



Youth are a key stakeholder in shaping the (re)development of the urban futures envisioned at the World Urban Forum 6.

THE CREATIVE ROOM, 28 September 2012

Successful youth engagement methodology for the urban planning process in Romania opens up the dialogue on international prospects regarding the role of youth for the urban future at the World Urban Forum 6, Naples, Italy.

Over 60 participants representing youth leaders, youth organizations, international urban think-tanks and intergovernmental organizations attended the networking event “**Youth Engagement for Sustainable Urban Planning: Tools and Prospects**” organized by **Odaia Creativă / The Creative Room (Romania)** within the sixth edition of UN-Habitat’s World Urban Forum, Naples (Italy), 1st - 7th September 2012.

The event presented powerful tools and strategies for engaging young people in urban planning processes.

“Youth are one of the largest demographic and most vulnerable groups in the world, and it is crucial that their engagement in shaping the urban future is taken from the level of inquiry and rhetoric to practice”, Dr. Joan Clos, Director UN-Habitat, declared at the launch of State of the Urban Youth Report 2012-2013.

Building on the experience of the international panel of experts, three tactics of engaging both youth and local communities, as well as local and national authorities were showcased, focusing on the context of Central and Eastern Europe.

At a grassroots level, **Odaia Creativă /The Creative Room** presented the “Habitat” methodology, which synthesized in a **board game** the conundrums of the urban legislation that define the urban planning of Bucharest (RO) and further advance the debate on other factors that contribute to the sustainable and prosperous development of a city. An appealing way for youth to get immersed in the local urban debates, Habitat enabled urban enthusiasts or mere game lovers to explore linkages, economic dilemmas and hazards which characterize any urban realm.

The **reSITE Festival (Cz)** curated a **high-level dialogue on current global urban practices** and raised bold questions and identified strong opportunities on the state of design and development practices for the city of Prague. **Kallipolis**, a dynamic urban design organization presented “People versus Borders” – an **environmental and urban regeneration project** of the Dobrinja area (Sarajevo) which brought changes not only in the local landscape, but in the crucial interaction of authorities with communities.

As Ms. Anamaria Vrabie, chairwoman of the panel declared, *“every urban context has its specific challenges, that sometimes pertain to the local and regional context, but are always subject to global events. One common element that emerged from the discussion was that action is imperative. Its first phase might take shape of a board game, a festival or an urban design project. But for each of the constituents of the projects it is a vital manner of engagement. The next phases rely on a corroboration of factors, which include the capacity for implementation of local and national governments.”*

Designed as an interactive workshop, “Youth Engagement for Sustainable Urban Planning: Tools and Prospects” included a **panel discussion**, a structured **Q&A session** and a **simulation**, using the five main themes tackled

by the Habitat methodology : **urban economic vitality, the built environment** – the institutional and regulatory framework for planning, **city cultural vitality, local community and urban planning** and **stakeholders in urban development**: the local authorities, the political power, civil society, investors.

Participants acknowledged the need to go beyond policy recommendations and welcomed the interactive format of the workshop organized by Odaia Creativă / The Creative Room Association. Further recommendations include that more inclusive, multi-level and multi-actor governance initiatives should have a voice within the World Urban Forum.

Pictures from the forum available [here](#)

About Odaia Creativă / The Creative Room

Odaia Creativă / The Creative Room is a non-governmental organisation based in Bucharest, Romania. We use a mix of research, visual tools and new media to increase understanding of urban and regional development processes in Central and Eastern Europe for local communities and national/local authorities.

About the World Urban Forum

Organized every two years, the Forum is one of the most open and noteworthy international gatherings focused on the process of urbanization and its impact on communities, cities, economies, climate change and policies.

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In the framework of the *World Urban Forum 6* organized by UN-Habitat

Partners: Kallipolis (IT), ReSite (CZ)

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