cultural heritage – research and perspectives. *Journal of Cultural Heritage, 10*(1), 1–8. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.culher.2008.09.002

Burawoy, M. (2000). *Global Ethnography: Forces, Connections, and Imaginations in a Postmodern World.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Campagna, D., & Jelinčić, D. A. (2018). A set of indicators of interculturalism in local cultural policies: A study of three Croatian candidates for the European capital of culture. *Hrvatska i komparativna javna uprava: Časopis Za Teoriju I Praksu javne Uprave, 18*(1), 47–71.

Campbell, P., Cox, T., & O'Brien, D. (2017). The social life of measurement: How methods have shaped the idea of culture in urban regeneration. *Journal of Cultural Economy, 10*(1), 49–62.

Campbell, P., & O'Brien, D. (2019). European capital of culture" and the primacy of cultural infrastructure in post-industrial urbanism. In Z. Krajina, & D. Stevenson (Eds.), *The routledge companion to Urban Media and Communication* (pp. 274–282). London: Routledge.

Castells, M. (1996). *The Rise of the Network Society, The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture, I.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Centre for Cultural Value. (2021). *Covid-19: "The great unequaliser?". What value culture? Leeds.* Centre for Cultural Value. Retrieved May 11, 2021, from https://www.culturalvalue.org.uk/event/covid-19-the-great-unequaliser/.

City of Rijeka. (2013). *Strategija kulturnog razvitka Grada Rijeke 2013-2020. (Cultural development Strategy of the City of Rijeka 2013-2020).* Retrieved July 24, 2020, from City of Rijeka: https://www.rijeka.hr/en/themes-for-citizens/culture/cultural-development-strategy-of-the-city-of-rijeka/.

Clark, T. (2011). *The city as an entertainment machine.* New York: Lexington Books.

Collins, P. (2019). And the winner is ... Galway: A cultural anatomy of a winning designate. *International Journal of Cultural Policy.*

Comunian, R., Chapain, C., & Clifton, N. (2014). Creative industries & creative policies: A European perspective? *City, Culture and Society, 2(5),, 2*(5), 51–53. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ccs.2014.05.009

Comunian, R., & England, L. (2020). Creative and cultural work without filters: Covid-19 and exposed precarity in the creative economy. *Cultural Trends, 29*(2), 112–128.

Corijin, E., & Van Praet, S. (1997). Capitais Europeias da Cultura e Politicas de Arte: O caso de Antuérpia 93. In C. F.(org (Ed.), *Cidade, Cultura e Globalização. Oeiras.* Celta Editora.

Degen, M., & Garcia, M. (2012). The transformation of the 'barcelona model': An analysis of culture, urban regeneration and governance. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, 36*(5), 1022–1038.

European Capital of Culture. (2010). *Summary of the European Commission conference "Celebrating 25 years of European Capital of Culture.* Brussels: Education and Culture DG.

European Commission. (2018). *European Capitals of Culture (ECoC) 2020-2023. Guidelines for the cities own evaluations of the results of their ECOC.* Brussels: European Commission.

European Commission. (2019). *Creative Europe: European Capitals of Culture.* Retrieved April 08, 2020, from https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/actions/capitals-culture_en.

European Parlament and of the Council. (1999). Decision 1419/1999/EC of the European parlament and of the council establishing a community action for the European capital of culture event for the years 2005 to 2019. *Official Journal of the European Communities,* 07 01 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:31999D1419&rid=1. (Accessed 7 March 2021) Accessed.

Eurostat. (2020). *Unemployment rates EU-27 and EA-19, seasonally adjusted, January 2005 - June 2020 (%).* https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Unemployment_statistics.

Ferrari, S., & Guala, C. (2017). Mega-events and their legacy: Image and tourism in genoa, turin and milan. *Leisure Studies, 36*(1), 119–137.

Fitjar, R. D., Rommetvedt, H., & Berg, C. (2013). European capitals of culture: Elitism or inclusion? The case of Stavanger2008. *International Journal of Cultural Policy, 19*(1), 63–83.

Flew, T., & Cunningham, S. (2010). Creative industries after the first decade of debate. *The information society, 26*(2), 113–123. https://doi.org/10.1080/01972240903562753

Florida, R. (2002). *The Rise of the Creative Class: And How it'ss Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life.* New York: Basic Books.

Florida, R. (2017). *The New Urban Crisis: How Our Cities Are Increasing Inequality, Deepening Segregation, and Failing the Middle Class-and What We Can do About It.* New York: Basic Books.

Friedman, G. (2014). Workers without employers: Shadow corporations and the rise of the gig economy. *Review of Keynesian Economics, 2*(2), 171–188.

Ganga, R. (2011). From the soviet exhibition palace to the contemporary art centre: Cultural democratisation or elitist enclosure? *engage, 28*, 19–28.

Ganga, R. (2012). *European Contemporary Museum Education. A Global ethnography on the policies and practices of the European Capital of Culture.* Porto: University of Porto.

Ganga, R. (2021). Evaluating cultural legacy – from policy to engaged research. In N. Wise, & K. Maguire (Eds.), *A Research Agenda for Event Impacts.* Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Garcia, B. (2004). Cultural policy and urban regeneration in western European cities: Lessons from experience, prospects for the future. *Local Economy, 19*(4), 312–326.

Garcia, B. (2005). Deconstructing the city of culture: The long-term cultural legacies of Glasgow 1990. *Urban Studies, 42*(Nos 5/6), 841–868.

Garcia, B., Cox, T., & Melville, R. (2010). *Creating an impact: Liverpool's experience as European Capital of Culture. Liverpool, Merseyside*. Reino Unido: University of Liverpool.

Gotham, K. F. (2011). Resisting urban spectacle: The 1984 Louisiana World Exposition and the contradictions of mega events. *Urban Studies, 48*(1), 197–214.

Green, S. (2021). *Selecting the European Capital of Culture: With added transparency*. January 18. Retrieved May 09, 2021, from Prasino: prasino, .eu/2021/01/18/selecting-the-european-capital-of-culture-with-added-transparency/.

Grodach, C. (2017). Urban cultural policy and creative city making. *Cities, 68*, 82–91.

Grundy, J., & Boudreau, J. A. (2008). 'Living with culture': Creative citizenship practices in toronto. *Citizenship Studies, 12*(4), 347–363.

Gupta, S., & Gupta, A.-Y. (2019). "Resilience" as a policy keyword: Arts council England and austerity. *Policy Studies, 1–17*.

Harvey, D. (2001). *Spaces of Capital*. New York: Routledge.

Hénaff, M. (2016). *The City in the Making*. London: Rowan and Littlefield.

Huovinen, A., Timonen, E., Leino, T., & Seppälä, T. (2017). Changing urban identities on a discursive map. *City, Culture and Society, 11*, 20–28.

Institute of Economics. (2015). *Mapiranje kreativnih i kulturnih industrija u Republici Hrvatskoj (Mapping of creative and cultural industries in the Republic of Croatia)*. Zagreb: Institute of Economics.

Jameson, F. (1998). *The Cultural Turn: Selected writings on the postmodern, 1983-1998*. Londres: Verso.

Koefoed, O. (2013). European Capitals of Culture and cultures of sustainability–The case of Guimaraes 2012. *City, Culture and Society, 4*(3), 153–162.

Lähdesmäki, T. (2012). Rhetoric of unity and cultural diversity in the making of European cultural identity. *International Journal of Cultural Policy, 18*(1), 59–75.

Landry, C. (2000). *The creative city: A toolkit for urban innovators*. Londres: Earthscan.

Landry, C., & Bianchini, F. (1995). *The Creative City*. Londres: Demos.

Lazzeretti, L. (2008). *The cultural districtualization model. Creative cities, cultural clusters and local economic development*.

Liu, Y. D. (2019). Event and sustainable culture-led regeneration: Lessons from the 2008 European capital of culture, Liverpool. *Sustainability, 11*(7), 1869.

Mandel, E. (1975). *Late Capitalism*. London: NLB.

Mangset, P. (2018). The end of cultural policy? *International Journal of Cultural Policy, 26* (3), 398–411.

Németh, A. (2016). European capitals of culture - digging deeper into the governance of the mega-event. *Territory, Politics, Governance, 4*(1), 52–74.

O'Brien, D. (2014). Cultural value, measurement and policy making. *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education, 14*(1), 79–94.

O'Callaghan, C. (2012). Urban anxieties and creative tensions in the European Capital of Culture 2005:'It couldn't just be about Cork. *International Journal of Cultural Policy, 18*(2), 185–204.

O'Neill, P., & Wilson, M. (2010). *Curating and the Educational Turn*. London: de Appel Arts Centre & Open Editions.

Papazoglou, G.2. (2019). Society and Culture: Cultural Policies driven by Local Authorities as A Factor in Local development—The Example of the Municipality of Xanthi-Greece. *2*. Heritage.

Pavel, S., & Jucu, I. S. (2020). Urban transformation and cultural evolution of post-socialist European cities. The case of Timisoara (Romania): From 'Little Vienna' urban icon to European Capital of culture (ECoC 2021). *City, Culture and Society, 20*, 1002.

Peck, J. (2005a). Struggling with the creative class. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, 2*(4), 740–770.

Peck, J. (2005b). Struggling with the creative class. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, 29*(4), 740–770.

Pintossi, N., Ikiz Kaya, D., & Pereira Roders, A. (2021). Assessing cultural heritage adaptive reuse practices: Multi-scale challenges and solutions in Rijeka. *Sustainability, 13*(7), 3603.

Pratt, A. C. (2008). Creative cities: The cultural industries and the creative class. *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography, 90*(2), 107–117.

Pratt, A. C. (2010). Creative cities: Tensions within and between social, cultural and economic development. A critical reading of the UK experience. *City, Culture and Society, 1*, 13–20.

Pratt, A. C. (2011). The cultural contradictions of the creative city. *City, Culture and Society, 2*(3), 123–130.

Pratt, A. C. (2017). Beyond resilience: Learning from the cultural economy. *European Planning Studies, 25*(1), 127–139.

Pratt, A. C. (2020). COVID–19 impacts cities, cultures and societies. *City, Culture and Society, 21*.

Pratt, A. C. (2021). Creative hubs: A critical evaluation. *City, Culture and Society, 24*, 100384.

Primorac, J., Obuljen Koržinek, N., & Uzelac, A. (2017). Access to culture in Croatian cultural policy: Moving towards explicit policies. *International Journal of Cultural Policy, 23*(5), 562–580.

Primorac, J., Uzelac, A., & Bilić, P. (2018). European union and challenges of cultural policies: Critical perspectives. An introduction. *Croatian International Relations Review, 24*(82), 6–13. https://doi.org/10.2478/cirr-2018-0007

Ri:2020. (2016). *Rijeka's Bid Book for the Title of European Capital of Culture 2020*. Rijeka: Ri, 2020. Retrieved June 29th, 2020, from https://rijeka2020.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/ri2020-eng-web.pdf.

Richards, G. (2015). Evaluating the European capital of culture that never was: The case of BrabantStad 2018. *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events, 7*(2), 118–133.

Richards, G., Hitters, E., & Fernandes, C. (2002). *Rotterdam and Porto, Cultural Capitals 2001: Visitor research.*. Tilburg: ATLAS Association for Tourism and Leisure Education.

Rius-Ulldemolins, J., Pizzi, A., & Rubio Arostegui, J. A. (2019). European models of cultural policy: Towards European convergence in public spending and cultural participation? *Journal of European Integration, 41*(8), 1045–1067.

Rubio Arostegui, J. A., & Rius-Ulldemolins, J. (2018). Cultural policies in the south of Europe after the global economic crisis: Is there a southern model within the framework of European convergence? *International Journal of Cultural Policy, 26*(1), 16–30.

Sacco, P. L., & Vella, G. (2017). Introduction to Valletta2018 cultural mapping: Debating space and place. *City, Culture and Society, 11*, 1–3.

Savic, J. (2017). Sense(s) of the city: Cultural mapping in Porto, Portugal. this issue. *City, Culture and Society, 11*, 12–19.

Selection Panel. (2016). *Selection of the European Capital of Culture in 2020 in Croatia. The Selection Panel's Final Report*. Zagreb: European Capital of Culture.

Seraphin, S. (2021). COVID-19: An opportunity to review existing grounded theories in event studies. *Journal of Convention & Event Tourism, 22*(1), 3–35.

Steiner, L., Frey, B., & Hotz, S. (2015). European capitals of culture and life satisfaction. *Urban Studies, 52*(2), 374–394.

Stipanović, C., Rudan, E., & Zubović, V. (2019). Cultural and creative industries in urban tourism innovation .the example of the city of Rijeka. *Tourism in Southern and Eastern Europe, 5*, 655–666.

The Audience Agency. (2021). *COVID-19 Cultural Participation Monitor. Inequalities through COVID-19*. London: The Audience Agency.

Tongco, M. D. (2007). Purposive sampling as a tool for informant selection. *Ethnobotany Research and Applications, 5*, 147–158.

Union, E. (2007). *Tratado de Lisboa. December 17*. Lisbon: European Union. Retrieved August 02, 2012, from http://eur-lex.europa.eu/JOHtml.do?uri=OJ:C:2007:306:SOM:PT:HTML.

Urbančíková, N. (2018). European capitals of culture: What are their individualities? *Theoretical and Empirical Researches in Urban Management, 13*(4), 43–55.

Vivant, E. (2013). Creatives in the city: Urban contradictions of the creative city. *City, Culture and Society, 4*, 57–63.

Vivant, E., & Morteau, H. (2020). Reframing the creative city debate from locally-based artistic activities. the case of independent films scenes in Paris suburb. *City, Culture and Society, 22*, 100357.

Waitt, G., & Gibson, C. (2009). Creative small cities: Rethinking the creative economy in place. *Urban Studies, 46*, 1223–1246.

Walmsley, B. (2018). Deep hanging out in the arts: An anthropological approach to capturing cultural value. *International Journal of Cultural Policy, 24*(2), 272–291.

Wise, N., & Clark, J. (2017). *Urban Transformations: Geographies of Renewal and Creative Change*. London: Routledge.

Wise, N., & Harris, J. (Eds.). (2019). *Events, Places and Societies*. London: Routledge.

Wise, N., & Jimura, T. (Eds.). (2020). *Tourism, cultural Heritage and Urban Regeneration: Changing Spaces in Historical Places*. Berlin: Springer.

Wise, N., Đurkin Badurina, J., & Perić, M. (2021a). Assessing residents' perceptions of urban placemaking prior to hosting a major cultural event. *International Journal of Event and Festival Management, 12*(1), 51–69.

Wise, N., Đurkin Badurina, J., & Perić, M. (2021b). Pre-event competitiveness: Exploring residents' perceptions of place management and local impacts. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-10-2020-1199. ahead-of-print.

Wise, N., Đurkin, J., & Perić, M. (2019). Renewing Rijeka for 2020: Managing placemaking, regeneration, and community participation. In N. Wise, & J. Harris (Eds.), *Events, Places and Societies* (pp. 72–84). London: Routledge.

Xuereb, K. (2016). Urban regeneration & valletta 2018. *City, Culture and Society, 7*(3), 194–195.

Zan, L., Baraldi, S. B., & Onofri, F. (2011). The rhetoric of cultural policies and the issue of 'getting things done': Bologna cultural capital 10 years after. *City, Culture and Society, 2*(4), 189–200.