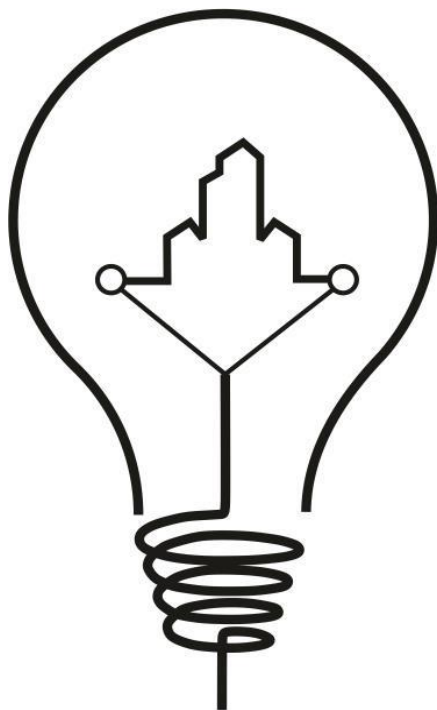


URBAN THINKING FESTIVAL 2018

1st Edition: Smart Planning for Cultural Heritage



Urban Thinking Festival

Brașov, Romania

25th of August - 1st of September 2018

URBAN THINKING FESTIVAL 2018 OVERVIEW

The **Urban Thinking Festival** has taken place between the 25th of August and the 1st of September 2018, in the city of **Brașov** in Romania – a former medieval city of Transylvania and one of the country's most important economic centres, now facing multiple challenges related to its economic development, metropolitan growth and the necessity to conserve its significant cultural heritage.

The general program of the Urban Thinking Festival included:

- A one-day study visit in the historical centre of Brașov, coordinated by local guides (architects, historians) – the 26th of August 2018;
- 5 working days (Summer School component), each coordinated by 1-2 international experts in different fields related to urban planning and cultural heritage: 1) Public Spaces (Dhiru THADANI – 27th of August 2018), 2) Urban Regeneration and Architectural Conservation (Valentina GIANFRATE & Giovanni GINOCCHINI – 28th of August 2018), 3) Cultural heritage & Smart Cities (Roland van der HEIJDEN & Manfred SCHRENK – 29th of August 2018), 4) Sustainable development (Izabela MIRONOWICZ) & Urban Governance (Pietro ELISEI) – 30th of August 2018 and 5) The final day dedicated to the final presentations of the proposed Planning Strategic Concepts, to be held in the Brașov City Hall.
- Each working day was followed by informal, public events meant to encourage professional debates around the different challenges raised by the conservation and capitalization of cultural heritage: round-tables, public screenings of documentaries related to cultural heritage and additional study visits.



Day 1 – Saturday, the 25th of August: Getting to know each other

Opening event: The organizing team and the participants met at [Hub OneZero](#) at 17:30 for an informal gathering, where they have presented themselves and their backgrounds. The evening continued with discussions about general issues concerning urban planning in Romania and abroad.

Day 2 – Sunday, the 26th of August: Getting to know the city

9.00 – 10.00: The participants met in “Nicolae Titulescu” Park, where representatives of the organizing team (Pietro ELISEI and Matei COCHECI) held a general presentation about the Urban Thinking Festival.

10.00– 13.00: Everybody was part of an interesting tour of the medieval parts of Braşov, guided by Răzvan DRACEA (president of Chamber of Architects – local branch Braşov-Covasna-Harghita). The participants had a general picture of the 3 main study areas (old city centre, the citadel and Schei neighbourhood), starting from the historical evolution to the nowadays’ problems and challenges of each area.

13.00– 14.00: Lunch break

14.00 – 15.30: Continuing the visit in Schei Neighbourhood

15.30 – 17.30: Going up on Tâmpa mountain for a beautiful sight of Braşov city

17.30 - onwards: free time



Day 3 – Monday, the 27th of August: Public spaces and Cultural Heritage

9.00 – 10.00: Lecture 1: Public spaces held by international expert Dhiru THADANI, followed by questions from the public

10.00 – 13.00: Workshop 1: Public spaces (coordinated by Dhiru THADANI, Pietro ELISEI and Sabina LEOPA): team formation and getting insights into the study areas: mapping existing public spaces and institutions, tracing connections between different areas and outlining possible areas of intervention; team work has been closely followed and supported by Dhiru THADANI and the members of the organizing team

13.00 – 14.00: lunch break

14.00 – 15.30: first round of presentations consisting in the diagnosis and a first draft of scenarios; each team presented both strengths and weaknesses of the pre-set areas and came up with some

possible development scenarios; all teams received feedback (questions and suggestions) from Dhiru THADANI and the organizers.



15.30 – 17.30: free time

17.30 – 19.30: Round table 1: Public spaces and urban regeneration in Romanian cities, moderated by Pietro ELISEI (Director of Urbasofia)

Guests: Dhiru THADANI (UTF international expert), Șerban ȚIGĂNAȘ (Secretary General – International Union of Architects), Raluca BACO (Urban Planning Department – Municipality of Brașov), Cătălin FRANGULEA-PASTOR (Brașov Metropolitan Agency), Matei COCHECI (Vice-president – APUR)

As the moderator of the Round table, Pietro ELISEI launched questions regarding how can we deal with innovation, what are the key elements a planner should consider in designing or regenerating spaces, what is a good process of shaping a public space or how can cultural heritage become a driver?

Among the panellists' answers, the following aspects have been pointed out: the importance of social media in the participatory process and in informing the public opinion on certain issues. The key issues when designing a place were considered the character of a place, where you design a place, what do you want to change of it, architecture and TIME – flexibility as well. Overall, a place should be inclusive. Regeneration is rethinking in order to include all the actors.

Șerban ȚIGĂNAȘ introduced a very interesting syntagma: find the right balance between USE and ABUSE.

After two hours of debate between participants, the takeaways of the round table were as follows:

- Dhiru THADANI: „To be an urban planner you have to love people.”
- Șerban ȚIGĂNAȘ: „You don't need to be a planner to love people. You can also be a mayor or a public servant.”
- Cătălin FRANGULEA-PASTOR: „good, attractive, creative, innovative spaces”
- Raluca BACO: „Rethink public space as a kaleidoscope of private moments.”
- Matei COCHECI: „Planning is more about the journey than the destination.”

- Sabina LEOPA: „There is no destination. We should forget the destination. A city should be happy.”

20.00 onwards: free time

Day 4 - Tuesday, the 28th of August: Urban regeneration & Architectural conservation

9.00 –10.00: Lecture 2 – Architectural conservation & Urban Regeneration held by international experts Valentina GIANFRATE and Giovanni GINOCCHINI, followed by questions from the public

10.00 – 13.00: Workshop 2 – Urban regeneration (coordinated by Valentina GIANFRATE, Giovanni GINOCCHINI, Șerban ȚIGĂNAȘ, Pietro ELISEI and Sabina LEOPA)

Each team started with a brainstorming session concerning suitable solutions for urban regeneration on each site, together with the experts. For all the cases, solutions had to focus on the needs of the people, by integrating the interests of both residents and tourists. Furthermore, each team had to think of *soft* and *hard* interventions in matter of time and resources, and of the stakeholders involved in the process of development as well.

13.00 – 14.00: lunch break

14.00 – 15.30: Second round of presentations: each team presented to the experts the loops which resulted after combining places (particular sites from the study areas), interventions, the actors/ people involved and resources (framework of implementation)



15.30 – 17.30: free time

17.30 – 19.30: site visit: Coresi business park

All the participants attended a thematic visit guided by one of the co-founders of the newly formed Business Park Coresi, including office buildings, retail and residential areas. They found out information regarding the former buildings of Tractorul factory and observed the ongoing process of regeneration of some of them. The visit was relevant especially for the qualitative and quantitative

information which were presented, and for a better understanding of how the functions of a big business park (150 ha) should be correlated and integrated as well.

19.30: Video projection: Documentary – Industrial Heritage: [Planeta Petrita](#) (Petrila Planet)



Day 5 – Wednesday, the 29th of August: Cultural heritage and Smart Cities

9.00 –10.00: Lecture 3 - Cultural Heritage & Smart Cities held by international expert Roland van der HEIJDEN, followed by questions from the public

10.00 –13.00: Workshop 3 – Digital solutions held by international expert Manfred SCHRENK

After the presentation of Roland on the digital city of Rotterdam, participants understood that digital tools should facilitate the contemporary way of linking people to spaces. Therefore, together with the international expert Manfred SCHRENK, the teams started thinking about possible ways in which technology could become part of the community in the medieval city.

13.00 –14.00: lunch break

14.00– 15.30: Third round of presentations: it seemed that technology helped the teams developing proper concepts for the studied areas, and all of them managed to find smart ways (applications, digital hubs, smart public transport) of linking people to places.

15.30– 17.30: free time

17.30 – 19.30: Round table 2: Romanian Cultural Heritage in the Digital Era, moderated by Sabina LEOPA (Manager of EU projects, Urbasofia)

Guests: Roland van der HEIJDEN (UTF International expert), Manfred SCHRENK (UTF International expert), Pietro ELISEI (UTF International expert), Ionuț ȚAȚA (ALT Brașov cluster), Sorin POP (INDECO Soft), Oana RUJAN (ARIES Transylvania cluster)

During the second-round table, Sabina highlighted the importance of cultural heritage as one of the most important strategic resources for sustainable development and economic wealth in European cities. The question for the public was how can cultural heritage be valorized and maintained through new technologies and which are the perspectives? To this, the guests reminded the importance of visual effects on historic buildings (see Festival Amural Vizual, taking place in Braşov), applications used for orienting and getting informed in the city and for experiencing different areas, and also ways of improving the quality of life in the old city by monitoring different processes.

In what concerns the integration of needs for both custodians and users, some of the guests came up with examples of ongoing successful collaborations (Rotterdam digital city and ARIES Transylvania cluster), while others pointed out the importance of enhancing PPPP (private-public-people partnerships).

19.30 onwards: free time



Day 6 – Thursday, the 30th of August: Sustainable Development and Urban Governance

9.00 –10.00: Lecture 4 – Urban Governance, held by international expert Pietro ELISEI, followed by questions from the public

10.00 – 12.00: Workshop 4 – Governance arrangements held by international expert Pietro ELISEI

Teams started working in a more structured manner on the framework for planning, including visions, policies and objectives in their proposals, while being assisted by international experts and the organizing team in this process.

12.00 –13.00: Lecture 5: European Heritage of Cities & Sustainable Development, held by international expert Izabela MIRONOWICZ

13.00 –14.00: lunch break

14.00 – 16.30: Workshop 5 – Sustainable development

After the last presentation, teams started analysing the heritage from a different perspective, and understood that the historic buildings' value consists in more than their age. Therefore, they started to find solutions for adding value to the existing heritage, by contemporary approaches/uses of the buildings/places.

16.30 – 17.30: break

17.30 – 19.30: Workshop – putting the pieces together

The last workshop was assisted by the organizing team and consisted in working at the final presentations for the municipality. Each team had to review the lessons learned during the week and to select and combine different knowledge inputs, to find the best solutions for the medieval areas of Braşov.



Day 7 – Friday, the 31st of August: Final presentations

9.00 – 12.00: Workshop – Finalizing the presentations

Each team had to present its work and the slides prepared in front of the organizing team to achieve a focused and coherent proposal and to ensure coordination of the results and outputs.

12.00- – 14.00: Final presentation

The final presentations took place at Braşov City Hall, in the Council Hall, in front of representatives of the Municipality, including the Mayor, George SCRIPCARU, the Vice-Mayor Barabaş LASZLO and the secretary Adriana GORAN and several journalists from the local media. Members of the

organizing team and invited experts were also present. Presentations were preceded by a general introduction done by members of the organizing team (Sabina LEOPA, Gabriel PASCARIU, Pietro ELISEI) about the event and its objectives, about participants, results and expected outcomes. A short session of Q&A for the media and representatives of the municipality (Bogdan MICU), followed the introductory moment. The presentations of the 3 teams, that followed were well appreciated by the audience and were followed by a ceremonial moment during which participants received a Certificate of Attendance as well as the international experts. At the end of the presentations and final comments all the participants were invited to take part at the last round table planned to take place during the evening at the County Library.



14.30 – 17.30: break

17.30 – 19.30: Round table 3: Smart Planning for Cultural Heritage in Braşov – towards a manifesto, moderated by Irina FLOREA-SAGHIN (ISOCARP); location: Reading Room of the Braşov County Library.

Guests: Izabela MIRONOWICZ (UTF international expert), Gabriel PASCARIU (APUR president), Pietro ELISEI (Urbasofia Director), Ştefan BÂLICI (National Institute for Heritage director), KOLLO Miklos (Chamber of Architects – local branch), Silvia DEMETER LOWE (Chamber of Architects – local branch), Bogdan MICU (representative from Braşov City Hall)

Firstly, the three teams were asked to briefly present their findings in front of the guests. After that, the moderator asked some of the panellists – those who were actively involved during the festival - whether their expectations were fulfilled and to what extent. The answers showed appreciation: Izabela MIRONOWICZ pointed out the fact that she found the participants as being very serious and responsible for their areas, and that she would have expected *crazier* solutions, while Pietro ELISEI was very pleased with the results, considering the short amount of time. As part of the organizing team, Gabriel PASCARIU was pleased with the overall organization of the festival and about the content as well, but he underlined that the outcome of the event is still to be evaluated and there are still expectations to be fulfilled, dissemination of the results being one major issue for the near future. The guests were also asked to provide a short feedback on the projects. Most of them were pleased with the findings, while some brought into discussion some of the most imperative problems of Braşov, with an emphasis on transport and urban pollution, related to the cultural heritage; furthermore, there was a discussion on the relation of Braşov citizens with the historical city centre. These are part of the issues which didn't seem to have been solved through the proposed scenarios. Lastly, each guest came up with different perspectives on the challenges of Braşov. In the end the moderator posed the issue of UTF as a manifesto, and the guests were invited to imagine the evolution of this first edition into a big manifesto towards high quality urban thinking („pensiero urbanistico”), as it was originally envisaged. There have been various opinions in this respect, most of them stressing the need to open a large and continuous dialogue about „the city” in general as a matter of general concern for local communities and not only for the authorities and professionals.

A collection of relevant pictures from the 1st edition of the Urban Thinking Festival is available here:

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/AaSvVNTLy7xP2hNN6>

Press releases and articles:

<https://www.igloo.ro/urban-thinking-festival-25-august-1-septembrie/>

<http://www.bzb.ro/stire/festival-de-reflectie-urbana-la-brasov-30-de-specialisti-in-urbanism-vor-regandi-orasul-a128576>

<http://www.bizbrasov.ro/2018/08/24/planificare-spatiala-inteligenta-pentru-cladirile-de-patrimoniu-ale-brasovului-specialistii-urbanism-vor-prezenta-solutii-pentru-efectuarea-unor-interventii/>

http://www.monitorulexpres.ro/?mod=monitorulexpres&p=actualitate&s_id=184726&Primul-Festival-de-„Reflexie-urbana“-din-Romania-Proiectele-tinerilor-urbanisti-pentru-zonele-turistice-ale-Brasovului

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