
Editorial

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1 Introduction

The future of our world will be characterised by global dynamics, accompanied by a great diversity at the local level. In this context, cities will play a pivotal role, in particular since our world will also exhibit a high degree of urbanisation. Cities will act as magnets for socio-economic development, if they are able to generate indigenous creative resources. In our modern knowledge society and economy, creative strategies, governance and management are increasingly required by cities, companies and organisations to become really competitive in a globalised world.

Creativity has in recent years become a popular topic in urban research and policy (Florida, 2002). But what is a creative city? Is it a state of mind or attitude of citizens? Is creativity a dedicated strategy for urban and regional economic development to attract investments and to better compete in a global market? Or, alternatively, is creativity centering around the question how to challenge the effects of globalisation through specificity (Landry, 2000)? Can creativity be regarded as a guideline for an urban governance model?

The profile of a creative city calls for new concepts which are difficult to be rigorously defined. It concerns many disciplines, from economics to political science,

from ecology to urban design and planning. A creative city does not exclusively coincide with a city of arts and culture production nor with the city of scientific and technological innovations. Hall (1998) has analysed the notion of a creative city in the course of history, identifying different types of a creative city: the cultural, the technological, the technological and cultural, the artistic and organisational city, etc. Multiple elements appear to concur in promoting a creative urban milieu, an atmosphere that stimulates creativity.

Urban design and planning can play a significant role in this perspective. This publication addresses the urban resources in design/planning, creativity and sustainability of city development.

In the present issue, a creative city is not regarded simply as an analytical concept that is useful for classification and interpretation among urbanists, economists and sociologists, but it prompts decision-makers to take appropriate action and it demands a vigorous commitment from the side of planners, architects and professionals by encouraging them to give up their 'comfort zone' and corporate attitudes. It represents a great challenge to which public officials, built environment professionals, managers, urban promoters and investors are expected to respond. It implies the creation of attractive cities that are desirable places to live, especially in terms of recreating those community values which are believed to produce a sense of citizenship.

2 Summary of contributions

The aim of this issue is to present, analyse and design principles, strategies and practices of the creative city with a view to the formulation of policy lessons and recommendations which are particularly suitable to contribute to a sustainable development of cities and high-value urban assets. In particular, the attention is focused on the following main issues:

- 1 What are some key features and critical elements conditioning urban creativity, how does the creative city actually work, how do ideas turn into urban innovations and what are the drivers stimulating a city to innovate, in order to overcome barriers and constraints?
- 2 What are the key infrastructures and tools required to promote creative processes in cities towards the achievement of competitive, sustainable and cohesive places, and how can a balanced evaluation process support the development and implementation of the creative city?
- 3 What are the main benefits of a creative-cultural city in terms of urban regeneration and cultural heritage, and how can cultural tourism contribute to these goals?

These three questions determine the composition and substance of this special issue.

In regard to the first question, a number of contributors discuss the main theoretical aspects and architectural principles underlying the concept of a creative city, including urban competitiveness and sustainability. The respective contributions will briefly be summarised here.

According to Massimo Clemente, the definition of creativity is not univocal among scholars. The author suggests how to fix strategic objectives for creative development,

starting from a 'de-globalisation' trend. This will allow us to build intercultural, creative and sustainable cities where everybody can recognise and experience his/her culture.

The paper by Maurizio Carta investigates the main factors of a creative city and urban competitiveness. These are summarised in three Cs, i.e., culture, communication and cooperation, as an indispensable guide for city councils, planners, architects and designers towards innovation and quality production, while contributing to the overall happiness of the communities they seek to serve.

Next, Aaron Mo argues that a sustainable creative city should support the development and production of a variety of local creatives, and not simply offer a place with emphasis on delivering a proper infrastructure for a creative market. The paper highlights the importance of providing an environment for existing creatives to develop and evolve. It also illustrates the strong reliance on good connectivity infrastructure (satisfactory provision of public transport and internet connections) and cross-border cooperation (development of regional, national and international networks) to support creatives entering established creative markets.

The study by Marichela Sepe investigates the drivers and factors conditioning creativity in cities that able to stimulate sustainable urban regeneration and innovation. A Spanish case study is used here to illustrate the fundamental role plaid by identity and creativity in producing sustainable social, cultural and economic change for the city's image.

Finally, Fabiana Forte and Luigi Fusco Girard discuss the importance of intangible aspects, such as beauty, in the genesis of the creative city. The study applies the concept of a complex social value for investigating new architectural assets, while highlighting the important role played by aesthetic values in cities.

The second part of this special issue opens with a contribution by Marilena Vecco. A historical perspective is adopted for analysing three main concepts: creativity, cultural industries and creative industries, in order to better understand their impact on contemporary cities. The question of how we can measure creativity is addressed, by showing an overview of different existing indices which can potentially contribute to a benchmarking of the creative potential of a country.

Patrizia Lombardi and Ian Cooper criticise current indicators and metrics for evaluating progress towards achieving sustainable development in the EU's desired Knowledge Society. The paper highlights the crucial role played by civic society organisations in the development of meaningful indicators capable of capturing issues such as inter-generational equity, aesthetics and governance.

The contribution of Domenico Enrico Massimo is directed toward the development of a prototype decision support system (DSS) aimed at supporting conservation and/or regeneration strategies at both a building and a city level. This is based upon powerful GIS tools, for both energy management and life-cycle valuation of conservation interventions.

Finally, Francesco Fusco Girard highlights the role of companies' activities in implementing urban sustainability through innovations, starting from a definition of sustainable company management and proposing next a systemic approach.

The third and last part of this issue is concerned with cultural heritage, urban regeneration and tourism. The paper by Maria Federica Palestino presents a case study of Scampia (Naples) as a learning example for the urban regeneration of the historical centre with a socio-cultural approach based on the education of citizens and on the rediscovery

of civic pride, known as Neapolitan Renaissance. This approach was developed by private and public actors.

Next, Alessio D'Auria analyses the impact of cultural tourism on urban economies, and explores the shift from 'traditional' cultural tourism toward new forms of 'experiential tourism', fostering a heritage-based sustainable development.

Finally, the paper by Peter Nijkamp and associates focuses on cultural tourism in cities, and presents the main results from a recent EU project, named integrated e-services for advanced access to heritage in cultural tourist destinations (ISAAC). On the supply side, an evaluation of e-services packages for creative urban tourism policy is presented. On the demand side, the study identifies the most prominent attractiveness features in a case study on the city of Amsterdam, seen from the perspective of e-services for the tourist sector.

3 Concluding remarks

We will summarise the main findings from this special issue in three messages.

- 1 In many papers in this issue creativity is envisaged and discussed from the perspective of sustainable urban development. This is conceivable, considering that the general goal that should drive creativity is sustainability. The image itself of a creative city refers to a sustainable city and vice versa. All best practices of sustainable cities reflect urban creativity at a sectoral or systemic level. Sustainable development is the search for a balance among multiple and conflicting values and requirements. Creativity helps to find new balanced and integrated solutions, in a win-win perspective, through the identification of innovative tools and relations among existing and future components. In particular, creativity is often linked to cultural dimensions of sustainable development, to its immaterial forms of capital, viz. human and social capital. More precisely, creativity may be considered as a tool for human sustainable development.
- 2 Sustainable architecture and planning show up in various articles to implement the sustainable model in the concrete space of city and territory. Sustainable architecture is characterised by maintaining urban values in the long run, through innovations in the use of natural materials, energies, water. Sustainable planning is characterised by innovations in land use, to promote a new urban metabolism and resilience, by improving competition and cohesion. De-industrialised areas, brown fields, derelict areas, port areas etc. are becoming all over the world the space-laboratories where urban creativity is concretely tested. Creative architecture and planning can modify the existing urban landscape, which reflects the set of interdependences among economic, social and ecological systems, producing new 'places' and conserving the existing ones: the memory of a territory/city, its identity or its cultural heritage.
- 3 Many papers in this issue address the urban evaluation problem as interpretation, comparison and forecasting to help urban design and planning in identifying priorities in the transformation of urban landscapes. This is because creativity and evaluation are closely intertwined. Evaluation stimulates the generation of new urban alternatives. Creativity and innovations are validated by their results, which have to be continuously assessed and monitored, in a learning process through ex-post

evaluations. Creative projects are characterised by high levels of risk and uncertainty, and low level of knowledge. Tests, experiences, experiments, pilot projects, prototypes etc. are all necessary to better understand the system dynamics, through solid and comprehensive evaluations of impacts, outcomes, results etc. Ex-post evaluations allow improving knowledge to reduce the distance between theory and practice. Ex-post evaluations of best practices are useful to produce new knowledge in order to improve ex-ante evaluations, to support new design and planning, new governance and management of our cities.

References

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