

REVITALIZATION AS BOTTOM UP



SUMMARY

“As more people, buildings, utilities, energy, and mobility are being driven by smart technologies and limited resources in the making of a smart and liveable city, it is important to emphasize the centrality of the social dimension (the people). In simple terms, inspire people and integrate their talents into the city environment.”

By welcoming engagement and collaboration, it is possible for people and institutions to assist in identifying problems, designing creative solutions, and producing systems that can address urban issues. In this way, people will feel empowered and valued not only as end users but as creators of their smart and livable city. It goes without saying that cities are for people, and they must be at the centre of it—interacting, exchanging, doing and ultimately innovating.

With **community-based participation at its centre**, an effective city revitalization process capitalizes on a local community's assets, inspiration, and potential, and it results in the creation of quality public spaces that contribute to people's health, happiness, and well-being and show people just how powerful their collective vision can be.

The wisdom of a broad cross-section of residents and stakeholders is an essential part of planning and designing livable, efficient, and authentic communities.



Bottom up revitalization will help to reimagine everyday spaces and to see the potential of parks, downtowns, waterfronts, plazas, neighbourhoods, streets, markets, campuses and public buildings.

Through a bottom-up city revitalization approach, it is possible to **de-centralize** and **localize** projects, thus breaking away from monolithic planning and design ideas that are disconnected from most people (and often serve the interests of the few, not the many)

“Master Plans” for cities are generally top-down models drafted by elite groups and fail to engage with citizens on their ideas. When the needs of the people are addressed, it increases property values and attracts investors because a community intuitively understands their needs and aspirations better than professional actors. Therefore, the involvement of a community from the beginning to the end of a project will help to deliver **more sustainable solutions**.

A bottom up approach provides a comprehensive assessment of local social, environmental, and economic issues, which helps to diagnose the local context in a detailed manner rather than relying only on quantitative facts and figures.

A bottom-up approach fills the gap between the problems identified by the planners and the actual problems that exist in an area. It also promotes increased **sensitivity to local issues**. A bottom-up approach increases a community's capacity to manage its environment, strengthens local value chains, and supports local economies and identity.

What are the »creative industries«?

The „creative industries“ (CI) also referred to as the „creative and cultural industries“ or the „creative and digital industries“ are “comprised of all sectors whose activities are based on cultural values, or other artistic individual or collective creative expressions.” (EU Commission)

On EU level, the CI is divided into nine industry fields: architecture, books & publishing, design, advertising, film, music, radio & TV, software & games, performing arts (EU Creative Industries Technology Strategy 2009-2012).



CITY OF KAMNIK

In the transformation of Kamnik city centre, we included all involved groups: residents like BSO representatives, private owners of long-term vacant spaces and local policymakers. Through personal interviews and workshops, we successfully addressed the essential common needs of all these groups. Especially in terms of communication, we focused on target group orientation and direct discussions.

As a result of one-year efforts on the location, three long-term vacant spaces were taken over by new and innovative entrepreneurs, and four empty shop windows were designed into pop-up windows promoting companies emerging from Kamnik's productive entrepreneurial environment.

www.podjetnisko-mesto.si

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Involve citizens and creatives in the early stage of local projects to integrate local know-how and resources but also integrate them on the long run to set measures to avoid gentrification.

Consider Public Private Partnerships to help bottom-up developed ideas to be successfully implemented and financed in a timely way.

Skill cities administration in methods and tools of bottom up city revitalization e.g. [creative bureaucracy](#) empowers to link different interests and perspectives to become an agent for change.

Soft skills of all involved actors (politicians, administration and citizens) is needed. Patience: as good urban revitalization needs time; an open mindset to accept diverse approaches, and a try-and-error approach to make things happen.

Urban management is no longer a matter of urban administration only it's a matter of ALL.

To make urban regeneration more sustainable- build on impact indicators e.g., based on Sustainable Development Goals of UN <https://www.urbanet.info/germany-sdg-indicators-municipalities/>

Appreciate and involve NGO's and Business Support Organizations as collaboration and cooperation partners that make urban revitalization diverse and inclusive and cities more livable

Identify the talents and assets within the community. In any community, there are people who can provide a historical perspective, valuable insights into how the area functions, and an understanding of the critical issues and what is meaningful to people.

Establish Business incubators to support regional entrepreneurial spirit

Remark: City revitalization through CCI is not a single action but a long-term endeavour

Bottom-Up revitalization needs a coordinator "(taking care of the actions") it should be a process and not a one-term action and keep permanent contact with users/ residents/ the must know what the users want

Think about Multifunctional places/ spaces instead of monofunctional use



TESTIMONIALS



Tanya Hristova
Mayor of Gabrovo Municipality

In my previous experience as the mayor of Gabrovo, I have become convinced that when we give people the opportunity to participate in making decisions that improve the quality of life, we succeed to the highest degree in achieving the mission of the local government, which obliges us to provide them services that benefit people. The imposition of “top-down” decisions has never been able to create a sense of belonging and often ends in misunderstanding and non-acceptance of even important and quality policies for all of us. Therefore, my main duty is to work in such a way as to be close to people, to hear their voices and, above all, to create an opportunity to work together with them for a better quality of life and opportunity for expression.



Dr. Sabine Naderer-Jelinek
Mayor of Leonding

As mayor, it is, of course, important that you have a city that lives. And life comes when ideas are given space when people are given space, and then the whole thing is filled with blood. I believe it is simply a central task of a city to live, to pulsate, and that is what makes a city live together.

In the development of an online platform, the most important thing for us as civil sector organizations is to be heard. Contributing to creative industries is only possible by a multisector approach where we, as an NGO are able to engage in dialogue with CINEMA project team. This cooperation has been possible through networking and the open-door policy of the city administration and CINEMA project team.



Anica Periškić
NGO “Podunav”,
City of Sombor



Christian Derntl
Butcher in the City of Leonding

For companies, it is very important to find a platform where they can present themselves and introduce themselves because maybe they are not so well known. An empty shop window directly in the city centre is ideal for increasing safe frequency for smaller businesses in the centre. Everyone who passes by is briefly interested, looks at it, and there every company can very briefly present itself and present what it does, and perhaps gain new customers.

We are aware that the people of Gabrovo are a difficult audience, and we know that the way to their hearts decision-making process is most interested to be involved and this approach is based on what they want and the change they would like to reach.



Greta Gospodinova
Member of Gabrovo Municipal Council



Nika Škrjanec
Local BSO representative/consultant, City of Kamnik

I think it is essential that when planning activities for the revitalization of the city, the suggestions of both city residents and regular and occasional visitors are taken into account. It is necessary to be aware that the city has more and more faces and roles that correspond to different groups and are often opposite. In this place, local decision-makers task is to connect the local community's interests with each other in a colourful symbiosis that creates a lively urban area that makes the centre pleasant for permanent residents, a vibrant creative-business district for all surrounding residents, and an exciting outpost for tourist visitors.

This policy brief has been prepared by the partners of the CINEMA project in November 2022.



RRA LUR

National Development Agency of Belgrade urban region



Schön, hier zu leben.



Agencia de Dezvoltare Regională Nord



The opinions expressed in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Interreg Danube Transnational Programme.