

URBACT CREATIVE CLUSTERS 2008-2011: KEY MESSAGES

Barnsley **Óbidos** Reggio Emilia Hódmezővásárhely Mizil INTELI Enguera Jyväskylä Viareggio



creative Clusters
in low density urban areas

URBACT

- URBACT is about **cities working together** to build solutions to major urban challenges.
- URBACT **works with all parties** who have a stake in the city: the LSG.
- URBACT is a **result-oriented** European programme: the LAP.

Connecting cities
Building successes

URB ACT

The vision

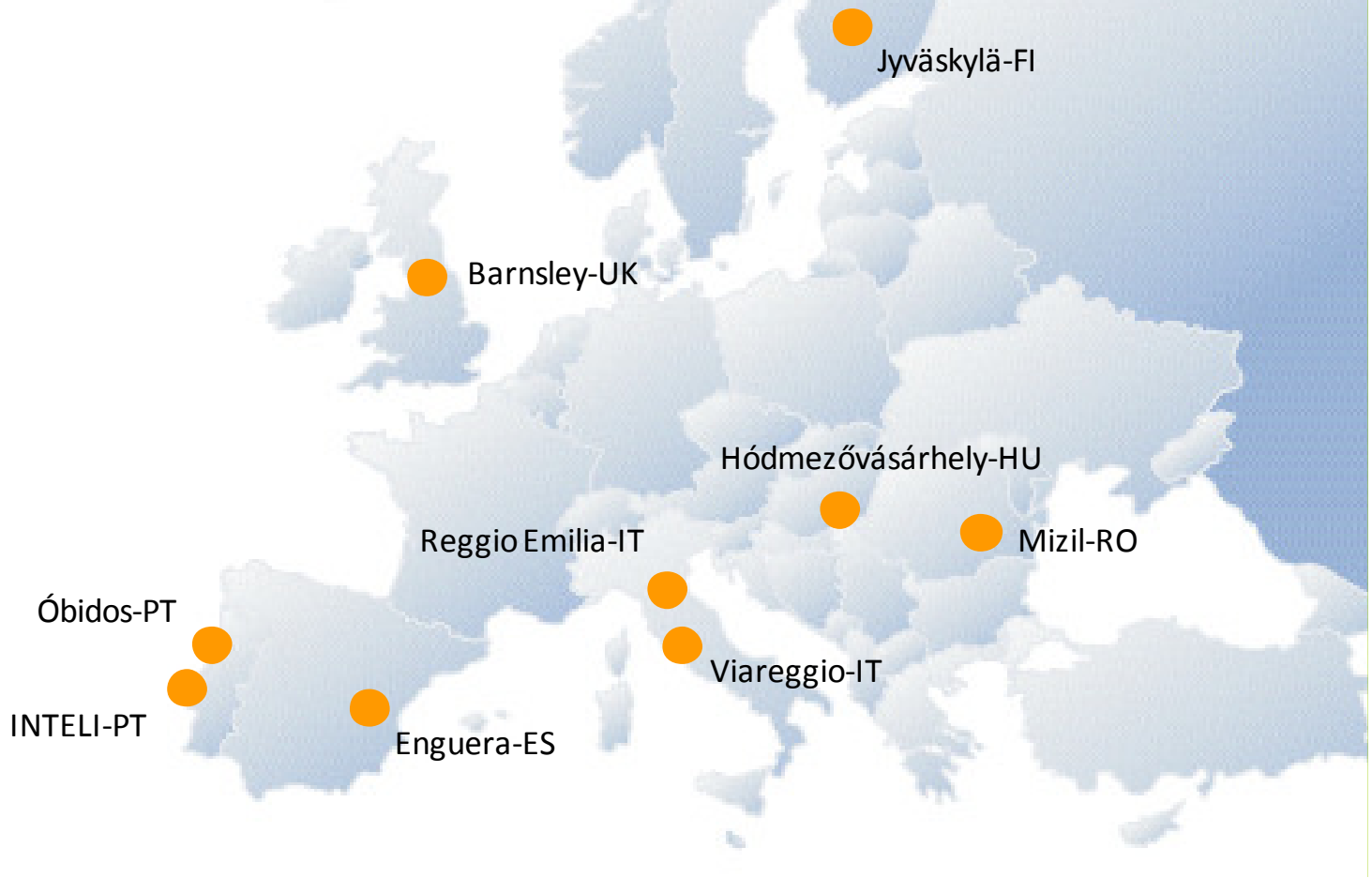
- The creative driver in local development is also functional outside the context of main urban hubs and core cities.

- It also means to transfer a range of so far considered urban attributes to middle-sized towns - accessibility, cultural life, tech. facilities, competitive clusters, global networking…**Big cities are not the only context to fully experience the contemporary**.

- … it should be explored the [real] capacity of the creative issue to impulse a leapfrogging in terms of social and economic development for small and midsize towns, as well as an opportunity to re-think rural development.

The network

A learning-by-interacting itinerary, 2008-2011



A learning-by-interacting itinerary, 2008-2011

- Production of a baseline study at the beginning of the process.
- Setting up of Local Support Groups in each of city partners
- A Local Action Plan for each of the city partners.
- Two major conferences.
- Four thematic workshops.
- Two key study visits.
- Involvement of Mayors and elected people, eg, “The Óbidos Charter”.
- “Open innovation and the city” as hot topic along the process.
- Systematic capitalization of the experience, beyond the URBACT community.
- …/….

Political engagement



Political engagement



Political engagement

VISIONS FROM THE MAYORS



Dr. János Lázár
Mayor of Hódmezővásárhely

Leadership and powerful new visions are key starting points to face new paths in local development for small and middle-sized towns across Europe. This section contains a number of short interviews by Miguel Rivas [the URBACT lead expert for creative clusters] to the Mayors of the city-partners. This issue with dr. János Lázár, Mayor of Hódmezővásárhely, a fifty thousand inhabitants town located in the heart of the Hungarian Southern Great Plain, near the Serbian and Romanian borders.

"My main aims are the improvement of employment, the revitalisation of local entrepreneurship, the preservation of regional culture and environment and the appreciation of solidarity and dignity"

MR. Industrial ceramics as the main economic sector in town is suffering these days a severe adjustment including the closure of some big factories. What is the explanation for that? What could be the role of the city council in facilitating new opportunity windows for that sector in your town?

JL. Hódmezővásárhely is in quite a good situation. Although both the town and the ceramics factories have felt the financial crisis, no huge problems have appeared in the town. The local ceramic industry was developed with state intervention in the '60s, during the socialist period, but at the same time on a quite high level. Due to the high-technological level and good infrastructure, after the change of regime in 1990, the ceramics industry in Vásárhely could find several investors, who have made high-level specializations, technical developments according to the market needs, so they could stay competitive. This is why the ceramic industry of Hódmezővásárhely is so well developed.
At the same time, I have to mention that Vásárhely's handicraft and ceramic industry is becoming a victim of Far Eastern dumping, which goes side by side with the dramatic change of customers' habits. These altered circumstances cause several problems for traditional small craftsmen, who have fewer and fewer customers and followers too. This is a complex problem, the solution of which can only be realized through cooperation and with joining forces. A thorough programme has to be created after surveying needs and available resources that can handle the above mentioned symptomes all togehter. The leaders of the town, taking into consideration the opinions of the stakeholders will have to decide whether this will be realized in the form of boosting the economy, or a tourism intervention. The first step of this long-lasting programme was the realization of the Integrated Town Development Strategy in 2008. Related to this and also in order to reach our strategic aims, we take part in two international projects: CeRamICa under the INTERREG IVC Programme, led by our city and Creative Clusters under URBACT II Programme. Our basic aim in both projects is to start our own, complex and long-lasting developments in order to find solutions for the above detailed problems with the help of international good examples and practices. The Local Support Group (LSG) that has been set up within the Creative Clusters project regards 'clustering' as the most important topic in the process of this problem handling. Thus the town wants to widen the frames of the LSG and organize a local forum focusing on the topic of local handicrafts and clusters, with the utmost involvement of all concerned people.

MR. Hódmezővásárhely hosts a major cultural event like the Vásárhely Autumn Exhibition [a well-known fine-arts exhibition in Hungary]. Also a unique exhibition space aimed at a critical review of the

VISIONS FROM THE MAYORS



MARKKU ANDERSSON,
MAYOR OF JYVÄSKYLA [FIN]

Leadership and powerful new visions are key starting points to face new paths in local development for small and middle-sized towns across Europe. This section contains a number of short interviews by Miguel Rivas [the URBACT lead expert for creative clusters] to the Mayors of the city-partners.

Branded as the Human Technology City, Jyväskylä [130,000 inhabitants] is located in Central Finland, 270 km north of Helsinki. The city is famous for its many buildings designed by Alvar Aalto and as the home of the annual Jyväskylä Festival. Within the URBACT framework, Jyväskylä presents a benchmark in innovative learning systems, new cluster readings for urban economies, and innovative facilities and venues for creative industries and activities. Jyväskylä is regarded as a good place to live, work and raise a family (www.jyvaskyla.fi/lang).

Mayor Markku Andersson is a member of the Board of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions. He is also a member of the Council of the United Cities and Local Governments. Mr. Andersson is the representative of the City of Jyväskylä as a member of the Board of the Union of the Baltic Cities. He is doctor of Education by the University of Jyväskylä.

MIGUEL RIVAS Mayor Andersson, within the URBACT framework, Jyväskylä is drafting its Local Action Plan around the concept of culture and wellness. What does this mean in concrete terms?

MARKKU ANDERSSON Human technology – the English slogan pretty much says it all. Soft, human-centred branches, including culture in its various forms, not forgetting nature, as well as hard technology - these will generate the added value by which the city's appeal can be measured. We want Jyväskylä to be a city which attracts people seeking a happy, fulfilling life for themselves and their families. The City of Jyväskylä's strategy aims at annual population growth of 1-1.5% and 1-2% growth in jobs. Of course, all cities want to grow, but what does that entail? Well, that many successfully handled matters impact in the same direction – and that produces a positive spiral, an innovative eco-system, in which chance occurrences naturally also play a role.

M.R. The wellness sector, EduCluster [in education], Forest Industry Future... How easy has it been to shape new productive realities and re-invent mature industries?

M.A. Wellness refers to a mood or state of mind in which a person's basic needs, health and satisfaction, meet each other. The services offered by the municipality, social welfare and health services as well as cultural provision, are closely bound up with that. Are we able to create an appealing city in which as many people as possible can achieve this all-embracing state of wellness? The matter can undoubtedly be approached at the level of the individual and of the community.

As regards Educluster, Jyväskylä


New format for stakeholders participation: the Local Support Group
LSG Jyväskylä

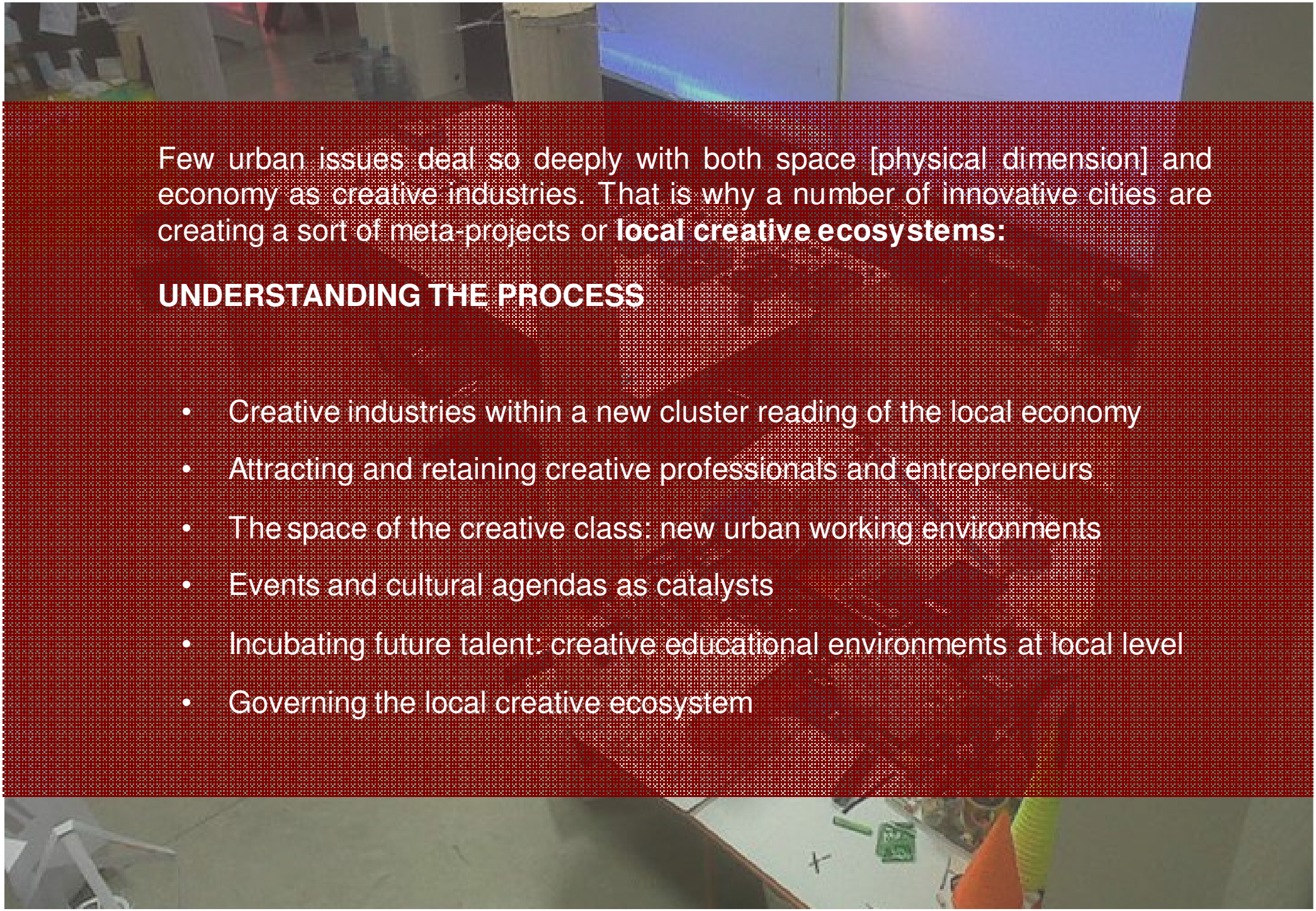

LSG Hódmezővásárhely



LSG Óbidos

LSG Viareggio

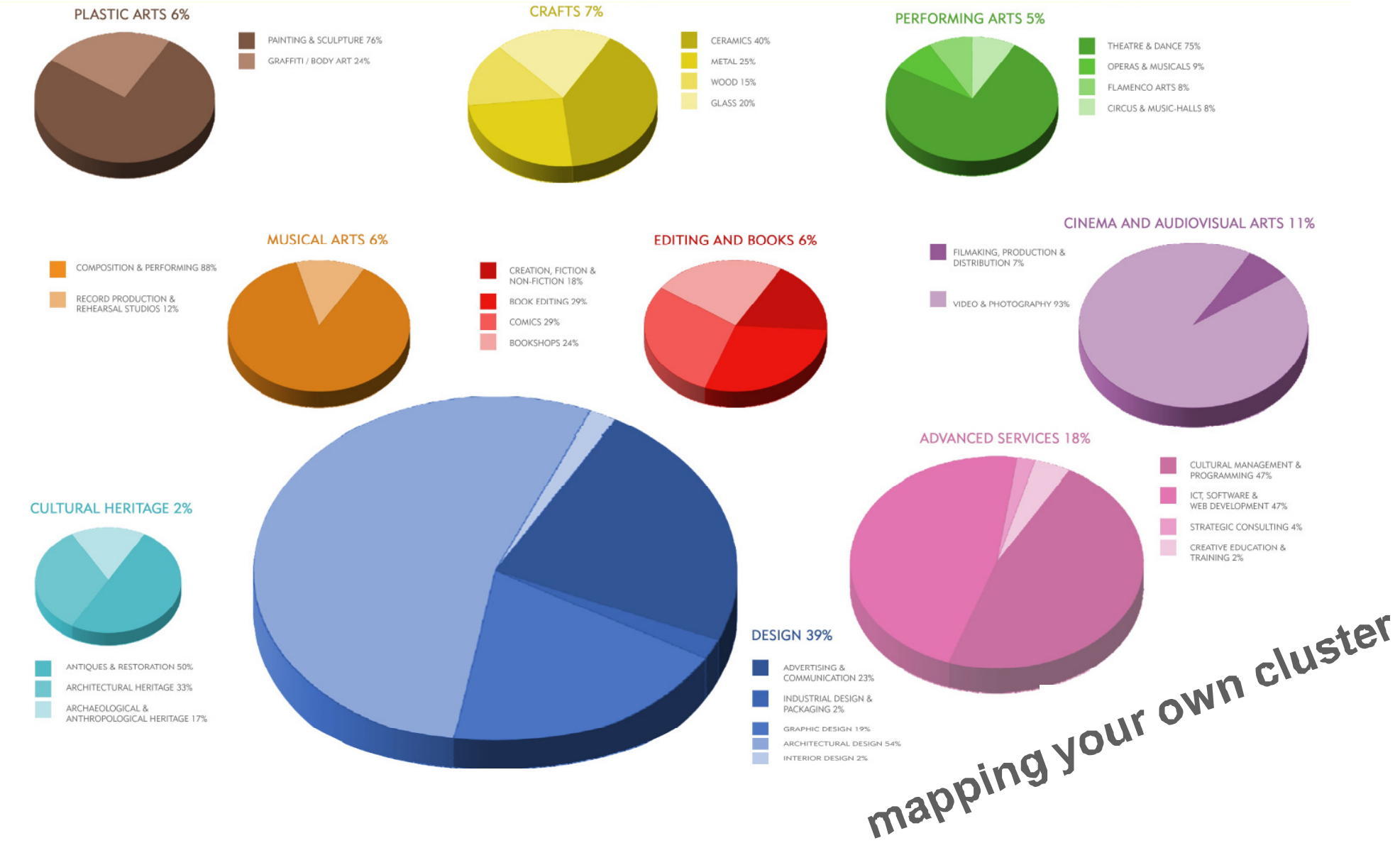




Few urban issues deal so deeply with both space [physical dimension] and economy as creative industries. That is why a number of innovative cities are creating a sort of meta-projects or **local creative ecosystems:**

UNDERSTANDING THE PROCESS

- Creative industries within a new cluster reading of the local economy
- Attracting and retaining creative professionals and entrepreneurs
- The space of the creative class: new urban working environments
- Events and cultural agendas as catalysts
- Incubating future talent: creative educational environments at local level
- Governing the local creative ecosystem



mapping your own cluster

Re-thinking local economies in order to:

i) **identify and boost new emergent realities, knowledge and creative-based – new media clusters in Reggio Emilia and Barnsley, the wellness cluster in Jyväskylä...**

key word is creative industries.

i) **promote new growth potential to mature industries using creative drivers like design – dealing with ceramics sector in Hódmezővásárhely...**

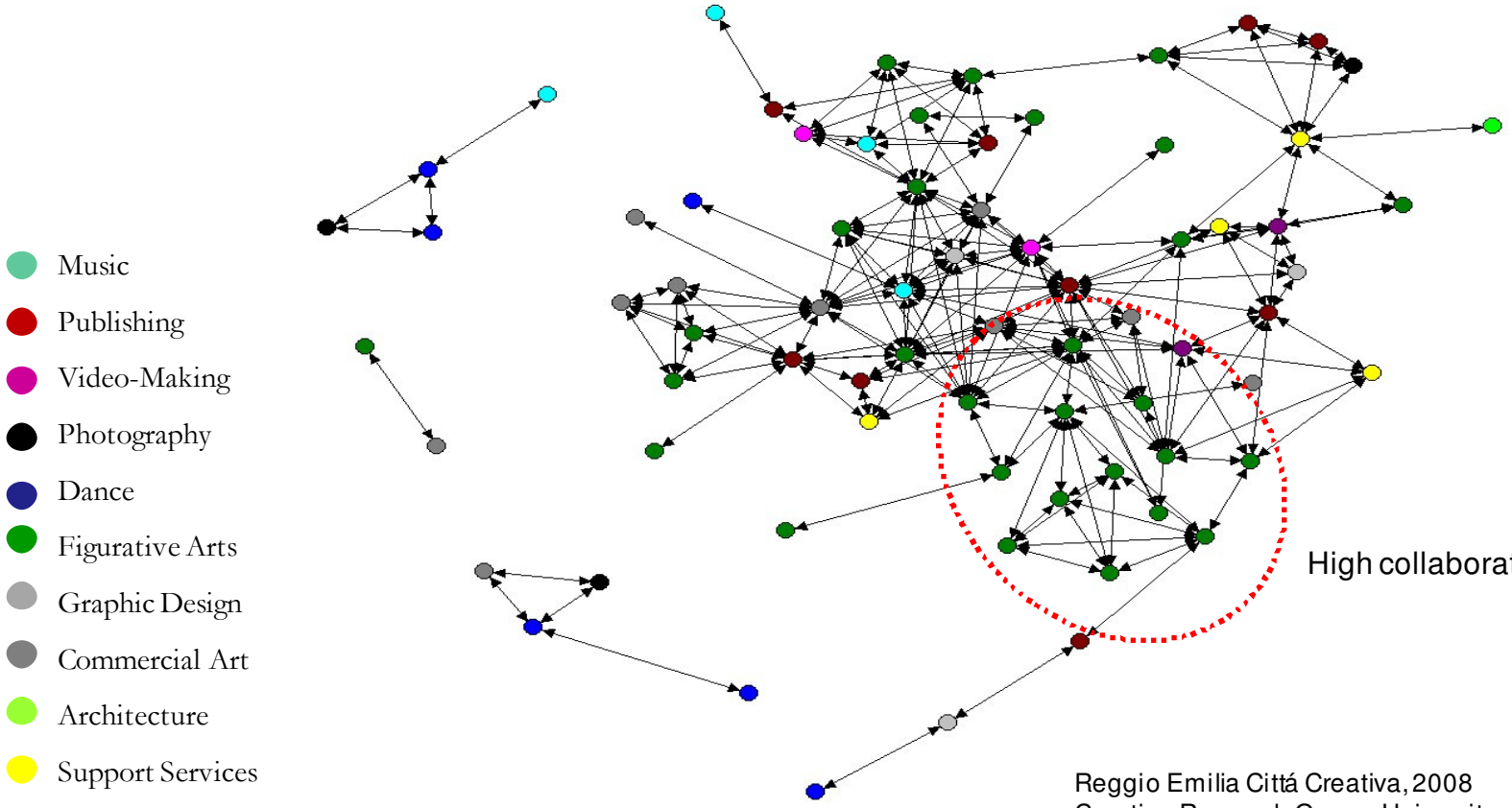
key words are creative jobs and creative-based business models.

- **Packaging financial, logistics and advisory support measures specifically adapted to the creative entrepreneur.** Tax reductions ["Tax free Óbidos"], real estate facilities, financial tools covering intangible assets, venture capital systems or linkages to business angel networks.

- The concept of **alliances** (for innovation, financing and cooperation) when dealing with emerging and strong clusterized productive realities. A more open and horizontal way of doing things

- **Making connections** and creating **sense of ownership** of events and venues through repeated exposure.

Reggio Emilia: making/reinforcing connections… clustering



Reggio Emilia Cittá Creativa, 2008
Creative Research Group, University of Módena and Reggio Emilia



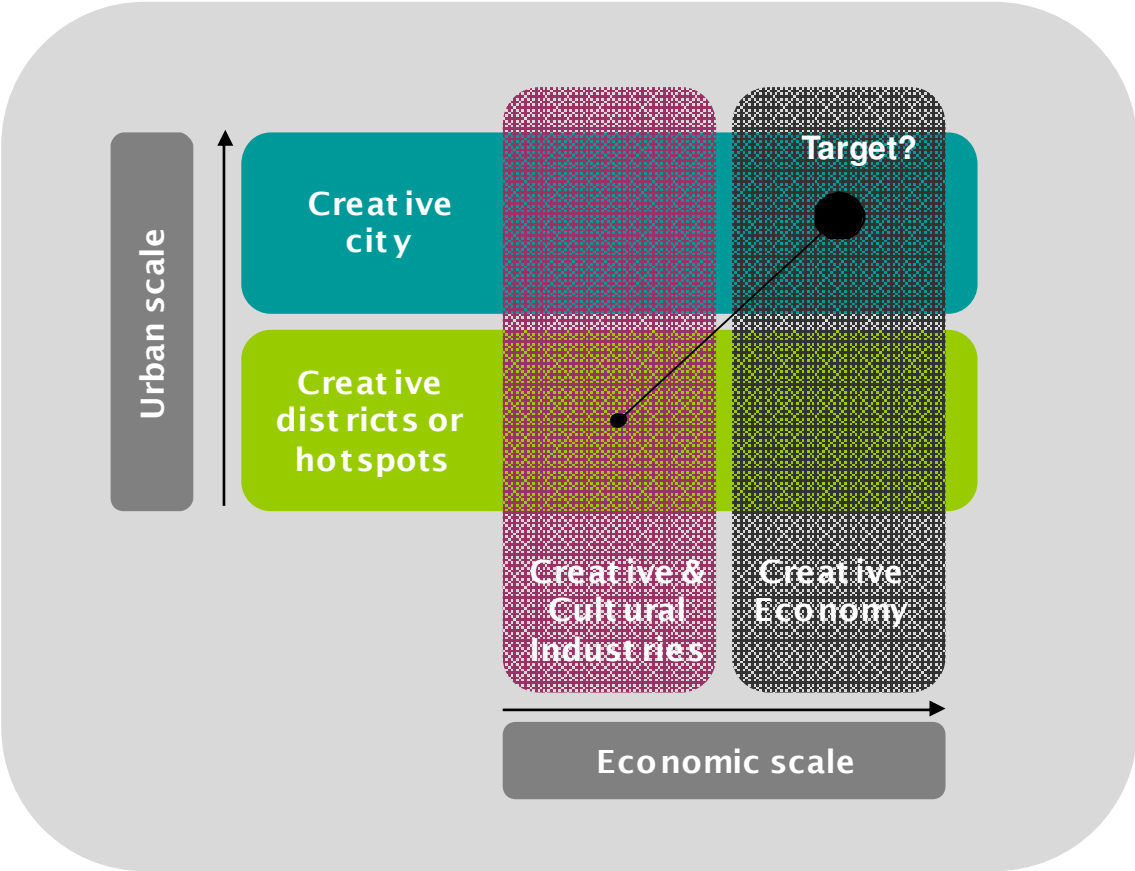


Barnsley: creating sense of ownership = continued engagement and retention

There is no a true creative-based strategy in local development without a <u>specific spatial strategy</u>

So, what spatiality for creative-based city strategies?

From urban planning to architectural design, different scales should be considered



Handling the scale factor

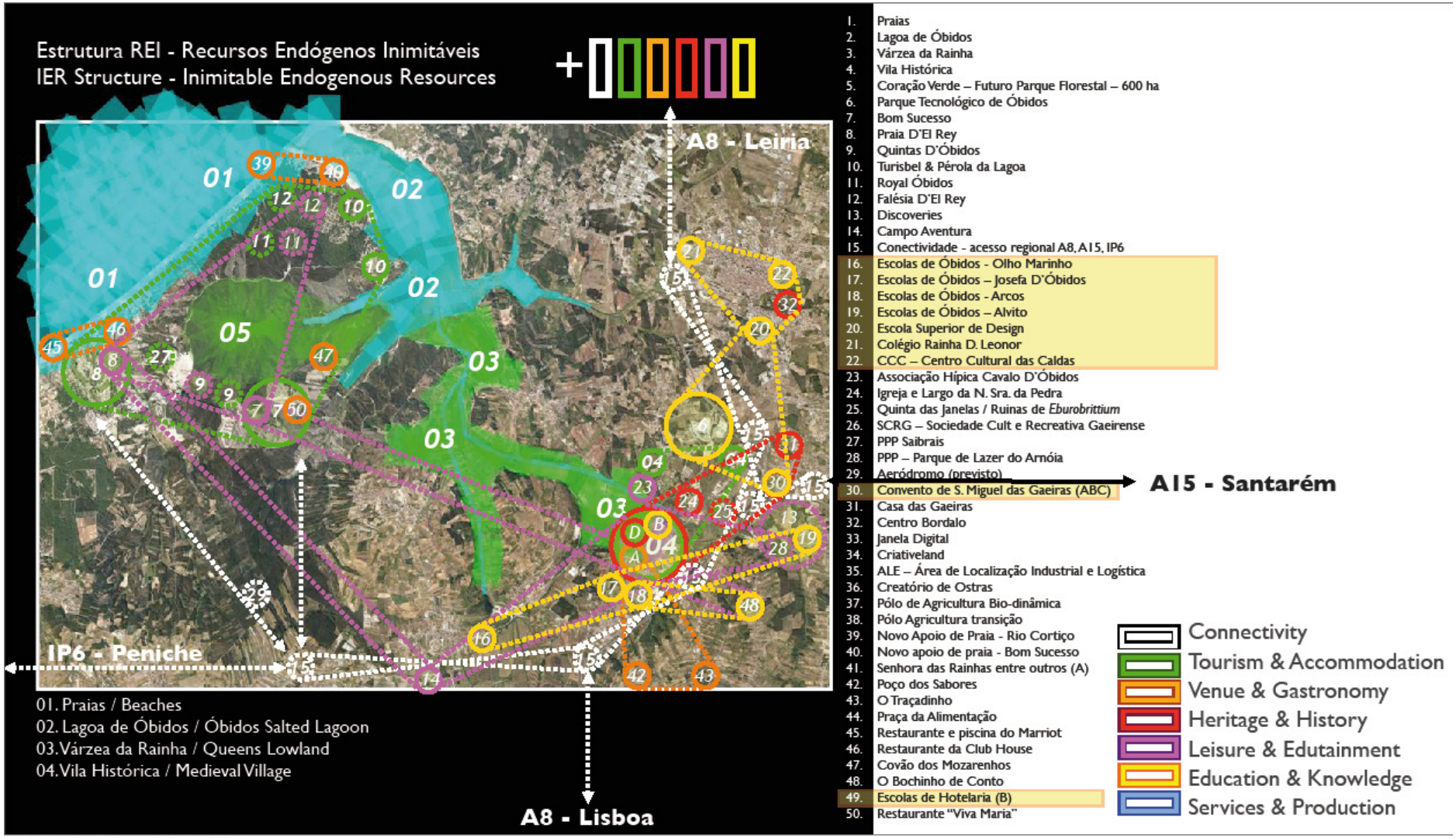
Source: INTELI, Grupo TASO

Spatial-based strategies:

- **Revitalising deprived areas.**
- **New roles for the public space: activating meeting points... using culture and creativity to re-activate flat public spaces.**
- **The continuum private and work life/space in creative professionals.**
- **Mixing retail/leisure/work/housing?**
- **Location factors for creative professionals.**
- **New iconic spaces?, urban fragments of creativity?**

Spatial-based strategies:

- **For city centres: re-making Barnsley, Città Giardino cultural quarter in Terni...Buda in Kortrijk.**
- **For urban peripheries: Reggio Territorio Esteso.**
- **New central districts: Lutakko area in Jyväskylä.**
- **The "creative space" beyond the city: Óbidos.**
- **The non easy coordination with the supra-local scale: Viareggio-Versilia, Jyväskylä-Central Finland, Enguera-Caroig, Óbidos-West region.**



Source: José Martins dos Santos

A new range of urban facilities:

- **New urban work environments.**
- **Spaces for interaction. Individuality + community..**
- **Hybridation, flexibility, experimentation, international scope…the idea of "extended workplace"**
- **Linking heritage to the contemporary:** ***" Old ideas can sometimes use new buildings. New ideas must use old buildings".*** **Jane Jacobs, NYC, 1961.**



Creative-based incubator_ABC_Óbidos_Portugal



Creative-based incubator and business centre

Digital media centre Barnsley_UK





Thematic business park [carnival]

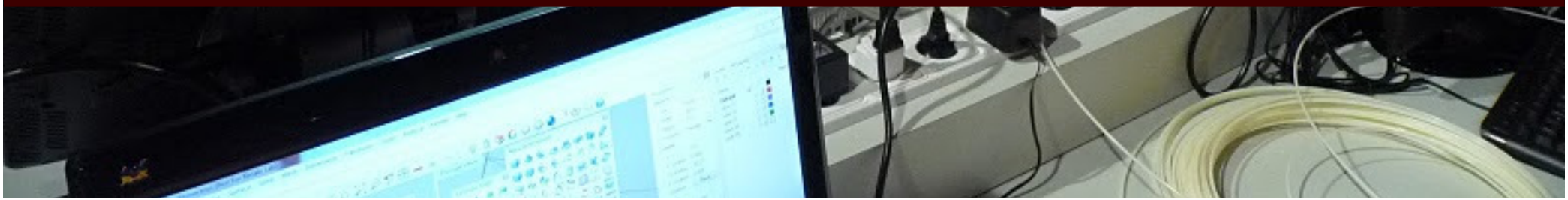
Parco della Citadella_Viareggio_Italy



Co-working_print centre_Jyväskylä_Finland



Fab_labs_personal digital manufacturing







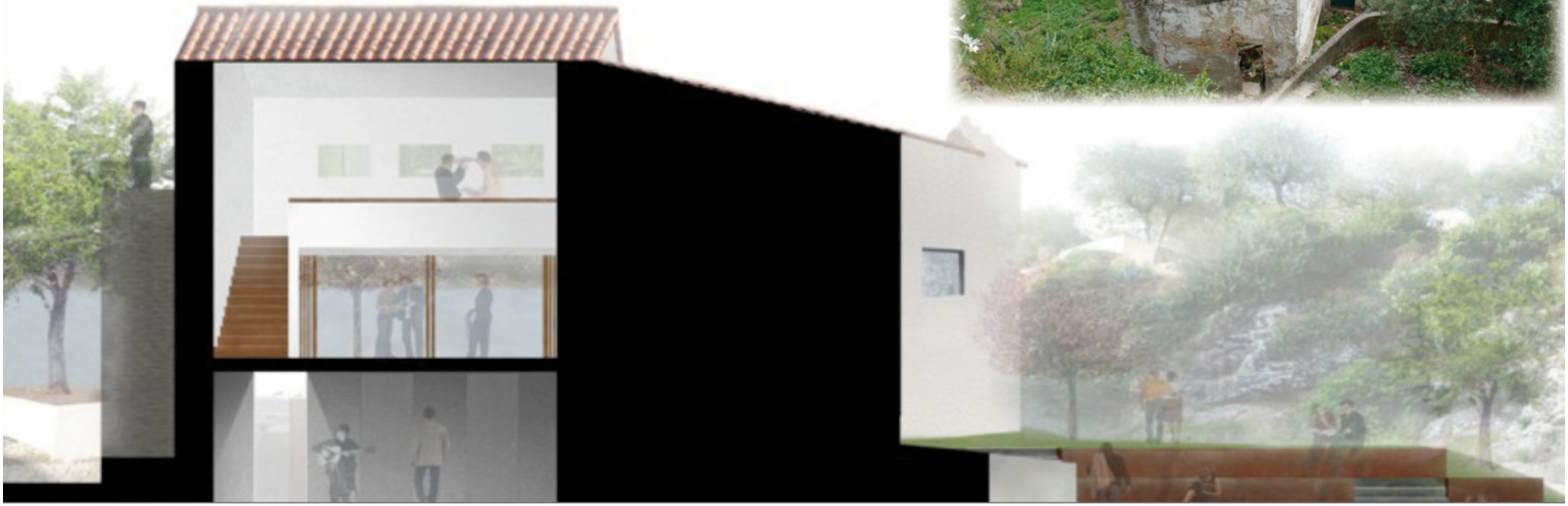


Adding creative uses to conventional business centres_Kortrijk_Belgium

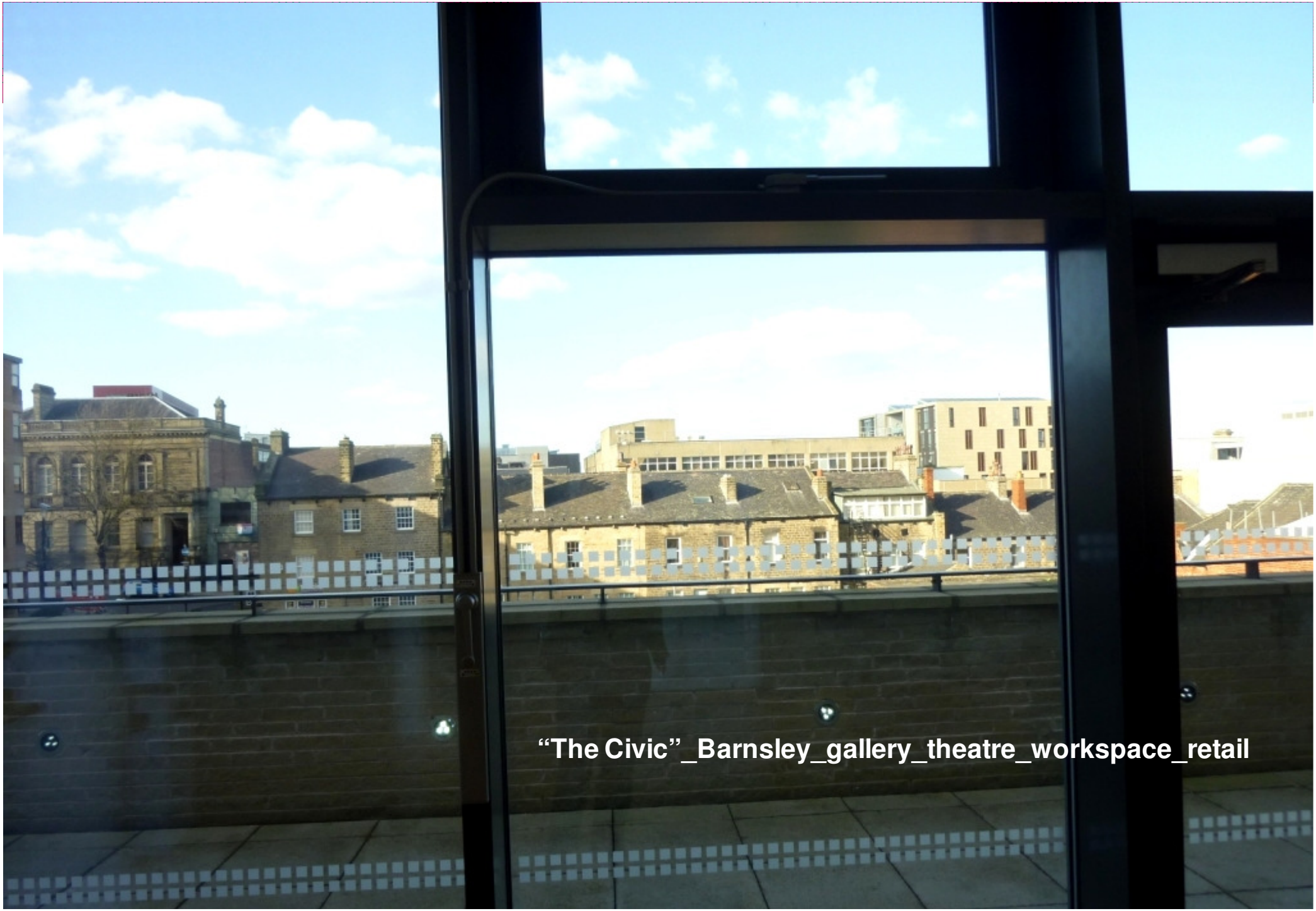
Creative Space #1

Work spaces Creative Retail





The rural loft_Óbidos_Portugal


“The Civic”_Barnsley_gallery_theatre_workspace_retail

“low-cost” cultural (alternative) spaces

Velha-a-Branca Estaleiro Cultural
Braga_Portugal












Smart leisure_Va Urma
Bucharest

Some cross-cutting issues:

- **Converging different visions and interests over the creative-based facility. Avoiding elitism in new *avant-garde* facilities.**
- **New formats in promoting and managing the creative-based facility: private developments, PPPs [Buda Centre_Kortrijk, CAOS_Terni…].**
- **Empowering creative-based strategies within the local background and potential. Do not imitate any formula.**

Cultivating the crossroad between cultural policy and economic development policy:

- **What kind of cultural policy for cultural entrepreneurs?**
- **How to promote a risk-friendly creative economy at local level?**
- **Lights and shadows in public cultural marketplaces.**
- **Re-thinking the big event: new aims, new formats, the post-event… scaling up strategies.**

- **Cities with a serious approach in creative economy are also developing innovative education systems - Reggio Emilia, Óbidos, Jyväslylä, Barnsley, Hódmezővásárhely .**

- **The Reggio approach in education is the result of combining teaching methods, architecture [school design], families & children, specialized public agencies [Reggio Children], firms... leading to the concept of "the educational city", a local ecosystem focused on education.**

That´s open innovation.

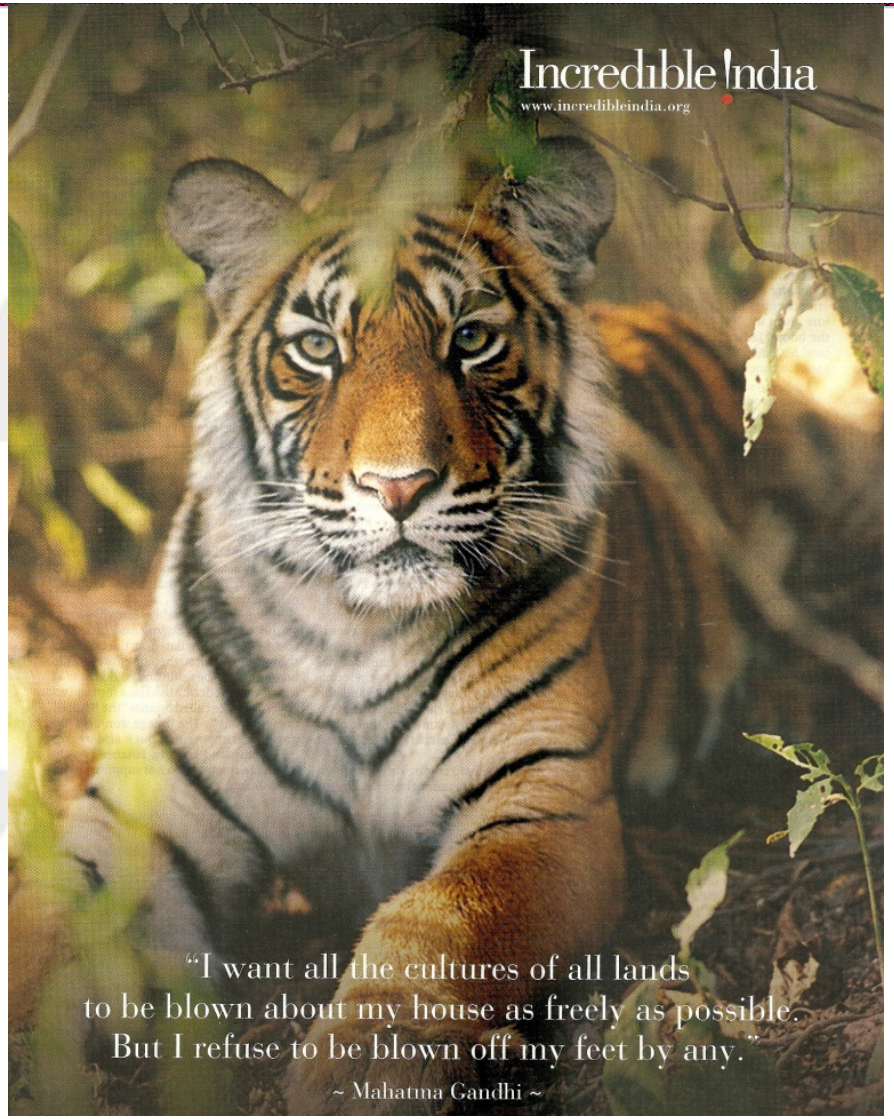


- **Leadership and shared visions.**
- **Active stakeholder management: co-design of local public policies; micro-policies or local project-based agreements combining different visions and expectations.**
- **Acceptance of some risk: permeability of organizations, upsetting hierarchies, networking...”making democracy works”. Case of Kortrijk.**
- **A re-definition of the concept of power in public policies. Elected officials usually are afraid to loose grip on the capacity of decision.**

Branding and communication the creative place:

- **A link in the chain of a creative-based local strategy, not the starting point.**
- **What is the creative place?: rhetorics, realities and expectations.**
- **Deconstruction and re-building city identity around creative-based narratives- Óbidos Criativa, Re-making Barnsley, Jyväskylä the human technology city…**
- **The trend: mixing a unique urban experience with a functional business place.**

Be credible



Miguel Rivas

lead expert for URBACT Creative Clusters

creative Clusters
in low density urban areas

EUROPEAN PROGRAMME FOR SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT

URBACT