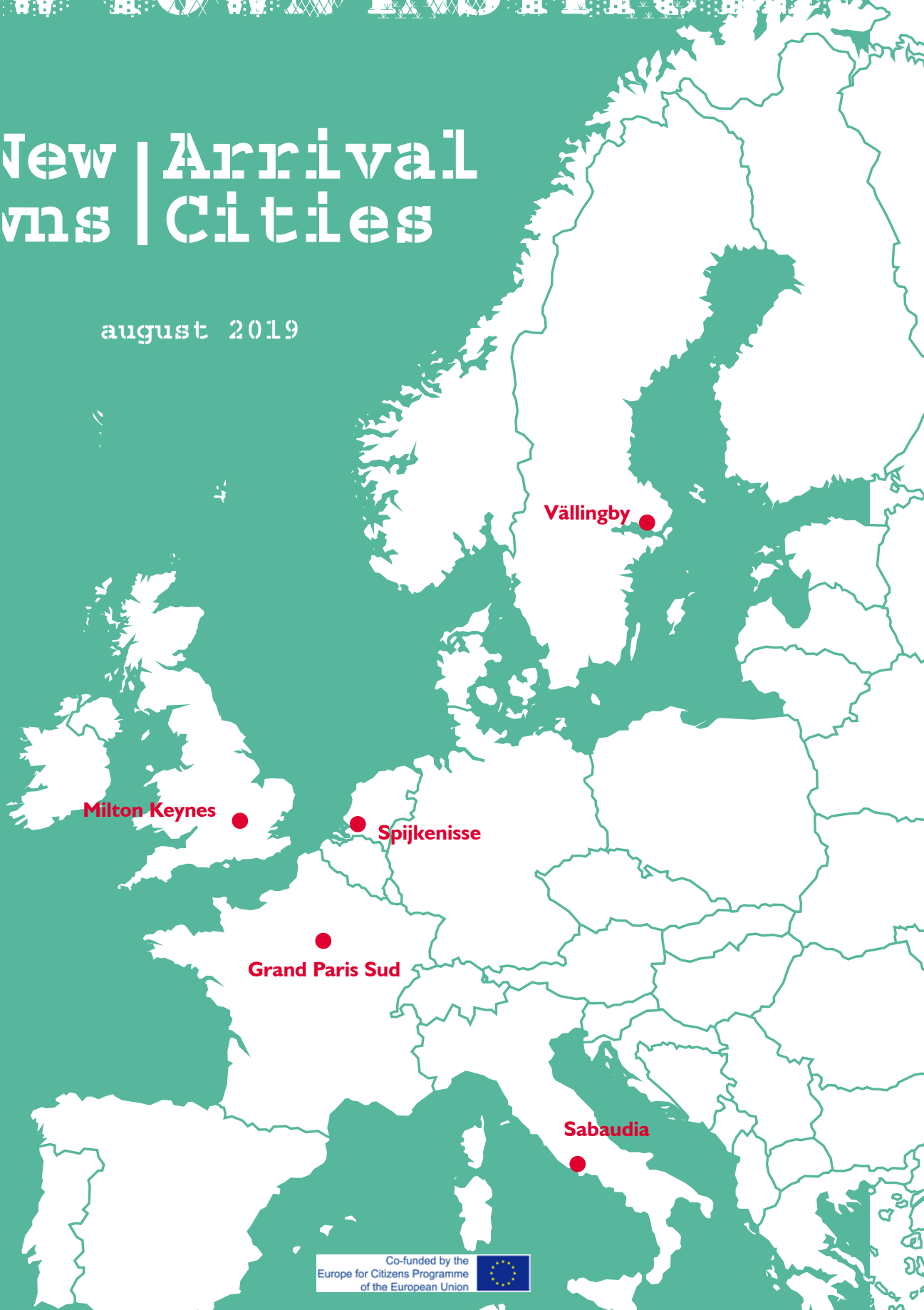


# INTERNATIONAL NEW TOWN INSTITUTION

## New Arrival Towns | Cities

august 2019



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**INTERNATIONAL  
NEW TOWN INSTITUTE**

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# Executive Summary

## Introduction

As New Towns across Europe experience changing dynamics due to increasing migration of foreign workers, refugees, asylum seekers and international students, among others, “New Towns, Arrival Cities” approaches these cities as potential laboratories of inclusion and experimentation, asking whether they can revive the spirit of urban and social innovation of the early days of their foundation. The two-year project brought together European city representatives, researchers, students, local migrant communities and experts to engage in a series of intercultural events, organised as five “New Town Labs” in five cities: Milton Keynes (UK), Sabaudia (Italy), Grand Paris Sud (France), Vällingby (Sweden) and Nissewaard (The Netherlands). The programme, consisting of public activities such as site visits, seminars, workshops and conferences, was led by the Municipality of Nissewaard (Spijkenisse) and coordinated by the International New Town Institute.

The results of the New Town Labs, as summarized in this report, bring out the unique and complex set of issues faced by each city in question, largely stemming from variations in size, administrative organisation, founding principles and cultural backgrounds. Especially considering the sensitive and often controversial nature of the topic of migration, this project uses a number of different lenses to engage with the core values of each city and country explored: heritage, art and culture, public space, building a positive narrative, adapting the welfare state model, and government-resident relations.

While the structure of the report provides a useful platform to compare challenges, ideas, and practical actions between the cities regarding each of the five lenses, there are also a number of cross-category insights that can be drawn from these studies, all of which work toward promoting the European Union’s values of civic and democratic participation, solidarity, and acceptance and esteem of diversity. These ten lessons provide a non-comprehensive summary of strategies and suggestions from across the five New Town Labs regarding how to reduce exclusion of minority groups while also actively valuing the potential offered by migrant populations. Ultimately, these insights emphasise and center on the importance of resident participation in civic life, reflecting on the tools and measures that can be adopted to include both long-term residents and migrant populations in the process of redefinition of the contemporary identity of the city.

## Insights

### 1. Promote art and culture as a means of transcending communication barriers

Communication, especially between migrant groups and long-term residents, has been identified as a challenge for many cities, stemming from cultural, religious and language barriers as well as a lack of confidence among migrant communities. Art, heritage and culture can be used as platforms for intercultural dialogue, overcoming these barriers and helping to build mutual understanding and acceptance. Festivals and cultural events in Milton Keynes and Grand Paris Sud, for example, allow migrant families from different communities to share their identities through traditional food, art, music and clothing, strengthening their sense of belonging while also fostering connections to other communities through shared values. Meanwhile, in Vällingby, lab participants suggested that the city's architectural heritage could be used to increase awareness among new inhabitants of the ambitiously democratic ideals behind buildings and urban forms in the New Town, helping to foster a sense of pride in the city and encouraging migrants to see themselves as an active part of its ongoing history.

### 2. Support grassroots groups, which often fill the gaps in service provision, cultural production and more

With city councils across the New Towns facing diminished resources and swelling populations, and many migrant communities feeling unheard and unrepresented by the government, both parties can benefit from collaboration. Many cities rely heavily on external grassroots organisations to drive community initiatives, embracing a “bottom-up” approach. Through financial support and by providing neutral venues for cultural events, the council can help these groups to become more visible. On the other hand, cities like Milton Keynes have also found that partnering with “neutral” parties in various communities creates a vital point of contact between city authorities (such as council members and the police) and residents who do not feel represented by them and are therefore reluctant to approach them directly. Independent migrants' associations across the New Towns work to organise language courses, promote exchanges between migrant communities and the host culture, and provide counsel for a wide range of other practical and economic issues. In some cases, language and other barriers can deprive migrant communities of the ability to understand their basic rights and advocate for themselves; here, independent organisations like the FLAI in Sabaudia have also played a crucial role in organising for workers, offering legal advice and providing other means of support to new residents.

### 3. Embrace a variety of approaches to public space - especially unconventional ones

While public space has been valued for its potential to promote social integration and increased quality of life, it can also be negatively perceived as unsafe, unsightly and expensive. Working against these associations, two separate approaches emerged in various labs: embracing mixed private-public partnerships that may be outside the traditional scope of “public space” projects, and using novel techniques and programmes that can dismantle entrenched thought patterns. The lab participants looked to the example of Gellerup, a Danish New Town where selective development of open spaces for housing, real estate or commerce allowed the city to balance the social and communal programme of public spaces with the cost of their maintenance. In Spijkenisse, one workshop had participants make extreme or absurd proposals for ways to mobilise resident participation in urban life, which were then developed into rational and often novel solutions. This strategy allowed participants to think outside of their own biases while also stimulating genuine interest and excitement in the potential of public space. Other labs brought out ways to directly redefine people's conception of public space: in Vällingby, Sandi Hilal presented the project “Al-Madhafah: The Living Room,” implemented in the Swedish town of Boden, where a Syrian immigrant family opened their living room to the neighbourhood, creating an unlikely public space and sparking a discussion on transforming public space to adapt to present needs.

### 4. Build on existing cultural and commercial models for integration

In several labs, participants shared ways to build on existing infrastructure in order to connect people from migrant communities to other people, services, and opportunities, often by looking at successful endeavours within these communities themselves. In Spijkenisse, the school De Vuurvogel provided an important collective space for the neighbourhood, bringing together the community through various programmes and connecting different social groups such as youth and the elderly. Milton Keynes also looked to schools as a potential place to foster democratic participation, engaging students as “cultural ambassadors” with a say in the cultural policies and agenda for the city; Grand Paris Sud later adopted a program modelled on this one. On the other hand, ethnic commerce was seen as another model to build on. Although ethnic shops have been blamed for isolating communities from the rest of the population, they are recognized as important gathering spaces for migrant communities to maintain connections to their country of origin while also establishing a sense of identity in their new home. In Aarhus, Denmark, the development of the Bazar—a commercial space for ethnic goods and products—has been credited for revitalising the neighbourhood, creating local job opportunities and bringing customers from throughout the region.

Participants in the Nissewaard lab suggested creating the conditions for economic activity at the neighbourhood level, encouraging communities to invest in the neighbourhood, and supporting newcomers to become entrepreneurs.

#### **5. Start with small-scale interventions as a first step toward improving public space**

Municipalities should develop long-term plans for addressing issues of inequality and exclusion of migrant groups as well as the deterioration of public space. Within such far-reaching frameworks, however, small steps and achievements are critical in testing architectural and urban strategies, demonstrating concrete actions and results, and gaining residents' trust. It is important that both migrant groups as well as long-term residents benefit from the improvements. In Sabaudia, one workshop saw students proposing a multitude of small-scale interventions in public space alongside basic maintenance of existing spaces. Suggestions included playgrounds, community-led installations, tree-planting, a market for local food and agricultural products, and even a drainage system to protect against flooding. This approach aims to improve the quality and inclusionary nature of public space while engaging residents as co-creators, both the Sikh community and the long-term Italians.

#### **6. Recognize that urban renewal and the existing urban identity can be mutually beneficial**

There seem to be two positions vis-à-vis the regeneration of New Towns. Either the original planning concept (sometimes including architecture) is sacrosanct and may not change, as in the case of Milton Keynes and Vällingby, or the exact opposite: the value of the original master plan, concept and architecture go completely unrecognised. Both attitudes miss out on the opportunities of a well-understood relationship between the past and the future. The existing urban identity can bring value to new developments and vice versa. While Vällingby should cherish its green character, it should also take into account how its position in the region has changed, necessitating an increase in the diversity and density of housing. These physical transformations will also have an influence on the socio-economic conditions of the New Town. In Denmark, Gellerup (part of Aarhus) has begun tearing down parts of older neighbourhoods to replace them with more up-to-date housing, while maintaining the existing core. In this way, the city extends beyond its original identity to create a newer, more positive image, while improving social and cultural opportunities. Architectural and urban renewal efforts can address multiple issues at once, as noted in Spijkensisse, where the need to refurbish older housing stock was also recognised as a chance to adapt to the current targets of sustainability, break the monotonous landscape of many neighbourhoods and increase social interaction between different neighbourhoods.

#### **7. Increase access to public programmes and services**

Recognizing that there are multiple, sometimes conflicting, needs within any community, public programmes and services can acknowledge and adapt to practical constraints in order to reach a greater part of the population—especially migrants and new arrivals. This could mean developing more flexible scheduling, such as in Sabaudia where most Indian workers work until sunset and cannot reach government offices during opening hours. Alternatively, municipalities could be more flexible in approaching communities for input: in Milton Keynes, participants pointed out that some people are uncomfortable at public meetings—especially if they are unable to read or write—and are better approached individually at home. One program in Vällingby provides a useful model for this strategy, engaging community volunteers to walk around and personally meet with refugees and asylum seekers, both as a way to share information and as a gesture of hospitality.

#### **8. Empower residents to take ownership of public life and activities**

To keep residents invested in the project of redefining the contemporary city, municipalities should share ownership of the city, with a particular focus on the most marginalised groups including migrants, youth and women. This kind of cooperation between the municipality and the local community is especially useful in situations where funding is lacking, as it requires fewer resources from the municipality. Workshop participants in Sabaudia, for example, suggested giving local youth the keys to a public playing field in order to give them a sense of ownership and responsibility for the space. Importantly, the Spijkensisse lab emphasised the need to not only provide top-down solutions, but to empower residents to propose their own ideas and projects.

#### **9. Invest in young people, and give them opportunities to define the urban agenda**

Young people are often overlooked in planning and policy development, despite their sizable share of the population and their potential impact on the future of the city. Young people in migrant communities are especially vulnerable to feelings of disenfranchisement and exclusion given negative media portrayals of their countries, isolation from parents due to long working hours, and lower rates of employment, education and training compared to native-born youth. Creating more involvement opportunities for young people in general can help combat the “youth drain” many New Towns are experiencing, and may even encourage people to return and start families in the city. For these reasons, a focus on youth is an especially vital part of including migrant communities in the narrative of the city. In Milton Keynes, for example, participants suggested lowering the minimum voting age from 18 to 16, which would allow young people to feel more

invested in public life. In societies where migrants are less likely to have political citizenship, young people and youth groups should still be given a seat at the table in shaping urban policies: as mentioned previously, Milton Keynes set an example by creating a school program that engaged students as ambassadors contributing to the city's cultural agenda, and a similar program was later developed in Grand Paris Sud. Initiatives led by young people themselves are also critical. In Vällingby, three Swedish-born girls of immigrant backgrounds founded Systrar Runt Hörnet ("Sisters Around the Corner"), a non-profit that supports and empowers young girls in their neighbourhood. Meanwhile, the Spijkensisse lab included a "youth parliament" which brought together students and members of the municipality's youth panel, among others, to discuss challenges they face and to give voice to their visions of the future of the city.

**10. Inequality and non-inclusion are complex problems that require sustained, long-term plans: communication and managing expectations are key**

A recurring theme throughout the labs was the importance of a long-term vision for reducing inequality and exclusion of migrant groups, as part of the strategy to redefine the city according to its needs. At the same time, many citizens expressed that there was a large gap between their needs and expectations and the city's decisions. The Nissewaard lab found that people felt most alienated by the government when many promises were made but not delivered on, creating disappointment and eroding trust. Repeated over and over, this discontent can alienate people not just from the government, but from the model of democracy itself. One way to combat this is to communicate directly with residents, for example creating a team of ambassadors that can explain urban and civic plans while avoiding jargon. There is also an urgent need to include more people with migrant backgrounds in municipal and other organisations.

## Conclusion

In general, the conclusions drawn from each of the labs suggest that there is still a long way to go towards the inclusion of the recent generation of immigrants in the New Towns. Challenges included a lack of commitment or knowledge by some municipalities to address the needs of migrant groups, as well as a perceived conflict of interest in some communities where residents took issue with government support of religious groups or activities, which often overlap with culture in migrant communities. Participants and organisers alike were often overwhelmed by the seemingly insurmountable issues at hand. However, participants also reported that the New Town Labs helped them develop stronger connections to other groups in their respective regions. Another major outcome of the programme is the creation of a robust network of New Towns, forming a base for future initiatives and exchanges.

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# Introduction



Originally for a rather homogeneous (white) population. Left: Thamesmead, London. Right: Gellerup (Aarhus). Images source: presentation of Michelle Provoost during the lab

New Towns of the 20th Century share a lot of similarities. Not only in the way they are planned and designed, but they also share a quite static model of society. For post war New Towns, this was rooted in the welfare state model in Western Europe. The cities were built for a predominantly white population with an emphasis on families. The way the New Towns were planned, reflected the desired stability of society, with houses and apartment blocks in neighbourhood units designed around collective open spaces.

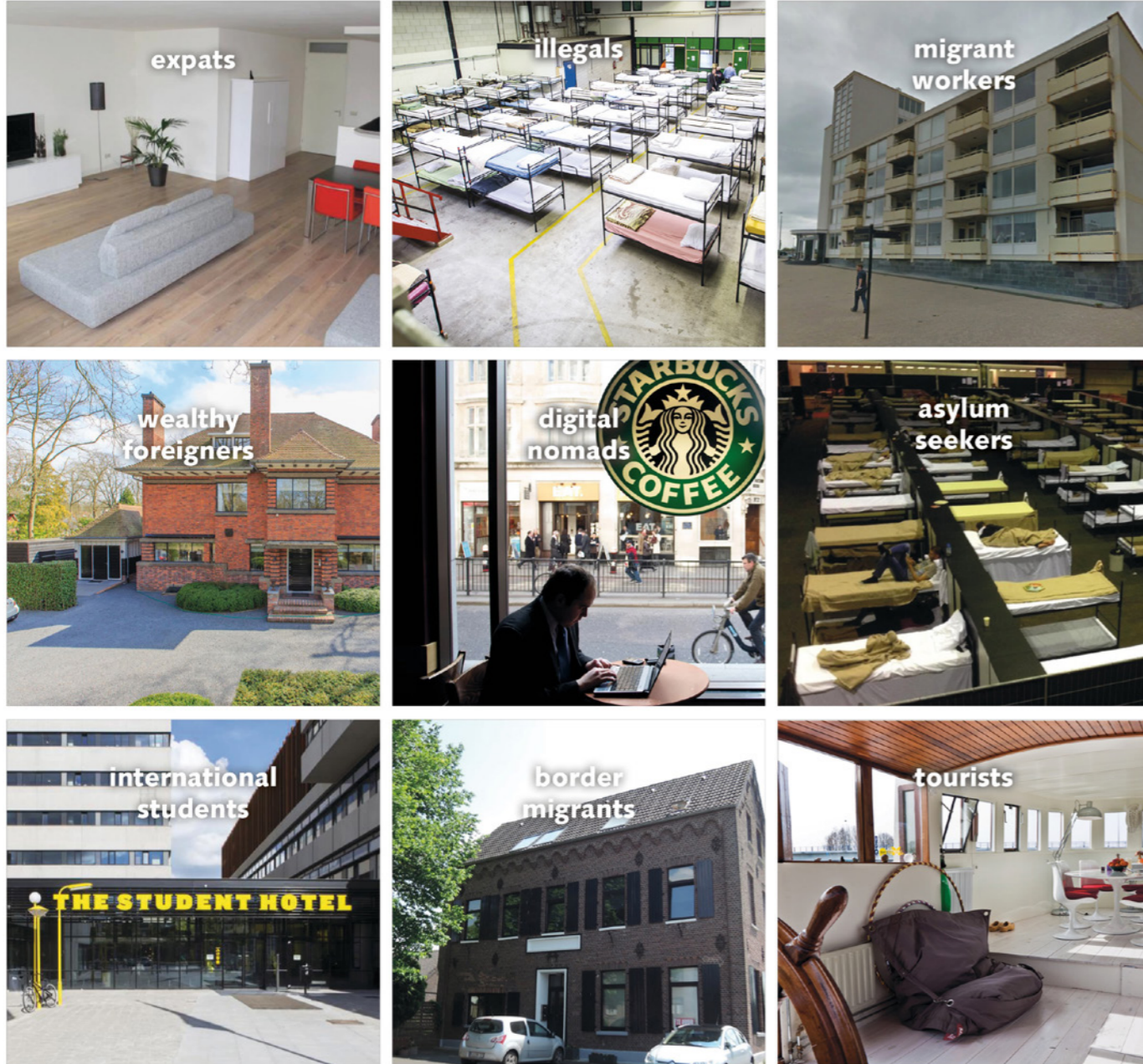


Ongoing process of immigration. Left: Turkish guest workers in Aarhus. Right: Chinese School in Harlow

While in the 50's and 60's the population of the post-war New Towns was relatively homogeneous, starting with the non-western migration in the 70's this changed. The first 'guest workers' came from Italy and Spain to the western and northern European countries; in the seventies Turkey and Morocco were the main sources of migration. Apart from guest workers, also refugees from all over the world have been housed in European New Towns, which were not built with this migration in mind; yet they have all experienced this same phenomenon.



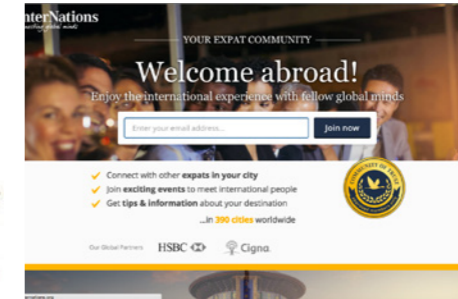
Some New Towns have taken on the function of housing newcomers and they have truly become 'Arrival Cities', like Vällingby (Sweden) or Sabaudia (Italy). In other cases, like Milton Keynes (UK), the New Towns have become the preferred housing environment of a migrant middle class that has adopted the suburban lifestyle.



Migrants of all kinds

Our cities are becoming more and more dynamic with a population that is not static but growing and shrinking and increasingly mobile. Not only the refugee crisis of 2015 has taught us this lesson, but also the increasing amount of international students, expats, economic migrants, asylum seekers and foreign workers. Now that we're experiencing new waves of migration and dynamic living in cities becomes more and more ubiquitous, we can recognize migration as a permanent force in our cities.

Migrants consist of various groups of people with very different needs and challenges. Some are more welcome than others: while cities compete for groups such as international students or expats connected to multinational companies, refugees and migrant workers are regarded as more problematic groups and meet with less enthusiasm. Increasingly New Towns -just as other cities- are facing tensions and challenges connected to migration.



Some are welcome! Some are not.

By definition, New Towns have no 'original' inhabitants and every resident is a migrant from somewhere else. In that sense, New Towns have been the prototypical 'Arrival Cities'. But even if migration was a factor from the very beginning, the ability of New Towns to take in newcomers has become more difficult and contested. Despite their relatively young age, those cities have gone through substantial and rapid demographic and socio-economic changes which have shaped and transformed them to the point that they find it hard to recognize themselves today. Many of the original communities seem to have stabilized in such a way that as economic and political resources diminish, the new migrants from outside the country have a hard time being accepted.

This might have to do with the New Towns' emphasis on 'the collective' and 'the community' and on the small scale of cohabitation, which makes it more difficult to accept other life styles. It might also have to do with the residents' choice to live in a small town and not in a big city, because people have actually fled the metropolis to become part of a New Town and want to avoid the big city atmosphere and accompanying troubles. Or, as David Lock expressed, talking about Milton Keynes: "People choose to move to the New Town because they buy into the prospectus. When the deal is changed, the reaction is strong".

Either way, the paradox of New Towns is that they were built as open cities for a cross section of society and are

A recent advertisement for Milton Keynes



now increasingly turning into fortresses, warding off unwanted groups of people. The starting point of this project 'New Towns, Arrival Cities' was that these 'old' New Towns need to reinvent themselves as 'Arrival Cities', similar to the early days of their foundation. They were places where new solutions are sought, and innovations were introduced. This made them contemporary laboratories of inclusion and experimentation where new positive dynamics were possible. Can they revive this spirit and become positive laboratories again?



Paradox of New Towns:  
from open city to fort.  
Left: Almere. Right:  
Spijkenisse



### 5 New Town Labs across Europe

While placing migration at the centre of reflection, the 'New Towns, Arrival Cities' project has brought together European city representatives, researchers, students, local migrant communities and experts to engage in a series of intercultural events. The main goal was the sharing of challenges, issues, ideas and practical actions which New Towns across Europe undertake today exploring ways of co-habitation, mutual respect and understanding.

The two-year project was led by the Municipality of Nissewaard and coordinated by the International New Town Institute. It has offered the chance to establish a platform for knowledge exchange between six European New Towns and three research institutions on the topic of migration. The project consisted of five "New Town Labs" held in Milton Keynes, UK (November 22-23, 2017), Sabaudia, Italy (May 16-17, 2018), Grand Paris Sud, France (October 17-18, 2018), Vällingby, Sweden (December 12-13, 2018) and Nissewaard, The Netherlands (February 20-21-22, 2019).

Each New Towns Lab was formed by one day of site visits and one of public activities shaped in different formats (seminar, workshop or conference, depending on the case).

Each city has been keen in producing an overview of the strengths, the challenges and the most urgent questions they are dealing with. The site visits have involved the local network of associations working with migrant groups, stakeholders and partners capable of providing the international delegations with a clear and concrete knowledge of the problematics. City partners have all made a great effort to select the best people with the right background and competence suitable to help with the local solutions.

The project has produced a great variety of activities: differences existed in the choice of the formats and approaches, which were chosen to fit the local requirements and contexts. These were decisions which led to the production of a wide variety of activities and outcomes. Whether it was a workshop involving the local community or students, if it was a one-day conference, or a series of seminars or public workshops: the red thread of the labs was how a better understanding of the ongoing changes can lead to reduce exclusion of minority groups and value the potential offered by the migrant population in the development of a new contemporary urban culture.

Taking into account that migration is a sensitive and sometimes controversial issue, and that countries have different core values in dealing with it, the project has explored it through different lenses: art and culture (Lab#1, UK), public spaces as drivers of inclusion (Lab#2, IT), processes of urban citizenship (Lab#3, FR), adapting the infrastructure of the welfare state model (Lab#4, SE) and the need for a new alliance between government and citizens (lab#5, NL).

### The spectrum of the cities

Although many issues and challenges in the New Towns looked the same, there were also differences to explore, which were to be found mainly in size, administrative organisation, founding principles and cultural backgrounds.

Spijkenisse, in The Netherlands, today 73.000 inhabitants, was created in the 1960s to respond to the pressing housing crisis of Rotterdam and the westward expansion of the city harbour. It became part of the new municipal entity of Nissewaard (85.000 inhabitants) in 2015. Born as a workers' city, the New Town has grown over the decades without a clear all-encompassing masterplan. In the light of the present regional developments and economic structural changes, the New Town is struggling with the recent demographic and socio-economic changes making it necessary to reinvent the social narrative of the city.

■ *The city's main question was: "How can the city revise the relationship between government and residents to create better places to live?"*

The French New Towns of Evry and Senart, founded respectively in 1969 and 1973, have also merged together with other 22 municipal authorities. The new metropolitan entity of Grand Paris Sud was formed in 2016 and counts 343.000 inhabitants. It is the fifth most populated area in Ile-de-France. Within the framework of the national programme “politique de la ville”, Grand Paris Sud is placing the citizen at the centre of the contemporary urban question. The path undertaken questions the citizenship rights and proposes a reflection on the tools that can be adopted to include migrant populations in the process of redefinition of the contemporary identity of Grand Paris Sud.

- *The city's main question was: “How to value the potential offered by the migrant population in the development of contemporary urban culture?”*

The Swedish New Town of Vällingby founded in 1954 (today 72,500 inhabitants), has also seen her administrative character transformed and became part of the Hässelby-Vällingby district, which is characterized by a substantial dependence on the decision-making level on the mother city's government of Stockholm. Vällingby, prime example of the acclaimed and renowned A-B-C model, the flagship of the social-democratic welfare state of Sweden, doesn't recognize itself anymore. As many other middle-aged post-war New Towns around Europe, its founding principles have become outdated. The faith of the pioneer generations which moved in the satellite town in the 1950s and 1960s to find a modern and prosperous life, has also gone. The clash between utopia and the rough reality is becoming painful.

- *The city's main question was: “How can the urban infrastructures and facilities of the foundation time respond to the current societal needs?”*

Sabaudia, in Italy currently has a population of 20,000 inhabitants and is surrounded by the nature of the Circeo national park. The city saw the light in 1933 and within this project it is the only case of New Town built just before the Second World War. Forerunner of the welfare state New Towns, the foundation of the city was a showcase of the “Battle of the Land” economic strategy of Mussolini to build consensus around the fascist regime: facilitate the agricultural exploitation of reclaimed land, reduce unemployment and revive rural Italy. Today in Sabaudia 11% of the population consists of Indian migrants from Punjab (India), largely employed in the agricultural sector (60% of the local economy sector) and segregated in the small neighbourhood of Bella Farmia (once a holiday house resort, today almost half occupied by immigrants), some 7 km away from the city centre.

- *The city's main question was: “How can public spaces improve the integration of newcomers?”*

Milton Keynes in the United Kingdom was built from 1967 on, to relieve the housing pressure in London. Originally home to a largely homogenous population of skilled workers from the capital city, it has recently undergone a prominent ethnic shift: the BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) population has doubled between 2001 and 2011, totalling 26%. The city is also growing rapidly and is soon expected to reach 500,000 inhabitants. Like many other New Towns, Milton Keynes is facing an identity problem. Despite strong grassroots cultural organizations, it suffers from a perceived lack of culture.

- *The city's main question was: “How can the city's thriving cultural scene be reflected in its image? And how can its growing cultural diversity be expressed in its identity?”*

## Conclusions

Despite all the different points of departure, this journey around Europe has made clear that post-war New Towns have to tackle a series of common challenges. Each city is of course unique, but all together they make it possible to recognize common phenomena. One of these is: the stronger the original ideas and ideals of the foundation period, the more difficult it is to understand the changes which occurred and to accept the new image of the city.

Already a decade after their foundation many of them (Evry, Senart, Milton Keynes and Spijkensisse) were deeply hit by the economic crisis of the 1980s and have seen their pioneer populations drastically reduced; the decade 1990s – 2000s have seen a tentative economic regeneration with great public and private investments in the renewal of the commercial areas (in Vällingby, in Senart, in Milton Keynes and in Spijkensisse). In the meanwhile, a new flow of international migrants was moving into the outskirts and the peripheral areas. The arrival of new groups has implied a physical transformation of the urban landscape with the creation of ethnic shops, cultural and religious centres which have increased the frictions and contributed to isolate the migrant groups.

With the aim to reflect on the challenges that European New Towns have to master today, this publication gathers the reports of each Lab, inviting the reader to delve into each city while, case after case, widening the perspective to the European dimension. The structure of the reports makes the results of the five labs easily comparable. Each city-report has the same five chapters through which the main challenges, insights, observations and questions that came out of the presentations and discussions are presented, with the intention of providing a base for further investigation. These five chapters are:

Heritage, Art & Culture: The cultural dimension in the New Towns often played a strategic role in the construction of a local identity in a situation where communities lacked common roots and shared historical meanings. Whether in Sweden, in France, in Italy or United Kingdom and The Netherlands, the pioneers had a lot of freedom and opportunities to actively engage in the construction of the cultural image of the city; they had the time to establish ties and give consistence to the new city they contributed to shape. The influx of migrant populations modifying the originally homogeneous contexts of the New Towns broadened the spectrum of cultural diversity in the region, but at the same time it posed challenges of co-habitation and mutual understanding of each's other differences. In addition, the original architectural features of the historic listed patrimony of post-war New Town can be valued as a way to increase awareness among the new inhabitants. Culture can be a driver of inclusive

processes and community participation, where diversity becomes the ingredient and the source of inspiration for the next era of the 'City of tomorrow'.

Public Space: Many New Towns have been conceived as ideal environments to settle. In all the cases explored, the public space had a consistent role in giving substance to the founding principles of the New Towns. The present dynamics impose a revision of the original ideas - where bike and pedestrian lanes were given priority over the car traffic and the "street" was the place where the community met and children could safely play – and require making an effort in reimagining the meaning and the potential offered by these contexts.

Adapting the welfare state model: Although they may be recent, the New Towns are undergoing great social and spatial changes. The installation of a diverse foreign population induces various changes (demographic, social, cultural, economic) and challenges public policy in an evolving urban territory, increasingly connected to the rest of the world. New Towns struggle to respond to the present needs which claim for a renewed listening attitude to understand changing demands.

Building a positive narrative: New Towns are the products of their time and changing social and economic circumstances require adapting to the new circumstances. The creation of a new narrative that embraces this multi-cultural diversity represents a challenge and requires first and foremost the understanding and value of the role that migrants can play in the contemporary city.

Government-citizen relations: The contemporary town has to reinvent its dialogue with the local community. It is relevant to create better connections between the local government and the present generation of inhabitants. What emerges is a combination of top-down tools (such as citizens' councils and ad hoc educational programmes in schools) and bottom-up approaches (the actions of migrants' associations) that become the prerequisite for establishing a renewed government-citizen relation.

City after city, this work has produced an overview of the societal changes and the policy demands of middle-aged European New Towns.

In the following chapters the specific findings of each city are described more in depth.

**The project's legacy**

During the two-year programme, city partners have deeply committed themselves to the process and made a great effort to overcome mistrust and skepticism. On the contrary, the long time together has created the favourable conditions for the group to build a safe space where to openly and frankly discuss major issues and struggles, but also benefit from new ideas and bring diversity in their own city programmes.

The organization of the labs has been quite burdensome from several points of view. On the one hand it has forced the city partners to actively face the topic of migration within the local political agenda; on the other hand it has stimulated a reflection around "What type of city are we today, and which directions have we undertaken?" offering the chance to critically observe what they are doing. It has raised the awareness of the need to involve migrant groups much more in terms of opportunities and involvement in the urban project. It has also offered the chance to enlarge the networks and the connections between the minority groups and associations with the local authority. A significant achievement was also the fruitful cooperation between the city councils and the local universities which has expanded the range of expertise involved and contributed to critically frame the contents of each Lab.

All in all, the project has made evident that cultural activities as driver of inclusion are not yet enough understood and that in general there is still a long way to go towards the inclusion of the recent generation of migrants.

To conclude, the first legacy of this work is the creation of a strong and robust network of New Towns which will create a basis for future initiatives and actions, by enabling the project partners to develop stronger connections.

By bringing together institutional and non-institutional actors, citizens and migrant groups from different countries and regions in Europe, from South to North, the Network 'New Towns, Arrival Cities' has contributed to foster the understanding of the European Union's values of civic and democratic participation and reinvigorate the feeling of belonging to an European institution that should be consolidated on its primary values of diversity acceptance, solidarity and esteem of each's other differences.

We hope you will enjoy it!

# Lab#1 | Milton Keynes

## Culture, Culture, Migration and Identity

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*Editing and contents supervision:* Viviana Rubbo and Michelle Provoost



## Milton Keynes

### >> Introduction

Milton Keynes is a New Town built from the 1970s initially to relieve housing pressure in London. Originally home to a largely homogenous population of skilled workers from the capital city, it has recently undergone a prominent ethnic shift: the BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) population has doubled between 2001 and 2011, reaching 26%. The city is also growing rapidly and is projected to reach 400,000 inhabitants by 2031. However, like many new towns, Milton Keynes is facing an identity problem. Despite strong grassroots cultural organizations, it suffers from a perceived lack of culture. *How can the city's thriving cultural scene be reflected in its image? And how can its growing cultural diversity be expressed in its identity and main programme?*

#### City origins

Milton Keynes was one of the last New Towns built in the UK under the post-war 1946 New Towns Act and is unique because of its scale (89 km<sup>2</sup>) and strong urban vision. Located equidistant from London, Birmingham, Oxford and Cambridge, its position has given it a geographic and economic advantage, contributing to its strong economy.

#### The 1970s Masterplan: a City in a Forest

Milton Keynes's original 1970 Masterplan envisaged a city of 250,000 people, an urban utopia of equality and a city of leisure and culture. The early days of the Development Corporation saw huge investment in infrastructure and the development of a unique 'Framework' of grid roads, separate pedestrian and cycling 'Redways', and corridors of linear parks and waterways in which the housing, employment and other buildings and land uses were dispersed. The city's low density and respect for existing historic towns and villages, plus its generous green space (some 26% of all land use) has given it a feel of a rural city, often called a 'City of Trees' or a 'City in a Forest'.

#### Rapid Growth

Throughout the 1970s, 80s and 90s, Milton Keynes continued to follow the Masterplan with very few changes, but with commercial developers replacing the Development Corporation as major housebuilder. Then, in 2005, a new Growth Agenda for the city was announced and a change in housing density on the flanks of the city was promoted to meet the new target of a city of 350,000. Ten years later, a new Local Plan (Plan:MK) is currently in consultation to anticipate even more growth, maybe even to

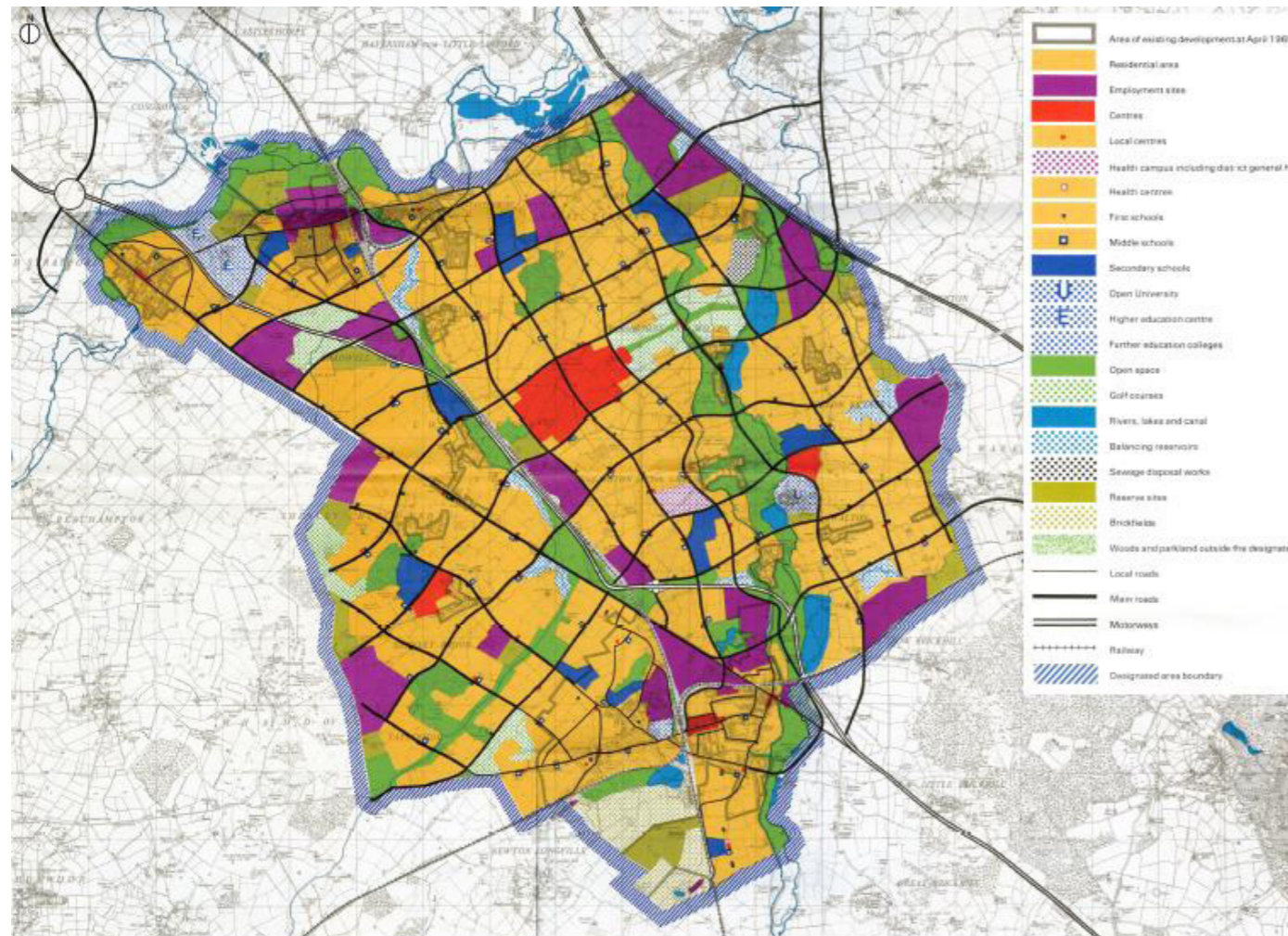
500,000 people. Many of the residents are rightly concerned about what that means for the city's uniquely designed framework, which they have come to call their home. In response, a MK2050 Futures Commission was set up, and its 2016 report made several recommendations to the city about future development.

#### Improving the Cultural Programme

The Growth Agenda and MK2050 Futures Commission has highlighted that, if the Milton Keynes is to transform itself into a respected European and International city, it needs a step-change in culture. Milton Keynes does not have a coherent annual citywide programme, and it lacks depth and breadth. Moreover, young and emerging talent have no (affordable) venues in what is a highly commercialised city centre. As well, the cultural make-up does not reflect the rapid demographic diversity that Milton Keynes is experiencing (up from 9% BME – Black and Minority Ethnic – in 2011 to 26% in 2016).

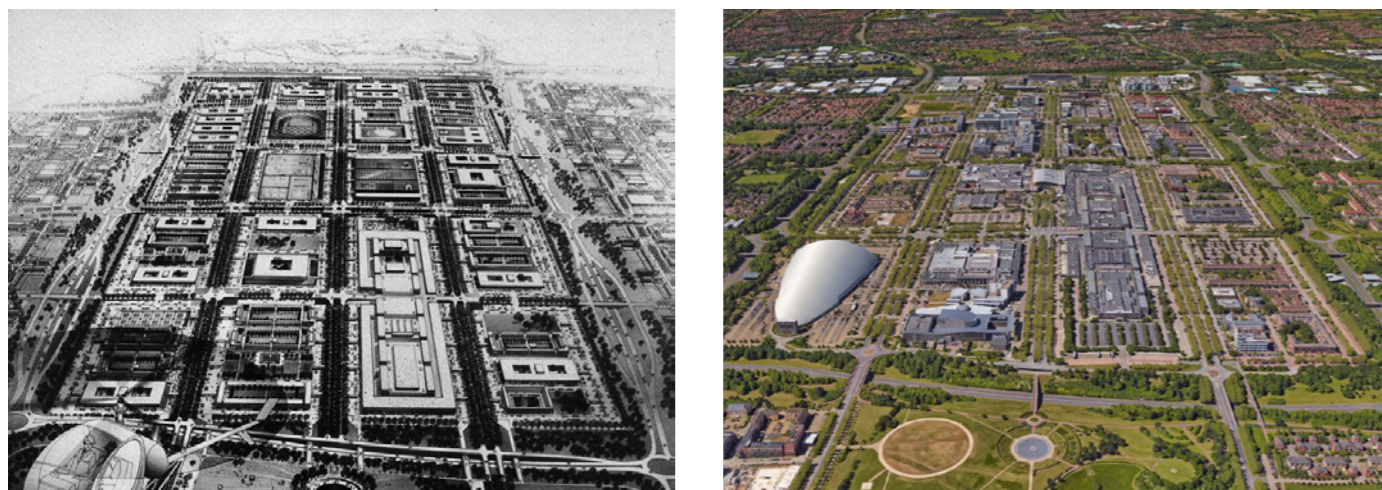
#### Questions for the New Town Lab

- How have new incoming migrants and communities contributed to shaping Milton Keynes's culture?
- How can Milton Keynes's cultural diversity be positively reflected in the city's policies, urbanism and identity?
- How can migration, identity and culture help Milton Keynes to develop into The Creative and Cultural City?



The 1970 plan for Milton Keynes. Basic planning principles: a grid pattern of main roads serving dispersed land uses, a city centre, system of linear parks, overlapping catchments, activity centres, pedestrian and cycle routes. 22,000 acres for a population of 250,000.

1974 vision for Milton Keynes's city centre, with 2017 aerial photo of the same area. Images source: presentation by Will Cousins during the lab



# 1. Art, Heritage and Culture

>> events provide a platform for dialogue and expression

## Challenges

The influx of migrant populations to originally homogeneous New Towns such as Milton Keynes has brought a cultural diversity that can contribute to growth and richness, but at the same time can cause social problems if not dealt with properly. Migrants need to be known and understood to be recognized and valued. Communication is often a challenge in this respect because of a lack of confidence and sense of identity among migrant communities, and because of a lack of knowledge about other cultures. In Milton Keynes, art, heritage and culture are being used as platforms for inter-cultural dialogue, with the aim of building mutual understanding and acceptance.

## Insights and observations

>> How can the dominant shopping culture make more room for the people's culture?

One obstacle to giving more room for ethnic communities to showcase their cultures is the dominance of Milton Keynes's shopping culture. The Town Centre (shopping mall) is one of the city's key assets. It is a well-known regional public destination, its modernist architecture has a heritage status, and it helps to drive the economy. However, the Council wants to move beyond this dominant shopping culture to bring more attention to the city's other cultural assets such as its art, heritage, architecture, landscape and, most importantly, the culture of the people themselves. During the last five years, the Council has been marketing large-scale city events to highlight these cultural aspects.

Milton Keynes's architectural heritage. From left to right: Ashton House with porte cochère (1978-9, Central MK); MK Council Offices (1977-9, Central MK); former royal train shed (1889, Wolverton); Church of St. Peter and St. Paul (early 14th C, Olney). Images from Simon Peart.





>> *How can cultural events act as a platform for communities to develop their identity and to connect with each other?*

One of the earliest and perhaps most well-known community art project in Milton Keynes is the concrete cows, which aimed to bring new communities together in the early 70s. More recently, the Citizen Ship project brought a bus shelter-like structure to five different sites in Milton Keynes, where people could connect and develop slogans for their city. Produced by Free art collective and architecture office Modern Architecture, the installation reflected the social imaginary of the city and broke down barriers to public participation and engagement by bringing art from the gallery to public spaces. Art in the Park, an annual event organized by the Milton Keynes Islamic Arts Heritage and Culture organization (MKIAHC), displays the traditional food, art, music and clothing of numerous ethnic groups: Muslims, Sikhs, Jews, Hindus, and others. MKIAHC founder Anouar Kassim, MBE explains that people's interest in artwork and food creates a common ground for dialogue, allows communities to show their identity, and strengthens their sense of belonging in Milton Keynes. Communities connect through shared values such as family and education, and experiences of arriving in a new city. Since the event began nine years ago, he says, Muslim communities – particularly children and women with headscarves – are much more accepted. Similarly, the annual Africa Diaspora Day, organized by Global Outreach Foundation (GOF:MK) offers a platform for African migrants to display their traditional cultures. The event particularly helps to strengthen the identity and confidence of young African migrants who struggle with low self esteem because of the media's negative portrayal of the poverty in their countries. From the Council's perspective, there need to be spaces that can accommodate such large events. It ran into problems when the International Festival had to be moved outside of the city centre because of public realm street furniture such as the car parking bollards and electric metre chargers were in the way.

>> *Who organizes cultural initiatives?*

Since its beginnings, Milton Keynes has had a strong grassroots arts and culture scene built up by volunteer groups. Today, since the Milton Keynes Council culture department is only three people, it relies heavily on these external "delivery organizations". They include MKIAHC (which grew organically as an umbrella organization for various ethnic groups), GOF:MK, and the Arts and Heritage Alliance (which includes more than 40 organizations). This "fragmented" cultural policy could be advantageous, as a shift needs to take place from the "top-down" approach of the Milton Keynes Development Corporation to a more "bottom-up" model of cultural production. If these initiatives are supported by the Council and by a policy of accommodation, providing neutral places for community initiatives, these groups can also become more visible. It is a viable alternative to large-scale cultural events organized by the Council.

From the French perspective, however, supporting religious organizations as "delivery organizations" can pose a problem for the separation of government and religion, and overlooks conflicting values such as the equality between men and women. From Anouar Kassim's (MKIAHC) experience, however, arts and heritage are a platform for voicing these kinds of issues.



*Eid Festival 2013 in Campbell Park, organized by the MKIAHC. Photo by Karen Kodish*

## 2. Public Space

### >> a place where communities can meet and become visible

#### Challenges

Public spaces are valuable as places that can accommodate the activities of local groups, and as meeting places for everyday communication and socialization. Paradoxically, the increasing population density of Milton Keynes's grid square neighbourhoods has corresponded with a decline of these communal facilities as local authority budgets reduce rapidly, a situation that is only made more severe with the general privatization and commercialization of public space. But, with the population increase and more newcomers to the city, there is a growing need to retain meeting places. In disadvantaged neighbourhoods such as Fishermead, Netherfield and Conniburrow, troubled youth who already experience cultural isolation are found roaming the streets for a lack of anywhere else to go. *Why are public spaces disappearing, and what can be done about it?*

#### Insights and observations

>> *Increasing density generally supports the functioning of public facilities. Why is that not the case in Milton Keynes?*

Density is said to be necessary to support public facilities. That has been the case in Gellerup, for instance. While public facilities closed soon after the city's construction in the 1970s for lack of demand and changing preferences, future densification will bring many new services. In Milton Keynes, there has been an opposite dynamic, with facilities closing as density increases. The success of the Town Centre is one of the causes – pulling activity from the surrounding neighbourhoods – as are England's developer culture and cuts to public funds. Urban design also plays a role; it is not just about building higher density but having a variety of building types with strong connections with the surrounding public space.



The Netherfield Local Centre, where most shops have closed.

>> *Can the private shopping mall function as a public space?*

Originally, Milton Keynes's Town Centre was planned as a bright and open public meeting place, but has since become a private shopping mall that closes in the evening. Although certain shopping centres offer cultural experiences beyond buying things, inviting people to linger, it remains questionable whether such heavily programmed commercial places can function as public space. In terms of accommodation, the shopping centre's

commercial rates make it unaffordable for independent and ethnic shops, pushing them out to the food centre (where pedestrian traffic is low) or the outdoor market.

>> *Who will fund the construction of public space and facilities?*

Milton Keynes has developed a partnership approach in the form of "Planning Obligations" to funding public projects. Under national planning regulations, the Council can ask a developer to contribute towards providing infrastructure. In the expansions areas, developers pay a "tariff" contribution to infrastructure at a standard rate. The Tariff is designed to generate £310m from the development of 15,000 dwellings, which is then spent on roads, schools, open spaces, libraries and other public facilities. Public art is also privately funded, for instance the Black Horse statue outside Lloyds Court, which was commissioned by the Development Corporation and financed by Lloyds Bank. The 1400-seat MK Theatre, on the other hand, was constructed with national Lottery funding. There are also commercial leisure developments such as Xscape, with cinemas, indoor skiing and skydiving, and shopping. Neighbourhood Parish Councils, the most local level of government, can provide another means of funding public facilities. By raising dedicated taxes, they can help their communities to plan and fund public projects (see more about Parish Councils in Chapter 5, p.33).

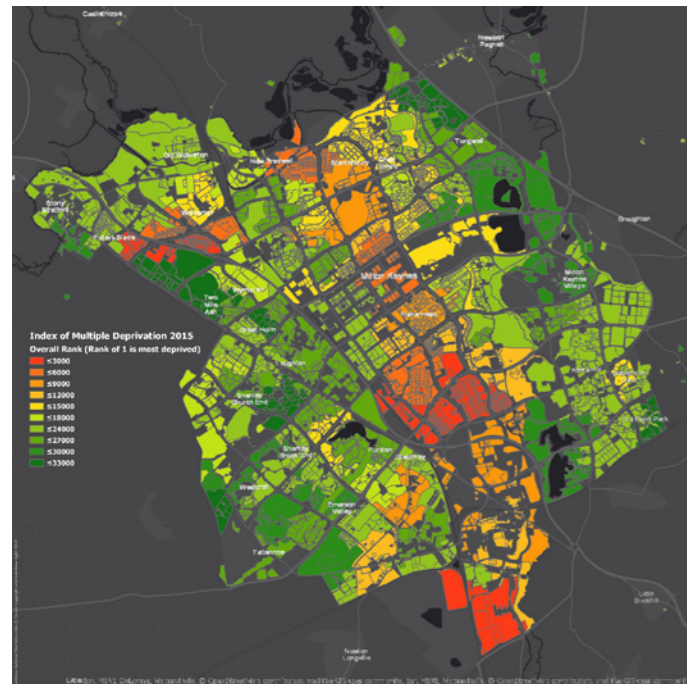
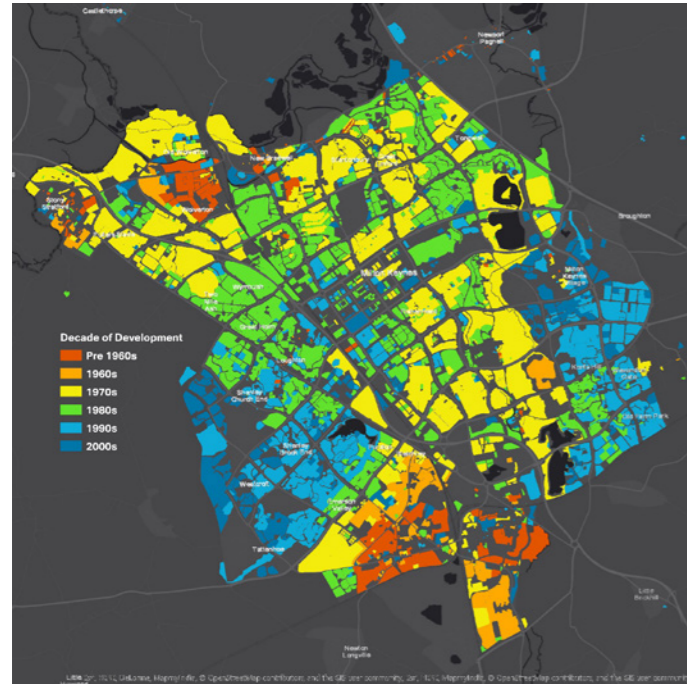
>> *What is the impact of mass communication and technology on the need for public spaces?*

With the rise of mass communication, participation and gathering on the basis of shared interests has been decreasing in Milton Keynes. As Mark Clapson pointed out, part of the decline is likely because much of our interaction no longer happens in local places but across far distances; interest groups can be local, national or global. Although part of the city's original grid-based urban design was a seamless "non-place" public realm through which one can move freely, associative activity was more successful when it was sponsored by the Development Corporation.



The Milton Keynes Market, with the modernist Town Centre behind. Photo by Chris Guy - gidsey.com

### 3. Adapting the welfare state model >> changing demands for housing and transportation



Milton Keynes's oldest neighbourhoods are generally the ones that are the most deprived.  
Images source: Will Cousins

#### Challenges

How can the positive qualities of Milton Keynes's original urban plan be kept while adapting to social change and densification? The goal of the Development Corporation's vision was to build a green city with easy mobility and freedom of choice, qualities that are still central to its future success. It was envisioned to be what Milton Keynes planner Derek Walker called a "circuit board city" (after Melvin Webber) with a "non-place urban realm". Seamless transportation would encourage social mixing and integration. This vision was implemented in the form of a uniform grid with roundabouts, a planning approach that also provided a clear and systematic way of converting a field into a town.

However, because the plan was designed for the private car – the grid was too dispersed for mass public transportation – mobility has become an obstacle to social integration. Those without a car, either because they are too young or cannot afford it, cannot easily move from place to place; there is no tram, and buses stop running after 21:00. Bus reliability is also compromised by congested routes at peak times and poor-quality information, and a bus ride from Fullers Slade to Bletchley is 1h10 by bus and only 15 minutes by car. Cheap parking and the ease of multi-destination journeys by car also contribute to the unpopularity of public transport. Culture plays a role in mobility, as well. Many new migrants are not familiar with the grid system or are uncomfortable with roundabouts and rely on taxis.

Besides transportation, poverty in certain grid square neighbourhoods is a growing problem. Currently, says David Gleeson (Your:MK), eleven of Milton Keynes's estates are categorized among the top 15% most deprived nationally. Seven of these estates together have around 6,500 properties and over 20,000 people.

The number of homeless households has risen by 128% since 2013, and approximately 800 families are housed in temporary accommodation. Housing is becoming unaffordable, and many who were born and raised in Milton Keynes cannot afford to buy a house. Prices are about 10x the average salary and viable mortgages are at 4x the average salary. Reported crime has also increased by 14% since 2016.

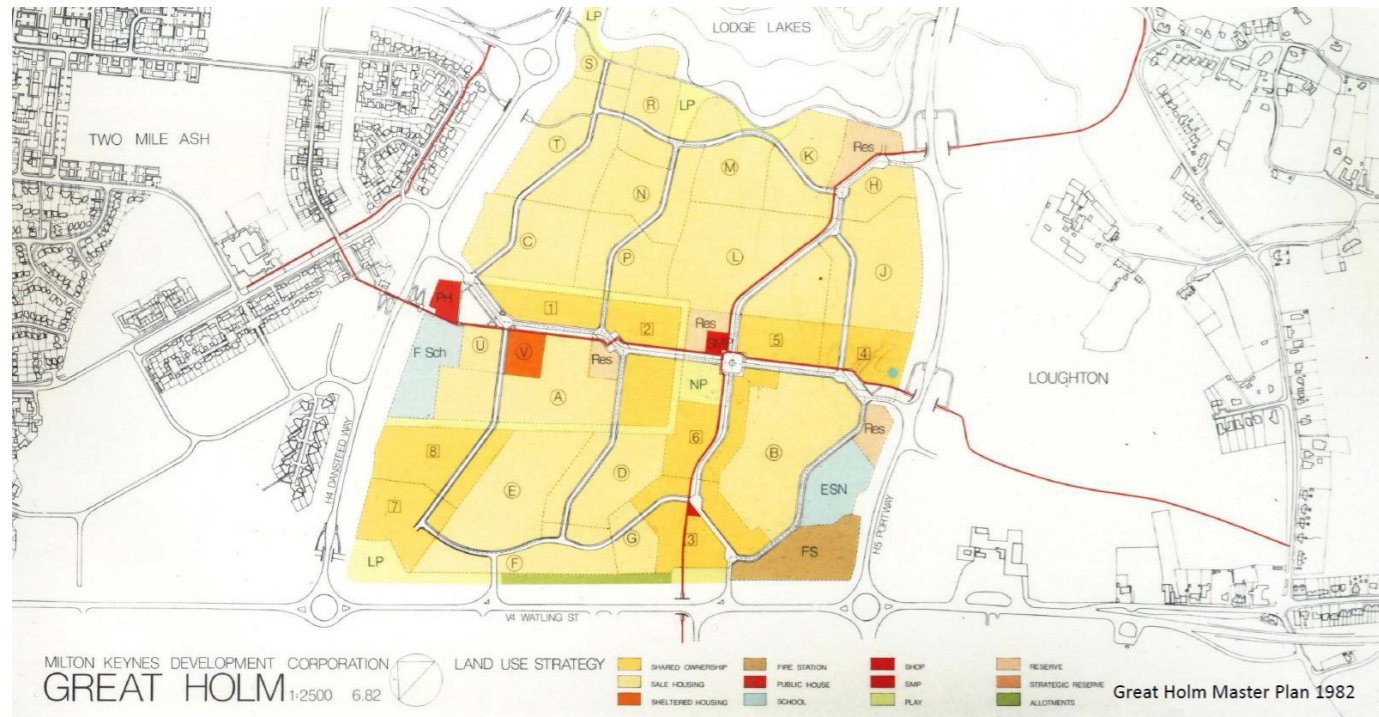
#### Insights and observations

>> How can public transportation and overall mobility be improved?

Milton Keynes's grid is by nature dispersed to distribute land use, and poses a challenge to retrofitting with mass rapid transit. It will require prioritising one transit corridor over another, explains Council urban planner Will Cousins, changing the original uniformity of the grid. Following the example of Aarhus and Gellerup, where a future tram line will connect Gellerup with Aarhus's city centre, implementing a tram system could be a viable option. Although public transport is lacking in Milton Keynes, the city does have a continuous system of pedestrian and bicycle "Redways". Separated from roads with level changes and broad underpasses, they were designed to protect pedestrians from vehicular traffic. While certain areas feel unsafe because of over-greening and cyclists are sometimes too separate from the general activity of the street, the Redways are generally perceived as safe. The Council has recently invested £300,000 for the promotion of cycling culture to "animate" the Redways. Dutch cycling culture is exemplary in this regard. In Nissewaard, for instance, migrants are encouraged to use bikes with cycling lessons given by Dutch college students, a strategy that could prove useful in other New Towns as well.

>> What are the social and physical factors of neighbourhood deprivation, and what are the implications for regeneration?

Neighbourhood deprivation is closely linked with transient communities and lacking social support structures, which is in turn affected by tenancy and housing affordability. Originally, all housing on deprived estates such as Fishermead and Netherfield was built by the Development Corporation for social rent. Through Right to Buy, about half of the stock is now privately owned, a significant part of which is privately rented. Private landlords, short rental contracts and multi-tenant occupation have led to transient populations and poor living conditions. In contrast, communities are more stable in neighbourhoods that are better off. In Wolverton, as Roger Kitchen (founder of Living Archive) points out, the housing stock may be of poor quality, but people love living there, and feel that they belong. The same is true of Fullers Slade, which has been slated for demolition. People are happy in these areas, says David Gleeson, because they know the people around them, and because there is a local support network of family members, doctors, schools, and work opportunities.



The Great Holm mixed-use plan. Image source: presentation by Will Cousins during the lab



Netherfield's original modernist social housing, listed in the Heritage Register. Image from Simon Peart

For a successful regeneration, then, tenure and social structures could be said to be much more important than architecture. “Put a deprived and poor person in a shiny new house,” says Gleeson, “and they’ll still be deprived and poor.” On the other hand, architectural heritage is not unimportant, especially in a city such as Milton Keynes that prides itself on being “different by design”, with heritage-listed modernist architecture to boast. Much of this architectural heritage lies in the city’s oldest and most deprived areas such as Netherfield. *Regeneration therefore needs to address*

*both social and physical aspects: how can communities be kept intact when they might have to be temporarily housed somewhere else? How can housing be physically renewed without losing its unique architectural qualities? How can social structures be safeguarded?*

>> *How can neighbourhoods be better planned to build stable and diverse communities?*

Building healthy neighbourhoods has much to do with mixed housing typologies, wealth categories, and tenancy. This mixed approach was tested in the Great Holm area, with the aim of building long-term resilience and diversity. Facilities include a pub next to a school, a community home, an elderly home, and a handicap home. The residential development is a mix of self-build plots, shared ownership housing, for-sale, low-income housing, bungalows, and blocks of high-density plots.

>> *Who plans and funds neighbourhood regeneration?*

Because of the complexity of the social issues to address, and given the Council’s limited capacity, neighbourhood regeneration requires the cooperation of multiple government organizations and of the residents themselves. The Conniburrow estate, for instance, received a £1 million from the National Lottery in 2015 to develop their own community regeneration programme during a 10-year period. In the Newport Pagnell district, the residents worked with the local Parish Council to develop a neighbourhood plan with recreation facilities, a school, and the development of roughly 1,000 dwellings to finance the facilities. It was voted on and approved by a public referendum. Local Parishes can also play a role in financing community projects by implementing a special tax. They are also given a small budget from higher levels of government to spend as they would like.

## 4. Building a positive narrative

### >> understanding cultural differences

#### Challenges

Milton Keynes has experienced a rapid diversification of its population, as Mark Clapson's statistics show: the black and minority ethnic groups have doubled from 13.2% in 2001 to 26.1% in 2011, and the number of residents born outside of the UK has also doubled in the same period from 9.9% to 18.5%. At the same time, there has been an increase of race hate (up 23%) and religiously-motivated crimes (up 83%).

These changes have not come without cultural challenges. Islamic women who ask for a separate swimming pool for religious reasons are told to use the general pool. African customs of showing respect with lowered eyes is often interpreted by English police as a sign of guilt. Young African refugees, with parents who work long hours, are often left with no one to speak to and roam the parks late at night. They are sometimes bullied at school, and suffer from low self-esteem because of the negative media portrayal of the poverty in their countries. These problems are not unique to Milton Keynes, being felt even more severely in places such as Grand Paris Sud, where tens of thousands of migrants have come. In the context of mass unemployment and the attacks in Paris, the finger is often pointed at migrant communities.

While Milton Keynes is becoming increasingly diverse, however, the brochure picture of the city still portrays the ideal of suburban living with a townhouse, garden, car, and a white nuclear family. People buy into these perspectives, only to find out that they do not reflect reality. There is a need for a new narrative, which should be developed with the communities who live there and who want to have an influence on their city. A key challenge is that New Towns are built with a very strong vision, and the people who first choose to move there cling to that vision, becoming defensive of it. However, a city built for the society of the 60s cannot answer to today's needs.

#### Insights and observations

>> *How can cultural misunderstandings be addressed?*

In Milton Keynes, the Council relies heavily on its "delivery organizations" such as AHA-MK members, GOF:MK and MKIAHC to carry out community work. For instance, GOF:MK organizes a monthly Breakfast Club where

migrants and locals can voice their concerns about cultural differences that might otherwise be offensive. With one-on-one conversations, guest speakers, Q&A sessions, and support from police and various other professionals, questions are dealt with such as why people cover their heads, or why people from certain backgrounds are stopped and searched. Another initiative of GOF:MK is a football club for youth and for adults, which is a way of teaching anger management skills, teamwork, listening, respect and time keeping. MKIAHC's Art in the Park is also a way of creating common ground around artwork and food. While such events are effective platforms for dialogue, though, finding ways to reconcile different values on topics such as gender equality could remain problematic.

>> *What kind of new narrative could reflect the reality of Milton Keynes?*

Migrant communities as well as youth could be more involved in envisioning the future of the city, thereby recognizing the importance of their contribution. One Indian resident emphasized the need for more recognition for the cultural diversity in Milton Keynes; some newcomers are unaware of the market, he says, because it is not promoted enough. Learning about other cultures can in fact be an enriching experience, and can show that we have more in common than we might think. Creating involvement opportunities for Milton Keynes's youth might also help to keep them from going abroad for career and education prospects, or might welcome them to return to start a family.

## 5. Government-citizen relations

### >> building trust is key to establishing a dialogue

#### Challenges

The Development Corporation, which has been described as a “benevolent dictator”, implemented its vision in a top-down city planning process. Since that time, the population has grown from roughly 60,000 to over 250,000, and the Council’s resources have diminished, requiring a more “bottom-up” democratic approach. *Who sets the strategy, and how can citizens’ voices be heard and implemented in future plans?* Engaging with communities to see what their needs are can be a challenging process, due in large part to a lack of trust. Especially in deprived communities, there is often a lack of confidence, cynicism, and a feeling of being let down. Moreover, growing social inequality and the municipality’s position of power can widen that gap.

#### Insights and observations

>> *How can a democratic planning process be implemented?*

One way of giving citizens more influence on the city’s future plans is to widen the legislative register. Lowering the minimum voting age from 18 to 16 would allow young people to be more involved, which might encourage them to stay. Voter apathy also needs to be addressed. In some estates, where residents do attend local meetings and express their opinions, they lose the will to vote, partly because of what they believe politicians will or will not do. While voting should be encouraged as a way of participation in shaping the city, though, it can present a dilemma, because residents are taking decisions for people who will live in those areas in the next five, ten or fifteen years.

>> *How can the trust of residents be gained, so that their voices can be heard?*

Establishing trust between the Council and the citizens is key for allowing community members to participate in the planning process. David Gleeson (Your:MK) explains that developing a regeneration programme requires engaging with communities to see what their needs are and to build a relationship with them. Some people feel uncomfortable at public meetings, for instance because they cannot read or write, and are better approached individually at home. In general, significant time and capacity is needed to develop these relationships. Having “neutral” people in the community is also helpful, as they are more approachable than Council members and

prevent residents from feeling threatened. For instance, GOF:MK’s African Forum programme bridges the gap between the Police and the African community by having a core group of elders work with the Police. This group then becomes the first point of contact for young people who face problems with the police, and they will in turn reach out to the parents.

>> *What role can Parish Councils / local governmental organizations play in participatory community development?*

Milton Keynes is unique for being completely “parished”; every neighbourhood or estate has its local government organization called a “Town or Parish Council”, which is a tool that can be used for local engagement. However, Town and Parish Councils are seldom representative of their communities - in terms of gender, ethnicity and age – often because those who have time to sit on councils are retired. A few are well connected to their communities, but many are not. In addition to the Town and Parish Councils, then, the City must also rely on informal interest groups. *How can Town and Parish Councils better engage their communities?* One Parish Councillor pointed to the “participatory visioning” model used in Portland, Oregon as a grassroots-level approach to involving people in bringing out the values that they consider important.

## Conclusion

The challenge of accommodating migrant communities in Milton Keynes and allowing them to become an integral and positive part of the city's culture and identity touches upon numerous factors, many of which have to do with building strong relationships between the residents and the Council, and between the various cultural groups themselves. To do so, there needs to be trust, acceptance and recognition of other cultures, an understanding among ethnic groups of their own cultural identities, and confidence among residents to express their opinions. *For all these aspects, communication is key; but how, where, and by whom?*

**Art, Heritage and Culture** is used as a communication platform in Milton Keynes. The ethnic art, music and food in events such as Art in the Park and African Diaspora Day draw people of different cultures together, providing an opportunity for dialogue. Such events are organized by local cultural organizations such as the Milton Keynes Islamic Arts Heritage and Culture organization and Global Outreach.

*Further discussion:*

- *If community cultural groups act as “delivery organizations” for cultural events on behalf of the Council, what problems does it pose for the separation between religion and state?*
- *To what extent can art and culture events address cultural misunderstandings such as the question of gender equality?*

**Public Spaces** and facilities provide settings for meeting and dialogue between cultural groups. These include community and youth centres, public parks and squares. With increasing density, the attractive of the commercial centre, growing developer culture and cuts to public funding, Milton Keynes's public facilities have been disappearing. Strategies for building new facilities include a partnership approach with developers in the form of Planning Obligations, and some neighbourhoods are taking the initiative to develop their own neighbourhood plans.

*Further discussion:*

- *To what extent can heavily programmed commercial spaces such as shopping malls fulfil the function of public space?*
- *How can increasing density be implemented in a way that best supports public facilities?*

Although the Milton Keynes Development Corporation's original plan for the city envisioned seamless mobility that would make it easy to meet anyone anywhere in a circuit board-like “nonplace” public domain, this 1960s **welfare state model needs to be adapted** for the 21st century. Car-based transportation is outdated, and housing that used to be subsidized has been privatized, with unaffordable prices and private rentals contributing to forming transient communities. With fewer stable relations in certain communities and reduced mobility, some areas suffer from isolation, poverty and general deprivation. Adapting the urban model includes regeneration both on a social and architectural level, building developments with mixed wealth groups, tenancy and housing typologies, implementing mass rapid transport systems not wholly based on cars, and improving the “Redways” network of pedestrian and bicycle paths.

*Further discussion:*

- *How can the original urban plan be adapted in a way that keeps the positive qualities of the original – the city's flexible urban grid, modernist housing, green spaces, etc?*
- *How can communities and social structures be safeguarded during regeneration?*

Building acceptance and understanding of the city's migrant communities also has to do with establishing a **new narrative** for Milton Keynes that reflects its culturally diverse reality. While the current “brochure picture” of the city still portrays the original image of suburban living and a white nuclear family, more attention could be given to the market and to cultural events. If it is to reflect the reality of its multicultural population, it should be developed in collaboration with local communities.

*Further discussion:*

- *How is the city's narrative manifested, and how does it compare with reality?*

For residents to participate in forming the future narrative and plans for the city, however, they need to express their opinions and the values that are important to them. Strong **government-citizen relations** are needed for the Council to take residents' voices into account. However, there is often a lack of trust and confidence, especially in the deprived neighbourhoods (where communication is most important). Making voting as accessible as possible, communicating with residents through “neutral” community workers, and engaged and representative local government organizations are among the approaches that could allow the Council to engage with the citizens.

*Further discussion:*

- *How can voting allow current residents to be as involved in city planning as possible, without impeding the implementation of regeneration plans for future residents?*
- *How can trust be built between deprived communities and the city Council?*
- *What role can local government organizations such as Parish Councils play in developing city plans?*

## Appendix 1

### >> New Town Lab Programme

**November 22 - Tour Day***10.30 City Centre Walking Tour*

(Departure from Holiday Inn, Central Milton Keynes)

Tim Skelton (MK Forum) led a Public Art walking tour of the city centre highlighting the key pieces of public art and their importance to Milton Keynes. He talked about the importance of these pieces in building a sense of place and identity within new communities from the city's early days to the more 'corporate' pieces added to the city centre in the 1980s and 1990s. Milton Keynes's more than 230 public art pieces have been recently recognized as a collection in its own right, enabling it to be regarded as one of the key 'framework' attributes that gives Milton Keynes its character, and placing greater emphasis on how works should be commissioned in the future.

*12.00 Welcome and Orientation*

(Location: Saxon Court)

Shane Downer (MK Council) and Noel James (MK City Discovery Centre) welcomed the EU E4C partners to Milton Keynes.

*12.30 Interaction 1: Community Language Service*

(Location: Saxon Court)

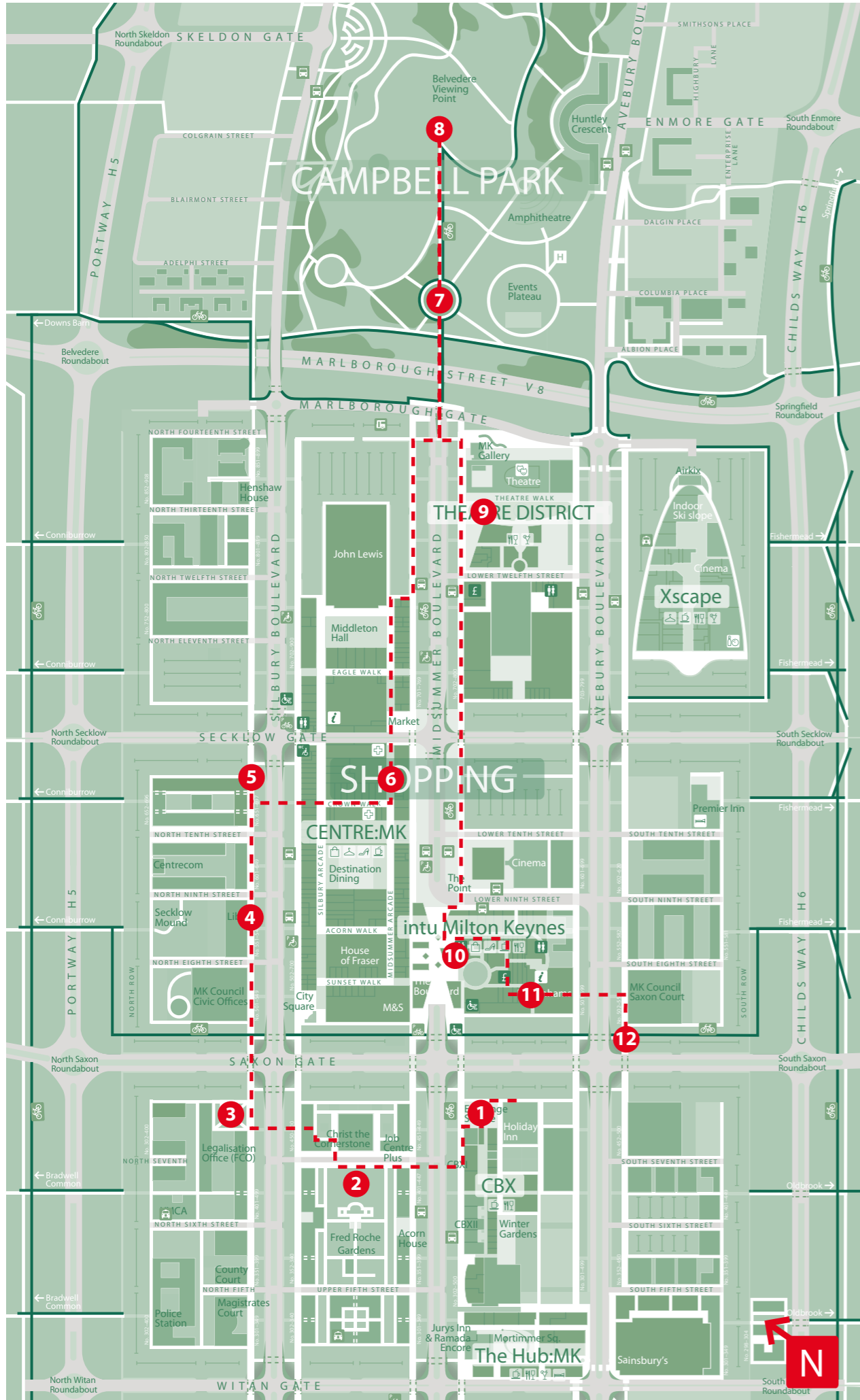
Anne-Marie Brown from the MK Community Language Service discussed how interpreters and translators are used in Milton Keynes and the diversity of the communities they serve. Today, over 60 languages are represented to meet the needs of the different influxes of people from across the globe who come to make Milton Keynes their home.

*13.30 Interaction 2: Milton Keynes Islamic Arts, Heritage and Culture (MKIAHC)*

(Location: Milton Keynes College, Leadenhall Campus)

During Lunch, Anouar Kassim (MKIAHC) discussed the group's ongoing initiatives in bringing together a range of different ethnic community groups in positive dialogue and activity against a current backdrop of anti-immigration attitudes locally and nationally. Successful initiatives include the work with the police, schools and colleges, and the annual major city-centre 'Art in the Park' event which attracts almost 10,000 people annually.





**1** **The Space Between**  
Ellis O'Connell, 1992



**2** **3B Series No 2**  
Bernard Schottlander, 1966-68



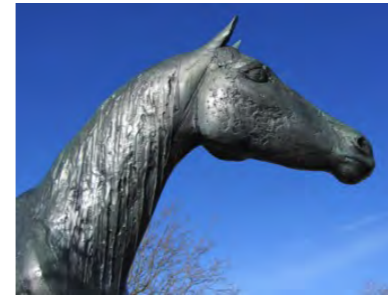
**3** **October**  
Wendy Taylor, 1980



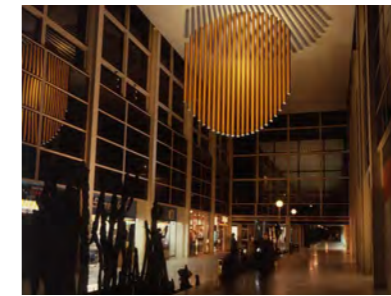
**4** **The Whisper**  
André Wallace, 1984



**4** **Fiction, Non-Fiction and Reference**  
Fionnuala Boyd and Les Evans, 1984



**5** **Black Horse**  
Dame Elisabeth Frink, 1978



**6** **Circle of Light**  
Liliane Lijn, 1980



**7** **MK Rose**  
Gordon Young, 2011



**8** **Light Pyramid**  
Liliane Lijn, 2012



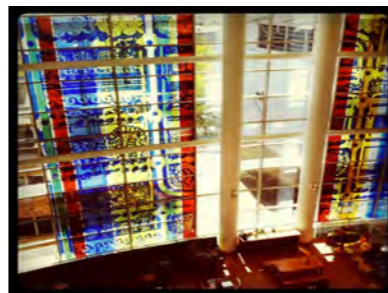
**9** **Dangerous Liaisons**  
Philip Jackson, 1995



**10** **Sitting on History**  
Bill Woodrow, 1996



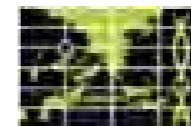
**11** **Time Machine**  
Kit Williams, 2002



**11** **Midsummer Art Glass**  
Anne Smyth, 2000



**12** **Essence**  
Wendy Taylor, 1982



*14.15 Loop 2: Netherfield Tour*

(Departure from the Netherfield Local Centre)

Simon Jackson (local architect) led us on a short walking tour of Netherfield, highlighting its original design, the diverse communities that live there and the issues and challenges facing it today. He described its physical decline and the arrival of poorer residents, the rise of absentee landlords and the resulting lack of motivation. Simon also discussed the proposed regeneration process.

*15.00 Interaction 3: Netherfield Exhibition*

(Location: Milton Keynes City Discovery Centre at Bradwell Abbey)

Darren Umney (PhD candidate in Design) presented his academic arts project, 'Every House of Langland Road', which is displayed as a major exhibition at the MK Gallery. The project proposes design concepts for Netherfield, a culturally diverse New Town area faced with poverty and health issues which is the subject of regeneration plans. Introduction by Noel James.

*16.00 Interaction 4: Festive Road*

(Location: Festive Road CIC at Kiln Farm)

Jessica Rost (Director of Festive Road) talked about the work of Festive Road in carnival and festival fringe arts, how they engage with diverse groups across MK and help new and existing peoples form an identity and sense of place and belonging. The presentation is followed by a tour of their Kiln Farm HQ (original factory unit).

*16.45 Loop 3: MK Museum Tour*

Bill Griffiths (Director of a 'MK Museum Victorian Christmas') led a tour through the MK Museum. The museum is set in a Victorian Model Farm dating from 1847 and part of the development of nearby Wolverton, the world's first planned railway town. Atmospherically lit by lamp and candlelight, the tour included the special rooms, collections and stories, ending at the Granary Tea Room.

*17.30 Interaction 5: Creation of the MK Museum*

(Location: MK Museum)

Bill Griffiths talked about the creation of MK Museum from volunteer heritage community roots in 1973 and its evolution over 40 years into the new City Museum to open in 2019.

*18.00 Christmas Buffet Meal, with discussion and feedback*

(Location: MK Museum)

**November 23 - Seminar Day**

(Location: Holiday Inn Central, 500, Saxon Gate, Milton Keynes)

*09.00 Introduction: Welcome to Milton Keynes – Culture, Migration and Identity*

Francesca Skelton (Chair of the MK Arts and Heritage Alliance, Moderator for the day) and Liz Grifford (Cabinet Member for Place) give an introductory presentation.

*>> Part one: Beginnings**09.15 'Europe for Citizens Project Overview'*

Presented by Michelle Provoost (Director of the International New Town Institute)

*09.25 'Towards 2050 - Milton Keynes: The Cultured and Creative City'*

Presented by Shane Downer (MK Heritage Officer)

*09.35 Keynote Presentation: 'Does a more diverse new city mean a more unsettled city? Milton Keynes since 2000'*

Presented by Professor Mark Clapson (University of Westminster)

*10.05 Panel Discussion*

Participants: Michelle Provoost, Shane Downer, Mark Clapson, Liz Grifford

*10.45 Break**>> Part Two: The Makings of Milton Keynes**11.15 'A City Designed for Migration?'*

Presented by Will Cousins (Chair of MK Gallery)

*11.35 'Personal Stories: Creating the Cultural Ambassadors of the future'*

Presented by the students of the MK Academy. Introduction by Deborah Gockelen (Director of Business and Enterprise)

*11.55 'Reaching newcomers, migrants & refugees through Culture'*

Presented by Mike Kasibo (Chair and Founder of the Global Outreach Foundation)

*12.15 Panel Discussion*

Participants: Will Cousins, Deborah Gockelen and MK Academy students, Mike Kasibo, Rosaline Stafford (Director of Global Outreach Foundation Milton Keynes - GOF:MK)

13.00 Lunch

>> Part Three: Placemaking and City Identity

14.00 'Different by Design: Milton Keynes the European Capital of Culture 2023? The role of Identity and Diversity in the draft 2023 Programme'

Presented by Fiona Boundy (Public Art Officer, Milton Keynes Council)

14.20 'Plan: MK – building culture and identity into the next Local Plan'

Presented by Mike Moore (Senior Planning, Milton Keynes Council)

14.40 'The significance of Milton Keynes's Design Unique Selling Point – The New Town Heritage Register'

Presented by Simon Peart (Conservation and Archaeology Manager, Milton Keynes Council)

15.00 'When New Towns are no longer new, Migration, Identity and Regeneration of the original New Town area'

Presented by David Gleeson (Managing Director of Your:MK)

15.20 Break

15.40 Panel Discussion

Participants: Fiona Boundy, Mike Moore, Simon Peart, David Gleeson, Roger Kitchen (Founder of Living Archive), Anouar Kassim (Founder of MK Islamic Arts Heritage and Culture / Community Connects UK)

16.20 Summary and concluding discussion

18.15 Dinner for participants of EU Partner Cities

(Location: Brown's Restaurant)

Including entertainment from Festive Road

## Appendix 2 >> speakers' biographies

### Michelle Provoost

*Director of the International New Town Institute*

Dr. Michelle Provoost is an architectural historian specialised in urban planning history, postwar architecture and contemporary urban development. She co-founded the office of Crimson Architectural Historians in 1994, and has been the Director of the International New Town Institute (INTI) in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, since 2008. Under her direction, INTI has grown into an internationally known center for education and research relating to New Towns.

Dr. Provoost is the head editor of the INTI publications. She teaches at various universities in the Netherlands and abroad and continues to be in great demand as a public speaker. She lectures regularly throughout Europe, Asia, Africa and the United States, and has been involved in many municipal, national and private committees and juries.



### Shane Downer

*Heritage Officer, Milton Keynes Council*

Shane Downer has been Milton-Keynes' Heritage Officer since 2003, coordinating the strategic heritage programme in Milton Keynes. Through these Strategic Plans he works with colleagues and local, regional and national public, private and third sector partners to implement major heritage provision change for a current resident population of 260,000 and over 200,000 heritage visitors a year to the six major heritage venues.

As Milton Keynes is set to almost double in population over the next thirty years, Shane coordinates the major building projects around new heritage, archive and museum provision including a new city Museum for 2019 a new City Archive and city centre cultural showcase for 2021, and refurbishment of other heritage sites. 2017 has been 'MK's' 50th anniversary and he is part of a team planning cultural step-change and a bid for Milton Keynes to be the UK's European Capital of Culture in 2023.



### Mark Clapson

*Professor at University of Westminster*

Mark Clapson is Professor of Social and Urban History at the University of Westminster. He has written A Social History of Milton Keynes: Middle England/Edge City (2004) and co-authored, with Mervyn Dobbin and Peter Waterman, The Best Laid Plans: Milton Keynes since 1967 (1998)





### Will Cousins

*DipARCH DipUD RIBA, Design Director, Chair of MK Gallery*

Will is a qualified Architect and Urban Designer with considerable experience of working in both the private and public sector on large scale strategic projects. He has been a Director at David Lock Associates since 1991 and has been personally responsible for the management and leadership of several of the Company's major commissions.

Before joining DLA, Will worked for London Docklands Development Corporation leading the Urban Design work of the Wapping and Limehouse Area Team, managing and delivering waterside regeneration and infrastructure projects during a time of intense development activity. Prior to that he worked on the implementation of the Master Plan for Milton Keynes Development Corporation and was responsible for the preparation of several master plans for new neighbourhoods, including proposals for the innovative Energy Park.

In addition to his position at DLA, Will is a Director of DLA Architects Practice Ltd; he is also a Founding Director of David Lock Associates (Australia Pty) with offices in Melbourne and Sydney, and regularly contributes to the Australian Practice's master planning work. Outside of the office, Will is Chair of Milton Keynes Gallery.



### MK Academy Cultural Ambassadors, with Deborah Gockelen

*(Director of Business and Enterprise, Milton Keynes Academy)*

The MKA Cultural Ambassadors are a group of students representing Years 8 upwards who came together in June 2017 to explore cultural opportunities in Milton Keynes, to research attitudes to their city and to promote their ideas about what makes MK so special.

The students have conducted research in the school and the local community, have 'Taken Over' Milton Keynes Museum, attended performances of 'Home Sweet Home' and 'Our Town' and taken part in a workshop to provide a cultural map of Milton Keynes reflecting their views now and how they wish to see MK in the future. They wish to share their research and their vision for MK's development with you on the 23rd November!

### Mike Kasibo

*Chair and Founder of the Global Outreach Foundation Milton Keynes - GOF:MK*

Mike Kasibo is the founder and Chair of Global Outreach Foundation MK. Mike is also the co-founder of African Diaspora Day Event and the initiator of Build In First Concept. Mike is currently undertaking his MSc in Global Cooperation and Security from Birmingham University. Mike has a BSc (Hons) Social work and Applied social studies from the University of Bedfordshire. He also has a diploma in Business Communication and a certificate in Community Organising. With over eight years' experience



in Social care, police and Community organising, Mike has contributed to the programmes geared towards the integration of refugee and migrant communities in East and West Midlands, through activities, events and skills development such as power analysis mapping, Leadership Training, Connecting, Speaking Out, Building Power and Mentoring. (Activities and events includes; African Diaspora Day Event, Black History Month, African Forum, Youth clubs, Show Racism Red Card and Breakfast Club)

### Fiona Boundy

*Public Art Officer, Milton Keynes Council*

Fiona Boundy is a freelance curator and creative producer who for the last eight years has specialised in the development and delivery of large-scale public realm commissions. Past projects include delivery of Artlands North Kent, an award-winning public realm programme, which formed part of Parklands - Farrells green infrastructure scheme for the Thames Gateway; curation and delivery of a two-year programme of artists and makers residencies in the Olympic Park for the London Legacy Development Corporation; the delivery of Greenland Street, Liverpool – a temporary art space which delivered a three-year programme of major new commissions in the lead up to Liverpool Capital of Culture and led on the development of a strategic plan for the Baltic Triangle, Liverpool's new creative quarter, and a series of six public realm commissions in Athens, as part of the launch of a major new cultural hub.

Fiona works as part of the Economy and Culture team at MKC, working on the development of a number of public art commissions, alongside strategic cultural futures projects including Milton Keynes bid to become European Capital of Culture and the new future cultural model for the city.



### Mike Moore

*Senior Planning, Milton Keynes Council*

Michael Moore is a Chartered Town Planner in the Planning Department of Milton Keynes Council. He has worked on several plans for the development of Milton Keynes over the years and is currently working on a new Local Plan (Plan:MK) for the development of Milton Keynes up to 2031. Michael's work in producing planning policies and related planning obligations guidance has been used by the Council to secure major financial contributions for the infrastructure and facilities made necessary by new development. While at the Council, Michael has worked on regeneration initiatives and prepared and managed external funding bids, including an EU funded project for the development of an Arts and Craft centre within the city. Michael is a graduate of the University of East Anglia and his work on planning obligations and the MK Tariff was the subject of his Master's degree thesis. He is a former director of the East of England Tourist Board.





### **Simon Peart**

*Conservation and Archaeology Manager, Milton Keynes Council*

Simon has been Milton Keynes Council's Conservation & Archaeology Manager since 2006. Simon is responsible for advising the Council, Stakeholders, commercial organisations and the wider public on the rich and varied heritage of Milton Keynes, which ranges from historic market towns through Victorian railway works, the WWII code breaking at Bletchley Park to its unique, late C20 new town. This advice is given at both a strategic level, helping to encourage sustainable growth, and at a detailed level on specific development proposals affecting heritage assets. Simon is the project manager of Milton Keynes' New Town Heritage Register, a 'local list' focused specifically on the Development Corporation period of the new town. The register seeks to recognise the unique character and heritage value of Milton Keynes, increasing awareness and appreciation, ensuring that it informs important decisions about its future and, where appropriate, that it is preserved for the enjoyment and education of future generations.



### **David Gleeson**

*Managing Director of Your:MK*

With more than 25 years' experience, David has worked on complex and high profile housing development and regeneration schemes across London and the South East. He has delivered innovative and community centred programmes in Hackney, Tower Hamlets, Camden, Westminster and Surrey. David, as Managing Director of Your: MK, is responsible for directing the company to achieve its objectives. He currently lives in Bedfordshire with his family.



### **Roger Kitchen**

*Founder of Living Archive*

Roger joined the Development Corporation's Social Development Dept. in 1971 as a community worker on the first new housing estates. In 1975 he came 'inside' the Social Development Dept., specialising in Education and Youth Liaison helping in the establishment of Inter-Action, the Youth Information Service and the Urban Studies Centre (now the City Discovery Centre). In 1978 he became the co-Director and later Director of Inter-Action Milton Keynes. In 1992 he left to become General Manager of Living Archive Milton Keynes, an organisation he'd co-founded with Roy Nevitt in 1984.

### **Cllr. Liz Gifford**

*Cabinet Member for Place, Milton Keynes Council*

Cllr Liz Gifford is one of the two Labour councillors in Stony Stratford Ward which includes the areas of Stony Stratford, Fullers Slade, Galley Hill, Calverton and Crownhill. She is the Cabinet Member responsible for Place, and her Portfolio includes Strategic Planning, Economic Development, Business Growth, Transport, Culture, Skills, Parish Partnerships, Libraries, Leisure Centres and Community Assets and Events.



### **Anouar Kassim**

*Founder of MK Islamic Arts Heritage and Culture / Community Connects UK*

Anouar is founder and chair of the Milton Keynes Islamic Arts, Heritage and Culture group and has been instrumental in bringing diverse groups and communities together across all nations and faiths to raise the profile and importance of culture to creating social inclusion, acceptance and an identity of belonging to the city. Key successes include the work with the Police, Schools and Colleges and the annual major city centre 'Art in the Park' event which attracts almost 10,000 people annually.



### **Francesca Skelton**

*Chair, MK Arts and Heritage Alliance*

Francesca moved to Milton Keynes in 1977 and spent the first 14 years commuting to London, first working on the commercial side of The Guardian newspaper, later moving over to IPC magazines where she worked on the launch of a new women's magazine OPTIONS. She later became publisher of Ideal Home magazine. On the birth of her second child she decided to work locally and she moved from the private sector to work in the voluntary sector, where she managed Relate MK for ten years. The community of Milton Keynes became her focus and she later became a trustee of the Milton Keynes Community Foundation, where she also served a three year term as Chair. She joined the Board of Governors at MK College and served as Chair for six years from 2007- 2013.

She is a Deputy Lieutenant of Buckinghamshire and was High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire 2015/16. In 2016 she took on the role of Chair of the Arts and Heritage Alliance Milton Keynes, which has 39 members. AHA-MK champions the rich heritage and creative future of Milton Keynes and 2017 is an important year for arts and heritage as Milton Keynes submits its bid to be chosen as European Capital of Culture 2023. Thriving culture is the key to successful cities as investment in arts and heritage has a significant impact on the economy, skills, education, recruitment and retention, tourism, integration, mental and physical health and our overall wellbeing.



**Noël James**

*Milton Keynes City Discovery Centre*

Noël James is the current Director and CEO of the Milton Keynes City Discovery Centre. She comes from a research background, and has over 25 years' experience working in the heritage sector. She has a particular interest in the built environment and has recently left post as Director of the Historic Towns Forum, an umbrella organisation specialising in urban planning in historic towns. Noël gained her Doctorate in Medieval Law from the University of York in 1999, and has published widely on Medieval Law, Landscape History, Social History and Historical Geography. In the past she has held posts at the Prince's Trust, the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Policy and Public Affairs Directorate at a Regional Development Agency, and at the Living Archive. She is an Academician of the Academy of Urbanism, a recent Trustee for the Battlefields Trust, and has been an expert panel member on the Revive & Thrive Challenge. She is also a mentor for the British Legion, mentoring returners to the built environment.

# Lab#2 | Sabaudia

Re-planning collective spaces to rediscover our roots

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*Editing and contents supervision:* Viviana Rubbo and Michelle Provoost



## Sabaudia

### >> Introduction

Sabaudia is unique among the cities participating in the New Towns Arrival Cities project because it is a forerunner of the welfare state New Towns, built just before WWII. Like other New Towns, though, it has been formed by immigrants since its origins: during Fascism and the post war period, populations from Veneto, Friuli, Trentino and Emilia Romagna moved to the region and were employed for land reclamation and agricultural work; later (1980-2000) workers came from Poland and Maghreb. The most recent immigrant agricultural workers are the Sikh, an Indian population from Punjab, who are currently the largest ethnic minority (11% of the population of Sabaudia, according to City Council statistics 2017). Romanians and Moroccans are the second largest ethnic groups in the city.



The reclamation area of the Pontine Marshes included the building of five New Towns: Pomezia, Aprilia, Littoria, Pontinia and Sabaudia.



Sabaudia was planned as the centre of a network of rural settlements.

### City origins

Sabaudia is one of eleven new towns built in Italy during the thirties, six of which can be considered “reclamation cities” and the others as “category cities” with very unique production features: several are mining cities, one has an aeronautics industry, and one produces cellulose. Two small towns in Sardinia should also be considered as reclamation towns: Arborea (formerly Mussolinia) in the Terralba district and Fertilia in the Nurra district. A third city was built in Sardinia, Carbonia; two cities in Istria, Raša (Arsia) and Podlabin (formerly Pozzo Littoria); one in Lazio, Guidonia, close to Rome, and one in Friuli, Torviscosa, all different in size.

### The reclamation of the Pontine Marshes

The reclamation of the Pontine countryside was the biggest reclamation project in Italy (set up and implemented by several legislative decrees, 1924, 1928, 1933). The area was initially a wet plain of 80,000 hectares bordered to the north by a coastline stretching from Mount Circeo to Terracina in the south, by the Tyrrhenian Sea to the west, and by Via Appia running from Rome to Terracina in the east. The five towns planned within the area, Littoria (1932), Sabaudia (1934), Aprilia and Pomezia (1939), are very different in size, from 3,000 inhabitants foreseen in the smallest (Pontinia) to the 20/40,000 thousand foreseen in the

biggest (Latina). Sabaudia was planned to receive 5,000 inhabitants in its centre and 20,000 in the wider area.

The purpose of the reclamation and planned towns was to facilitate the agricultural exploitation of the reclaimed land, reduce unemployment, revive rural Italy and build support for the fascist regime. The economic strategy was based on a network of primary cities and secondary towns, the latter considered as service centres for the rural homes spread throughout the agrarian territory.

Although there was a single unifying hydraulics plan and a common intention to give a territorial and civic role to the new towns, the new cities themselves are designed as strongly independent urban centres. This is due to the Fascist rhetoric which wanted each urban project invested with significant political meaning and heroic references.

### The Piccinato Master Plan, 1934

While the plans for Latina and Pontinia were directly commissioned, those of Sabaudia and Aprilia were the result of a competition. The winning proposal for the master plan of Sabaudia was designed by a group formed by the architects Cancellotti, Montuori, Piccinato and Scalzelli.

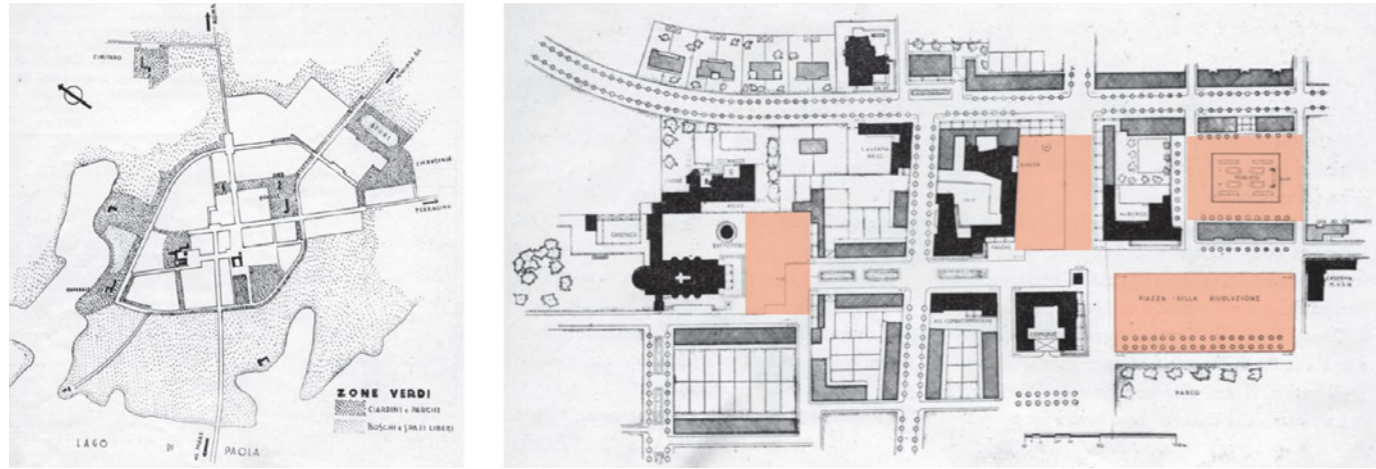
The plan is based on the concept of an open city directly linked to its surroundings, an agricultural centre serving the surrounding land. There are two reasons for this approach: Fascist agricultural propaganda and the beauty of the land, especially its sandy coast, Paola Lake, the network of coastal lakes and the Circeo promontory. The necessity to preserve the beauty of the land is also at origin of the establishing of the National Park of Circeo in 1934, which encompasses Sabaudia within its borders.

The will of Luigi Piccinato (the main architect and urban designer of the city) to bring the landscape elements into Sabaudia with both physical and visual connections leads to a quite open urban shape, rather than a strict geometric plan. The urban masterplan is centred on three types of open spaces: the squares (the municipality square, the square of the adunate/gathering and the church square), the axes connecting the squares and several wide representative tree-lined roads, and the green spaces towards the lake of Paola, intentionally left unplanned and open. The municipality square sits at the intersection of the two main perpendicular axes - the cardo and decumano - referring to the glorious history of Roman town planning.



The Piccinato masterplan for Sabaudia, 1934 (source: Piccinato 1934)





Piccinato's plan placed Sabaudia within "green zones" (left), which were brought into the city centre with wide axial streets and squares (right). (source: Piccinato 1934)

The 1934 Piccinato masterplan (orange) superimposed on Sabaudia's existing urban fabric (black). (source: presentation by Dunia Mittner during day 2 of the lab)



### The Seaside Centre and Touristic Boom ('60s to '80s)

After WWII, Sabaudia started its transformation from an agricultural centre to a resort town. During the Sixties and Seventies in particular, Sabaudia was appreciated by the Roman intelligentsia because of its nature (including an 18km-long beach) and the rationalist architecture's pure rectilinear forms that evoke the metaphysical sensations of De Chirico paintings, and its proximity to Rome.

Famous writers such as Alberto Moravia and Dacia Maraini as well as filmmakers such as Pier Paolo Pasolini and Bernardo Bertolucci chose Sabaudia as their summer holiday destination, spending several months there and transforming it into an elite seaside resort. The Moravia-Pasolini couple was particularly influential in the transformation of Sabaudia into a resort town. The city also formed the backdrop of well-known movies including "Divorce Italian Style" (Germi), "School Mates" (Verdone) and more recently "The Caiman" (Moretti) and "The Family Friend" (Sorrentino). Beyond filmmakers and intellectuals, the site is chosen by politicians and television personalities.

During this time, Sabaudia's surroundings become the victim of intense squatting and illegal building, making it necessary to redraw the borders of the Circeo National Park. Some coastal areas near Latina, where illegal construction is particularly severe, are taken out from the original perimeter of the park. Other areas remained within the borders to protect them from real estate speculation, such as the coastal lakes of Fogliano, Monaci e Caprolace. The Eighties are thus a time of heavy construction within the territory.

### Immigration in Sabaudia: the Bella Farnia neighbourhood as a case study

During the 1970s economic boom, Bella Farnia, one of Sabaudia's satellite secondary towns located along the coast, was developed as a holiday house resort. Today, almost half of the residents are Indian immigrants.

Bella Farnia was part of a series of similar developments that sprang up all across the Mediterranean tourist areas. It is composed of multiple allotments structured as small enclaves with winding street patterns and white plastered buildings. The Bella Farnia Mare allotment, where most of the Indians have settled, was originally developed by the Somal housing cooperative and offered a variety of summer house typologies including detached single-family villas and denser arrays of apartments for a less affluent clientele. Because it was meant as a holiday resort, few public amenities were planned: a church, an elementary school (which is now abandoned) and a bar.



The Bella Farnia neighbourhood: the outlined lower area shows the Bella Farnia Mare area where many Punjabi immigrants live. The public amenities are limited to several shops, a bar and a church (outlined upper area).



The Indians' apartments (top) and the larger villas owned by Italians (bottom) strike a surprising contrast, yet are part of the same neighbourhood.

Before the development was completed, however, Somal went bankrupt. A conspicuous number of flats was left unfinished, and public spaces remained as open left-over spaces. The empty apartments attracted the attention of nearby agricultural entrepreneurs, who bought them and began renting them to the Punjab workers who arrived in the 1980s to work in the nearby fields and greenhouses.

Numerous factors drew the Punjab immigrants to Sabaudia: finding work in India was difficult at the time and those who could afford it went abroad; it was also relatively faster to obtain visas for Italy than for other European countries, which were distributed according to annual quotas for the immigration of agricultural workers. The Punjab workers settled in Bella Farnia because it was close to their work and rent was relatively cheap. Moreover, other areas of Sabaudia were not renting to immigrants in the 80s and 90s; Bella Farnia was an exception because it was a holiday resort. Most of the agricultural workers, despite being met with less favourable living and working conditions than they expected, remained in Sabaudia because of the debt incurred during their travels and because of the bureaucratic obstacles to arranging their documents.

Today, the apartments that were designed for 2-4 people are home to 6-8 immigrants, and the roughly 1900 Indians in Bella Farnia constitute around 40% of the population (according to the Municipality of Sabaudia's population statistics, 2017). However, the neighbourhood's Italian families in the larger holiday houses and the Indian communities in the apartment blocks seldom mix.

### The New Town Lab: How can Public Spaces Improve the Integration of Newcomers?

How can newcomers, and in particular the Punjab community, be better integrated in Italian society? Historically, the city's abundant open spaces have served this function. Today, however, they are only occasionally used: once a week during the market, or for special events during the summer, for example during the Sabaudia film festival. One problem is the mix

of pedestrian and car traffic. As well, new neighbourhoods such as Bella Farnia lack public spaces where new populations can gather and meet. How can this situation be improved?

## 1. Culture

### >> a vibrant immigrant culture, yet segregated

The Punjab population in Bella Farnia has a rich culture, but one that remains little known by the nearby Italian community. While Italians socialize at the bar in the evenings, the Indians gather in their own neighbourhoods and in the Gurdwara Sikh temple.

The Gurdwara was established in 2001 in a warehouse 1km from the centre of Sabaudia. It is a place for gathering and for religious celebration on Sundays, when most workers have a day off. The temple is open 24/7 and many Indians use it as temporary accommodation (if they have nowhere else to sleep) in exchange for helping with cooking and cleaning.

The temple is also open to those from outside the Sikh community, for instance Romanian and Ukrainian women who married Indian men or Italians who are curious about the Punjab culture. However, these are more the exception than the rule; others seldom come because of the language barrier and because they have no contacts within the community.

At the end of June, thousands of Sikhs from the province of Latina and from the regions of Lazio, Campania and even further from north-Italy join Bella Farnia's Sikh community in a procession from the Gurdwara to the centre of Sabaudia, commemorating the martyrdom of the fifth guru Arjan Dev.

Apart from religion, Indian culture becomes visible in sports: since 2001, Indians from all over Italy come to Bella Farnia every July to compete in the national Kabadi tournament – India's national sport. The Punjab culture is also manifested in the spices, food and Indian films sold in the neighbourhood's modest selection of small shops.

Despite this cultural richness, there is almost no communication between the Italians and the Indians. Even within the small confines of Bella Farnia, the two communities remain segregated.



The Gurdwara Sikh temple, 1 km from the centre of Sabaudia, is housed in an old warehouse.

## 2. Public Space

### >> short-term, local and participative action needed

The city centre of Sabaudia was designed to host the political, social and commercial life of its surrounding network of rural settlements. Its wide axial streets and public squares were built in proportion to the large region that they served. While Bella Farnia's Punjab community bikes 9 km to the Gurdwara, however, they apparently do not find it worthwhile to travel a similar distance for the public life in Sabaudia's centre, contributing to the residential and economic segregation of the community.

Overall, the workshop results (see Appendix 1) propose improving Bella Farnia's open spaces with basic maintenance and small-scale, temporary interventions as a testing ground for shared activities. Cooperation between the municipality and local community would require fewer resources from the municipality and would give the community a sense of ownership. Moreover, there is possibly too much public space, making it a financial burden; some of it could be redeveloped with housing and commercial programme, generating finance to raise the overall quality of public space and public services in Bella Farnia. The mostly likely starting points for implementing the proposed strategies are the central square

The workshop focussed on five open public spaces in Bella Farnia.



and the park because of the public and symbolic value of a well-connected central meeting place, the current lack of places for children to play, and the potential of sports for creating a bridge between different generations and cultures.

In proposing these strategies, however, we cannot naïvely assume that improving public space and the physical conditions in Bella Farnia will solve its complex problems of inequality and non-inclusion. The municipality needs a more long-term plan, also to serve its ambition to obtain funding from regional and European governments. Another challenge is finding ways to engage the separate local communities, especially because the Indian residents are less outgoing than the Italians and because the population varies throughout the year, growing considerably during the summer holiday season.

### **The example of Gellerup as a financial model**

The ongoing urban renewal project in the Danish New Town of Gellerup, which was presented by Tom Nielsen (Aarhus School of Architecture) and Sara Allermann Kruse (City of Aarhus) during the May 17 public conference, demonstrates how redevelopment can pay for itself with densification and diversification. Built in the late 60s and early 70s as a “workers’ paradise” with 2400 housing units in 8 typologies of flats, Gellerup was initially populated by middle-class Danish families. During the 70s, these families left with the arrival of Turkish guest workers and Vietnamese refugees. The 80s saw an influx of refugees from Palestine, Iran, Iraq and Somalia. By the 1990s Gellerup was the poorest neighbourhood in Denmark, plagued with riots and unrest and labelled a ‘ghetto’. Because few people actively chose to live in large-scale housing blocks, a social imbalance was developed, which was exacerbated by the tendency of successful migrants moving out to other, more suburban areas when they had the chance. Gellerup in this way stayed an ‘arrival city’ for the poorer migrants, however without the positive connotations of offering chances for economic and social improvement.

Many years of social efforts have not changed the area, so these are now being combined with radical physical changes. The urban redevelopment project aims to retain residents with strong socio- economic resources and attract more diverse groups of residents. It will renovate existing housing, replace five housing blocks and five institutions with more dense, diverse housing types, build new office buildings that will move 1000 jobs to the area, and create a sports and culture campus and a new urban park. Gellerup will be more connected to the surrounding city - and will therefore feel safer - with a light rail line and new streets.

Similar to Bella Farnia, one opportunity for improvement in Gellerup was the abundance of open space in this modernist neighborhood. In particular a series of empty grass fields along the eastern side was unused and without ownership. Here, the solution was to decrease the amount of open space and use the area to diversify the housing stock and demography by inviting private development projects. While public space is valuable for social integration, selectively developing it for housing, real estate, cafes or shops can balance both the programme and the financial burden of maintaining the spaces.



*Indian children playing football on an abandoned parking lot in Bella Farnia*

### 3. Adapting the Founding Principles

>> from serving a regional economic strategy to serving a growing and diversifying local population

Sabaudia was a “showcase” New Town built as part of the “Battle for Land” economic strategy to build consensus around the fascist regime. The O.N.C. (Opera Nazionale dei Combattenti, a charitable organization to support WWI veterans) coordinated agricultural production in a network of rural settlements to maximize yield and distribution. Its function was also political and representational, reflected in its solemn rationalist architecture and public squares.

The fall of the regime in 1943, the growing population in the 1960s and the arrival of new immigrants from the 1970s onwards changed Sabaudia from a centre in service of a national economic strategy to a veritable city. New neighbourhoods and services were built around the original centre.

Economically, the city suffered from decreasing funds as industry and (military) institutions closed their doors in the last decades. Today, the local democratic

government must shoulder the sometimes conflicting demands of the ‘original’ inhabitants and the newcomers from India as well as Romania and Morocco in a situation with diminishing finances and a political climate which is not favourable towards integration of migrants. At the same time, the region’s economy is strongly dependent on the immigrant workforce; Indians perform 90% of the work for the agricultural sector, which accounts for 60% of the Sabaudia’s economy.



View from the civic tower towards the church: wide tree-lined streets and rectilinear rationalistic architecture surrounded by nature.

### 4. Building a Positive Narrative

>> Recognizing the Indian workforce as part of the city’s pioneering spirit

Sabaudia’s two main economic pillars are agriculture and tourism, based on the region’s fertile land and the beauty of its natural surroundings. Balancing an increasingly intensive agricultural production with the preservation of the natural environment are therefore a primary focus for the municipality. The Circeo national park, founded the same year as Sabaudia and encompassing the city within its borders, was established for the dual purpose of protecting nature and developing tourism. It is the smallest national park in Europe but also the most biodiverse, and this natural environment is preserved both for the common interest of the global community and because of economic competition. Balance with agricultural exploitation is maintained by only farming in restricted areas.

Sabaudia promotes a narrative of itself based on tourism and nature, emphasizing its picturesque qualities. Touristic promotion focuses on wellbeing, the environment and history. However, relatively little recognition is given to the immigrant community as an asset when, in fact, Sabaudia was built by immigrants and continues to be sustained economically by them.

Building a narrative that recognizes the importance of immigrants would firstly require to recognize the ongoing pioneering spirit of Sabaudia: after the first generation of immigrants from the north of Italy, there have been consecutive waves of migrants coming in and the Indians and other migrants form part and parcel of this ongoing development shaping the city.

Secondly it would require empowering migrants to participate in urban life, providing support that might lead them to strengthen their socio-economic position, ensure their civic rights, create chances for emancipation and maybe for them to become entrepreneurs themselves. This effort is already being made by schools, which offer language courses and teach immigrant students and families about public services. Participation of youth also happens through sports. However overall, the immigrant residents are not yet an integrated part of Sabaudian urban life.



An exchange between the international delegates and Bella Farnia’s Indian community during the May 16 tour

## 5. Government-Citizen Relations

### >> private organizations fill the 'communication gap' between the municipality and its immigrant residents

While the initiatives taken by schools and sports organizations are an important first step towards recognizing and empowering the immigrant population, there is not yet enough support from the municipality's side.

There are numerous communication barriers between the Punjab agricultural workers and government institutions, including working hours and language. The Indians work from sunrise to sunset. With only bikes or busses as a means of transport, they cannot reach the government offices in Sabaudia during opening hours. Moreover, most institutional workers don't speak English (as many Indian workers do) and most Indians don't speak Italian, making it difficult for the institutions to teach the workers about their rights and responsibilities, and for the Indian workers to explain their situations and needs to the Italian authorities. As the Punjab community leader Dhillon Karamajit explains, the language barrier is one of the causes of exploitation, as the Indian workers cannot ask for their rights.

Independent organizations are working to fill this gap. FLAI (the federation of agricultural industry labourers) organized numerous strikes, resulting in the passing of the law against "caporalato", the illegal hiring of agricultural labourers for very low wages through an agent. Every Wednesday, FLAI worker Hardeep Kaur, herself of Indian background, parks a minibus-turned-mobile-office in Bella Farnia, from which she offers legal advice and helps the Indians to arrange their resident permits and other documents. InMigrazione, a social cooperative in Sabaudia, offers support for immigrants including a welcome centre and language school, and they engage in research and activism on the issue of exploitation of agricultural workers. Amici di Bella Farnia, formed to provide basic community services for the first generation of immigrants from the Veneto and Friuli regions, organize activities and workshops for the elderly Italian community. They regularly offer their community centre for the Indians to gather, but the two groups don't mix.

Although the municipality has made a step in supporting local needs by establishing a 2018 participatory budget of 360 000 euros, more engagement is likely needed. In the first place, it would require including more members of immigrant communities - not only the leaders - in

exchanges and reflections about their needs, visions and expectations for their neighbourhoods. Equally important is the municipality's willingness and commitment to address these needs. Especially in a situation where funding is lacking, co-creation and co-ownership with local communities are necessary to address the complex social situation.

## Conclusions

Sabaudia, like other New Towns, was build and maintained by a top-down planning process. With changing populations and needs, the city faces similar problems of isolated and disadvantaged immigrant neighbourhoods, lacking services and unused urban spaces. Given the social complexity of neighbourhoods like Bella Farnia and the municipality's lacking financial resources, urban redevelopment can no longer follow the traditional top-down approach. New planning processes are needed in which communities are given a more active role in order to plan according to their needs, encourage ownership and alleviating the municipality's financial burden in maintaining public spaces and amenities. However, such cooperation requires communication, willingness and commitment from the municipality as well as local communities. How can municipality and immigrant populations, in particular the Indian population of Bella Farnia, be encouraged to participate in such processes and become integrated in urban life?

While **culture** has the potential of becoming a platform for inter-cultural dialogue, as is the case in Milton Keynes, in Sabaudia it appears to have the opposite effect. The community of Indian agricultural workers and their families gather within the confines of their own neighbourhood and weekly at the Gurdwara temple. Although the Italian and Indian communities live right next to each other, there is an apparent lack of willingness to come to know each other, one reason being the language barrier.

*Further discussion:*

- *Do the two communities share any common interests that could draw them together, such as the malfunctioning of public services in Bella Farnia?*
- *Can the existence of different cultures be taken into account to create a meaningful designs of public and/or commercial spaces and possible cultural programs?*

Another reason for the lack of integration between the two communities is the lack of well-functioning **public spaces** in Bella Farnia. As a starting point, the workshop results proposed basic maintenance of existing open spaces, starting with temporary small-scale functions and engaging residents in a process of co-creation. There are also possibly too many open spaces and developing it could diversify the programme while alleviating the financial burden of maintenance.

*Further discussion:*

- *How can public spaces be designed, programmed and managed in a seaside town that hosts a much larger population at certain times of the year?*
- *How can the quality of the public space be raised in a financially viable way, possibly by combining investments with development opportunities?*

New Towns are products of their time, and changing social and economic circumstances require **adapting the city's founding principles** to the new circumstances. Originally designed to be a flagship city as part of a national economic strategy in support of the fascist regime, Sabaudia's population has since grown and diversified while the governments resources have diminished.

While its population was initially Italian, today there are large numbers of Indians, Moroccans and Romanians. The immigrants from Punjab are particularly important for the city's economy, performing 90% of the labour in the agricultural sector. Given that agriculture is one of Sabaudia's two economic pillars - along with tourism based on the natural environment - can a more positive narrative be formulated, one that recognizes the immigrant workforce on which the city depends?

Acknowledging the importance of Sabaudia's Indian community and involving them in urban life would require a shift in **government-citizen relations**. A more cooperative approach to planning also becomes necessary as government funding diminishes. Currently, there is a communication gap between the local immigrant community and institutions, making it difficult to address socio-economic problems. Organizations such as FLAI and InMigrazione are working to fill this gap, but additional support from the municipality would be needed to address the complex situation.

*Further discussion:*

- *It is clear that the community needs to play a more active role in urban development, requiring public actors to modify their planning approach: not thinking for the community but with them. How can such a change be accommodated?*
- *If language is a primary barrier to government-citizen relations, how can schools and language education in general gain a more prominent role in the long-term integration strategy?*
- *Obstacles on the road to improvement exist such as insufficient funds, lacking political will or others. Can these obstacles be clearly identified? How can they be dealt with?*

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## Appendix 1 >> Workshop

### Workshop Introduction

Since many years already, XXth century New Towns play a strategic role within the class of Urban Planning held by Dunia Mittner at the Department of Civil, Environmental Engineering and Architecture of the University of Padua, Italy. The study of New towns models and planning concepts offers the opportunity to observe the city from an overall point of view.

The class includes workshop's activities focused on the Italian New Towns built in the Thirties in different regions, including the Agro Pontino (Sabaudia, Latina, Aprilia), Friuli Venezia Giulia (Torviscosa), Emilia Romagna (Tresigallo) and Sardinia (Carbonia, Arborea, Fertilia), adopting either a comparative approach or the analysis of a study case, each presenting its own particular issues.

In the recent years, the workshops were held in the new town of Sabaudia, because of the original master plan drawn by Luigi Piccinato, as well as for the relations with the surrounding landscape and the natural elements (the Circeo mountain, the Circeo national park, the lake of Paola, the coast with the dunes, etc.), and the transformations which are currently challenging the contemporary city. A solid collaboration with the Municipality has allowed the University to organize a series of one-week workshops which has seen the students of Padua to work closely with the public Administration and the local organizations. Main goals, the development of strategic visions and hypothesis of transformation for the new town.

A major change in Sabaudia is the revamping of its original agricultural vocation, which has recently attracted many workers from Punjab, India. This was the reason why the New Town was identified as the perfect location to host a workshop with the students within the "New Towns Arrival Cities" project, focusing on the collective spaces as possible drivers for processes of inclusion between locals and newcomers.

Before the workshop, the students had worked on identifying five open spaces in Bella Farnia, few kilometers away from Sabaudia and sought for thematic match for each location: the square, the park, the playground, the market and the hub. Bella Farnia, because of the insolvency of the Housing cooperative that built the project in the Seventies, today lacks in public spaces and urban services, condition which has led to a progressive deterioration of the entire area, bringing down the housing prices and therefore making it attractive for the migrant Sikh population.



While in Padua, the work of the students consisted in collecting the information (bibliographies, pictures, videos), seeking inspiring examples and draw some first design hypothesis, during the workshop in Sabaudia, the students visited the sites and run interviews with the residents. The inventory of the places and their present conditions had highlighted the need for an urgent renewal of the public spaces, with the aim to improve them as collective places for a more diverse community.

During the final phase of the workshop, the students were responsible for the coordination of the thematic groups. They had the chance to confront themselves with the local administrations, the international partners and the local stakeholders, with the aim to discuss and elaborate ideas and insights for the public spaces' renewal in Bella Farnia. By bringing together such a wide spectrum of voices and stakeholders, the workshop has produced strategic guidelines which have been handed over to the local administration.

(Authors: Dunia Mittner, Sebastiano Roveroni, Marco Stecca)

### The workshop assignment

How can public spaces in Bella Farnia be redesigned and reprogrammed to accommodate the needs and desires of its multifaceted and diverse population?

As part of this New Town Lab, an urban workshop was carried out with the participation of 70 architecture students from the University of Padua, led by Professor Dunia Mittner, Sebastiano Roveroni and Marco Stecca. After studying Sabaudia from their home university, the students spent four days in the New Town, elaborating thoughts and ideas for improving Bella Farnia's public spaces. On May 17 the students coordinated five workshop groups that brought together local civil servants and the international partners to formulate possible strategies for five open spaces, each guided by a given theme: the square, the park, the playground, the market and the hub.

### Workshop results

#### >> The square

A centrally located open green space that once functioned as a park, but is now abandoned.

Four concrete actions points for improvement (in a collaborative process with the municipality and the local community):

- Basic cleaning and maintenance of the space
- Organize social events that include the entire community

- Place a central element that serves both the stable population of Bella Farnia and the summertime touristic population
- Create additional connections, making the area accessible from every part of the neighbourhood.

#### >> The park

A green area belonging to the municipality that is currently undermaintained.

Four concrete action points for improvement:

- Basic maintenance by the municipality, cut the grass, add sitting places, add a sign to mark the area
- To generate funding for improving the park, part of the land could be sold; a shop or cafe could also be added, which would serve the entire community.
- Organize meetings with the municipality and both the Indian and Italian residents to determine the needs and wishes for the space, determine common interests, plan shared actions.
- Start to create a playground, a basic amenity that is currently lacking.

#### >> The sport playground

A green area currently used for sports.

- Make the area more accessible with basic maintenance by the municipality
- Ownership: give the keys to the local youth interested in taking care of the playing field
- Use the space as a testing ground for temporary shared and co-designed activities and installations, which could be a way of identifying which activities are interesting for both the Italian and Indian communities.
- Delegate the management of the space to the community, supporting them with municipal funding

#### >> The market

An empty green area that was once planned to be developed as a market.

- Make a business plan for the area, based on the selling of local food and agricultural products as the element that can connect the Indian and Italian communities
- Build a tall structure or tower to make the market visible and easily recognizable
- Create a natural border of trees to protect the privacy of the local inhabitants who live around the market area
- Install a drainage system to protect the area from flooding (the ground is uneven)

>> *The hub*

Privately owned land along the main road to Bella Farnia, located between the Italian and Sikh communities.

- Cleaning and basic maintenance of the area
- Organize a meeting with the landowner, the municipality and representatives from the Sikh and Italian communities to decide on the potentials of the area. Possibilities include a multifunctional building and legal consultancy, a meeting point for the district and a centre that accommodates various religious groups.
- To give the area a more community-oriented function, the municipality could purchase or lease the land to support the development of communal functions.
- Make the area accessible from the main street and from the back side of the houses around it.

## Appendix 2

### >> New Town Lab Programme

#### Day 1: Wednesday May 16

(Site visits)

*13.30 - 13.45 International delegates meet in Fiumicino Airport. Transport to Sabaudia by bus.*

*15.30 Check-in hotel*

*16.00 Introduction*

(Location - Sabaudia Centro di Documentazione "A. Mazzoni")

Welcome by Dr. Arch. Claudio Leone, Head of Sector VIII AA.PP. - S.U.A.P. - Europa Desk. Brief introduction on the foundation of the City of Sabaudia and its urban development by Dr. Arch. Luca Falzarano on the theme "Major reclamation works and new arrivals: migratory flows in the territory of Sabaudia, the creation of the city centre and the rural villages".

*16.20 "Gellerup: From disadvantaged area to attractive city district"*

Presented by Tom Nielsen (Aarhus School of Architecture) and Sara Allermann Kruse (City of Aarhus)

*17.00 Tour of the city centre*

Visit to the city centre with particular attention to the rationalist aspects of the original buildings, the institutional functions they had in the past and their present role. The tour is guided by Prof. Dunia Mittner.

*18.30 Tour of Bella Farnia*

The group leaves by bus for Bella Farnia. On the way, participants see the agricultural lands and the greenhouses, which are the economic pillars in the area and the reasons for the intense migration flows to the region. The tour ends in the small Bella Farnia settlement. The visit to Bella Farnia also includes the five locations that are the object of the workshop the following day.

*19:30 Dinner at the Sikh Temple*

Arrival at the Sikh Temple at Via Caporale Tortini, the religious centre and gathering place of the Punjab community, where dinner is served (kindly offered by the Sikh community).

*21.30 Return to the hotel by bus.*

**Day 2: Thursday May 17 - Public event**

(Conference and workshops)

(Location - Sabaudia Centro di Documentazione "A. Mazzoni")

9.00 *Introduction by Dr. Arch. Claudio Leone, Head of Productive Activities dep. (moderator)*

Welcome by:

Mayor of Sabaudia, lawyer Giada Gervasi;

Vice Mayor Mr. Alessio Sartori, Alderman Sport and Associations world;

Alderman Finance and Europe desk Dr. Giampiero Macale;

Alderman Productive Activities Dr. Fabiana Marangoni; Indian Ambassador Reenat Sandhu;

Prefect Dr. Giovanna Maria Rita Iurato, Directorate of Religious Affairs, Ministry of the Interior Prefect of Latina, Dr. Maria Rita Trio

9.20 *Introduction to the theme of the Lab by Dr. Arch. Claudio Leone*

9.35 *"New Towns, Arrival Cities" project goals and ambitions*

Presented by Dr. Michelle Provoost (INTI Executive Director)

9.50 *"Re-planning collective spaces within a polycentric city"*

Presented by Dr. Dunia Mittner

10.10 *"The sustainability of new inclusive spaces"*

Presented by Dr. Paolo Cassola (Director of the organization Parco Nazionale del Circeo)

10.35 *coffee break*

11.00 *"The school as a place of welcome, aggregation and main actor in the formation of a spirit of solidarity"*

Presented by Prof. Miriana Zannella (Director of the scientific high school "G. Marconi")

11.20 *"Arrivals in Sabaudia and daily life from the migrant perspective"*

Presented by Mr. Karamajit Singh (Representative of the Indian community)

11.40 *"Sociological aspects of the immigration process in the territory of Sabaudia"*

Presented by Dr. Piero Rossi, Head of the Quality of Life sector of the Municipality of Sabaudia

12.00 *Q&A from the public, concluding remarks by the moderator and presentation of the afternoon workshop sessions*

Presentations finish at 12.45 and conference continues with the workshop at 15.00

15.00 - 17.00 *Workshop sessions*

The aim of the workshop sessions is to involve international delegates and local residents in identifying concrete strategies for making Sabaudia's public spaces more inclusive. Delegates and residents are organized into 4-5 groups and assigned one public space. Each group has a maximum of 20 people and includes policy-makers, professors, international partners, local community members and architects/planners. During the workshops, the students from Padua present their work. There is one moderator for each group.

Within each group, the workshop proceeds as follows:

- Introduction to the site by the students from Padua
- Discussion about the needs and aspirations.
- From your expertise and professional group, what kinds of improvements do you propose? What are the priorities?
- Together define 4 concrete action points for implementation in the public spaces. This proposal is presented in the conclusive plenary session.

17.00 *Presentation of the results of the workshops*

17.30 *Plenary discussion with panel of international partners*

International partners give practical recommendations about how to turn ambitions into practice, including policy, participation and design aspects. Moderation by Michelle Provoost, INTI Director.

18.00 *Summary and conclusion by Claudio Leone*

18.05 - 18.30 *Steering group meeting with representatives from the international delegations*

21.00 *Dinner*

## Appendix 3

### >> speakers biographies



#### **Claudio Leone**

*Head of Productive Activities and of the Europe Desk, Municipality of Sabaudia*

Claudio Leone is trained as an architect. He joined the municipality of Sabaudia in 2011 as Head of the spatial and regional planning department. He was subsequently appointed as Head of the Urban Planning of private and public building regulations with special duty on unauthorized developments. Since January 2018, Claudio is Head of Sector VIII (productive activities) and of the Europe desk.

Before working for the municipality of Sabaudia, he worked in public administration for the municipalities of Ardea, Pomezia and Nettuna. He started his career at the provincial administration of Latina from 1978 to 2002.



#### **Michelle Provoost**

*Director of the International New Town Institute*

Dr. Michelle Provoost is an architectural historian specialised in urban planning history, postwar architecture and contemporary urban development. She co-founded the office of Crimson Architectural Historians in 1994, and has been the Director of the International New Town Institute (INTI) in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, since 2008. Under her direction, INTI has grown into an internationally known centre for education and research relating to New Towns.

Dr. Provoost is the head editor of the INTI publications. She teaches at various universities in the Netherlands and abroad and continues to be in great demand as a public speaker. She lectures regularly throughout Europe, Asia, Africa and the United States, and has been involved in many municipal, national and private committees and juries.



#### **Dunia Mittner**

*Assistant Professor of Urban Planning at the University of Padua*

For several years, she has been working on the topic of new towns built world-wide since the beginning of the Twentieth century, writing several essays and three books: "New towns from the Twentieth century" (Testo&immagine, Turin-Italy, 2003), "The Reticular City and the Modern Project" (Città Studi, Milan-Italy, 2008) and "New Towns: An Investigation on Urbanism" (Jovis, Berlin 2018).

#### **Paolo Cassola**

*(Director of the Circeo National Park)*

Paolo Cassola is the director of the Circeo National Park. He is also a teacher, lecturer and consultant for regional authorities, public and private institutions in Italy and abroad. His primary involvements are environmental protection, sustainable integrated planning, coordination and marketing of projects for the protection of rural communities, and the enhancement of local agricultural production and sustainable tourism. He has also co-founded several local development projects. Paolo is a consultant for international community development activities: the "Habana Ecopolis" project in Havana (Cuba), and a water management project in the rural municipalities of the Hodh El Chargui region (Mauritania) for the benefit of the rural population and the development of micro-enterprises. His role also includes the training and communication advice on strategies, actions and practices and European funds. He is writer, journalist freelance and consultant for the WWF delegation in Tuscany.



#### **Mariana Zannella**

*Director of the scientific high school "G. Marconi"*

Miriana Zannella is the Director of the scientific high school "G. Marconi" and teaches Italian and literature. She has many years' experience in teaching and training seminars about social inclusion and the role of education in the welcoming and acceptance of diversity.



#### **Dhillon Karamajit Singh**

*President of the Gurdwara Sikh Centre in Sabaudia*

Dhillon Karamajit Singh is the founder the Gurdwara Sikh Centre in Sabaudia. He is also President of the Italian Indian party since 2005, and President of the National Federation of Kabaddi (the national sport of India) since 2009. Dhillon immigrated to Italy in 1985 after obtaining a diploma in business economics at the Guri Nanak University in Amristar, and moved to Sabaudia in 1996, where he runs his own business. He obtained a degree in accounting in 2009, and has worked for the court in Latina as auxiliary. Today, he collaborates with the City Council and with schools to support the integration of the Sikh community.



**Piero Rossi**

*Head of the Quality of Life sector of the Municipality of Sabaudia*

For several years, he has been working as a social worker for the Municipality of Sabaudia. Since 2013 Piero is Head of the Social and Healthcare Services Sector and since last year he is Head of the Sector called "Quality of Life". Within this role, he is coordinator for Welfare, Health, Housing, Public Education, Library and Museum. He is also the technical representative of the office in charge of the Social Health District Plan "Latina 2".

# Lab#3 | Grand Paris Sud

## Migrants in a New Town A process of citizenship

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### Credits

Texts: Viviana Rubbo

Editing and contents supervision: Michelle Provoost



## Grand Paris Sud >> Introduction

Grand Paris Sud (GPS) is an urban agglomeration created in 2016 by the merging of 24 municipalities some of which are New Towns founded in the 1970s. At that time, these new cities have responded to the challenge of welcoming tens of thousands of inhabitants from different places mostly from the region and its surroundings by providing housing, mobility networks and nearby job opportunities.

Nowadays, these conditions have drastically changed and so has the image of the New Towns. In the context of mass unemployment, coupled with the attacks in Paris, France is currently experiencing a disturbing identity crisis. The finger is often pointed at the melting pot of the suburbs where the population is extremely diverse in terms of ethnic origins and religious denominations and where the migrants and their descendants are increasingly accused of causing the evils in French society.

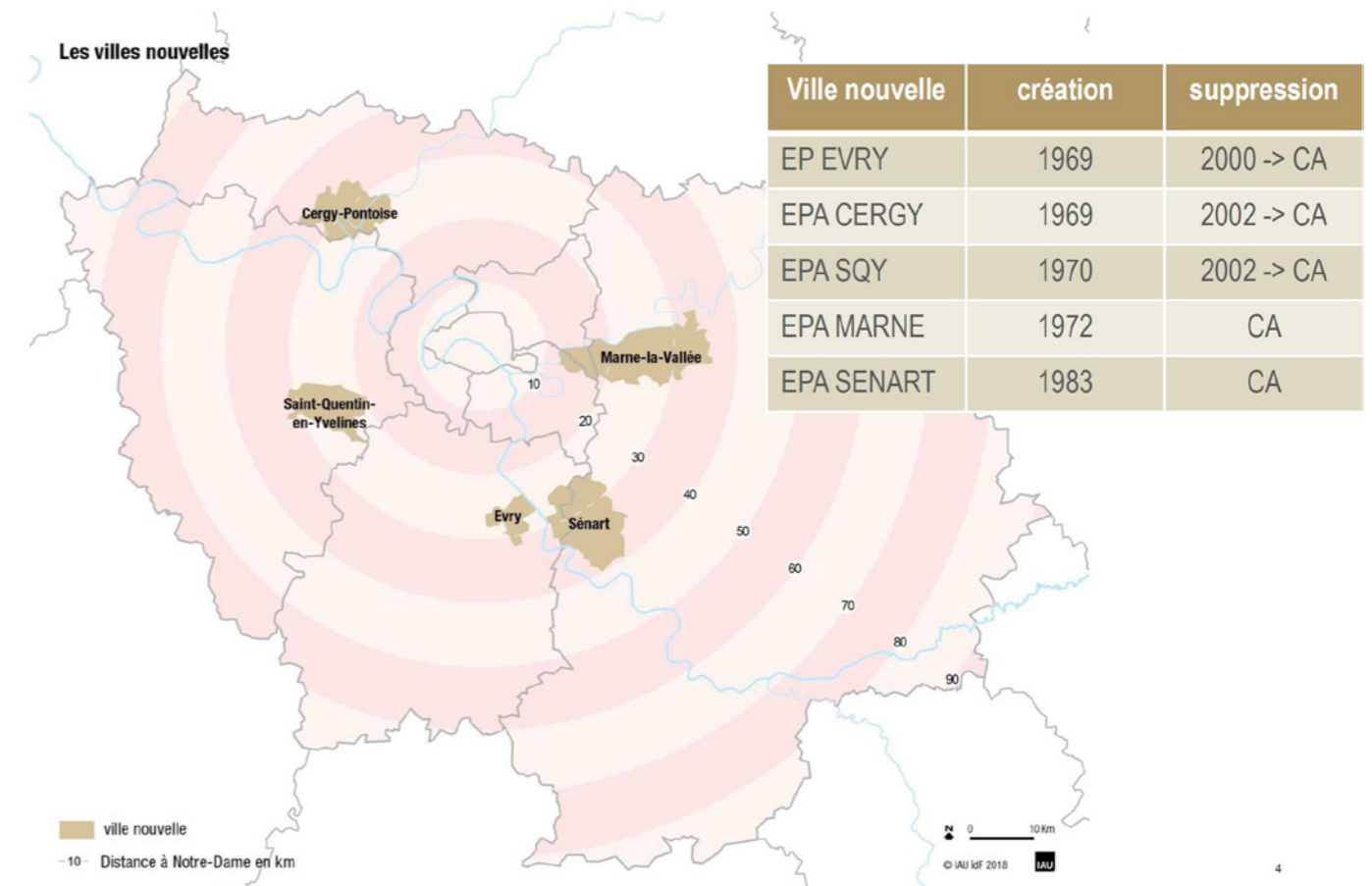
### The origins of the agglomeration

With 343.000 inhabitants, Grand Paris Sud is the fifth most populated area in the Île-de-France region and one of the driving forces behind the population growth in the region. Its creation on January 2016 is the result of an ambitious territorial project giving priority to inclusion, innovative actions and place-specific integrated urban public policies (so called "politiques de la ville").

The territorial history of this agglomeration is marked by two different, yet peculiar, circumstances: the first one dating back to almost half a century ago, with the creation of the villes nouvelles (New Towns), some of which belong to the agglomeration today); the second has just begun and concurs with the recent formalization of the French metropolises. In this new governance system, redistributing the powers within the Region, Grand Paris Sud positions itself as a strategic player dealing with regional and national issues (transport, economy, training, health, major projects) and attaining the necessary critical mass to be heard.

### The years 1970s: the creation of the New Towns

A very diverse urban landscape is one of the main features of Grand Paris Sud, where traditional towns with historical and cultural heritage coexist with the *grands ensembles* and *villes nouvelles*. The *grands ensembles* were government-subsidized largescale housing estates and tower blocks of the 1950s and 1960s. Among them *La Grande Borne* (Grigny) and *Les Tarterêts* (Corbeil-Essonnes), which responded to the housing crisis of the capital city. Because they did not provide their inhabitants with the living conditions



they had hoped for, the French government decided to anticipate the population growth and improve the quality of living conditions, proposing a new development policy which led to the creation of the New Towns. In order to fuel these new developments, the government financed the necessary infrastructures and took measures to encourage people and businesses to settle. Evry and Senart were among these territories of new foundation. Both belong today to the agglomeration of Grand Paris Sud.

According to the plan, five New Towns came into being in the Ile-de-France region: Cergy-Pontoise, Evry, Melun, Saint Quentin-en-Yvelines and Senart saw completion and welcomed their first residents at the beginning of the 1970s.

The construction of these New Towns was mainly aimed at absorbing the rapid growth of the Paris region, strengthening the creation of new development poles some 30-40 km away from the urban heart of Paris, being relatively autonomous and seeking a balance between housing and employment, combined with urban facilities and amenities as administrative and cultural services and shopping malls.

Each new city saw the establishment of a public development institution (EPA – *Etablissement Public d'Aménagement*) responsible for managing

Localization of the 5 New Towns in the Ile-de-France region.  
Source: presentation during the New Town Lab#3 by Mariette Sagot, © IAU-IdF, 2018

1 Original words of Deputy Mayor Jacques Longuet "Ainsi, dans une atmosphère pour le moins surréaliste, le tout premier bâtiment à sortir de terre fut la barre préfectorale, époustouflante structure de l'architecte Lagneau, toute brute de béton décoffré, immense vaisseau incongru au cœur d'un paysage rural"

2 Data provided by GPS in preparation of the New Town Lab.

the construction and urbanization of the territories concerned, by applying the will of the State on the ground.

### Evry-Ville-Nouvelle

In 1965, the Paris Region Strategic Plan proposed the broad lines of the intended development of the city which was meant to consider the consequences of an inevitable future growth together with the need of promoting better living conditions. In order to harmonize and control the development of the Region at different levels such as housing, employment, leisure and transportation, Evry has been conceived as a high-density urban area. Evry-Ville-Nouvelle was created on April 12, 1969 by the public planning authority of the city of Evry (EPEVRY). It included four pre-existing municipalities Bondoufle, Courcouronnes, Evry and Lisses. To affirm the administrative and public dimension of the New Town, the first buildings erected were the prefectural house, the city hall, the train and the bus station. "Thus, in a surreal atmosphere, the very first building out of the ground was the prefectural bar, a breathtaking structure of the architect Lagneau, all raw concrete, a huge incongruous vessel in the heart of a rural landscape"<sup>1</sup> reminds us the Deputy Mayor Jacques Longuet. Still, it was not enough to bring a soul to the city and make it attractive and dynamic. Therefore it is during the late 80s and 90s, that other public works and new buildings saw the day: the Chamber of Commerce, the cathedral, the theatre, the gigantic multi-functional hall called "Les Arenes", the public library and one of the first cinema multiplex of that time, all clustered around the Agora square, the entrance to the commercial regional mall of Evry<sup>2</sup>. In the same decade, the University of Evry Val d'Essonne was finally opened together with internationally-known research institutions (Evry Genopole), and the numerous religious centres which characterize the area (a mosque, a cathedral, a pagoda and a synagogue), contributing to the evolution of the city and giving to it a new cultural and religious dimension.

"Move the city to the countryside » was the slogan in 1979. Giving this context, key focus of this lab has been the visit to Les Pyramides district. Started in 1971, as a result of an international architecture competition, it counts 3500 residential units (of which 1500 are privately owned, the remaining stock is subsidized and publicly owned), 10 000 inhabitants of which 43% under 25, 29% of single parent families and 24% of families with more than three children. The unemployment rate in this neighbourhood reaches 18%.<sup>2</sup>

### Senart-Ville-Nouvelle

The last New Town created in the region was Senart (1973). It is composed of ten municipalities: Cesson, Combs-la-Ville, Lieusaint, Moissy-Cramayel, Nandy, Réau, Savigny-le-Temple, Vert-Saint-Denis (in the county

of Seine-et-Marne), Tigery and Saint-Pierre-du-Perray (in Essonne). Opposite to the dense urban structure of Evry, Sénart is a green city with a rural and natural dimension which saw its population growth multiplied by four between 1974 and 2014. Recognized as a strategic territory for the development of Greater Paris, Senart has responded to many challenges, particularly that of regulating and organizing spontaneous urban growth in the outer suburbs of the Paris region and accommodating part of that regional population growth. Although lower today than in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, the demographic growth of Senart remains high for the Greater Paris area with a positive migratory balance of +0.6% per year, while for Grand Paris Sud it is equal to 0%.<sup>3</sup>

The central space of the New Town is the Carré Senart, a hub of regional relevance, accommodating leisure facilities, educational institutions, extensive car parks, commercial activities, light industry and logistic embedded in a natural environment. With only 30% of the space built and no residential functions, the Carré had been held as "land in reserve" during the crucial growth period and is currently under continuous development creating much debate over the future economic development and wellbeing of the region.

### A territory undergoing radical transformations

Although they may be relatively young, these New Towns are undergoing major social and spatial changes. If the years between 1975 and 1990 have seen half of the regional growth concentrated in the new cities (all the five New Towns in Ile de France region have seen their population multiplied by three in 40 years<sup>4</sup>), the focus of the recent dynamics is re-centered on the Paris region with a process of redistribution still in force today. The economic crisis of the 1980s caused the mass exit of the managing class and saw the arrival of the intermediate professions and more modest categories combined with the poorest population groups "The construction of the city slowed down, only social housing keeps being produced. The population becomes precarious [...] the inhabitants of the foundation years are replaced by families that have not chosen to live in Evry. The exodus of the middle class begins"<sup>5</sup> reported an article appeared in Libération in 1999.<sup>6</sup>

The first residents of the New Town were young families with children for whom the proximity to work and urban services was the measure of their everyday life. Jacques Longuet has sketched out a portrait of the original *homo evryanus*: "... it's young, above all, recently married, a young family man. [...] Here he becomes co-owner in a small apartment building where he contributes to the collective management. In parallel, because often rootless, he invests in the associative life which gives him the opportunity to modestly shape the city at his image."<sup>7</sup>

3 Demographic data provided by GPS in preparation of the New Town Lab.

4 Presentation by Mariette Sagot, IAU IdF 17-18 Oct, 2018

5 Original text of the quote in French "la construction de la ville ralentie, seul le logement social progresse. La population se précarise [...] aux habitants du départ se substituent des familles qui n'ont pas spécialement choisi Evry. L'exode des cadres moyennes commence "

6 « Rêves perdus d'une cité idéale. Insécurité, précarité. Evry s'est peu à peu dégradé ». Article signed by Olivier Bertrand in Libération, 29 January 1999

7 Original text of the quote in French "(il) est jeune avant tout, récemment marié, voire père de famille en bas âge. [...] Le voici devenant copropriétaire dans une petite résidence d'immeubles où il apporte sa participation à la gestion collective. En parallèle, parce que souvent déraciné, il investit dans la vie associative ce qui lui donne la possibilité de façonner modestement la ville à son image"



<sup>8</sup> With the application of the 27 January 2014 Law on the modernization of the territorial public action and the affirmation of the metropolises (Law Maptam).

<sup>9</sup> Presentation « Regard historique et démographique sur le peuplement des villes nouvelles » Author: Mariette Sagot, IAU (17-18 October 2018

Between the 1990s and the first decade of the new century, demographics have changed: the New Towns, and Evry in particular, register an increase of families without children, seniors or retired households and single-parent family groups, mainly due to a progressive aging population and the departure of the new generations from the parents' households towards the central areas of Paris. Not only that; from the mid-1980s, the city began to impoverish, and social problems hit hard. The installation of a diverse foreign population (Moroccan, Algerian, Malian, Senegalese, Indian, Turkish, Chinese, Laotian, Pakistani, Portuguese, etc.) provokes socio-economic and cultural transformations which modify the image of the city itself. Mutations reflected in the way the city is perceived, questioning the public policies and their ability to respond to evolving urban territories increasingly connected to the rest of the world. Data provided by IAU-IdF show that, in 2013, the 25,7% of the population in Evry is migrant, mainly coming from Africa (39,4%), Maghreb (29,1%) and Asia (13,4%).<sup>8-9</sup>

Fifty years after their creation, Evry and Senart no longer see themselves as New Towns. They are in the midst of reinventing themselves, starting from the acknowledgement of their present conditions: jobs need to be found elsewhere (proximity to the job is not anymore the attractive factor bringing people to the New Town); the original population of pioneers, whenever they remained in the city, is retired and old and in increasing need of healthcare infrastructures; the new waves of migrants express needs and social questions which differ from the ones of the pioneers. A difference with the first generation of inhabitants is that these new populations of migrants are deprived of civil rights, which now they start to claim. Especially when it comes to Evry, it is worth noting "*the influence of the ideals promoted by the cultural revolution of 1968 in shaping the social organization in les Pyramides district*" tells us André Darmagnac, one of the professionals behind the creation of New Town and himself one of the first inhabitants of *Les Pyramides*. During the first ten years, people from all over France have moved there, and "*we were aware of the chance that we were given, that of living an exceptional social experience*" [...] The public authority (EPEVRY) believed in the role of the inhabitants as active players and city-makers and made them collectively responsible for the self-management of the neighbourhood (children activities, community events). People from different income classes shared together the same spirit. For the animation of the Agora, EPEVRY hired 120 (!) animators entertaining the general public.

That enthusiasm lasted only a decade. The French governments which followed in the 1980s became the main promoters of low-density developments and distanced themselves from the dense urban experiments undertaken in Evry. Already in the years 1990s the mayors of Evry, poined at *Les Pyramides*, when talking about examples of popular neighbourhoods,

"*Voilà comment, l'image de la Ville idéal a été détruite*" is the statement of Mr. Darmagnac.

The phenomenon of global migration caught the public unprepared, making it difficult for the new migrants to put down roots within a policy framework unable to ease the process of inclusion. "*50 years have passed; the pioneers decided to put down roots elsewhere; the image of the neighborhood is heavily deteriorated [...] The arrival of foreign populations in great numbers, whose recent installation does not allow yet a reflection in terms of integration, creates diversity and cultural richness who does not always recognize himself in this European context, leading us to think about the notions of integration, and valorization, and also, sadly, that of pauperization*".<sup>10</sup> Migrants add an extraordinary multicultural richness which is not always fully appreciated in the current European context and which brings us to reflect on the notion of integration and mutual esteem while urgently addressing the impoverishment and social exclusion of migrant and minority groups, is the conclusion of Jacques Longuet, Deputy Mayor in Evry "*We need to recognize the positive impact of the migrants*" is the call of Patrick Curmi, president of the University d'Evry-Val-d'Essonne, opening the workshop sessions during the lab.

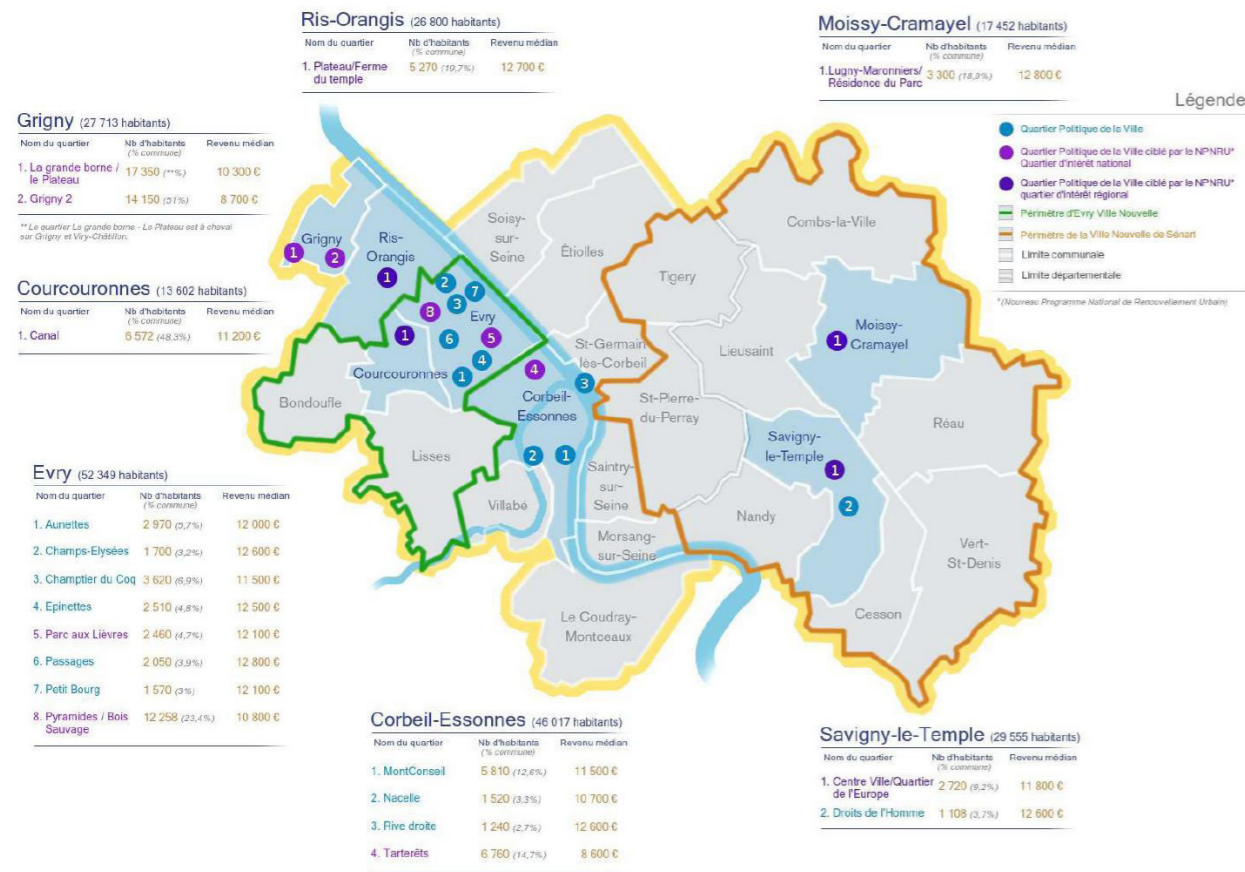
### The notion of Urban Citizenship and the role of the politiques de la ville

As a matter of fact, over the years, the image of the two New Towns has changed. A profound renovation of the urban spaces and the city's functional patterns is a priority within the GPS political agenda. To this territory pertain nineteen neighbourhoods classified under the programme "*politiques de la ville*": seven of which are in Evry and two in Senart. The goal of the program, designed at the national level and run by the local government, is to deeply transform the existing urban structures with actions of housing renewal and a major commitment in reducing the social and territorial inequalities.

This political agenda is founded on the increasing awareness of the need to give the city a new multicultural dimension, built through the mutual understanding and the acceptance of each other's differences. **A new cultural paradigm** needs to be formulated, **a new narrative embracing all the citizens of this territory** in what wants to be **a process of co-creation of a multicultural society**. "*You have to change the way you look at yourself and to the other. There is a need to build a new perspective on the city by integrating this new cultural dimension capable of steering the mutual knowledge in what is a completely new multicultural society*"<sup>11</sup> says Ziraute, Bouhennicha, project manager for the City Policy and Social Cohesion in GPS.

<sup>10</sup> Original text of the quote from the contribution of Deputy Mayor J.LONGUET, 17 octobre 2018 "*50 ans ont passés ; les pionniers ont décidé d'aller faire racine ailleurs ; l'image du quartier s'est fortement dégradée [...] l'arrivée en nombre de populations d'origine étrangère, dont l'installation récente ne permet pas encore de réfléchir en terme d'enracinement, crée une diversité et une richesse culturelle qui ne se reconnaît pas toujours dans ce schéma européen et amène à réfléchir sur les notions d'intégration, de valorisation, mais aussi hélas de paupérisation*"

<sup>11</sup> Original text in French "*Il faut changer son regard sur soi-même et sur l'autre. Il y a une nécessité à construire un nouveau regard sur la ville en intégrant cette nouvelle dimension culturelle capable de faciliter la connaissance réciproque dans une société tout à fait multiculturelle*"



Map of the GPS districts where the programme "politiques de la ville" is applied

12 David Giband, Corinne Siino « La citoyenneté urbaine pour penser les transformations de la ville? », Annales de géographie 2013/6 (n° 694), p. 644-661. DOI 10.3917/ag.694.0644

13 Presentation by Mariette Sagot, IAU IdF, 17-18 Oct 2018)

The New Towns have changed; **the image of the city**, and the way people perceive it, has changed as well. The cultural diversity needs to be acknowledged and understood, only then the right to the city will be "for all".

The right to urban citizenship for the migrant communities is central to the new approach adopted by GPS. In a context of urban growth and concentration of migrant and minority groups in the urban centres, cities appear as the privileged contexts for experimenting with global multiculturalism which often leads to the exacerbation of socio-economic and residential segregation, unequal access to employment, housing and resources. The term "urban citizenship", while not referring to the claim of political rights (besides, in France, migrants are excluded from the right to vote), concerns the right to the city (the access to its facilities, and public spaces) and the right of association (of different nature: religious, linguistic, cultural, housing). Today, urban dwellers claim these rights, claim their space in the city and want to participate actively in the urban project. They want to improve their living conditions and their urban experience which determine the emergence of new political arenas.<sup>12</sup>

In societies where the citizenship rights exclude the migrants (like in France where only 44% of the migrants is naturalized citizen<sup>13</sup>), ethnic commerce,

associative life and religious centres become the places through which they become visible and active players in the territories of arrival. All this is raising a **political question** which concerns the society itself and **the role and place that is given to migrant's communities** in our contemporary diverse and multicultural societies.

Through the different public programmes and policies including urban renewal and socio-economic improvements of deprived neighbourhoods, the agglomeration of GPS has fully taken the chance to start a challenging, however urgent, process which deeply looks at these fundamental aspects by bringing back the **focus of the urban question to the individuals and their needs**. The citizens are placed again **at the centre of the debate** about the city and its future, in a moment when the New Towns of Evry and Sénart are making efforts to re-imagine themselves within the territorial framework of the metropolitan agglomeration. The path undertaken questions the current citizenship rights and proposes a reflection on the tools and the measures that can be adopted to include the migrant populations in the process of redefinition of the contemporary identity of GPS.

### The question of the New Town Lab

The New Town Lab #3 in GPS wanted to encourage a reflection on the right to the city for all, in the awareness that migrants' groups are the most vulnerable: what are the conditions of their arrival, what is the process of integration and most of all: how can they become active players in shaping the future of these cities?

The Lab has analysed the causes and effects of the current societal changes and proposed a reflection on the migrants' participation in the socio-economic and cultural life of the city and their role in the unfolding history of the New Towns. It mainly wanted to support the notion that once again these peculiar territories can be pioneer territories of social and cultural innovation. By seeking to respond to the pressing questions of solidarity and urban citizenship, the local government is making a great effort in giving space to the emergence and **value of the new hybrid culture which forms the multi-ethnic society of the New Towns** fifty years after their creation.

*How to better understand the ongoing changes and value the potential offered by the migrant population in the development of a contemporary urban culture?*

14 André Darmagnac, geographer. He accompanied the group of international delegates to visit "les Pyramides" during the Lab, 17-18 Oct 2018

## 1. Culture

### >> Recognize and make accepted the new hybrid culture of the city

#### Challenges

The cultural dimension of the New Towns has often played a strategic role in the construction of a local identity where communities lack common roots or shared historical meanings, as we learned during our long journey throughout Europe especially with the cases of Milton Keynes (UK), in Sabaudia (IT) and Vallingby (SE). The pioneers had a lot of freedom and opportunities to actively engage in the construction of the cultural image of the city; they had the time to establish ties and give consistence to the new city they contributed to shape. As we learned in Evry, the life in *Les Pyramides* was the expression of an ideal urban style: the inhabitants themselves organized the social life of the neighbourhood, collective spaces became the meeting points for everybody who wanted to be actively involved; street activities and public events were part of the usual routine<sup>14</sup>. The Agora was the cultural and commercial 'place to be' for everybody living in and around Evry. Likewise in Senart, the *community-centre/theatre Espace Prevert Animation of Savigny-le-Temple*, was (and still continues to be) a cultural spot of regional relevance.

The influx of migrant populations modifying the originally homogeneous contexts of the New Towns broadened the spectrum of cultural diversity in the region, but at the same time it posed challenges of a social nature which question the current policy frameworks here as well as in the many other New Towns around Europe.

Characterized by the presence of diverse migrant communities coming from different multi-ethnic and inter-religious backgrounds, the recognition of the raise of a new hybrid culture is a challenging starting point to express the complexity and cultural richness of Grand Paris Sud. Today again, **art and culture can act as platforms for inter-cultural dialogue**, with the aim of building mutual understanding and acceptance. But how to do that? And by which means?

Since the beginning of their foundation, Evry and Senart have both invested in their cultural dimension and both have offered a vibrant atmosphere yet addressed the homogenous middle-class audience which moved to the city at that time. What emerges today is the lack of representation of the cultural hybridization which is otherwise appreciable in the street (and confirmed by the demographic picture). The fact that the contemporary society is the result of different cultures is a fact that needs to be recognized, accepted

and understood. GPS envisions to fill this gap and take steps forward in producing a cultural offer which can better reflect its multicultural reality.

Within the framework of the '*Politiques de la ville*' special programmes, GPS is experimenting new empowering tools which can give the migrant communities a new visibility, assigning them the role of influencers and promoters of the cultural programme for the agglomeration.

#### > "the Citizens' councils"

Among the mechanisms fostering democratic participation, the "Citizens' councils" are political organs elected and organized at the neighbourhood level which participate in the decision-making process, planning and implementation, of the projects of socio-economic and physical urban renewal in the districts under the programme "Politiques de la ville".

#### > "the cultural ambassadors"

A second tool is the creation of the "cultural ambassadors": an experimental three-year involvement programme of the students of the Louis-Armand Secondary school in Savigny-le-Temple which envisages their active contribution to the so called "assises de la culture", cultural committees which decide on the yearly cultural policies and agenda for the agglomeration.

The creation of the cultural ambassadors is a project that Milton Keynes Council had presented during the first New Town Lab held in MK in November 2017. GPS had promptly adapted this practice to his territorial policies making it a tangible result of the influence and the learning exchange processes set into motion by the Europe for Citizens programme. A partnership is currently underway between the two schools involved.

Another aspect that makes the cultural dimension so peculiar for this territory, is the co-existence of a national juridical context quite unique where secularism is guaranteed by law<sup>15</sup>, and the school is the instrument through which the republic builds freedom and a plural civic awareness. On the one hand, there is the promotion of a new cultural dimension through the cooperation with the educational system where the school is the primary tool to achieve a multicultural society based on the mutual understanding and a "*bien vivre ensemble dans la diversité*". An example is '*La Charte de la Laïcité*', a project supported by the agglomeration which has involved hundreds of children of the primary schools around the meaning of "citizenship, secularism and appreciation of the multiculturalism", turned into a comic book realized by the students. On the other side, Evry distinguishes itself as an inter-religious centre of European relevance hosting on its territory a number of religious communities among which a synagogue, the biggest Pagode in Europe, a cathedral and a mosque.

15 Law 2004-228 of 15 March 2004 is the French law on secularity and conspicuous religious symbols in schools bans wearing conspicuous religious symbols in French public (e.g., government-operated) primary and secondary schools. The law is an amendment to the French Code of Education that expands principles founded in existing French law, especially the constitutional requirement of laïcité: the separation of state and religious activities (Wikipedia)

Religious centres welcome believers but also function as places for education and training, as community centres where traditions can be nurtured and handed down from one generation to another, while preserving the connections with the countries of origin.

Questions for further discussion:

- *Is contemporary immigration a factor of cultural reconstruction or of the construction of new hybrid cultures?*
- *What is the role of culture in the process of acquisition of urban rights by the migrants?*
- *How to give expression to the multicultural society within the French notion of secularism?*

## 2. Public Space

### >> New urban patterns and functions that can boost socio-economic and cultural inclusion

#### Challenges

Both Senart and Evry have been conceived as ideal environments to settle. Whether in (urban) Evry or in (natural) Senart, the public space had a consistent role in giving substance to the founding principles of the two New Towns. The present dynamics impose a revision of the original ideas and require making an effort in reimagining the meaning and the potential offered by these contexts.

#### Evry

The driving principle for several districts in Evry was “back to the street”, the place where people could meet and share moments of daily life. Among the examples, the construction of *Les Pyramides*, was seen as a chance to experiment with this ambition. Public spaces were dedicated to pedestrians, car access was forbidden, social and recreational facilities were located on the ground floors of the buildings (schools, kinder-garden, community spaces, commercial activities), and all this contributed to the creation of an ideal society, told us André Darmagnac, geographer, officer at EPEVRY from 1967 to 1978 and one of the first residents in the neighbourhood.

Gathered in association, the citizens had created a number of cultural and social activities (among which the collective restaurant for the two main schools of the neighbourhood and a series of workshops and programmes to entertain the children after school time) based on the crucial role given to the street and the common spaces. The pedestrian bridge (which we crossed during our visit to access the district from the commercial mall and the Agora) was built after an animated battle conducted by the local residents after having realized the importance of being one road away from the city centre and not able to get into it!

In the original drawings, the only entrance to the



Place de dragons today (Ph. Viviana Rubbo)



Nearby the Middle School Collège Les Pyramides (Ph. Marit Geluk)



Pedestrian streets and squares within the urban structure of Les Pyramides district today (ph. Viviana Rubbo)



Pedestrian bridge to Les Pyramides district (Ph. Viviana Rubbo)

neighbourhood was the one located on the side of the bus station.

Crossing the bridge was “like enter a dream”, says André Darmagnac. The neighbourhood was all colourful and children played in the squares and could walk to school on their own.

Only few hundred meters away, the Agora was the leisure centre of the city. As mentioned already, that place was the beating heart of the public life. Once a month, events were organized (music festivals, performances etc). IBM employers, coming from all over the world, used to hang out in the restaurants of the main square as well as the club of journalists and the local entrepreneurs,

together with the working class, families and children attending the shows in the cinemas and theaters. The Square of the Agora was also the most attractive location during the elections for the political candidates securing a capacity of audience of more than 10.000 people. Today the square is under transformation with the aim to reactivate the powerful meaning of its previous days, a lively heart of the city.

Together with the cultural and social dimension, also the economic conditions have changed. If in 1973, the reason for moving to Evry was the proximity to work, as recalled by the lines of an advert on the magazine *le Monde* “à Evry, on va à pied à son travail. [...] à Evry, on habite à deux pas du bureau”, yet today, the work is no longer close to the city, raising issues of segregation and economic exclusion mainly with regard to the migrant communities. The energy of the early days seems lost. The streets seem very quiet and silent, the collective spaces and the associations of residents don't exist anymore.

### Senart

From the beginning and still today, Senart claims its rural character placing nature at the heart of its foundation (metaphorically and physically). One third of the surface of the New Town is rural land, forests and water. Since its foundation, each district was equipped with public facilities (schools, gymnasiums, swimming pools, libraries, music schools, neighbourhood houses, social centres, rescue center), shops and green spaces. However, a centre was missing. Therefore in 1986, studies for the development of a central retail and business park were carried out and in 1996, the development plan for the Carré Sénart was completed.

Described as a vital regional economic centre for Grand Paris Sud, the Carré, like MK Centre, was created for and in the middle of surrounding towns and villages. It is a gigantic park with the ambition of becoming a regional hub embedding businesses, commercial areas, light industry, logistic, cultural and administrative facilities. “The area is however only accessible by car and is missing a social dimension. The endless parking lots are designed almost without human feelings and completely decentralized without any points of reference. What is the social dimension of Carré Senart? Which kind of activities are there, except for commerce?” were the questions raised by the international participants.

Senart (which has seen its population multiplied by four between 1974 and 2014) is formed by an ensemble of scattered villages literally plunged in the natural landscape which implies the existence of a far-reaching mobility system able to connect the local and regional dimension **fostering the intercommunal relations and the socio-economic inclusion.**



The Agora – Evry commercial and cultural epicentre today (ph. Viviana Rubbo)



Aerial view of Carré Senart. Source: presentation by Francois Tiro, architect, 18 October 2018



Carré Senart – endless parking lots and the green avenues of the Carré Senart (Ph. Viviana Rubbo)



The private means of transport seems to be the precondition in this context which raises both questions of environmental sustainability and socio-economic inclusion of the migrants' communities: what seems to emerge in the wide bucolic Senart, is the pressing need for **place-rooted sustainable solutions, inclusive spaces within the existent urban patterns**, necessarily served by a widely distributed public transport.

Further discussion:

- What is the relationship between the inhabitants and their neighbourhoods?
- If we do not want to isolate migrants, the Carré Senart must also be a centre of social life. Which strategies could steer the creation of a social dimension?
- How can architecture create a democratic platform?
- What is the place of citizens in the co-construction of the city?

### 3. Adapting the original model to contemporary needs

>> New Towns struggle to respond to the present needs. A listening attitude to understand changing demands becomes crucial

#### Challenges

The French society today shows an image where the migrants' communities are excluded for citizens' rights (they cannot vote) and need to find their own means to emerge from the shadow. In 2013 in Evry the migrant population represents the 25,7%, while in Senart the 14%.<sup>16</sup> Within a political context not favourable to welcoming migrants, and a lack of investment from the State, the associations play a crucial role in creating the conditions towards a process of civil and social inclusion.

Born from a spontaneous and bottom-up process of self-determination, the associations respond to the primary need of the migrants to determine their own way to participate in society; they work on the ground and provide the expertise to assist on a wide range of practical issues. They literally support the migrants' day to day life: create the link between the school and the pupil's family providing the necessary assistance, organize language courses to learn French (they call them "trampoline classes"), enhance the mutual respect and foster dynamics of multiculturalism promoting the knowledge of the culture of origin (with both children and parents) through a series of activities which include photography, video-making, story-telling and the sharing of food recipes.

One of the associations based in *Les Pyramides* is *Génération Femmes*. Created in 1992 by a group of female teachers of the local schools, the association was born to assist mothers in tackling the swelling number of migrant students leaving the school or struggling to deal with the French educational system. In 2007 the association also opened its doors to men and young boys due to an increasing demand of aid. Main issues regard the understanding of the local society and the acquisition of the necessary instruments to start a process of active inclusion. Workshops also include information about the rules of the road (the driving code) of the host country complemented with assistance in the administrative and fiscal procedures required for the opening of new businesses. There are 58 different nationalities represented in the association today.

*"The use of associations across GPS was clear. The ruling agglomeration and*

communes support these organizations on the ground. It was clear that funding was given to these associations, but an element of residents' association and community involvement also played its part. Groups included those for migrants, women, young people, students, artists, language classes. All is centred around cohesion" noted Shane Downer, MK Council delegate.

"We call ourselves *association de nécessité publique*" told us Isma Hooini, director of Génération Femmes. In fact, they act filling the gap left empty by the welfare state, not yet equipped to tackle the current societal changes, and trying to respond to the pressing questions of migrants' inclusion and participation in the French civil society.

Among the associations that we met were the following:

- **FIA (Femmes Inter Associations Inter Service Migrants)** is a national network of women's associations that promotes the social, professional and cultural advancement of women and fights against all forms of violence and discrimination ([fia-ism.com](http://fia-ism.com))
- **Génération Femmes.** Association based in the *Les Pyramides* district which promotes the social, professional and economic integration of women of all origins and cultures
- **Génération 2.** The association works in different neighbourhoods and supports families with the objectives of socialisation, empowerment, fight against discrimination and self-discrimination, the notion of integration and citizenship (<http://generation2-citoyennete-integration.fr/>)
- **Association la voix des jeunes.** The association promotes the integration and socialization of families and young immigrants for a better involvement in the socio-economic and cultural life (<https://www.voicesofyouth.org/fr>)
- **Conseil Citoyens du centre-ville de Savigny-le-Temple.** (<http://www.savigny-le-temple.fr/content/participez-aux-conseils-citoyens>)

## 4. Building a positive narrative

### >> Acknowledge and understand the multicultural dimension of the contemporary society

#### Challenges

As we already mentioned, both Senart and Evry were established in the early 1970s as 'Utopian' New Towns responding to the ambition to move "the city to the countryside" and had experienced, from the start, rapid population growth (influx of internal and regional migration). Only a couple of decades later, at the turn of the century, the image was drastically changed: the New Towns were facing rapid urbanization from a new growth dictated both by globalization and the increasing prices in the capital city (Paris), as well as by the increasing ethnic diversity. Both cities also face aging population issues finding it hard to retain the generation between 25-39 age range.

In less than 50 years, these New Towns have lost their original identity: the demographic composition is extremely diverse, new cultural influences and socio-economic structures are shaken. Today, professionals and public actors are confronted with critical issues and conflicts between different groups threatening the social cohesion of these territories.

On day 2 of our visit to GPS, the University, which hosts 15.000 students in the heart of Evry, proposed a collective reflection on three aspects which can contribute to enhance the construction of a new narrative, capable of being inclusive and representative of the diversity and richness which form the contemporary society and, not least, make it understood and valued.

- The role of culture and identity of migrants in building strong, cohesive communities.
- The role of associations in the welcome and assimilation of immigrants to GPS;
- Ethnic commerce: the role of migrants in the economic and business vitality of GPS;

#### Migrants' Culture and Identity.

When talking about culture and identity of migrants, the question raised is how culture can be transmitted in such a diverse community. The importance of immigration has evolved over time and has become long lasting or permanent. But becoming rooted in a new territory, does not

imply the severing of ties which immigrants have with their own country. As a first step, every culture organizes themselves into organizations or associations. This offers a safe place to share cultures and traditions, as well as vital time to talk (in the same language), share and communicate within a context which feels familiar.

But how is it possible to give expression to a different culture within the new society? Creating a community offers the opportunity for the migrant population to create an identity and strengthen the feeling of being part of something. Festivals, cultural events and activities including migrants' families from different cultures (sharing foods or traditions) helps to create a trans-cultural shared learning, as Rabbia Quaki confirmed. She is a young Moroccan woman who arrived in *Les Pyramides* in 2002 alone. *"In the beginning I didn't know anybody, I was afraid to talk to my neighbours. Then, through the association Génération Femmes, I learned French and started to join several activities. I feel well here. I meet and talk to people from different cultures."*

Her example, as many others in the neighbourhood, shows how relevant is the role of the associations in supporting the process of learning and understanding of the French local culture - its language, its legislative system (right to culture vs law e.g. polygamy) - making easier the progressive integration of the newcomers and their consequent acquisition of more rights.

### The role of the associations.

*But what kind of immigrants unite in migrant organisations? How are migrant organisations being financed?* From the start, the New Towns have represented particularly dynamic areas for associations and cultural life, the inhabitants were usually referred to as "pioneers" during the 1970s. This inventiveness also involved the descendants of immigrants residing there. These associations could choose to work toward integration "in the host territory," or to consolidate relations between the "host and home territories." Migrant associations do generally work toward the integration of a population which is often isolated due to a lack of knowledge about the host country. To do so, these associations carry out actions such as language courses, professional guidance and training, social assistance, and citizenship paperwork, all of which favour access to basic rights and autonomy. Migrant associations are also very effective when it comes to setting up networks for exchanges between the communities of the New Towns, on the one hand, and the cities and villages of North Africa, sub-Saharan Africa and Asia on the other. The ties may be traditional (sending school supplies, student exchanges), but they may also give rise to more innovative initiatives (cultural mediation, economic projects) which may be seen as change-accelerators in the relations between the territories of arrival and the native regions and as ways to connect the populations

concerned. New Towns could play as **"test territories" for questions regarding migrants' citizenship rights, inter-cultural policies as well as for solidarity**, just as they once were **pioneers of the ideal functional city**.

In these New Towns the associative life has been always rich and encouraged: neighbourhood associations, cultural associations, sports. The inhabitants of the early New Town neighbourhoods still testify to the richness of the social bond created by these associative dynamics. Today, more than 300 associations exist only in the territory of Savigny-le-Temple.

### Migrants' ethnic commerce.

With a special focus in Evry, this seminar has offered the chance to start a reflection on the image of the ethnic businesses and its evolution in terms of spatial development and political meaning in the Villes Nouvelles given the current political European context. Evry, with the neighbourhood of *Les Pyramides* (counting 10.000 inhabitants), is an exemplary case of the demographic evolution which happened in the New Towns: starting from the 80s, the migrant waves have progressively moved here from the Northern regions of the African continent, mainly Algeria, and Sub-Saharan Africa (Congo, Mali and Senegal) during the 1990s. Often, ethnic activities, commerce and other exchanges with country fellows or with people from the same religious group, were located outside the New Town, mainly in the inner urban areas. An example is the Parisian neighbourhood of Château Rouge; since the 1990s this is a very lively area, characterized by the presence of a large immigrant population. Many markets, grocery stores and African hairdressers were (and still are today) located here, while the retailers often live in the suburbs. Château Rouge is still today a place where customers from all over Île-de-France can find ethnic products.

In recent years, the question around the economic and social role of ethnic commerce emerged as a political question which concerns the society itself and the role and place that is given to migrant's communities in our contemporary diverse and multicultural societies. Ethnic commerce is a means for the community to determine its place in the community and it is very much linked to its presence in the life of the city. The ethnic shops often become meeting spaces where the relations with the countries of origin is maintained and cultivated; spaces which nurture the traditions and the cultural dimension of the communities creating roots within the territory.

In Evry, commercial activities linked to the Kurdish and Turkish culture started in the years 2000. They were also the first to stay open late in the



The headquarter of Génération Femmes in Les Pyramides district, Oct 2018. Ph. Marit Geluk



night having effects on the spatial dimension of the neighbourhood where they were located. Chinese and Indians arrived in the first decade of the new century and share the same spaces around the train station, while the hairdressers belong to the African communities.

In 2002 Evry was in the national newspapers when the Mayor in office at that time opposed the choice of a supermarket located in *Les Pyramides* district to sell only halal, suggesting that this choice would have led to the isolation and segregation of the neighbourhood encouraging the inhabitants who didn't want to buy halal to move away. This inflamed a national debate which didn't really produce a long-term and fertile discussion on the role of commerce as a factor for inclusion of the migrant communities.

*Further discussion:*

- *How to build a positive narrative of the migrants, give them voice and foster their active role?*
- *How can favourable conditions be created to encourage the participation of migrants in the socio-cultural and economic life of the city? And what should be those conditions?*

## 5. Government - Citizen Relations

### >> Combining top-down and bottom-up actions to redefine the alliance with the community

Since their creation, the New Towns of Evry and Senart have been places of experimentation for a progressive construction of the city with a special place given to the inhabitants' participation in the city-making process. During the first decade in *Les Pyramides* district (Evry), the public authority had encouraged weekly public assemblies by providing spaces for gathering and debate. In Senart, extensive listening campaigns were carried out, notably between 1995 and 2001 to collect the feelings of the populations and their proposals. However, cultural homogeneity and common interests were the ingredients of this first phase.



*Meeting the local associations working with migrants at Pyramides District Sports Association*

The current scenario is completely different and while many initiatives have seen the lights thanks to the schools and the migrant's organizations celebrating an important first step towards recognizing and empowering the immigrant population, there is not yet enough support from the State. Aware of the challenge, the government of Grand Paris Sud has built its strategic vision around the participation of the community to the urban project of the agglomeration through the application of the national programme "politique de la ville". This project's mission is to facilitate the co-creation of an urban project that is rooted and built on the principle of urban citizenship.

In order to achieve this, GPS is exploring a new approach which implies a change in perspective, while stimulating a positive cooperation with the associations willing to "*adopter a nouveau regard sur la ville*" explains Ziraute Bouhennicha, project manager for the City Policy and Social Cohesion in GPS.

Trying to follow this direction, the government of the agglomeration applies a number of tools which, combined together, can contribute to **redefine a new alliance with the local community**.

- Ad hoc **financial support to the associations** which mobilize their resources to empower migrants to participate in urban life, providing support to strengthen their socio-economic position, ensure their civic rights, create chances for emancipation.

- Creation of **district councils** (dictated by law) to promote civil participation in neighbourhood life.
- Creation of **citizens councils** which are fixed by law as special tool for the neighbourhoods under the programme "politiques de la ville". They are formed by the representatives of the local associations and of the public authority (municipal council) and by representatives of the inhabitants elected by law. Their priority goals are: foster the public participation of civil society and city users in the debate around the city of tomorrow together with the institutional actors; the co-creation of policy actions and programme of urban regeneration; encourage and support the civil initiatives including the role of the migrants in the local society.

Since 2014, 11 citizens councils were created in the agglomeration, of which 8 in Evry and 3 in Senart.

## Conclusions

Evry no longer sees itself as a New Town and, with Senart, is reinventing its identity starting from the recognition of a multi-cultural dimension which has been part of the recent history of the New Town. The creation of a new narrative that embraces this multi-cultural diversity represents a challenge – shared by all the other New Towns explored throughout the implementation of this European programme - and requires first and foremost the understanding and value of the role that migrants can play in the contemporary city. The appreciation of their contribution whether it comes through culture and religious forms, associative aggregations or through community commerce and ethnic businesses is a first milestone. Mostly in contexts where the acquisition of civil rights is often submitted to national legislation and procedures of naturalization which are very complex.

As emphasized in the previous New Towns labs of Milton Keynes and Sabaudia, the pioneering spirit of the New Towns can function as a favourable condition for innovative practices to stand out.

The recognition that the institutional cultural agenda inadequately represents the society **cultural hybridization** is a point of departure. Like in Milton Keynes, the young generation takes the lead and the experimental project of the Cultural Ambassadors aims to create a new cultural dimension in GPS while setting the conditions for a permanent cooperation between the educational systems, the schools, the cultural players and the public actors.

Building acceptance and understanding of the city's migrant communities has to do with **establishing a new cultural paradigm** capable of reproducing its culturally diverse reality. Prevented from political rights and in the absence of a clear policy framework, migrants take the initiative and mobilize their community around the creation of ethnic shops and cultural and religious centres (often around the station area and in the most deprived neighbourhoods). All this comes with **physical modifications of the urban landscape**, provoking frictions and/or contributing to isolate the group from the rest of the population.

This not only happens in GPS, but for instance also in Sabaudia (Italy), where the Sikh community from Punjab (India), mostly employed in the agricultural sector, is settled in one of the Sabaudia's satellite secondary towns located along the coast and where ethnic shops have opened in the neighbourhood only to serve the migrant population. But things can be turned around and GPS could also look at Aarhus (Denmark) where the municipality is committed to transform Gellerup, one of the poorest

neighbourhoods in the country – where unemployment rates raise to 50% and 83 different nationalities coexist – into an attractive district. The initial push came from a developer who decided to create a Bazar – a commercial space for ethnic goods and products which is revitalizing the neighbourhood, creating local jobs opportunities and playing as a reference place for the immigrant population of the district and bringing flows of customers the entire region.

New Towns are the products of their time and changing social and economic circumstances require adapting to the new circumstances. Today GPS recognizes the importance of partnering with associations in designing long-term democratic participation and new citizenship paths which can allow migrants to be active players in the socio-economic life of the agglomeration.

The combination of top-down tools (such as citizens' councils and ad hoc educational programmes in schools) and bottom-up approaches (the actions of migrants' associations) could be the prerequisite for establishing a renewed **government-citizen relation**.

Within the framework of the “*politique de la ville*” national programme, GPS is placing the citizen at the centre of the contemporary urban question. The path undertaken inquires the current citizenship rights and proposes a reflection on the tools and the measures that can be adopted to include migrant populations in the process of redefinition of the contemporary identity of GPS.

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'Regard historique et démographique sur le peuplement des villes nouvelles', Mariette Sagot, IAU-IdF, 17 October 2018

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Shane Downer, Heritage Officer, MK Council (notes from the Lab#3 in GPS)

Ziraute Bouhennicha, Project manager “politique de la ville » in GPS interviewed by Viviana Rubbo 17-18 October 2018 and 12-13 December 2018

André Darmagnac, geographer, interviewed by Marit Geluk and Viviana Rubbo 24 January 2019

Isma Hooini, Director Génération Femmes interviewed by Marit Geluk and Viviana Rubbo 24 January 2019

## Appendix 1: >> Demographic information

The information below is taken from the official INSEE statistics for 2018 (2015 census results) and 2013 (2010 census results).

### Demography

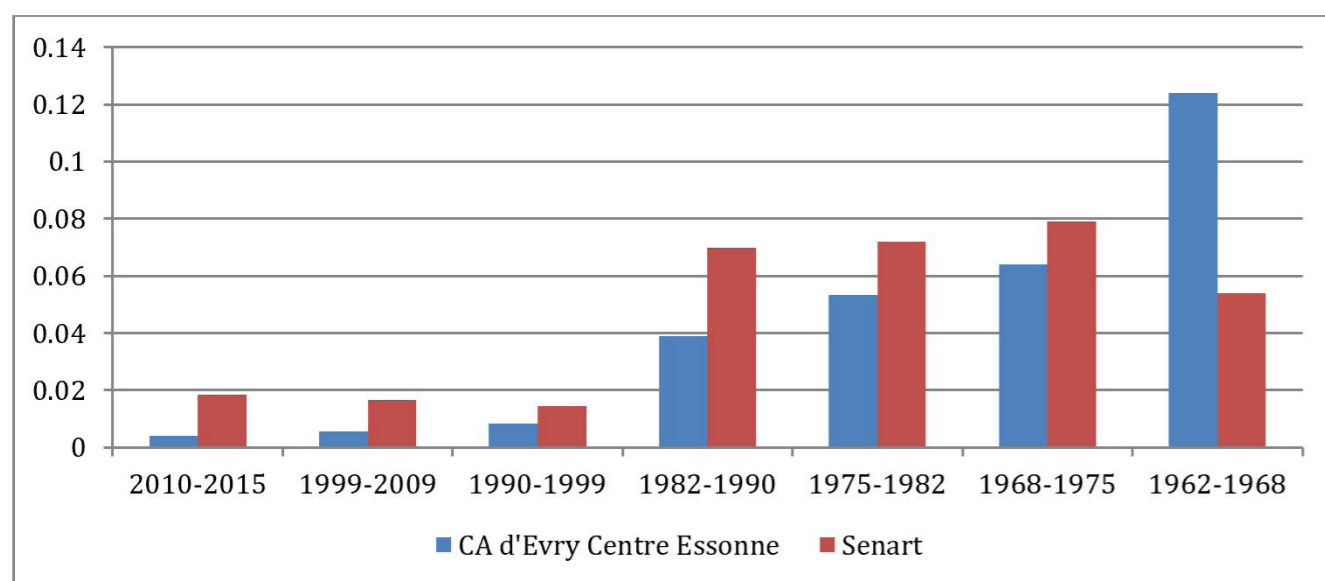
In 2018, the official populations of the New Towns of Evry Centre Essonne and of Senart are, respectively, 108,375 and 122,325 inhabitants. The Public Establishment for Intercommunal Cooperation (EPCI) to which they belong, Grand Paris Sud, has a total of 346,826 inhabitants. The two New Towns thus account for two-thirds of the inhabitants of Grand Paris Sud.

Over the last five years, the New Town of Senart has had an average annual population growth of 1.9%, while Evry Centre Essonne registered a growth of 0.3% and Grand Paris Sud of 1.4%.

The population growth in Senart is much higher than that of the counties of Seine-et-Marne and of Essonne (1% higher in both cases), and of the Greater Paris region (0.5% greater per year).

Population growth in the New Town of Evry Centre Essonne was quite high in the early 1960s, but is quite low today.

In Senart, demographic growth began later and, although lower today than in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, it remains high compared to the Greater Paris area.



In both Evry Centre Essonne and in Senart, as elsewhere in the Greater Paris region, demographic growth is closely related to a high natural balance (growth due to the difference between the number of births and

the number of deaths, that is 1.25% for Senart and 1.5% for Evry Centre Essonne, and 1.4% for Grand Paris Sud and 0.9% for the Greater Paris region.)

The New Town of Senart has a positive migratory balance of +0.6% per year, while for Grand Paris Sud as a whole it is 0%. Conversely, Evry Centre Essonne has a significant migratory balance deficit (-1% per year), as does the Greater Paris region (-0.4% per year).

### Housing

Population growth in Senart is supported by a high rate of new housing production (+2.28% per year). In Evry Centre Essonne, housing development is much lower (+0.6% per year). The average annual growth rate in housing is 1.6% in Grand Paris Sud and 0.8% in the Greater Paris region.

### Households

The number of households is climbing in Senart (+2.4%), while keeping the same rate of housing production in Evry Centre Essonne (+0.5%). However, as for many other locations in Greater Paris, the number of individuals per household has declined in both the New Towns, dropping from 2.62 to 2.59 in Evry Centre Essonne, and from 2.83 to 2.74 in Senart. This drop in the number of individuals per household has been observed in communes with low to medium population growth. The new housing provision mainly serves the demand related to separations and to young adults moving to live on their own.

The figure is nevertheless much higher than that for the Greater Paris region (2.32).

### Employment

In 2015, 76.4% of the population in Senart (aged 15-64 years-old) was employed (61,862 inhabitants), which represents an increase of 1.4% per year over 5 years. In Evry Centre Essonne, 56,657 individuals were employed, i.e. 73.7% of the population aged 15-64 years-old, registering a decrease of 0.2% per year over 5 years.

The unemployment rate in Senart (based on the census and not on the state unemployment office) is 12%, and that of Evry Centre Essonne is 16%.

Grand Paris Sud has an employed population of 168,361 individuals, and 14% of the population is unemployed. The number of persons employed varies yearly by about 0.8%.

**Jobs**

In 2015, Senart offered a total of 42,755 jobs, representing an increase of the 2% per year over 5 years. Evry Centre Essonne had 65,189 jobs, meaning a decrease of 1.2% per year over the same period.

**Employment rate**

In 2015, in Senart, there were 0.78 jobs per employed adult and in Evry Centre Essonne, 1.37. The figure for Grand Paris Sud is 0.96 jobs per employed adult. In the beginning, the New Towns hoped to count one job per inhabitant.

**Employers**

In Senart, there were 5691 structures offering employment in 2015 and in Evry Centre Essonne 8711. The increase in the number of structures offering employment during the 2010-2015 period amounts to 6.6% per year in Senart and to 4.3% per year in Evry Centre Essonne. Grand Paris Sud experienced an increase of 5.2% for the same period and Greater Paris a 5% increase.

## Appendix 2:

### >> New Town Lab Programme

**Day 1 - October 17**

(Open to EU project partners only)

*9.00 - 11.00 Arrival of the European delegations at the Residhome Hotel*

*11.10 Ice Breaking*

With representatives of the various delegations and participants  
Situated at Residhome Hotel

*11.55 Departure*

For the Hôtel d'Agglomération de Grand Paris Sud (Courcouronnes site)

*12.05 Exhibition: 'Histoires d'exil' (Stories of Exile)*

- Film on Grand Paris Sud

- Welcome and official opening of City Lab by Francis CHOUIAT,

- President of the Communauté d'Agglomération Grand Paris Sud,  
Mayor of the city of Evry

Situated at Hôtel d'Agglomération de Grand Paris Sud (in the 'salle des assemblées')

*12.25 Departure*

For Hotel Résidhome

*12.35 Lunch break*

Situated at Restaurant French Corner (by Residhome)

*13.50 Departure*

For the Iannis-Xenakis Departmental Music Conservatory

*14.00 Exhibition: 'Charte de laïcité' (The Secular Charter)*

Situated at Iannis Xenakis Departmental Music Conservatory

*14.05 Presentation*

'The history of the new town and its urban development' presented by Jacques LONGUET (Deputy Mayor of Evry in charge of education, the family, patrimony and the city's past)

*14.25 Discussion*

*14.55 Presentation*

'The evolution of new towns, particularly Evry, since 1975 and in the regional context' presented by Mariette SAGOT (sociologist and urbanist, expert on town policy at the Ile de France region Institute of city planning and development)

*15.15 Discussion**15.45 Presentation*

'Focus on the question of secularism' presented by Laura KOSSI (Director of the Centre de Ressources Politique de la Ville en Essonne (Essonian Town Policy Resource Center))

*15:55 Departure*

For Evry Cathedral

*16.05 Tour of the Cathedral*

With Jacques LONGUET

*16.50 Departure*

For the Pyramides District

*The Pyramides District*

- 17.20 Tour of the neighborhood and presentation of the local context with François DELOUVRIER, urbanist, and André DARMAGNAC, urbanist and geographer.
- 18.20 Meeting with representatives of associations at Maison des Sports des Pyramides (Pyramides District Sports Association)
- 20.00 Dinner prepared by the local Cultural Association Apese Haiti

**Day 2 - October 18**

Between 07.00 and 8.30 breakfast at the hotel

*08.45 Departure*

By bus for the New Town of Senart

- View of the Synagogue
- Stop at the Pagoda and film presenting the building

*09.30 Exhibition: 'Mon arrivée en France' (My Arrival in France)*

Situated at Hôtel d'Agglomération de Grand Paris Sud (Lieuxaint site)

*09.35 Presentation*

'The local historical context of the New Town' presented by François TIROT (Assistant Head of the Senart EPA (Etablissement Public d'Aménagement) (State Office of Urban Planning))

*10.00 Discussion**10.30 Bus tour of the New Town of Senart*

With Virginie LACOUR (Head of the Patrimony and Tourism Service of Grand Paris Sud)

*11.30 Meeting with local activists of Savigny le Temple*

With Fidèle DJIVO (President of the Conseil citoyen du centre-ville (City Center Citizen Council)), and the student 'cultural ambassadors' of Louis-Armand Secondary School

*12.30 Departure*

For the Hôtel d'Agglomération de Grand Paris Sud (Lieuxaint site)

*12.40 Lunch break*

Situated at Hôtel d'Agglomération de Grand Paris Sud

*14.00 Departure*

By bus to the University of Evry Val d'Essonne

*14.30 University of Evry Val d'Essonne*

- 14.35 Welcome speech Patrick CURMI, Chancellor of the University of Evry Val d'Essonne
- 14.50 Thematic Workshops
- 16.00 Coffee break
- 16.15 Workshop results and discussion

*17.30 Departure*

For the Courcouronnes Mosque

*17.45 Tour of the Mosque**18.30 Departure*

By bus for L'Empreinte, contemporary music concert hall in Savigny le Temple

*18.55 L'Empreinte*

- 19.00 Feedback and conclusions on City Lab and dinner prepared by local associations
- 20.30 Steering Committee with introduction to the next Lab conference (Sweden)
- 21.00 Concert

*23.00 Return by bus to the hotel*

## Appendix 3 :

### >> speakers biographies

**Jacques LONGUET** is currently serving as Deputy Mayor of the city of Evry. As head of education, the family and patrimony, he succeeded in obtaining the "Remarkable Contemporary Architecture" label for the city. For thirty-eight years, Mr. Longuet taught history and geography at Le Village secondary school. He also taught at the Parc des Loges high school, at the teacher- training institute of Etiolles and at the university of Evry until 2013. He is extremely interested in both the history of the territory and the New Town experiment. In his capacity as Community Councilor for Grand Paris Sud, he works to develop the visibility of the heritage of the urban agglomeration's 24 communes. He has also been responsible for culture for the city of Evry and for the Syndicat d'agglomération nouvelle (New Agglomeration Association) from 1995 to 2001, and again, from 2008 to 2014 as head of Culture for Evry and of cultural installations and resources for the Agglomération d'Evry Centre Essonne.



**Mariette SAGOT** is a demographer at the Institut d'aménagement et d'urbanisme d'Ile-de-France. She studies regional and territorial social and demographic issues, including aging, inequality, poverty, immigration, double residency, etc. She has worked with Insee (Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques) to create several maps of the inhabitants of Greater Paris.



**Laura KOSSI** directs the Essonne City Policy Resource Center (Centre de Ressources Politique de la Ville en Essonne, or CRPVE).

The CRPVE is a place where those involved in city policy can come together to reflect and discuss. The center concentrates on questions related to education, to urban renewal, health, migration, and so on. Each year, the center proposes activities to develop skills and to encourage networking and the sharing of experiences to those who carry out actions in neighborhoods and with the town's residents.





**François DELOUVRIER** has been associated with the city of Evry since 1973. He participated in the creation of the residential districts at EPEVRY, builder of new towns, for 20 years. He was in charge of urban planning, housing and city policy for the city of Evry for 10 years. After a few years at AUDESO, the urban development agency of the greater Evry area, he ended his career in 2015 at the Communauté d'Agglomération Evry Centre Essonne. Currently retired, he is involved in various local associations and is a member of the Evry Village neighborhood council.



**André DARMAGNAC** has a PhD in geography. His dissertation focused specifically on the Corbeil-Essonnes conurbation. From 1967 to 1978, he worked for EPEVRY, builder of new towns, managing the use of educational, sports and cultural installations. He then headed the Center for Education, Training and Cultural Activities (the FIAP EVRY, or Foyer International d'Accueil et de Promotion Sociale) from 1978 to 1989. He ended his career at the Syndicat d'agglomération nouvelle, then at the Communauté d'Agglomération Evry Centre Essonne, from 1989 to 2001.

**Marie SOBIROU** completed her degree in architecture (DPLG, a national degree) in 2005 and then worked for several agencies on projects concerning housing, public works (a water park, a secondary school, a conservatory for music and dramatic arts, etc.), commercial and health installations. In 2012, she completed a Master's degree in urban planning and transportation at the Institut Français d'Urbanisme and then joined the world of contracting. Since 2012, she has been in charge of the writing and of coordination the various partners of the Territorial Development Contract (Contrat de Développement Territorial, or CDT) for Grand Paris at Aulnay-sous-Bois. Between 2014 and 2015, she was in charge of operations and was the reference architect for the town of Colombes. She then worked for the Evry-Centre-Essonne agglomération Direction d'Aménagement where she participated in an urban study of the Pyramides and Bois Sauvage neighborhoods of Evry in order to complete the Urban Renewal Program and to launch the New Urban Renewal Program.

**François TIROT** is deputy director of the Sénart Etablissement public d'Aménagement (EPA-Sénart). EPA- Sénart is a public agency focusing on industry and business. It is responsible for developing the new town in accordance with legislation.

**Virginie LACOUR**, in charge of the conservation of Patrimony, heads the Patrimony-Tourism service of the Grand Paris Sud Agglomération. Formerly director of the Coulevrain Eco-museum and farm located at Savigny-le-Temple, she focused on 40 years of human urban history in Senart, from its construction to today, in the context of the exhibition entitled « récits de vies, récit de ville » ("life stories, town stories") (2013).



**Fidèle DJIVO** is president of the Citizen Council of the town policy neighborhood of downtown Savigny-le-Temple. The Citizen Council, created May 19, 2015, works to encourage the development and visibility of the residents of this prioritized neighborhood. It participates in the conception, application and evaluation of the city contract, and is involved in all phases of its organization and management.



**Vasoodeven VUDDAMALAY** has primarily published on the inscription of migration in geographical space. He defended his PhD in 1993 at the EHESS (Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales) and his HDR (in order to supervise doctoral students), *Des enclaves urbaines aux espaces transnationaux: Pour une géographie des espaces de l'immigration* in 2014 at the University of Paris- Nanterre. He has taught at the University Evry since 1999 and has coordinated publications with researchers at the International Research Center of the Institute of Political Science (Sciences-Po), and at the CEIAS (Centre d'Études de l'Inde et de l'Asie du Sud) of the EHESS and the Universities of Oxford – Sydney.

He has organized and directed seminars at the University of Evry: *L'impact des diasporas sur l'économie-monde* (9 April 2015) and *Migrations, villes globales et justice spatiale*, (Symposium Arts, langues et interculturalité : Alternatives au paradoxe de la globalisation (27 and 28 March 2012.)) He is the author of *Les diasporas originaires du sous-continent indien en France*, which was a chapter of *Migrations et mutations de la société française. L'Etat des savoirs* directed by Marie Poinot and Serge Weber (Paris, La découverte, 2014, p. 130-138)







**Didier DESPONDS** is full Professor of Geography at the University of Cergy- Pontoise, where he has headed the MRTE (Mobilities – Networks – Territories – Environment) Laboratory since 2013. His research concerns household residential strategies, the social impact of urban policy - especially in the context of urban renewal - and tensions involving housing and the application of “intelligent territories.” He is also responsible for several research programs focusing on residential mobility around airports, the evaluation of the French Vexin Regional Natural Park, and the place and role of ethnic minorities in European cities. He directs the publication of *Devenirs urbains* with Editions Manuscrit. Among his most recent publications: « *Territoires intelligents* » : *un modèle si smart ?* Coll. Villes et territoires (Editions de l’Aube, La Tour-d’Aigues, 2018), *La ville conflictuelle. Oppositions – Tensions – Négociations*, Coll. *Devenirs urbains* (les éditions du Manuscrit, Paris, 2016), *Les habitants : acteurs de la rénovation urbaine ?*, Coll. *Géographie sociale* (Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2014)



**Abdoul Hameth BA** holds a PhD in geography from the University of Paris I Panthéon Sorbonne and is Senior Lecturer in Geography at the University of Evry- University of Paris-Saclay. He also holds an HDR and directs research in the human and social sciences. His research focuses on international migration, decentralized cooperation, sustainable development and questions of interculturality. Abdoul Hameth BA has published, alone or in collaboration with other researchers, the following works: *Acteurs et territoires du Sahel* (ENS éditions, Lyon, 2007), *Dimension culturelle du développement : Dynamiques de valorisation ou de dévalorisation des territoires urbains* (L’Harmattan, 2010), *Le vieillissement dans l’immigration : l’oubli d’une génération silencieuse* (L’Harmattan, 2006), *Femmes africaines immigrées responsables d’association face aux enjeux de citoyenneté et de développement: entre mimétisme et innovation : le cas des régions Ile de France et Nord-Pas de Calais*, (revue *Espaces -Populations-Sociétés Lille* , n°2014/2-3, 16p.)

# Lab#4 | Vällingby

Adapting the welfare state  
model to present needs -  
The ABC-Town in Transition

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## Vällingby >> Introduction

Vällingby was inaugurated in 1954. It was one of the satellite towns along the newly expanded subway line from Stockholm city centre to Hässelby in the westernmost part of the municipality. Vällingby was an ABC-town, which stood for *Arbete, Bostad, Centrum* (Work, Dwelling, Centre). The ABC model was developed from the concept *grannskapsenhet* or Neighbourhood Unit – an idea originating with the American planner Clarence Perry in the 1920s. Just as most modern New Towns the notion was that a good city should be based on semi self-sufficient neighbourhoods that each contained the very basic services needed for daily life within a walking distance. With dedicated schools, shops, post and bank offices, social services, and more, the neighbourhood unit would create a community and provide a sense of belonging and security for residents. The concept had previously been used to plan Årsta in southern Stockholm in the 1940s, and it was scaled-up and broadened in Vällingby, especially to expand the number of local employment opportunities. Vällingby was planned to accommodate between 25,000 and 30,000 inhabitants, who were imagined as socially and economically independent from central Stockholm and the surrounding urban areas.

*Aerial view of Vällingby centre and surrounding dwellings, 1958. Taken by Oscar Bladh.  
Source: Stockholm City Museum.*



*Historical image of Vällingby Centrum in the 1950s  
Source: Nordiska Museet (ph. Erik Liljeröth)*

### Planning concept

The three parts of A, B, and C are distinctly present in the town plan. Work (A, arbete) should be localized in close proximity to people's homes and the town centre, while two industrial zones were planned to the west and south. Workplaces should also be located in the centre. Besides the employment opportunities offered by the shops, restaurants, and various public institutions, offices were located above the stores and restaurants and in a few higher buildings. Dwellings (B, bostäder) were planned in a variety of typologies, from low-rise and high-rise multifamily apartment buildings, to single-family houses and rowhouses, all within the maximum distance of 800 meters from the centre. And finally, the centre (C, centrum) was located in the middle and provided commercial, cultural, social, recreational, and religious services and institutions. It also was intended to act as a hub for transportation, with a subway stop (30 min to Stockholm Central Station), bus station, and a large number of parking places located underneath and around the town square. Cars and buses were separated from pedestrians and cyclists. Within residential areas, cars were only allowed on one side of the buildings, while cycling and walking paths were generously provided throughout the town; they connected Vällingby to the nearby areas and to the centre of Stockholm.



Historical image of Vällingby Centrum in the 1950s

Source: Nordiska Museet (ph. Gunnar Lundh)

17 From Sven Markelius: "Relation of dwelling type and plan to layout of residential quarter", in the relation between dwelling type and plan and the layout of residential quarter, Lissabon: International Congress for Housing and Planning XXI, 1952, p. 36.

Vällingby was the result of the regional planning of greater Stockholm in the post-war period, which focused on decentralization and making room for the long-term growth of the city. The most important plan was the General Plan of 1952, developed by the City Planning Office and its director, Sven Markelius. Since the 19th century, the city had acquired larger land areas – sometimes from other municipalities – in order to expand its borders and keep control over the territory to secure the housing provision and the urban development schemes, which were necessary for the city to grow in a sustainable and inclusive way.

With a clear parallel to what we learned in the New Town of Spijkenisse in the Netherlands, the satellite towns of the so-called 'Vällingby Group' (*Vällingbygruppen*) were built along the western subway line. These satellite New Towns were planned to work as partially independent towns, each inventing its own life, while physically connected to the capital city via the Tunnelbana. Each of these stops was planned as a city centre on its own, only slightly differentiated by the weight given to the balance of A-B-C functions in the planning schemes, as described by Sven Markelius in 1952 during a conference in Lisbon "*the proximity of residence to the workplace must be considered as one of the most vital problems requiring solution and an important point is, therefore, to strive for a suitable balance between dwelling and workplace within a limited area*"<sup>17</sup>.

While this principle naturally suggests a parallel with the French case of Evry, and the C-component (shopping and cultural centre as driving and structural function of the New Town) with the case of MK, Vällingby is characterized by a substantial difference which lays in the governance system structure; the New Town (like other Stockholm's satellite towns) maintains a strong administrative dependence to the decision-making level of the mother city's government. Contrarily, Milton Keynes and the French New Towns of Evry and Senart, or the above mentioned Nissewaard in the Rotterdam metropolitan region, all exist as a municipality on its own.

### Vällingby today

The city of Stockholm is divided into 14 districts based on geographical area. Hässelby-Vällingby is one of the Western districts in the municipality. Hässelby-Vällingby has an area of 19,6 km<sup>2</sup> and comprises sub-districts such as Grimsta, Hässelby Gård (farm), Hässelby Strand (beach), Hässelby Villastad (villa town) Kälvesta, Nälsta, Råcksta, Vinsta and Vällingby. The abundance of green space and water also makes Hässelby-Vällingby distinct. For instance, Grimsta nature reserve, including Råcksta Träsk, is considered valuable for outdoor activities. A popular walking course runs along Lake Mälaren, which connects the seaside resorts of Canaan and Maltesholm. In these diverse and easily accessible green areas, there are good opportunities for both relaxation and exercise. Residents and visitors can walk in the woods, pick berries or mushrooms, ride, and swim. The Hässelby-Vällingby district administration is responsible for maintaining these areas, as well as providing certain municipal services. These include preschools, elderly care, support and service for people with disabilities, urban environmental work (such as the maintenance of parks), social psychiatry, individual and family care, consumer guidance to leisure and cultural activities.

This abundance of nature is indeed an asset for the district. These areas are being planned, designed, and maintained so that they complement each other and can handle an increased population without losing their value. Easy access to nature in different forms offers a number of proven positive health effects, which also make social and cultural integration easier. In many parts of the world, however, nature is dangerous and something to avoid. Therefore, it has been considered important to inform immigrants that Swedish nature is safe and a resource for everyday life. Thus, the



The abundance of nature and green spaces (in Grimsta, top) and apartment-houses in Hässelby Strand with view on the lake (bottom)

<sup>18</sup> Thomas Millroth & Per Skoglund: Vällingby en tidsbild av vikt. Stockholm: Almlöfs Förlag, 2004, p. 107. Quote from 'Too good to be true or too bad to be credible - a tale of two towns, the sequel', author: Signe Sophie Bøggild, p. 188

Hässelby-Vällingby district has a unique chance to plan and design its parks and natural areas with the goal to remove barriers between different socioeconomic areas and to create spaces and places for spontaneous interaction between people with different backgrounds. This is producing positive effects in addition to more structural actions to counteract segregation and alienation among newcomers.

Like the other European cases explored in this journey across Europe, despite its relatively young life, Vällingby has gone through substantial changes which have shaped and molded it according to the pace of the socio-economic and political circumstances which have characterized the 20th century up to the present: *'Vällingby was created in the displacement from village to city, from privatised economy to collective state, from an old-fashioned country marked by farm society and agriculture to a modern welfare state, from the organically growing city to the planned society; the suburb Vällingby became the materialisation of the ideological hopes that anticipated and followed the transformation.'*<sup>18</sup>

### **New arrivals and emerging needs**

In order to help new arrivals to integrate into Swedish society and to facilitate use of national and municipal public services, newcomers are offered social guidance, access to cultural and sport activities, parental support, language lessons and services. During the summer of 2018, approximately 85 new arrivals have visited the Hässelby-Vällingby municipal offices and received support with respect to private financial matters, community orientation, and practical information. In order to assist newcomers living in temporary housing in finding long-term housing solutions, the municipal administration has offered the residents support in a variety of languages, including Persian, Somali, Arabic, and Tigrinya. Up to 46 new arrivals, of which 56% were women, received information about reliable websites that advertise apartments, how to write CVs and letters, as well as information about their rights and obligations when renting a home. The participants were satisfied with this resident support, as expressed in the following quotes: "I really needed to learn things that I never heard about" and "That information should be given to all as soon as you arrive".

### **The Questions of the Lab**

The New Town Lab in Vällingby investigated the transformations of the post-war built environment and its social milieus over time – from the so-called ABC-town of work-dwelling-centre (arbete-bostad-centrum) of the 1950s, to a town with a more diverse population and less workplaces in the 1980s, to the contemporary town characterized in part by international migration and with a revitalized centre. During the workshop, we looked

at how the former structures of the mid-20th century Swedish welfare state are being used today, developed insights and analysed the emerging trends and responses in terms of services and action programmes. The lab has involved professionals, public actors, local associations' representatives and citizens. The questions of the lab could be summarized as follows:

*How can the urban infrastructures and facilities of the foundation time respond to the current societal need? How can they be transformed and adapted to the new context especially with respect to the radical changes which occurred in the demographic composition of the city?*

The 2-day programme proposed a reflection on the value of the A (work), B (dwelling), and C (centre) components and the way their perception has changed:

*Are they still valid or have they become obsolete? Starting from their historical values, how can they be reconsidered in the light of the 21st century demand of a more socially and culturally diverse Sweden?*

19 'Too good to be true or too bad to be credible - a tale of two towns, the sequel', author: Signe Sophie Bøggild, p.188

20 'While progressive modernist architects in most other countries worked from the margins during the pre-war period, Sweden made an exception. This was probably due to a rare ideological and aesthetical overlap between the Social Democratic Party in power and the socially engaged architects of Swedish Modernism. Sharing faith in progress and modernisation, architects sat at the negotiation table with politicians and vice versa at the drawing table. These parties became different limbs of the same bureaucratic system when avant-garde architects of the 1920s and 1930s were appointed city planners and functionaries of the large public building task of the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, eventually materialising a new society.[...] As an example for all, in 1939, another CIAM member and glowing Social Democrat, Sven Markelius, was 1938-1944 head of building and planning investigation of the National Board of Public Building, and in 1944 he was made director of Stockholm's urban planning office.'

Quote from 'Too good to be true or too bad to be credible - a tale of two towns, the sequel', author: Signe Sophie Bøggild, p.90

21 'Too good to be true or too bad to be credible - a tale of two towns, the sequel', author: Signe Sophie Bøggild, p. 176

## 1. Heritage & Culture >> The B-word. From heritage to today's housing challenge

### Challenges

The cultural dimension in the New Towns has often played a strategic role in the construction of a local identity where communities lack common roots and shared historical meanings. Vällingby is even more than that: it was most of all, a political project, the representation of the social democratic welfare state. The years after the second World War were defined as historical for several reasons: "Vällingby of 1954 was part and parcel of the expansionist political program of Folkshemmet (People's Home). Over a long period of Social Democratic hegemony, housing policies manifested as 'social engineering', associating urban planning and the design of dwellings with the creation of 'the good life' and the 'just society'."19 The New Town Vällingby, embodying the political system, became the flagship of Sweden. In addition, an immense popular demand for change was on the rise, combined with increased expectations (economic, political and popular). The demand for an improved standard of living was urgent, because the housing conditions in the country were quite abominable, as the result of an unregulated market and indecent and over-crowded homes for the low-income classes.

The time was mature for experiments and innovative solutions<sup>20</sup> which led to the new planning paradigm of the 'ABC-Town'. As the flagship of this paradigm, Vällingby was appointed patrimony at the young age of 33 (1987). Today, at the age of 65, the city finds itself dealing again with a severe housing challenge which mainly requires convincing responses for refugees and asylum seekers.

After its inauguration, Vällingby was immediately recognized as an innovative form of planning and was publicized in articles appearing in numerous international architectural and planning magazines. Not only that, Swedish and international tourists – a broader public than the usual suspects of architects and historians - did sightseeing in the ABC-Town far into the 1960s.<sup>21</sup> The advertising and promotional dimension of the ABC-town created also new job opportunities for the recently mobilised local female workforce, which included also the possibility of a career as Fröken Vällingby (Miss Vällingby): hostesses in stewardess-like uniforms who were in charge of guiding groups of tourists around the 'City of the Future'.

One of the reasons for this intensive international interest was that it was regarded as one of the first towns built according to the new notion of the post-war New Towns, a planning concept that had primarily been defined

by the British New Towns Act of 1947. Although Vällingby was based on the Swedish concept of the ABC-town, its planning and design reflected the approaches used in the early New Towns in the UK. The British connections were also explicit: the planning of Vällingby was conducted in parallel with the first British New Town of Stevenage, and the two planning teams exchanged knowledge and ideas in a "sister city" agreement (this arrangement was abandoned and forgotten after a few years).

One of the principal actors in the construction and management of the housing as well as of the Vällingby Centrum, was, and still is, the housing corporation Svenska Bostäder, founded in 1944. Owned by the City of Stockholm, this is one of Sweden's largest housing companies which has had an active role in the construction of Stockholm for 75 years by now. In Vällingby, Svenska Bostäder has recently restored the façade of the iconic cinema Fontänen built in 1956 with an operation which, by completely transforming the inside (addition of several new screen-rooms) is unnoticeable from the outside.

In 2006, a new master plan for Vällingby was conceived by the City of Stockholm and in 2008, Vällingby Centrum was re-inaugurated. Re-baptised as Vällingby City, the new K5 retail store has become Vällingby's new landmark. Yet, Vällingby Centrum offers a spectrum of cultural facilities, such as a cinema, theatre, restaurants, shops and a church, whose infrastructures date back to the 1950s. By then the suburb was new and considered to be a highly modern phenomenon. Today they are still present and in use, however, as emphasized by Signe Sophie Bøggild, echoing an Indian say, they are "same same, but different"<sup>22</sup>. And she explains: "while new cobblestones immaculately re-enact a 1950s geometrical pattern, the lower floor of the Edward Hopper-like restaurant Vällingehus is converted into a multi-ethnic food hall ranging from Lebanese to Thai. Between these contrasts, Vällingby's intimate and nationally listed community centre appears as a geological plate, rubbing between the Sweden of yesterday and the Sweden of tomorrow. Old New Town pioneers pulling suitcases on wheels, veiled women, playing children and busy shoppers, many of whom are carriers of traditional Swedish names such as Svensson, Jönsson and Andersson, mix moderately with counterparts with names like Khan, Osman and Hossein. Small-scale shops, the popular MacDonald's and the classic cinema Fontänen blend with public service anchors such as the assembly hall Trappan, the youth club Tegelhögen, the library, and the Saint Thomas Church."

As highlighted by Shane Downer (MK Council)<sup>23</sup> during the lab, the original architectural features of the listed patrimony of Vällingby Centrum,

22 "Too good to be true or too bad to be credible - a tale of two towns, the sequel", author: Signe Sophie Bøggild p. 71

23 MK Council has established a so called 'Conservation Team' working on the awareness and helping to understand the city heritage and the relation between the old and the new buildings.



Vällingby in Postcards. The Theater Fontänen.  
Source: Petronella Mill

24 "Too good to be true or too bad to be credible - a tale of two towns, the sequel", author: Signe Sophie Bøggild p.162

although partially renewed and transformed in terms of functionalities, can be valued as a way to **increase awareness among the new inhabitants** who have moved to the city in recent years and who might not be aware of the history behind the creation of such **identity buildings** and urban forms. This might contribute to make them proud of the city that has welcomed them and therefor make them part of its historic iconic past and an active player in the city of tomorrow.

Along the same line of thinking, the Hässelby-Vällinby district has commissioned a photographic research to explore the city's new hybrid culture which is to be detected and somewhere hidden within the welfare social and cultural infrastructure of the city of 1954. "Hidden diversity" was exhibited in the People House where the lab was held and portrayed the ongoing transition from the A-B-C town to the contemporary city demographic composition.

Recognized from the start as a concentration of experimental design planning and housing solutions, the 'ABC-Town' offered a multiple choice of housing typologies including tower blocks, 3 storey-houses, domino houses and row houses. Initiatives exploring high quality design models for affordable "pragmatic and 'sufficiently egalitarian' solution for families",<sup>24</sup> became possible.

During her presentation, architect Anna Sundman explored the work of architects Höjer & Ljungqvist between the years 1950-70s, addressing the theme of the organized self-building. At that time a real community had developed around the **self-building homes** and inhabitants were not only consumers but also producers. Trying to diversify the housing offer in Vällingby and respond to the urgent housing needs, they proposed the construction of self-built family homes (row houses realized combining different types of standard modules) in the neighbourhood Atlantis (1952-1955), among others.

Behind the new self-built housing developments, there was the utopian spirit of the New Town of Vällingby, the ambition of being in the midst of creating a new society. A model for ideal communities was being tested, supported by a package of tools and special loans which also included the possibility for the residents to pay in workforce (they built in their own free time and weekends). Priority was given to families with children and works had to be realized with a quite

high pace (9 months to build the house). The result was a low-cost solution with high quality standards, in terms of architectural spaces, and strong connection with the natural environment.

**Standardized modules** were used and matched according to the individual requirements. **The political ambition of that time made this type of development become a reality.**

The prime minister Olof Palme (social democrat) himself moved into the neighbourhood (1968-1983) with his family, highly convinced of the role of such a strategy to respond to the housing crisis of that time. The neighbourhood Atlantis is now protected as cultural heritage.

Such democratic and community self-built approach can today be a source of inspiration when the city must provide a large number of affordable houses in a very short time. The housing challenge hit Sweden and the Capital City in particular. SHIS Bostäder's CEO Anders Kindberg put the accent on the figures: the housing queue today counts more than 500,000 people in need of a home.

SHIS is a municipal foundation established in 1963 by Stockholm city council with the purpose of reducing unhealthy homelessness in the city and help people back to the regular housing market. They are producing **temporary modular homes** that are meant to be in a place for a maximum of 15 years. In 2018, about 6100 people lived in the SHIS housing estates, of which 4100 were newcomers. As additional assignment SHIS supports the city by providing temporary housing for those newcomers allocated to the municipality in accordance with the new legislation 2016 related to the resettlement of newcomers.

The foundation helps the tenants with the relocation to permanent housing solutions, also through a cross sectoral "Boskola - housing and living school" including notions concerning the economic aspects (rent and payments' deadlines), the application for a permanent house, the connection to the labour market, the link between family and school, safety and security and the general rules of co-habitation, supporting the process of inclusion of newcomers in the local system.



View on the central pedestrian areas of Vällingby-Centrum in December 2018.  
Ph. Will Cousins



The commercial area Vällingby -Centrum recently renovated. Ph. Will Cousins



Row houses in the neighbourhood Atlantis, Vällingby. Ph. Will Cousins



The opening of temporary modular homes for newcomers in Stockholm in 2018.  
Source: presentation of the SHIS Bostäder during the Lab#4 in Vällinby in Dec 12-13, 2018

In 2015-2016, 2000 newcomers arrived in the Hässelby-Vällingby district. The demand for affordable housing (not enough provision in the existing market) challenges the A-B-C town again.

Questions for further discussion:

- How can we understand housing and the concept of home in relation to migration and temporary forms of housing?
- How can new approaches and design solutions help to overcome segregation and create connections and solidarity between communities?
- How to produce affordable and high-quality housing?

## 2. Public Space

### >> Green and blue networks as drivers of inclusion processes to overcome segregation and isolation

#### Challenges

As we learned during this Lab, the green areas were essential to achieve the seamless coherence of the A-B-C scheme. Similarly, in Evry and Milton Keynes, everything was planned to be at 'walking distance', approximately 1km radius from the *Vällingby Centrum* or the local district centres. More importantly, pedestrian or bicycle lanes were given priority over car traffic. *"According to the scale of the child, schools, playgrounds, shops and the Tunnelbana station are planned strictly for pedestrians. Meanwhile, park areas with playing fields and sports facilities are interconnected; [...] As far as possible, greeneries with pedestrian and bicycle paths run through the different neighbourhood units like an unbroken chain".*<sup>25</sup>

Having inherited this spatial organisation, can the natural areas and the green-blue infrastructures also today become the drivers for social interaction between different groups and foster the construction of an inclusive society?

The importance of green networks for a sustainable urban development is on top of the agenda both in terms of Vällingby planning policies and actions fostering the promotion and the accessibility to the natural environment. However, safety and security seem to limit the exploitation of such resources. Green zones are perceived as dividing factors between the neighbourhoods, more than connecting elements for inclusive-community spaces.

Magnus Rydevik, Head of the Department of Urban Environment, stressed the potential of connecting neighbourhoods via the existing green infrastructures with increased social interaction and safety as important components of sustainable urban development. In doing so the Department has established a cross sectoral cooperation with the other departments (Traffic, Environment, Labour Market, Education, etc) in the framework of the comprehensive Plan for the City of Stockholm, whose main goals include being a growing city, a cohesive city, a climate smart and resilient city, equipped with good public spaces.

What emerges from the debate is that there are a lot of barriers which are not only physical such as tunnels, underpasses, dark spots, that make the users feel unsafe and therefore reluctant in using them; the mental obstacles might carry just as much weight.

<sup>25</sup> "Too good to be true or too bad to be credible - a tale of two towns, the sequel", author: Signe Sophie Bøggild p.136



The City districts points out the need for an increased social interaction between the different neighbourhoods, which are sometimes isolated and segregated. Even when distances are small, variations in terms of population's composition and incomes register relevant effects producing mental and cultural barriers between the communities, as pointed out by Stefan Bärnin, sustainability manager of the local football organization *Brommapojkarna* and by the founders of *Systrar rönt hornet* (Sisters around the corner).

They gave us a picture of the neighbourhoods of Hässelby-Villastad, Hässelby-Gård, Kalvestia and Smedshagen, nearby Vällingby Centrum: Hässelby-Villastad has 15% of its residents born abroad, 0.7% in need of financial support, while in Hässelby-Gård, 43% of the inhabitants is born abroad and 14% in need of financial support; 18% of the inhabitants of Kalvestia is born abroad and 0.5% is in need of financial support, while in Smedshagen 52% is born abroad and 15% in need of social support. Although only a couple of kilometers away from each other, there is no communication between those areas, and there are huge differences in the dominance of population born abroad combined with low-incomes.

The local youth football club and the *Systrar rönt hornet* (Sisters around the corner) are active in the Vällingby area. Their actions are mostly directed to promote gender equality, promote cooperation between children from different schools and build confidence in the what is defined as 'other'.

In particular 'Sisters around the corner' is a non-profit organization founded by three Swedish born girls with an immigrant background who have created a support service/help point for young girls in the neighbourhood, who -like they did themselves in their adolescence- struggle with all kinds of life issues. While usually youth programmes are mostly addressed to boys, this is a specific programme for teenage girls. With a bottom-up approach, they operate on the ground, getting the trust and feelings of the youngsters and being able to contribute to the formulation of the real local questions.

They welcome the teenagers in a community space (owned by the municipality) with the aim to listen to their needs, empower and encourage them to pursue their ambitions and dreams. Many conflicts rely on the contrast between the teenagers and the parents who have migrated to Sweden.

So what can be the role of public space for encouraging migrants to find their space in the arrival city and how can it be a driver for inclusion?

Nowadays, there are 43,3% of migrants in Hässelby-Vällingby. It can be said that public space is an important factor that can make diversity visible and appreciable, create a chance to meet and the chance to come together culturally by sharing experiences.

The City district has identified a number of public **squares and spaces** within its territory on which they are currently working in order to make the neighbourhoods **more accessible and attractive**, and therefore more **welcoming to the users**.

Sandi Hilal, a Palestinian born architect and artist now based in Sweden, brought a project to the attention of the international delegates that overturns the perspective. Her question is "how can newcomers and refugees in particular, become host in the country of arrival. Given their temporary and unstable conditions and the limitation in terms of citizenship rights (as we widely discussed in the French case of Grand Paris Sud), newcomers could play an active role in the new city of arrival and finally feel at home, becoming 'host' for the local community who has received them.

She is the initiator of the project "Al-Madhafah: The Living Room"<sup>26</sup>. She started it in Boden (in northern Sweden) where she met a Syrian couple who decided to open their living room to the neighbourhood making it a public space. In this way the couple (refugees) has changed its "institutional role" from being guests in the arrival city, to hosts for their city fellows. She mentioned that this was really innovative for the Swedish community because they tend to swing shut in their private spaces. Hilal explained that, by opening the living room and inviting the local community in, the Syrian couple has actively started a process of inclusion: the living room has become the 'public space' where they could bring the old and the new life together. In her opinion, public space needs transformation to adapt to the present needs. New arrivals are a chance to critically look at our models of society and suggest that maybe it is time to change them.

*Questions for further discussion:*

- *What is the role of public places for the integration of newly arrived migrants?*
- *What do town centres and meetings places mean for the sense of belonging in a city district, area, or block?*
- *How can social and physical planning for such gathering spaces be coordinated with the issues of migration and integration?*

<sup>26</sup> The video of the Inauguration of Al-Madhafah The Living Room Project In The Yellow House In Boden: <http://www.decolonizing.ps/site/2018/08/inauguration-of-al-madhafah-the-living-room-project-in-the-yellow-house-in-boden/>

27 "Too good to be true or too bad to be credible  
- a tale of two towns, the sequel', author: Signe  
Sophie Bøggild p.141

### 3. Adapting the welfare state model >> Changed demographics and economic conditions necessitate to re-think the A-B-C model

#### Challenges

Although they may be recent, the New Towns are undergoing great social and spatial changes. The installation of a diverse foreign population induces various changes (demographic, social, cultural, economic) and challenges public policy in an evolving urban territory, increasingly connected to the rest of the world.

The A-B-C town responded to the needs of its time, but today the questions and ambitions have changed. Do we need more or new letters – a D-E-F-G, for instance – and what would these new functions be?

When Vällingby was built it was a shock! Where the Vällingby-Centrum stands today, there used to be farmlands and pastures, tells us Ulrika Sax, ethnologist and architectural historian. The first-generation residents thought they had found heaven. Nevertheless, Vällingby never grew as large as its planners anticipated, but it remained the major centre of neighbourhoods located along the western subway line.

Pioneering the 'ABC-Town' concept, Vällingby was planned as an integral, sustainable ensemble of public services, local workplaces, private enterprises, a varied architecture and housing typologies and careful landscaping with the ambition to transform a tabula rasa into a real town. It included all facilities required for a happy and modern life based on the ideal of equality aimed at eradicating poverty and inequalities (whether they relate to social economic, ethnic, or religious or physical conditions).

Despite the fact that the original plan estimated a high number of local workplaces compared to other parts of the Stockholm region, and new jobs were supposed to be generated by local industries, offices, services and institutions, the A-B-C idea in practice became a B-C city: "The amount of actualised local work places never matched the visions of the master plan [...]".<sup>27</sup>



Historical postcard: Aerial view of Vällingby showing the different housing typologies aggregated around the central hub gathering urban services and cultural facilities  
Source: Petronella Mill

At the end of the 1950s, the period of the babyboom, the population in Vällingby peaked to 24,000 persons living in the core area of Vällingby, Grimsta and Råcksta, Ulrika Sax says. In the mid-1960s, Vällingby Centrum was extended with half its size, although numbers were already going down to 22,500 Vällingbies. This moment corresponded to the teenage boom. In the 1974 the number of inhabitants had further decreased to 15,600. Yet it was difficult for young people to find housing and jobs within the city district. Drugs and conflicts urged many among the first generation to move to the newer areas created within the "One Million Programme", like in Rinkeby and Tensta in the north of Vällingby. Similarly, the larger companies that were located in Vällingby and Johannelund moved to newer facilities nearby.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the town centre was also slowly decaying. Ulrika Sax talks about **empty nesters**: only seniors and the old pioneers remained in the New Town, apparently the last of the original inhabitants. The aging is a common factor to the change of demographics in the postwar New Towns. In the pioneer years (**until 1966**) when the population was young, **30 percent consisted of children** and only 2,6 percent of elderly. "Like many other countries in the age of globalisation, [...] important workplaces – especially within industry and trading goods – have disappeared or reduced in size since the mid-1980s (35 percent from the 1988 to 1998). During the 1990s, the corporation Konsumentverket moved from the industrial area Johannelund, while many enterprises and offices emptied. Moreover, the number of employees in the large office building of the National Power Board Vattenfall in Råcksta has decreased in tandem with the vacating of the company's offices in Hässelby Gård."<sup>28</sup>

In the late 1990s, only 13,400 residents lived in the inner parts of Vällingby and that's when Vällingby started to go through several regeneration programs. In 1998, 15 percent of the total working population in Vällingby was employed locally, whereas 22 percent worked in another municipality"<sup>29</sup>.

#### A slow and painful transition

Today the demographics have changed again and more than 40% of the population is coming from other countries, from other districts of Stockholm, primarily the north-western part of the region. This is, interestingly, from the same areas where the children of the first generation of pioneers had moved in the 1970s. Less than half of the working population work locally, while the percentage of car-dependent commuters (with jobs spread out in the region) has gone up.

With a varied range of residential types, in Hässelby-Vällingby the 32% of the population occupies single-family houses and 68% lives in flats in multi-family buildings. **Leasehold units (hyresrätter) represent 70% of the housing solutions** in the multi-family buildings.

28 "Too good to be true or too bad to be credible  
- a tale of two towns, the sequel', author: Signe  
Sophie Bøggild p.190  
29 "Too good to be true or too bad to be credible  
- a tale of two towns, the sequel', author: Signe  
Sophie Bøggild p.190

**30** Sven Markelius and Göran Sidenbladh: "Town Planning in Stockholm: Housing and Traffic", in Ten Lectures on Swedish Architecture. Stockholm: Svenska Arkitekters Riksförbund, 1949, p. 75 and 78. Quote from "Too good to be true or too bad to be credible - a tale of two towns, the sequel", author: Signe Sophie Bøggild

If the founding model implied that "*local industries should have been able to provide jobs for both men and women*"<sup>30</sup> within a walking distance, the reality today is that people have to travel long distances to get to their workplaces. The original political and social functions of the city have become outdated, and the contemporary work models have changed from the home-work trajectory to the more flexible networking systems. This implying a complete rethinking of the A-B-C model.

The discussion during the lab has led to contemplate the possibility of increasing the letters/values integrating the historical city functions A-B-C with additional elements such as D (Diversity) or (Do-er – change makers, people who do things) – E (Equality, Education) – F (Fairness) and K (Kunst).

Questions for further discussion:

- What consequences should the changed perspectives on work (A), dwelling (B), and centre (C), have for the physical environment? Are the concepts of ABC still central for social and physical planning, or have they become obsolete?
- Migration policies (in Sweden) are often predicated on a misguided notion that only legal citizens contribute to the economic development of the nation and of society. How are immigrants and unemployed affected by such definitions?
- What does the localisation of workplaces mean with respect to integration?

## 4. Building a positive narrative

### >> Understanding cultural differences

#### Challenges

Like many other middle-aged New Towns across Europe, the A-B-C town of Vällingby finds it hard to recognize itself. The image of the social-democratic model based on universalism, standardisation and collectivism is challenged by neoliberal politics, on the one hand, with changes in economic and social policies, and on the other, by a more diverse and multicultural population.

"Although Sweden can seem like the happy, neutral and well-organised IKEA country on the surface, its later history of (im)migration and urbanisation has been both turbulent and rapid."<sup>31</sup> Before 1930, more than a million Swedes immigrated to the United States. From then onwards internal migrations have seen many leave the countryside and move to the urban centres; the years 1950s and 1960s saw the creation of the first planned communities with thousands of people migrating to the post-war satellite towns. Since the years 1970s and 1980s international immigrations have increased with hundred thousand refugees and guest labourers arrived from all over the globe.

In December 2015, the larger district of Hässelby-Vällingby had more than 72,500 inhabitants of which 43,3% have a foreign background (born abroad or born in Sweden with both parents born abroad), which is a higher proportion than the average of 32,8% in Stockholm as a whole (as of 2017).

Through its architectural layouts and models the Swedish Welfare state sought to create social justice through equality and uniformity.<sup>32</sup> The modernist urban design and top-down planning were instruments to achieve the standardisation of good living conditions for all. The target of the pioneer city was monocultural: "*the ethnical Swedish family with a working father, a housewife mother, kids, healthy economy, and (after Vällingby) probably a Volvo or Saab*"<sup>33</sup>, a portrait which is practically disappeared. The arrival of new and diverse populations challenged this overall cultural system.

Showing that it is not always easy to create understanding between different cultures, Jennifer Mack, associate professor of Theory and History of Architecture at KTH, talked in her presentation about her publication 'The construction of Equality', a research about the city Södertäljen.

**31** Signe Sophie Bøggild, "Too good to be true or too bad to be credible - a tale of two towns, the sequel", p. 264

**32** Jennifer Mack, "The construction of Equality: Syriac Immigration and the Swedish City", source

**33** Too good to be true or too bad to be credible - a tale of two towns, the sequel', author: Signe Sophie Bøggild p. 265

Södertäljen became the capital of the Syriac diaspora: it was called Mesopotalje. While the Swedish society was built on equality and collectivity, the Syriacs were used to (because of their Christian religion) be isolated and different from the other Syrians and to be together in an enclave. Syriacs and newcomers changed the taste and the aesthetics of the Swedish city they live in by decorating and customizing their modernist houses. They started a church and a shopping centre that took over the function of the original C-centre, in a completely different architectural style. Insights arising from this influx of a different community is that equality doesn't have to be synonymous with anonymous and standard architecture, like the Swedish planning culture assumed in the post-war period.

On the other hand, equality is also hard to combine with the idea of the enclave, which is intrinsically closed to 'others'. In that sense it also raises the question if the new centre is attractive for other than Syriac groups. It is open, but do people feel welcome?

The A-B-C model is based on a specific societal ideal and Syriacs have showed that it can be adapted to the present and future needs of the community. Inhabitants become city-makers in the construction of the new equality, that also implies a **mutual understanding and acceptance** of each other's differences.

In its presentation Bo Larsson, ethnologist and editor in social science at City Museum of Stockholm), presented his book 'Vällingby: eleven personal histories'. This book contains a rather detailed account of his interviews with citizens of Vällingby, based on the research of the Swedish scholar Börje Hanssen. Hanssen came to Vällingby in 1957 and was very intrigued by the modern developments of the suburb. In his research, he wanted to prove the theory that relationships between people had changed profoundly since Sweden was no longer an agricultural but a highly industrialized country. To answer this question Hanssen interviewed 10 households about their everyday life. In these interviews, he asked rather personal questions about what people were doing outside and inside their homes, about neighbours and relatives, and about communications (the use of telephones and the means of mass communication like radio and newspapers). Hanssen chose his interviewees according to their dwellings and deliberately wanted his interviewees to come from both the working and middle class to represent the social structure of the city. In 1972, Hanssen repeated his interviews with the same people and published his results in the book 'Family, households, kinship'. In the book he published long extracts of the interviews which still provides a picture of the everyday daily life in Vällingby during that time.

The City Museum of Stockholm decided in 2009 to repeat this study, because there have been qualitative changes in demographics and living conditions since the last study was made.

Different from the very homogenous households Börje Hanssen interviewed in 1957, the new households of 2010 are extremely heterogenous: 'The family in the middle of their thirties with two children has disappeared and, maybe not so surprisingly, there is a mix of variations with several households with roots in non-European countries.'

*Questions for further discussion:*

- *If the standardisation was a way not to leave anybody out, the contemporary society has become hybrid: how to give space and expression to it?*

## 5. Government - Citizen relations

### >> Building trust is key to establishing a dialogue

'How can citizens and residents be involved and make their voices heard?' was commonly recognized by all the public representatives as "the challenge of today" for many local governments. Make citizens active players in the urban project and find new approaches to communicate with them is priority for Vällingby as well. This process also runs in parallel with recognising the role of those associations spontaneously born in the district with the aim to reinforce the citizens' participation and the empowerment of migrant groups, youth and women. The essential problem is segregation. There is a shortage of about 300.000 houses in the region, 150.000 in the centre of Stockholm. The peripheral municipalities are building middle class housing but not affordable housing. This exacerbates the conflict.

*Brommapojkarna* (BP) is Europe's largest football association working in cooperation with other local organisations to promote gender equality and social impact jobs with projects like *Slussen in* or *Hoodifood*, to stimulate the access to the labour market for migrants.

Together with *Systrar runt hörnet* (SRH, Sisters around the corner), the associations claim the relevance of their work on the ground and ask the municipality for greater attention to what they do. This bottom-up approach is an evolving attitude that certainly can have a positive effect on the process of integration and social cohesion and on the relationship between government and the new citizens.

During the lab, the City district illustrated the variety of services offered by the citizens office. To name a few: the language cafés and Swedish with children (which help the newcomers to better understand the Swedish society), computer courses (to acquire new skills and become independent), 'Hand in Hand' and 'Face to Face', a service where community hosts walk around in the community to provide information and personally talk to refugees and asylum seekers, mentoring programs, youth meetings, and cultural and sport activities.

Yet, there is a huge gap between the city driven decisions and the citizens' actual needs and expectations. Especially the provision of affordable housing remains the key issue.

The Swedish housing model is divided into renting or owning your home. Sweden has a municipal system for public housing and the city is responsible for the local housing supply. To achieve a housing supply though, the city

turns both to public partners and the private sector. The line between private and public is blurred due to legislation aiming for open competition in the market. This means that the public rental homes are not to be confused with social housing. Public housing is not targeting any particular social group and acts much like a private company. Housing rents in Sweden today are determined by market parties without public intervention. This is done through collective negotiations according to a system of utility-value rents. Rent is supposed to correspond to the quality, standard and service of the apartment. The housing crisis requires responses which can be only found with the wide cooperation between the public and the private actors, as was shown in the case of Gothenburg during the panel debate on the first day. In fact, this Swedish city has decided to do something innovative, challenging the market forces and the current rules in finding solutions for creating conditions for the production of affordable rental homes.

**A renewed alliance between citizens and government** must be formed. This requires trust and long-term commitment.

The question which remains open and handed down to the next New Town lab in Nissewaard (NL) is: **How can the municipality get closer to the citizens and understand their desires?**

**34** MK Council has established a so called 'Conservation Team' working on the awareness and helping to understand the city heritage and the relation between the old and the new buildings.

## Conclusions

Vällingby, the A-B-C acclaimed and renowned model, the social-democratic Welfare state flagship of Sweden, doesn't recognize itself anymore. As many other post-war middle-aged New Towns around Europe, its founding principles have become outdated. That faith of the pioneer generation which had moved to the satellite town in the 1950s and 1960s to find a modern and prosperous life, has also gone. The clash between utopia and the rough reality is becoming painful.

Similarly to the other cases explored in this research programme, these New Towns have been deeply hit by the economic crisis during the 1980s and Vällingby, like Evry, has seen its population reduced to half in those years. Interestingly this didn't translate into a larger housing offer because, as Ulrika pointed out, the older people continued to live alone in the same apartments previously occupied with their children. While the 1990s have seen a tentative economic regeneration with great public and private investments in the renewal of the commercial centres: that happened in Vällingby, in Senart, in Milton Keynes and in Spijkenisse. Nonetheless, the outskirts and the peripheral areas have remained untouched for long time. Each case is of course unique, but all together it is possible to recognize common phenomena: the stronger the ideals of the foundation, the more difficult to understand the changes which occurred and to accept the new image of the city (Evry, Milton Keynes).

**The narrative of the A-B-C model is so powerful that the construction of a new narrative requires a lot of efforts, starting from the understanding of each other's differences.** With 43,3% of citizens with non-Swedish background and thousands of newcomers (refugees and asylum seekers) who arrived between Jan 2015 and Aug 2017, the cultural paradigm needs to be reformulated. The French partners in Evry called this a necessary "change of perspective". Perhaps the city can contemplate the possibility of increasing the letters/values in order to integrate the historical city functions A-B-C with additional elements such as D (Diversity) or (Doer/Doing) – E (Equality, Education) – F (Fairness) and K (Kunst).

**Hidden diversity. Culture and heritage can become factors of mutual recognition and understanding.** As highlighted by Shane Downer (MK Council)<sup>34</sup> during the lab, the original architectural features of the historic listed patrimony of Vällingby Centrum can be valued as a way to **increase awareness among the new inhabitants. Culture can be a driver of inclusive processes and community participation**, where diversity becomes the ingredient and the source of inspiration for the next

era of the 'City of tomorrow' (as Vällingby was called in the 1950s).

Like Sandi Hilal explained with her 'living room' project: public space needs to be transformed to adapt to the present needs. New arrivals open the doors of their living rooms to welcome the local Swedish: then the process of inclusion has started. The living room becomes the new "public space" for sharing stories, experiences and backgrounds and the old life comes together with the new one. In her opinion, newcomers are a chance to critically look at our models of society and suggest that maybe it is time to change them.

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## Appendix 1: >> New Town Lab Programme

### Day 1 - December 12

*13:00-13:45 Registration and check-in at hotel,*

*13.45 Welcome and introduction at the hotel*

Situated at First Hotel Brommaplan (subway stop: Brommaplan)

*14:00-14:45 Guided Tour of Vällingby, starts at hotel*

- Short introduction to the town and its surroundings

- Short walking tour of Vällingby Centrum

Seminar | Academic Forum

Situated at Pelarsalen, Folkets hus, Vällingby, Albert Aronssons torg 5

*15:00-15:50 Architectural and Planning Concepts and Typologies of the Vällingby Group – Chair: Erik Stenberg*

- Mats Franzén, sociologist, professor emeritus, Uppsala University, "The ABC-town"

- Anna Sundman, architect and founding partner, Theory into Practice, "Höjer & Ljungqvist"

*15:50-17:00 Living and Dwelling in Vällingby (B) – Chair: Helena Mattsson*

- Pelle Björklund, architect and CEO, Svenska Bostäder: "Svenska Bostäder's role in the development of Vällingby yesterday, today and tomorrow"

- Ulrika Sax, architectural historian and housing researcher, "Living in Vällingby First generation residents"

- Bo Larsson, ethnologist, Stockholm City Museum, "The voices of Vällingby"

*17:00-17:30 Coffee Break, with discussion in Workshop Groups*

*17:30-18:20 Practices and Methods for Understanding and Promoting Integration – Chair: Meike Schalk*

- Jennifer Mack, architectural historian and anthropologist, KTH, "The Construction of Equality"

- Sandi Hilal, architect and artist, "Al-Madhafah: The Living Room"

*18:20-18:40 Panel Discussion – Moderator: Erik Stenberg*  
 Panel discussion with Mats Franzén, Anna Sundman, Ulrika Sax, Bo Larsson, Jennifer Mack and Sandi Hilal

*19:00- Dinner*  
 Buffet dinner in Pelarsalen, Folkets Hus. Discussions in Workshop Groups during dinner.

## **Day 2 - December 13**

Seminar 2 Hässelby-Vällingby City District  
 Situated at Pelarsalen, Folkets hus, Vällingby, Albert Aronssons torg 5

*09:00-09:45 Urban Development and Environment*  
 - Magnus Rydevik, unit manager, urban development and environment, District Council of Hässelby-Vällingby

*09:45-10:15 Coffee Break*

*10:15-11:15*  
 - Anders Kindberg, CEO, SHIS Bostäder  
 - Linda Björkman, unit manager, citizen services, District Council of Hässelby-Vällingby  
 - Jessica Persson, development strategist, District Council of Hässelby-Vällingby

*11:30-14:00 Guided bus tour with lunch*  
 - Guided bus tour of Hässelby-Vällingby  
 - Lunch at Grimsta IP  
 Presentations by local organizations, Grimsta IP  
 - Stefan Bärnin, sustainability manager, Brommapojkarna  
 - Systrar rönt hornet (Sister around the corner)

Walk back to Vällingby Centrum from Grimsta IP (20 min walk) –  
 Discussions during walk in Workshop Groups

**W O R K S H O P** (NTAC participants only)  
 Situated at Pelarsalen, Folkets hus

*14.30-16:00 Workshop*  
 - Discussions in Workshop Groups + coffee and refreshments  
 - Presentation by Workshop Groups + Conclusion

*16:00-16:30 Steering committee meeting*  
 - Review and comments of Lab #4 Vällingby  
 - Presentation of next lab in Nissewaard  
 - Messages from INTI and project leadership

*17:00 Lucia concert at Sankt Tomas Church, Vällingby Centrum*

*19.00 Dinner at Gnarly Market in Vällingby Centrum (in former dance hall and restaurant Vällingbyhus)*



## Appendix 2: >> Speakers' biographies



**Pelle Björklund** is CEO of Svenska Bostäder. Between 2003 and 2008 he was CEO of the Stockholmshem affiliated housing company, which is owned by the City of Stockholm in the same group of companies as Svenska Bostäder. From 1991 to 2003 he was CEO of Väsbyhem, a municipally-owned housing company in a smaller city north of Stockholm. Prior to this, he was Head of Department at SKB, Stockholms Kooperativa Bostadsförening, which is a cooperative housing association in Stockholm. After finishing his architecture studies at KTH Royal Institute of Technology in 1979, he designed a block of houses for Svenska Bostäder.



**Linda Björkman** is Department Manager of Citizen Services at the District Council of Hässelby-Vällingby. The Department of Citizen Services has the mission to provide newly arrived residents of the Hässelby-Vällingby community with information in the form of a Citizen Office and so-called "Citizen Hosts." The Department also maintains a mentoring program and organizes events. Collaborations between Citizen Services and local social associations provide numerous activities for children and youngsters in the Hässelby-Vällingby district.



**Stefan Bärnin** is Sustainability Manager at Brommapojkarna. Brommapojkarna (BP) is Europe's largest football association with 4,000 football-playing children and adolescents, and about 700 volunteer leaders. Over 1,000 of our young people are girls, which means that we are Sweden's largest girls' football club. In 2018 we had approximately 18,000 activities in the form of workouts and matches, including the 257 teams that participated in series games. BP's activities are mainly focused on children and youth, which corresponds to approximately 95% of our total business. The schools for 6- to 7-year-olds and our teamwork instruction for those 8 years and up are the essence of what we do. BP has taken a strategic decision to act as a responsible social actor and carries out a relatively extensive CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) work, especially under the auspices of what we call "Västerort Meeting Place."

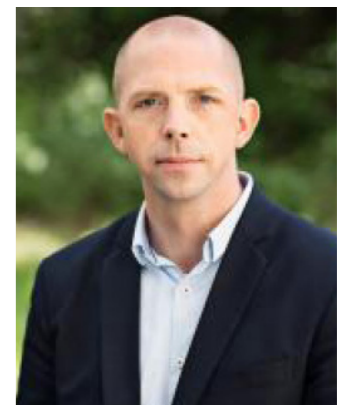
**Mats Franzén** is Professor Emeritus in sociology at the Institute for Housing and Urban Research, Uppsala University. He has been engaged in urban studies for more than four decades and received his Ph.D. in 1981 for a study of modernist planning ideas and the interventionist state in Sweden from the 1940s to the 1970s (with Eva Sandstedt). He has researched working class Stockholm between the wars, gentrification in Stockholm compared to Hamburg, and contemporary urban entrepreneurialism in Stockholm and Gothenburg, as well as several minor urban studies and some sport sociology and youth studies. Currently he is conducting an oral history of growing up in one of Stockholm's first modern suburbs in the 1950s - Gubbängen.



**Sandi Hilal** is an architect and researcher. She headed the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) Camp Improvement Program in the West Bank (2008–2014). Together with Alessandro Petti, she is a founding member of DAAR, an architectural studio and artistic residency programme that combines conceptual speculations and architectural interventions ([www.decolonizing.ps](http://www.decolonizing.ps)). Alongside research and practice, Hilal is engaged in critical pedagogy and is a founding member of Campus in Camps, an experimental educational programme run by an Al Quds University/Bard College partnership in Dheisheh Refugee Camp, Bethlehem ([www.campusincamps.ps](http://www.campusincamps.ps)). For the Swedish Art Agency, she currently conducts the public art project *Al-Madafeh: The Hospitality Room*, together with refugees in Boden. She is also a research fellow at ArkDes, 2018-2019.



**Anders Kindberg** is CEO of SHIS Bostäder. SHIS Bostäder is Stockholm City's residential social resource. We work with the city's mission to provide short-term housing for people who are in need of temporary housing for social and/or economic reasons, as well as to offer longer-term housing for those in need of extended housing support. We are a municipal, non-profit foundation that is explicitly designed to help people in vulnerable situations, a unique role that feels extraordinary and rewarding.





**Bo Larsson** has worked in museums in Stockholm since 1991, to a large part with contemporary collections and acquisitions. Currently he is employed at the City Museum of Stockholm, where he partly works as an ethnologist partly as an editor in social science for the publisher Stockholmia forskning och förlag. He has a Ph.D. in economic history from Uppsala university/Nordiska museets forskarskola.



**Jennifer Mack** is Associate Professor at KTH School of Architecture. She combines history, ethnography, and formal analysis to study social change and the built environment, including research on the architecture and planning of mosques and minority churches, the landscapes of modernist neighborhoods, and the collisions between mid-20th century Swedish design norms and the needs and innovations of migrants. She received the 2018 SfAA/AAA Margaret Mead Award for her book, *The Construction of Equality: Syriac Immigration and the Swedish City* (University of Minnesota Press). Mack holds a PhD from Harvard University, an MArch and MCP from MIT, and a BA from Wesleyan University.



**Helena Mattsson** is Professor in History and Theory and Head of Department at KTH School of Architecture. Her research deals with the 20th century theory of welfare state architecture and contemporary architectural history with a special focus on the interdependency between politics, economics and spatial organizations. She is the co-editor of *Swedish Modernism: Architecture, Consumption, and the Welfare State* (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2010), the themed issue of *Architecture and Culture* "Architecture and Capitalism: Solids and Flows (2017), and the forthcoming book *Neoliberalism: An Architectural History* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press). She is currently working on a book on postmodernism and politics in Swedish architecture. She is a member of the editorial board of *Journal of Architecture*.



**Jessica Persson** is Development Strategist/Secretary at the District Council of Hässelby-Vällingby. She is responsible for undertaking decision-making about matters like the business plan and our analytical reports, and she is also responsible for leading goal definition and budgetary processes within the Department of Prevention and Social Work.

**Magnus Rydevik** is Head of the Department of Urban Environment. The Department of Urban Environment is responsible for the maintenance and development of the many parks and large natural areas located within the district of Vällingby-Hässelby. This "green structure" is critical for the urban development of the area. It can, for example, be used to connect different socioeconomic areas in order to increase social sustainability. The members of the department cooperate closely with central divisions in Stockholm in our work with sustainable city development.



**Ulrika Sax** is an ethnologist and holds a PhD from the KTH School of Architecture, at the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm. She has written numerous books, including two about the suburbanisation of Stockholm in the 20th Century. One book, published by the City Museum publisher Stockholmia förlag, is about the planning of the new town Vällingby and the outcome of the design visions. As an ethnologist, she is particularly interested in how the built environment affects people's living conditions.



**Meike Schalk** is Associate Professor of Urban Design and Urban Theory at KTH School of Architecture. She is concerned with critical inquiry into questions of sustainability, democracy, and citizen participation in urban development processes, using practice-led research methods. She is a co-founder of Action Archive, a non-profit organization dedicated to urban research through the approaches of oral history and participatory historiography together with the artist and architect Sara Brolund de Carvalho and the architect and architectural historian Helena Mattsson. Most recently, she concluded a study as part of the Decode research project that focused on the Swedish model of the welfare state in depopulated areas of the rural North.



**Erik Stenberg** is an architect, Associate Professor at the KTH School of Architecture, and Assistant Director of KTH Center for a Sustainable Built Environment. He leads Grön BoStad Stockholm, a 5-year 92 MSEK EU project with the aim to make the housing sector in the greater Stockholm region smarter, greener, and more socially sustainable. Since 1999 he has been engaged in the practice, research, and politics of restructuring the so-called "Million Program" in Sweden. He has redesigned apartments, organized a housing fair (Tensta Bo 2006), researched and exhibited archival material, started an introductory architecture school in one of Stockholm's



largest modernist housing areas, and lectured extensively both nationally and internationally. He is co-editor of the book *Sustainability in Scandinavia: Architectural Design and Planning*.



**Anna Sundman** is an architect and co-founder of Theory Into Practice, an architectural office that combines research and design. Their work often starts from the context of complex societal challenges and builds cross-disciplinary partnerships to develop innovative ideas, using architecture as the working medium. She is currently leading a research project aiming to challenge car dependency norms in the development of Swedish housing. Theory Into Practice relies on a strong foundation in theory, but the most important results are the built spaces that offer more sustainable ways of living.



**Systrar runt hörnet (SRH)** (Sisters around the corner) is a nonprofit "girlfriend" who works to strengthen, organize, and engage teenage girls in the suburbs. They are currently working in the Hässelby area. The association started in 2016 and has grown enormously since then. The members have increased in number, strengthened in resolve, and consolidated their efforts. The need for this group is great because there is all too often an exclusive focus on boys in the suburbs. We therefore want to make sure that girls do not disappear from view.

# Lab#5 | Spijkenisse

## Reshaping government- citizen relations

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- 3. Adapting the Welfare State model: Cities in transition - the old urban patterns have become outdated and new socio-economic and structural conditions challenge the contemporary city
- 4. Building a positive narrative: What will be Spijkenisse in perspective?
- 5. Government-citizen relations: Own the city. Create the conditions for a collective construction of the city
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### Credits

*Texts:* Viviana Rubbo and Stefanie Korrel

*Editing and content supervision:* Michelle Provoost



35 This text is a free adaptation of the text presentation of Raymond van der Sluis, municipality Nissewaard.

## Spijkenisse >> Introduction<sup>35</sup>

### History of a peculiar urban development

Spijkenisse is situated southwest of Rotterdam in the Rhine-Meuse delta. Since 2015 the New Town is part of the municipality of Nissewaard. The municipality has a population of 85.000 inhabitants, of which about 73.000 live in Spijkenisse.

Founded as an agricultural and fishing community along an inlet of the Old Meuse (Oude Maas), after the second World War the village had a modest scale of about 3.000 inhabitants. It is only during the years 1960s that Spijkenisse's urban growth gained momentum in relation to

the municipality's decision to facilitate the westward expansion of the port of Rotterdam.

Part after part, neighbourhood after neighbourhood, the 'Spikicity' we know today was built through different additions. The districts of Hoogwerf, Schiekamp and Groenewoud respectively to the North and South of the old village, were built in the 1960s to respond to the pressing housing crisis of Rotterdam and the westward expansion of the city harbour which had become a new strategic hub of petrochemical industry also in relation to the 1956 Suez crisis and the conflict in the Middle East, which had consequences for the Netherlands' supply of oil. At that time, workers from all over the Netherlands moved to the region which, combined with the peak of the post-war baby boom and the existing housing stock in dire need of maintenance, translated into a housing crisis of considerable dimensions.

Constructions started in 1958 with large scale residential developments like Schiekamp and Hoogwerf. One of the sources of inspiration for these projects were the principles formulated by the modernist architecture movement, as elaborated by the members of the International Congresses of Modern Architecture, or C.I.A.M. The plans were intended to meet the multiple requirements set by living, working, leisure and traffic. Top-down planned communities following the common model of the western European New Towns,

characterised by parallel rows of flats (mix of affordable single-family units and low-rise blocks of flats), organised in a grid by perpendicular residential

roads and centralised neighbourhood facilities, including schools and local shopping centres. Standard homes were comfortable for that time, with a wall-to-wall living room, separate bedrooms for the children, an efficient kitchen and a bathroom with a shower or mini-bath. The units had their own garden or balcony and were surrounded by greenery. The prevailing idea was that the new neighbourhoods had to be concentrically positioned around the actual town centre, as a kind of self-contained residential districts.

In 1962, construction works continued along the southern end of the village, in the Groenewoud neighbourhood. This was followed by Sterrenkwartier, where building sites started in 1965. Here the same template was applied as in the Northern social housing blocks, as well as the same unit types. Monotony and a uniform urban landscape became a distinctive mark for Spijkenisse.

The late 1960s saw a major shift in people's thinking about town and country planning. Whereas previously there had been a strong focus on collectivity and large scale development, the new plans opted for the smaller and more individual scale. The new point of departure was 'building for the neighbourhood', with lots of low-rise buildings, hardly any tower blocks and active participation by local stakeholders. In other words, residents were given a say in the development of their residential environment: the democratisation of the social housing processes was described as the 'Spijkenisse Model'<sup>36</sup>. However, this new approach led to spatial confusion and ineffective orientation at the neighbourhood and district level. The neighbourhoods De Hoek and De Akkers are clear examples of these new ideas.

The conventional housing units of the previous decade didn't respond to the new ideals "the representatives of late 1960s counterculture had no interest in the middle-class lifestyle" explains Raymond. In response, architects of the 1970s designed neighbourhoods for pedestrians and children playing in the public squares, rather than traffic lanes. Waterland is a wonderful example of this new principles, offering zones with limited access to cars, and bike paths drawing the regular grid layout for streets and squares. These areas are called 'cauliflower neighbourhoods' "places where you might get lost and won't find your way out easily..." Today's Waterland is still a great place to live, with an abundance of green space. Although here as well, some streets are in a state of decay.

36 Text presentation by Raymond van der Sluis, Municipality Nissewaard. The Spijkenisse model has been defined by the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency (PBL). In the framework of the 2012 'Nieuwe Steden in de Randstad' Rapport <https://www.pbl.nl/publicaties/2012/nieuwe-steden-in-de-randstad>



The village of Spijkenisse in 1953  
Source: Municipality of Nissewaard



Plan West, construction works for the new Zeeheldenbuurt (1957)  
Source: municipality of Nissewaard



Housing typologies in Spijkenisse. Source: Municipality of Nissewaard



Housing typologies in the Vriesland neighbourhood, 1983  
Source: municipality of Nissewaard



In 1977 the municipality accepted the national status of *groei kern* (growth town) with an increased task to provide housing. A new top-down planning phase was starting. The national government was the leading party in this operation. The Third National Policy Document on Spatial Planning (*Derde Nota Ruimtelijke Ordening*) defined stricter regulations for the growth of the Dutch towns and villages. Several New Towns were designated to rehouse the excess population of the central cities, such as Rotterdam. The national government's decision to include Spijkenisse was motivated by a number of different considerations, among which the fact that the town had been growing at a fast pace for years, so obviously had a lot of experience with expansion. As a New Town, Spijkenisse had to build 16.500 new homes within a period of fifteen years. The state provided funding to extend the Rotterdam subway line to Spijkenisse, under the condition that the largest part of the housing stock would be realized within a certain proximity to the metro stations. The planning concept behind the new housing developments was the creation of single-family homes with private gardens, which led to the creation of low rise, compact and high density neighbourhoods. High rise buildings were out of the question. Owner-occupied and social rental dwellings were fully mixed. The dwellings were for the largest part occupied by home seekers from Rotterdam, Schiedam and Vlaardingen. Mainly the middle-income families, often employed in the harbour, that move to Spijkenisse. In the 1980s the population grew to almost 70.000 inhabitants.

The goal set by the national government was to build 16.500 new homes within a time span of fifteen years. Only in the period between 1976-1981, Spijkenisse built 7,000 new homes.

By 1981, Spijkenisse was the fastest-growing town in the Netherlands. And by the time Spijkenisse's three new subway stations opened for business, two completely new neighbourhoods had been constructed: De Akkers and Vriesland, followed by the neighbourhood of Vogelenzang in 1987.

The neighbourhoods of the 1980s show a great variety in terms of architectural forms and design solutions to combine the requests and wishes of the new inhabitants with the need to build densely and within a limited space: 85% of the home-seekers wished for a single-family home. The imperative was to realise as many homes as possible in the direct vicinity of the subway stations. However, by using every last square metre

of the available area and keeping the gardens as small as possible, planners were able to strike a decent balance between residents' wishes and the Ministry's demands. In some cases, building density was as high as 70 homes per hectare. The houses were smaller than the ones built in the 1970s. On the one hand this had to do with the Ministry's requirements, on the other with the need to minimise the costs. Also, for this reason, houses have relatively small windows, to save on heating expenses: climate adaptation *avant-la-lettre*.

In order to achieve the required building density, the plans for the neighbourhood De Akkers included a lot of multi-storey buildings, but none of the buildings exceeds four storeys. By now, everyone agrees that this building density is too high, since it affects the neighbourhood management and the residents' quality of life negatively. In the early 1980s, planners aimed to create a more attractive and varied residential environment. They continued along these lines in the 1990s and beyond. This variety, combined with a somewhat unclear street pattern and poor accessibility, has given the neighbourhoods from this period a somewhat obscure character. Combined with increased crime, vandalism and drugs, some of the neighbourhoods of this period are labelled for their social issues.

The 21st century marks another milestone for the recent history of Spijkenisse's development. After decades of growth and housing production, the focus is now shifting from quantity to quality and the municipality is determined to improve the anonymous image of the town. Large investments have been made for the revitalization of the town. Those include the upgrading of the New Town centre and new cultural facilities driving the regeneration of some of the older neighbourhoods and finally the construction of more expensive housing stocks. All this, according to the municipal voice, is valued as necessary to stay attractive for the middle-class residents.

Spijkenisse urban development has changed its course and new neighbourhoods have been created along the river *Oude Maas*: Maaswijk and Schenkel. Here, the City Council's<sup>37</sup> new target is to realise a varied mix of homes – social rentals for low-income households as well as for middle and high incomes up to even luxurious townhouses. The project

<sup>37</sup> Since 2015 Spijkenisse is part of the new Municipality of Nissewaard.



Housing developments built during the 80s: small apartments and spaces densely built.  
Ph. Viviana Rubbo



Pedestrian and bicycle paths cross the neighbourhoods built during the 70s and design friendly and safe urban spaces  
Ph. Nick Tameris

developments started in 2000 but were interrupted by the crisis in 2008. These neighbourhoods have been designed in a rational way, combining a clear main structure with close attention to outdoor public areas in the urban environment. These areas were relatively expensive for Spijkenisse in those years, with detached homes and large semi-detached homes. The plans for De Schenkel were not developed with the participation model; as a reaction to the small-scale approach they proposed a radically different path: avenues, canals, open spaces and a distinctive, historicist architectural style.

The present and future plans are represented by the Elementen neighbourhood. The land for this project was purchased by the municipality from a private landlord for 40-plus million euros “so the city probably won't be turning a huge profit from that” says Raymond, “but it's important for other reasons, since it will be connecting Spijkenisse with the river again”. Given the geographic location and the close proximity of the dike, the high-rise plans had to be developed in close consultation with Rijkswaterstaat (The National Agency for water management). The new neighbourhood brings together tower blocks and low-rise developments of which the architecture takes inspiration from the historical buildings of the port. It offers urban facilities and healthcare services on the towers' ground levels and green areas which extend towards the water.

These new developments are the result of the first masterplan of 1995, meant to attract the middle-class and high-income groups to that area, mainly from Spijkenisse itself. However, they are presently occupied for more than a 50% by people coming from outside the city. This raises questions about social and cultural connections with the existing town and demographic composition and about accessibility and mobility networks to and from the town centre.

### **Economic and socio-demographic changes. Spijkenisse repositions itself in the Rotterdam region**

New Towns in the Netherlands have been developed to relieve the pressure on the large cities and to make sure that suburbanisation would develop in a structural manner. Presently these large, historical cities have become more appealing and more popular again. Suburbanization is no longer always self-evident. Through the years, the regional development has changed the territorial organisation and the relation between

Rotterdam and its suburban poles. The region is more urbanized, transport systems have been extended and the economic structure transformed.

Within this new setting, new challenges for Nissewaard emerge. Throughout the years, most of the housing provision in the city was especially meant to accommodate the workers of the port (with neighbourhoods like the Akkers where the social housing estate reaches the 70%).

Lately, as a consequence of the economic turmoil, that segment of the population is not there anymore and Nissewaard finds itself with a large amount of cheap housing which becomes attractive for people who cannot afford Rotterdam or are not allowed to live in the main city because of the Rotterdam Act. That is a major challenge for the city who wants to favour the social mix and also attract new promising residents who make the choice to live in Nissewaard because of the new amenities and services the city can offer today.

As a result, the town has to confront itself with a number of questions: *What is the definition of its new role in relation to the mother city Rotterdam? In what way does the city want to position herself? What is her unique selling point?*

### **The revitalisation of the town centre**

The town centre of Spijkenisse was constructed during the early 1980s but after a few decades it no longer met with the standards and needs of the visitors. Its architecture and amenities became unattractive and were thought to be lacking a nice and welcoming atmosphere. Facilities were meant to serve a much smaller population.

During recent years, a lot of investments have been made in the town centre. It has been transformed into the 'living room' of the town. The area for shopping, hotels, bars and restaurants has been expanded, building façades and pavements were renewed, and a new theatre and a new library were built. These both have a distinctive architecture and were designed by top-class architects. At the same time, retail is going through a rough time as a consequence of the increased popularity of the online shopping. Together with real estate owners and shopkeepers, the town has tried to increase



*The urban regeneration of the inner-city centre (1990s)  
Ph. Viviana Rubbo*



*The North-east access to the commercial city center with the new Theater De Stoep realized by the Architectural Office UNStudio.  
Ph. Viviana Rubbo*



*The Boekenberg, the city public library designed by architectural office MVRDV  
Source: municipality of Nissewaard*



*De Element: the towers of the Masterplan of 1995.*

Source: Ph. Nick Tameris

the quality of the environment. Initiated by the municipality, a so-called 'business investment zone' was set up, in which every owner and every user of the centre pays an extra tax, serving collective goals. This idea comes from the owners and the users of the area who have taken this decision via popular vote.

### The Questions of the Lab

The fifth and last New Town lab of the New Towns Arrival Cities programme was held in Spijkenisse on Feb 20-21 2019. Organized by the Municipality of Nissewaard, the focus of the debate was 'Reshaping government-citizens relations'.

This lab had a specific focus on the neighbourhood de Hoek which was the product of the city's urban developments of the 1980s. The public administration, together with the housing association De Leeuw van Putten, is exploring new ways to steer a process of integrated and inclusive socio-economic and physical renewal, working closer with citizens and motivating new forms of engagement. The main question of the City Lab was: *How can we make our neighbourhoods better places to live through a renewed cooperation between government and citizens?*

The lab brought together local actors, the young generation of citizens, residents, international delegates and experts (among them Helena Casanova, Maarten de Booij, Carine van der Horst and Femke Kaulingreks), with the aim to seek ideas for policy tools and measures.

## 1. Heritage & Culture

### >> The city as an open-air museum: the history of architecture and urban planning since the post-war period to the present time

#### Challenges

The small village of farmers and fishermen has abruptly changed its face in the blink of an eye.

In the aftermath of the second world war, combined with the peak of the baby boom, the years 1960s have turned the small village into a New Town. From then on, the construction of Spijkenisse has continued decade after decade. Without an all-encompassing masterplan, urban growth has gone through different phases dictated by policy frameworks, ambitions and goals which differed from time to time. The history of this peculiar development is clearly visible when exploring the city as we did during the first tour day guided by Raymond van der Sluis, Head of the Urban Management department in the Municipality of Nissewaard. Understanding and reading the history of the town, despite its young age, can help to foster the sense of belonging to the place, as we widely discussed in Vallingby, Sabaudia, Grand Paris Sud and in Milton Keynes. It could also contribute to raise the interest and the participation of the citizens in envisioning a new transformation phase based on co-creation and co-planning. This could be a good start to make people feel at home and become active players of a future urban project.

Walking through the city today one can read the history of the town's urban developments. Every decade is recognizable by its own spatial and architectural characteristics. Like a journey across the time, the city is indeed an open-air museum. The appreciation for the older (1960s and 1970s) buildings is still an acquired taste in Spijkenisse: not many people see the value of the architecture from the typical New Town-era or find it interesting. To a certain extent this building period defines the identity of Spijkenisse, but the city does not want to be associated with it. *Can there be a renewed positive identification with the housing and architecture of the period of the 1970s?*

In addition, contrary to the top-down planning applied in the post-war cities of new foundation, present trends show new models emerging based on self-organization and participation: *what 's the limit and how can you combine top-down planning and decision-making processes with bottom up ideas and projects?*



Questions for further discussion:

- How can (the process of creating) architecture and urban planning contribute to make people feel at home and strengthen the sense of belonging to a place?

## 2. Public Space >> Rediscover collective spaces as a strength and a value for the community

### Challenges

Principles behind the construction of the expansions of the years 1970s and 1980s gave priority to the pedestrian and bicycle roads. Neighbourhoods were connected by green spaces and parks. Most of the social houses built in the neighbourhood De Hoek date back to those years. The typical houses of that time look uniform, with the same orientation and storages located on the front facing pedestrian streets where one can hardly see children playing anymore and squares and public spaces are often turned into parking lots or reduced in space by fences and wooden walls "protecting the individual privacy".

Maarten de Booij, CEO of the housing corporation De Leeuw van Putten, goes straight to the point: the Hoek was mainly built during the 1980's according to the housing needs and wishes of that time. Apart from the dimensions and the dense configuration of the neighbourhood, these types of houses do not seem suitable for today's family composition. Also because of the need to reduce the construction costs, the quality of these houses is quite low, and the housing association knows it needs to be prepared for renovation works in the near future.

Things have changed in the neighbourhood: "A lot of the supermarkets, stores and entrepreneurs have left De Hoek. This makes spontaneous interaction between inhabitants scarce. A lot of squares that were in use as playgrounds have been transformed into parking spots. There is a lot of critique on youngsters, because they cause nuisance in the neighbourhood. Unfortunately, they do not have places indoors where they can meet" (Robin, a young adult grown up in De Hoek).

As Maarten de Booij highlights, there is no evident problem to complain about in De Hoek at present. And that is , the real challenge today.



The neighbourhood De Hoek. Fences and wooden structures mark the space and squares are often used as parking lots. Ph. Viviana Rubbo and Stefanie Korrel

Houses and public spaces are not in a bad shape yet. But they know it will happen soon. And that is why the housing corporation is strengthening its cooperation with the municipality with the aim to explore new approaches to initiate a process of cooperation with the inhabitants tackling the decaying process of the built environment and of the public spaces well before the emergency point; and most of all, to do this combining bottom-up and top-down approaches, making the residents and the civil society part of the process from the very beginning. Keywords for this new ambitious programme are cooperation, trust and mutual confidence.

This is why there is need for strengthening the social bonds between the inhabitants of the area. 'How do you increase collaboration between inhabitants?' is the question addressed to the international delegates attending the Lab.

On the short-medium term, the plan of De Leeuw van Putten is to keep up with maintenance on the built environment and the public space fostering the improvement of the social dimension with activities which keep the area liveable. For the long-term, a strategic perspective and big interventions should be planned. They are aware that if the status of the neighbourhood drops than its more difficult to improve the area as a whole. The combination of improvements that are not easy (read: expensive) and a soft approach (acupunctural as architect Helena Casanova says) at the same time requires a comprehensive approach at neighbourhood level. In this respect, Helena Casanova, also highlights the importance to "integrate in the project the voice of the users, together with institutional and non-institutional experts."

Public spaces are very important and starting from the analysis of how they are used from a sociological point of view, it becomes extremely relevant for the understanding of the current social dynamics. Users and residents should be placed at the centre of the project of the neighbourhood renewal process.

As a housing corporation, De Leeuw van Putten is dealing with three main dilemmas:

- *A planning dilemma:* the need to think about the future when there is no evident problem
- *A dilemma of scale:* how to engage people in a vision which requires to look at the neighbourhood level and even beyond (city, region): a change of scale is needed.
- *A communication dilemma:* how to inform and talk to people without making them afraid that the neighbourhood will disappear (does it mean my house will be demolished? When do you do that? Why? Where should I go? How will this neighbourhood change?)

Tensions might raise. So, the question is 'how to involve people in the overall vision with the aim to create innovation?'

The goal is to give another image of the neighbourhood, starting from asking the citizens: "What do you really want today? What are your aspirations?"

In terms of facilities and collective spaces, the school De Vuurvogel has become an important meeting point in the neighbourhood. As the school principal Arnold Eijgelsheim explains "the school connects the community: the youth with the elderly. It is important to think big and start small, this will create dedication and loyalty to the place."

#### Questions for further discussion

- How to involve people in the overall vision of transformation of a neighbourhood with the aim to create innovation?
- How do you increase collaboration with and between inhabitants?



Housing typologies in Condorhoek, 19070s-80s  
Source: Housing Corporation De Leeuw van Putten



Kiekendiefhoek  
Source: Housing Corporation De Leeuw van Putten



Housing typologies Talinghoek  
Source: Housing Corporation De Leeuw van Putten

### 3. Adapting the welfare state model

>> Cities in transition - the old urban patterns have become outdated and new socio-economic and structural conditions challenge the contemporary city.

#### Challenges

Social housing has been one of the main features of the housing provision in Spijkenisse. As Raymond van der Sluis mentioned during the explorative tour of the town, the city offered a lot of rentals; homes for regular households consisting of Mum, Dad and two kids. All were geared towards the same target groups, with a median income at most. If people started earning more – you could make a good living working in shifts in the port or the chemical sector – the town didn't really offer any options to move up the housing ladder. And the same applied to senior citizens and young people.

Due to the fact that Spijkenisse was built in one go and during a very short time span, the built environment is getting old all at once. This is a characteristic Spijkenisse shares with all the other New Towns. In order to prevent a massive deterioration, timely investments are necessary. Some of the oldest parts of the housing in the town have already been demolished by the housing associations and have been replaced by something new. During the period of the welfare state, amenities and urban services received a lot of architectural attention. Many of these buildings have now become empty and share today the same fate as the political system that has produced them and also that has also changed: many of these modest shop rows have been adapted for other uses and urban facilities and shopping centres have disappeared.

After 40 years, social housing has been drastically reduced and the housing corporations usually renovate, sell or tear down the buildings. And that's what has been happening in particular in some of the Northern neighbourhoods of Spijkenisse built in the 1960s. Many of those blocks from the first expansion phase were considered outdated.

A far bigger part of the housing supply, however, is younger than that (the biggest growth of Spijkenisse took place between 1975 and 1985), and -more important- is owner-occupied. Throughout the years, that part of the housing supply has lost a lot of its attractiveness; a process that was enforced by the use of cheap materials, and planning concepts which by now are perceived as outdated. All this necessitates to rethink

the quality of the living environment embracing public spaces renewal and accessibilities, improvement of community services and facilities and the refurbishment of large part of the housing stock, which also implies energy efficiency solutions.

Many dwellings need to be adapted to the current targets of sustainability. This effort also offers the chance to diversify and to improve the aesthetic of the housing supply, making it possible to break the uniformity and monotonous landscape of many neighbourhoods. This aspect is carefully taken into account by the City Council since the attractive living environment has always been one of the most important qualities of Spijkenisse.

Nissewaard today is strongly committed to renew the housing supply in order to make it future-proof. With different measures.

Only recently, a new policy concerning three decentralization acts took place in the Netherlands. Youth health care, participation and social support became the responsibility of the municipalities. It was the reason for Nissewaard to apply major changes in its own vision and methods. The basis of the idea is to change the attitude and work and act closer to the citizens instead of the top-down and distant relation which is the usual approach of the governmental system. This for instance means the introduction of integrated approaches to help inhabitants, both between municipal departments and between the municipality and health care partners. But it also means working more from inside the neighbourhoods. It is a new way of working which is called "Thuis in de Wijk ('At Home in the Neighbourhood').

#### Questions for further discussion:

- *The massive deterioration of the housing provision raises questions which include the role of the citizens in the urban project: how to work with the inhabitants and make their participation effective?*
- *what kind of approach is needed when the urban transition implies changes in the socio-economic and demographic trends?*

38 City' ambitions, as described by the local partners in preparation of the Lab  
Source: <http://www.newtowninstitute.org/spip.php?rubrique155>

## 4. Building a positive narrative

### >> What will be Spijkenisse in perspective?

#### Challenges

*"In Nissewaard, we keep positioning Spijkenisse as a residential area for families. Because we are situated close, yet not attached, to the agglomeration of Rotterdam, we create a distinct profile for ourselves as a green large residential area, on the border of the Rotterdam region and the rural area of the province of Zeeland. The employment of the port of Rotterdam is just around the corner. The economic structure of the port has changed in the course of the time due to automation resulting in a decreasing demand for employees. That change continues, but at the same time, the demand for higher-skilled work-force increases due to the transformation of the port into a green industry. Nissewaard wants to be the safe haven of a world harbour. The transport connections for it are already in place. As a town we accept that our inhabitants will continue to visit the centre of Rotterdam, but we would like to encourage them to visit the town centre of Spijkenisse on a regular basis and feel at home there."*<sup>38</sup>

Many of the inhabitants in Spijkenisse have a migrant background: there is a large group of people from Surinam & The Netherlands Antilles who arrived in the early days of the city (1970s), and a more recent flow of refugees and asylum seekers which the city accommodates just like any other city in NL. They are especially Syrians and Eritreans. But also, because of the harbour, the city still attracts many European workers, mainly from Poland.

Within this mix of cultures, people might feel less connected to the town (and sometimes remain closed in the own communities), but it also means that the social and cultural structures are still in development. Differently from the past, this is a crucial point: there is a new generation which was born and raised in the city. This generation demands some extra attention and urges the city, as in many other European middle-aged New Towns, to critically address questions which relate to the redefinition of its own identity and its future. *What will be Spijkenisse in perspective? What is her vision for the future?*



Some ethnic shops in the neighbourhood the Hoek  
Ph. Viviana Rubbo

Drawing an overview of the Dutch New Town context, Michelle Provoost, INTI Executive director, stressed the similarities and exceptional condition of Spijkenisse in comparison with other New Towns. They all share for example a lack of urban character, a lack of housing diversity, a car-based infrastructure, a need to make the city climate-proof, and a need to add housing for the local youth and for the increasing aging population. On the other hand, there are some aspects which distinguish Spijkenisse from the others. In fact, while many New Towns are confronted with outdated centres, Spijkenisse has made a leap ahead already a decade ago by creating a New Town centre with shopping and services facilities, investing in cultural infrastructures.

Today in Spijkenisse there are people of all kind: expats, Eastern-Europeans working in the harbour, old Vietnamese, a large Antillean and Suriname population, young second generations with migrant background, asylum seekers. When the city was founded the population was quite homogeneous. *How to include those who moved in this heroic phase when the city has started, with others who have arrived later on?*

Despite the premises, also here the pioneer spirit is evaporated say the city representatives. There is a lot of skepticism around the demographic changes and the recent arrival of newcomers. This is also emphasized by the so-called "Rotterdam law", which prevents people with a low social status to move into areas with a low social status (=cheap housing) within the Rotterdam borders, and so they are likely to move to Spijkenisse because of the low rental prices. Political parties such as the extreme right Party for Freedom led by Geert Wilders has a strong hold in the Dutch New Towns in particular in Almere and Spijkenisse these days, tending to promote the paradoxical mutation of the New Town original idea of an open city to a fort. It is important to tackle these issues. And to do this it is necessary to reinvent the social narrative and take the necessary steps to promote a mutual understanding and the acceptance of the new face of the city.

#### Questions for further discussion:

- Does Spijkenisse attract people from Rotterdam because there is less ethnic diversity?
- The pioneer spirit has gone away, what are the new founding values which make the city unique?

## 5. Government - Citizen relations

### >> Own the city. Create the conditions for a collective construction of the city

To address this pressing and complicated topic, the host partner has chosen a geographic area in the town: De Hoek, a neighbourhood that one might call typical for Spijkenisse. It is one of the areas developed in the beginning of the 1980s, during the town's largest growth spurt. About 60% of the housing stock is social rent, 40% is owner-occupied. While the first residents were mainly young families, nowadays the neighbourhood has a more diverse population. De Hoek has a somewhat parsimonious and gritty appearance as a consequence of the economic crisis of the time. The neighbourhood has never been on top of the neighbourhood ladder, but as the years have passed, De Hoek now finds itself in the lower regions.

Housing association De Leeuw van Putten and the municipality of Nissewaard are about to develop a regeneration vision and plan for De Hoek. Both spatial-physical and socioeconomic aspects will be included. With the aim to explore the topic of the lab "How can we make our neighbourhoods better places to live through a renewed cooperation between government and citizens?" the Municipality of Nissewaard has organized a workshop gathering inhabitants, local organizations, institutional and non-institutional representatives and international delegates.



Morning workshop sessions

#### Own the city. Feel home and responsible

Within the format of the workshop, the working method adopted was that of the "the battle of the Absurd": a creative way to stimulate thought-provoking approaches and dismantle the fixed thinking patterns for producing new ideas.

The morning sessions explored the theme of "how to mobilise the neighbourhood's residents in becoming active players and city-makers of their own town".

In Dutch New Towns, the first-generation residents sometimes feel less connected and less involved in the daily life of the New Town than in 'regular' towns. Since they are not born in the New Town, first

generation residents are for instance more likely to identify themselves as Rotterdammer than as Spijkenisser. Next to that they came to live in

a planned town, where the government more or less took care of every aspect of life. Without an existing civil society, social and cultural networks had to be built from the ground.

How to encourage residents in the neighbourhood to become active players in the urban project, to engage themselves with the future of their neighbourhood and -on a bigger scale- of the town? How to make them feel at home? And to promote a sense of responsibility of the collective spaces in this age of individualization and digitalization? How to find out whether citizens are satisfied about the way the local government acts?

Divided in groups, participants were encouraged to make extreme, "absurd" proposals which could help to attract the attention, facilitate the interactions among neighbours and activate the participation. Among others, ideas included: *tear down something valuable (the school for instance), get drunk, occupy a parking lot and organize a summer camp!*

Those first strange ideas then were developed into rational and potential solutions taking into account their feasibility. And they became: create something valuable for the neighbourhood, start a local wine production to create and improve the identity of the neighbourhood and organise a week-long market with free food, with activities and amenities to make the summer time enjoyable for everybody and include open houses to improve contact between inhabitants, all giving priority to the reconquering of the public squares in the neighbourhoods, currently used as parking lots.

Commenting on the results of this animated co-production of ideas and proposals, architect Helena Casanova observed that shock can be a good way to initiate neighbourhood participation.

Physical interaction is an important factor to take into consideration when wanting to increase neighbourhood participation. It is an important way to connect. A whatsapp-group for participation (and not only to report vandalism) can improve the social network within a neighbourhood.

More importantly, the City should think and plan ahead instead of taking sudden interventions. The construction of a long-term vision highlighting what the city wants to become, and how the neighbourhood should improve, is a vital starting point. Within the farsighted framework, in order to keep inhabitants committed and involved, it is necessary to show fast results and concrete actions. Small steps and achievements are the key to create participation and make it valuable for the community.

The second round of questions focused on the success factors in organizing involvement of residents by turning the question around: what you should do to create an environment without involvement? Answers included making too many promises, use a lot of jargon, reduce accessibility to services and information, lack of facilities and unclear map of the city's services. Answers formulated from these first inputs then showed that

from a public point of view it is important to set priorities and make a plan before making promises. As already mentioned, start from small actions, this helps to gain trust and be clear on what kind of participation you are asking of the community. Create a team of ambassadors for more direct communication, to explain plans and avoid jargon. Make the public services information accessible 24/7. Give everybody the right to act but also be innovative in terms of services and public offer. In Milton Keynes they already have an “express service” where you have to pay extra (according to your income) to get faster attendance.

Another idea was to create the conditions to start a local economy at the neighbourhood level. This model would increase the way the community works together, by being encouraged to invest money in the neighbourhood. With a special attention to newcomers and new arrivals in the town, it would be also important to create a special department with a comprehensive knowledge of the public services, infrastructures and information about hospitality.

### The Unusual Suspects

The third workshop was centred around reaching the youth of Nissewaard and involving them in the policy process of the municipality. Dutch New Towns have been developed as suburban, residential towns and therefore struggle to tie their youngsters to the towns. At the same time, young people in general are often forgotten in the development of policies and plans.

Several parties were invited: JOZ (the foundation involved with youth in Nissewaard), the youth panel of the municipality and students of a high school in Spijkenisse. The Youth parliament, as the gathering was immediately called, enthusiastically defended their points of view and were pleased to discuss the challenges they are confronted with while representing the future of the town.

The discussion was built around a series of statements that obliged the youngsters to take a position and line up as supporter or opponent.

“I want to live in Spijkenisse for the rest of my life” has divided the group, showing a wide disagreement. Feeling unsafe and the lack of opportunities were listed as reasons why one should leave the town. Only a small

group indicated that they want to stay in Spijkenisse with the argument that the city is close to Rotterdam but provides a better environment to start a family. Reasons also included that “stay” is a form of loyalty towards the city where one grew up.

“There is nothing to do in Spijkenisse” found the disagreement of the majority of the group. Besides the presence of a lot of associations and activities, many have argued that people need to take responsibility by themselves in finding the services already in place. While some participants highlighted the need for more flexibility in terms offer and functions/amenities.

To the statement “Everywhere in Spijkenisse, I feel safe”, the majority of the group does not agree. What emerged is that more incidents had happened in places that used to be seen as safe spots. Interestingly, one of the participants argues that often the terms of safety and security are based on feelings instead of facts, leading to the following statement “There are enough police officers visible in my district” which is very much related to the individual experience.

The closing statement invited the youth to take on their future and look at themselves as the one responsible for the town “If I were to be in charge, I would do everything differently”.

While a large part of the group states that they are more than satisfied with their lives in Nissewaard/Spijkenisse, however, if they have to make a list, they would invest in safety and make the town more vibrant and richer in terms of opportunities. Being responsible means, as one of the youngsters explains, make sure that all the districts are treated the same way, same service offers and opportunities, and no longer difference between rich and poor neighbourhoods.



Afternoon working session – the Youth Parliament

## Conclusions

Spijkenisse is the typical product of the welfare state. The years 1960s and 1970s saw the creation of many amenities, youth and community centres, those emblematic places of the New Town where one could develop his own talent. Everybody was encouraged to be part of the city life by organizing their own activities (this concerned the youngsters of that time, for instance), says Michelle Provoost, INTI Executive Director.

As part of a cycle, the contemporary town has to reinvent its dialogue with the community again. The Lab has addressed what are the things that most alienate the people from the government, and one of the things on top of the list was "if you make a lot of promises and then you don't deliver" it will create disappointment, lack of trust and distance.

When the government makes a promise than expectations should be met emphasizes Michelle Provoost and the result of discontent can turn people into strangers and alienated, from the government in the first place, but also from democracy as a model.

The wistful wishes from the youth parliament were very clear and call for a reflection within the government itself: how will the city start to deliver on what has been brought up? The City can have big plans, but it is important to bring the community with you and start from the small real and sound steps which can produce changes.

What has emerged clearly during the two days, is the relevance of creating better connections between this generation of inhabitants and the city government of Spijkenisse and create more opportunities for everybody: the youngsters, the old pioneers arrived in the early years, the new arrivals, the expats and the varied diversity which makes the city again a laboratory of inclusion.

Femke Kaulingfreks, analyzing the debate with the youngsters, explains that what has become very clear is that there is not 'one thing' that 'the youth' wants. There are multiple views and ideas. She liked the fact that the youngsters want to develop themselves further and have a critical look on the present condition.

In order to feel safe and at home you need to feel connected. It is in our nature to want to be a part of something, says Carine van der Horst, project manager for the project *'Thuis in de Wijk'*. It is important to invest and make efforts to become part of a certain group. That is where reciprocity seems to be key. The citizen is both consumer as producer of the city and its future.

Concluding this inspiring two-day event in Spijkenisse, keywords for further thinking are focused on talent development, investment in training the skills of young people, keep engaging the whole spectrum of people, including minorities and a mix of different groups. Do not only offer solutions but make the citizens involved to come up with their own projects, creating the conditions for empowerment.

Motivation seems to be the most important key to success. But how do you motivate people? is the question from Magnus Rydevik, Vällingby City-district in the City of Stockholm.

In general, the delegations see the municipality of Nissewaard as do-ers, people who act and therefore produce innovation. 'When you are looking for citizens' participation, do not make promises you cannot keep and make sure you can achieve short and mid-term results. And do not forget the youth, they hold the future', was the closing remark of Marc Weerts, City manager & town clerk, Municipality of Nissewaard.

## Bibliography

- Publication: "Nieuwe steden in de Randstad" Rapport 2012, Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency (PBL)  
Link : <https://www.pbl.nl/publicaties/2012/nieuwe-steden-in-de-randstad>
- Text presentation by Raymond van der Sluis, Head of the urban management department, Municipality of Nissewaard, February 2019
- Publication "Wij zijn De Hoek, Wij(k)visie voor een Vitale, veilige en kindvriendelijke wijk", Municipality of Nissewaard and Housing corporation De Leeuw van Putten, July 2018.
- Publication "Wijkontwikkelingsplan Spijkenisse Zuidwest, Goed wonen, Samen leven en Jezelf ontwikkelen", former Municipality of Spijkenisse, May 2013
- An introduction to the New Town and her ambitions: "Lab#5: Nissewaard. Reshaping government-citizen relations" <http://www.newtowninstitute.org/spip.php?rubrique155>

## Appendix 1: >> New Town Lab Programme

### Day 1 - February 20 - Tour day

Introduction to Spijkenisse: development, context, challenges, residents

*11:00 - 13:00 Delegations are welcomed at metro station Spijkenisse-Centrum and brought to the hotel for check-in (only for early arrivals) and then to the public library "De Boekenberg" where all the group meet.*

*13:20 - 14:00 Lunch at the Boekenberg Library*

Meeting point: De Boekenberg Library, Markt 40, 3201 CZ Spijkenisse

*14:00 Welcome and introduction*

- Welcome by Igor Bal, alderman of the municipality of Nissewaard
- Opening by chairman Raymond van der Sluijs, head of the urban management department at Nissewaard municipality

*14:30 New Town Context*

New Towns in the Netherlands by Michelle Provoost, director INTI

*14:45 Film presentation*

Short film of Nissewaard and its inhabitants with the Filmmaker Marit Geluk

*15:00 - 18:00 Tours*

- Tour of the library with the director Victor Thissen
- Walking tour in the old village by Raymond van der Sluijs
- The tour of Spijkenisse by bus

*18:30 Drinks & bites at windmill Nooitgedacht*

*18:45 Recent developments: De Elementen by Klaas Boonstra, urban designer at Nissewaard municipality*

*20:00 Dinner at apartment tower Rokade by the Oude Maas*

*22:00 Return to the hotel*



**Day 2 - February 21 - Seminar day**

With international representatives, local professionals, national experts and residents

07:00 Breakfast at the hotel

08:30 Breakfast at the hotel Walk or e-shuttle ride (upon request) to the elementary school De Vuurvogel in De Hoek neighbourhood

09:05 Opening of the seminar day by chairman, town clerk Marc Weerts

09:15 Workshop 1: De Hoek Neighbourhood development

with the participation of the experts:

- Maarten de Booij, CEO, housing association De Leeuw van Putten
- Helena Casanova, architect, urban designer and landscape architect, Casanova + Hernandez
- Elisabeth Boersma, architect and urban strategist, planB

10:45 Guided walking tour

Group 1 guided by Albert Meijer, urban designer involved in the development of Spijkenisse in the 1980s

Group 2 guided by residents of De Hoek

11:30 Workshop 2: Sense of place and involvement with neighbourhood and town

with the participation of the experts:

- Carien van der Horst, programme manager social development, Nissewaard municipality

13:00 Lunch at neighbourhood centre De Hoek

13:45 Departure for town hall Nissewaard

14:00 Workshop 3: Understanding youngster as unusual suspects

with the participation of the experts:

- Femke Kaulingfreks, political philosopher, anthropologist, pedagogue and lecturer at InHolland university of applied sciences

15:30 Coffee break

15:45 Conclusions by Marc Weerts

16:30 Drinks and bites

Short free time in the town centre

Delegates are invited to meet at the harbour at 17:45 for the boat tour.

18:00 Boat tour of Rotterdam and the port of Rotterdam

Dinner is included

22:00 Return to the hotel

**Day 3 - February 22**

Evaluation of the New Towns Arrival Cities project

07:00 Breakfast at the hotel

08:30 Departure for Nissewaard town hall

08:45 Evaluation of New Town, Arrival Cities project

11:30 Light lunch at town hall Nissewaard

12:30 Departure of the delegations

## Appendix 2: >> Speakers' biographies



### **Michelle Provoost** (Director of the International New Town Institute)

Dr. Michelle Provoost is an architectural historian specialised in urban planning history, postwar architecture and contemporary urban development. She co-founded the office of Crimson Architectural Historians in 1994, and has been the Director of the International New Town Institute (INTI) in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, since 2008. Under her direction, INTI has grown into an internationally known center for education and research relating to New Towns.

Dr. Provoost is the head editor of the INTI publications. She teaches at various universities in the Netherlands and abroad and continues to be in great demand as a public speaker. She lectures regularly throughout Europe, Asia, Africa and the United States, and has been involved in many municipal, national and private committees and juries.



### **Raymond van der Sluijs**, head of the urban management department, Municipality of Nissewaard

Raymond van der Sluijs is an Experienced Head Of Department (urban management) with a demonstrated history of working in the government. Skilled in Public Sector, Management, Leadership, Economic Geography, Government, and Governance. Strong operations professional with a double academic background. He tries to connect human geography with challenging issues within the local government.



### **Marc Weerts** City manager & town clerk, Municipality of Nissewaard

Marc has a legal background and an origin as an attorney at law with a law firm in Rotterdam. Since 2002 he became affiliated with local government and had several jobs within the municipality of Spijkenisse and later Nissewaard. He started as legal adviser and later on switched to management positions at the legal department and the policy department. As such he has attended earlier meetings of the former European New Town Network. He has developed a special interest in local government and in particular for Nissewaard with its interesting physical and social structures as a new town. As a manager Marc was involved in the merger of the municipalities of Bernisse and Spijkenisse into the new Nissewaard. The last four years Marc served as City manager/ town clerk at Nissewaard. The relevance of the greater Rotterdam area for Nissewaard is as elementary as it is extensive. Therefore as chairman Marc presides the

gathering of the 15 city managers of the greater Rotterdam Area since 2017.

### **Helena Casanova**, architect, urban planner and landscape architect

Helena is Spanish. Since the year 2000 she is registered as an architect at the Dutch Architects Register. She is also a member of the Spanish Association of Landscape Architects (AEP). In 2001 she founded, together with Jesus Hernandez, Casanova + Hernandez architects, urban planners and landscape architects. The Agency has been awarded in several international competitions. In 2018 she has been guest professor at the University of Navarra, Spain. She has also been a guest at educational institutions such as the Berlage Institute, TU Delft, Lebanese American University, Chalmers School of Architecture at Gothenburg, Architecture University in Shenzhen.

She was co-founder and board member of the new European NL organization.



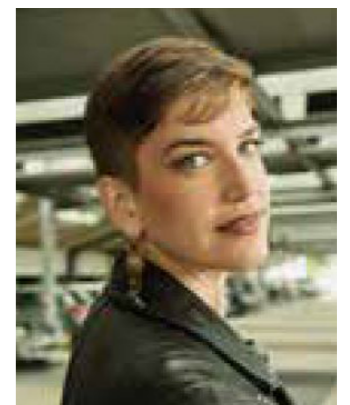
### **Carine van der Horst**, "Thuis in de Wijk" Programme manager

Drs. Carine van der Horst, MCA is an experienced change manager specialized in issues within the local government. As a child she herself grew up in a New Town, namely Nieuwegein. After her History studies she worked as an organizational consultant within the municipality of Utrecht on metropolitan issues. Today she is working as a program manager of the project "Thuis in de Wijk" (Home in the Neighborhood) for the municipality of Nissewaard.



### **Femke Kaulingfreks**, researcher

Femke Kaulingfreks has been a lecturer in Youth and Society at the knowledge center "De Gezonde Samenleving" since March 2018. In her research work she addresses complex social issues concerning the relation youth, education and employment, being the empowerment of the youngsters a central topic of her investigation. In her study it is outlined how informal and professional assistance can come together and reinforce each other. This results in reports and methodological advices for professionals on both sectors: youth and education.





**Maarten de Booi**, CEO of De Leeuw van Putten

Maarten is CEO of De Leeuw van Putten, a housing association that manages around 4000 homes, shops, business spaces and social real estate in Spijkenisse. De Leeuw van Putten is primarily a social housing association. Maarten works in order to create networks and alliances with local stakeholder as an essential part of a modern social housing model.



# International delegates involved

## Aarhus Municipality, DK

Sara Allermann Kruse, *Consultant, works with the transformation of the Gellerup/Toveshøj area in Aarhus*  
 Gitte Brødsgaard Vesti, *Head of Office, Integration and Urban Development, Mayors Department, City of Aarhus*  
 Cecilie Hørlyck, *Aarhus Kommune*  
 Nadja Juul Christiansen, *Consultant*  
 Pia Katballe, *Aarhus Kommune*  
 Trine Kyed Jansen, *Aarhus Kommune*  
 Anne Marie Larsen, *Chief consultant, Integration and Urban Development, Mayors Department, City of Aarhus*  
 Anders Leth Nielsen, *Special consultant, works with integration and social policy in disadvantaged areas in Aarhus*  
 Andrea Usbeck, *Consultant*

## Aarhus School of Architecture, DK

Niels Albertsen, *Professor emeritus at the Aarhus School of Architecture*  
 Birgitte Geert Jensen, *Associate professor, with a special research interest in participation processes, social innovation*  
 Tom Nielsen, *Professor, cand.arch., PhD, with special research interest in the Comings and Goings theme and the transformation of New Towns*  
 Karen Olesen, *Associate professor and teaching coordinator, with a special research interest in late modern architecture and the new towns*

## Community Action, UK

Clare Walton, *Community Action:MK*

## David Lock Associates, UK

Will Cousins, *Design Director, David Lock Associates*

## De Leeuw van Putten, NL

Robert Geertsma, *Policy advisor housing association De Leeuw van Putten*

## Grand Paris Sud, FR

Ziraute Bouhennicha, *Chef de projets PV Territoire Seine-Essonne*  
 Catherine Dupraz, *Director of the culture department*  
 Elodie Gilabert, *Project Manager City Policy for the Evry Territory*  
 Céine Hallier, *directrice adjointe de cabinet à Grand Paris Sud, en charge des questions culturelles*  
 Laurence Hequet, *Community Councilor of Greater Paris South responsible for solidarities*  
 Kinga Kotras, *European Programmes at GPS*

## International New Town Institute, NL

Sonia Kruskovic, *Manager of Innovation Managerial*  
 Virginie Lacour, *project manager about cultural heritage*  
 Eric Mulot Radojic, *Project Manager at the Development Council*  
 Dorothée Nevil, *International and European relations*  
 Perrine Passot, *Director of Urban Renewal*  
 Laurence Paulet-Colas, *Director of City Policy and Social Cohesion*  
 Clélia Pires, *Responsible for Education at GPS*  
 Sandrine Risser, *in charge of territorial marketing*  
 Raphaëlle Samba-Fouani, *Urban renewal project manager at GPS*  
 Marie Soubirou, *Urban renewal project manager at GPS*

Marit Geluk, *Video-maker*  
 Isabel Kooj, *INTI Intern Communication*  
 Stefanie Korrel, *INTI intern*  
 Isabel Potworowski, *NTAC Communication manager*  
 Michelle Provoost, *NTAC Project supervisor*  
 Viviana Rubbo, *NTAC Project coordinator*

## KTH Royal Institute of Technology - School of Architecture, SE

Jennifer Mack, *PhD, architect, anthropologist and researcher KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm*  
 Helena Mattsson, *Professor in History and Theory and Head of Department at KTH School of Architecture*  
 Meike Schalk, *Associate Professor and Director of Research, expert on citizen participation*  
 Erik Sigge, *Architectural historian and researcher, PhD, KTH School of Architecture*  
 Erik Stenberg, *Associate Professor, KTH School of Architecture. Assistant Director of KTH Center for a Sustainable Built Environment. Project leader, Grön BoStad Stockholm*

## Milton Keynes Council, UK

Lallie Davis, *Arts and Heritage Alliance*  
 Shane Downer, *Heritage Officer*  
 Fiona Robinson, *MK Futures 2050 Programme Manager*  
 Neil Sainsbury, *Head of Placemaking*  
 Julie Ward, *Development Officer*

Adam Sciberras, *Development Surveyor*

## MK Development Partnership, UK

Simon Wright, *Head of Public Engagement*

## MK Gallery, UK

Julie Dawes, *Events and Community Engagement Manager*

## MK Parks Trust, UK

<b>Nissewaard Municipality, NL</b>	<p>Igor Bal, <i>Alderman spatial development, sustainability, transport and work and incomes</i></p> <p>Ingrid Blokland, <i>Neighbourhood development manager</i></p> <p>Marieke Boerma, <i>advisor spatial development</i></p> <p>Anne de Jong, <i>advisor incomes, participation and integration</i></p> <p>Sander Deijl, <i>NTAC Project Manager</i></p> <p>Misko Papac, <i>Team leader</i></p> <p>Nick Tameris, <i>Department wellbeing and society (samenleving)</i></p> <p>Victor Thissen, <i>Director (local) library</i></p> <p>Raymond van der Sluijs, <i>Head of urban management</i></p>
<b>Sabaudia Municipality, IT</b>	<p>Federico De Angelis, <i>Urban planning department</i></p> <p>Claudio Leone, <i>Head of Sector VIII AA.PP. - S.U.A.P. - Europa Desk</i></p> <p>Mara Palombi, <i>City of Sabaudia</i></p> <p>Riccardo Pedini, <i>Urban planning department</i></p> <p>Maurizio Zomparelli, <i>Referent for the New Towns, Arrival Cities project, Municipality of Sabaudia</i></p>
<b>Stokholm Municipality, SE</b>	<p>Petronella Mill, <i>Masters in Architecture at ETH in Zurich</i></p>
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# Organisations involved

Milton Keynes Council  
 Milton Keynes Discovery Centre  
 Milton Keynes Islamic Arts and Culture Organization (MKIAC)  
 Global Outreach Foundation (GOF:MK)  
 MK Gallery  
 MK Academy  
 Your:MK  
 MK Arts and Heritage Alliance

University of Padua  
 Municipality of Sabaudia  
 Gurdwara Sikh Centre in Sabaudia  
 Amici di Bella Farnia Association  
 Circeo National Park  
 Local public High school "G. Marconi"

Municipality of Grand Paris Sud  
 Université d'Evry Val d'Essonne  
 Espace Prévert Cultural Space  
 L'Empreinte  
 Apese Haiti Cultural Association  
 La Maison des Sports des Pyramides  
 FIA - Femmes Inter Associations Inter Service Migrants  
 Génération Femmes  
 Génération 2  
 Association la voix des jeunes  
 Conseil Citoyens du centre-ville de Savigny-le-Temple

School of Architecture, KTH Royal Institute of Technology  
 Municipality of Vällingby  
 Folkets Hus  
 Uppsala University  
 "Al-Madhafah: The Living Room"  
 SHIS Bostäder  
 Brommapojkarna (Youth Football Club)  
 Systrar rönt hornet (Sister around the corner)  
 Svenska Bostäder  
 Stockholm City Museum

Nissewaard Council  
 Public library "De Boekenberg"  
 Housing association De Leeuw van Putten  
 Elementary school De Vuurvogel  
 Residents of De Hoek neighbourhood

Aarhus School of Architecture  
 Municipality of Aarhus

# Partners



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