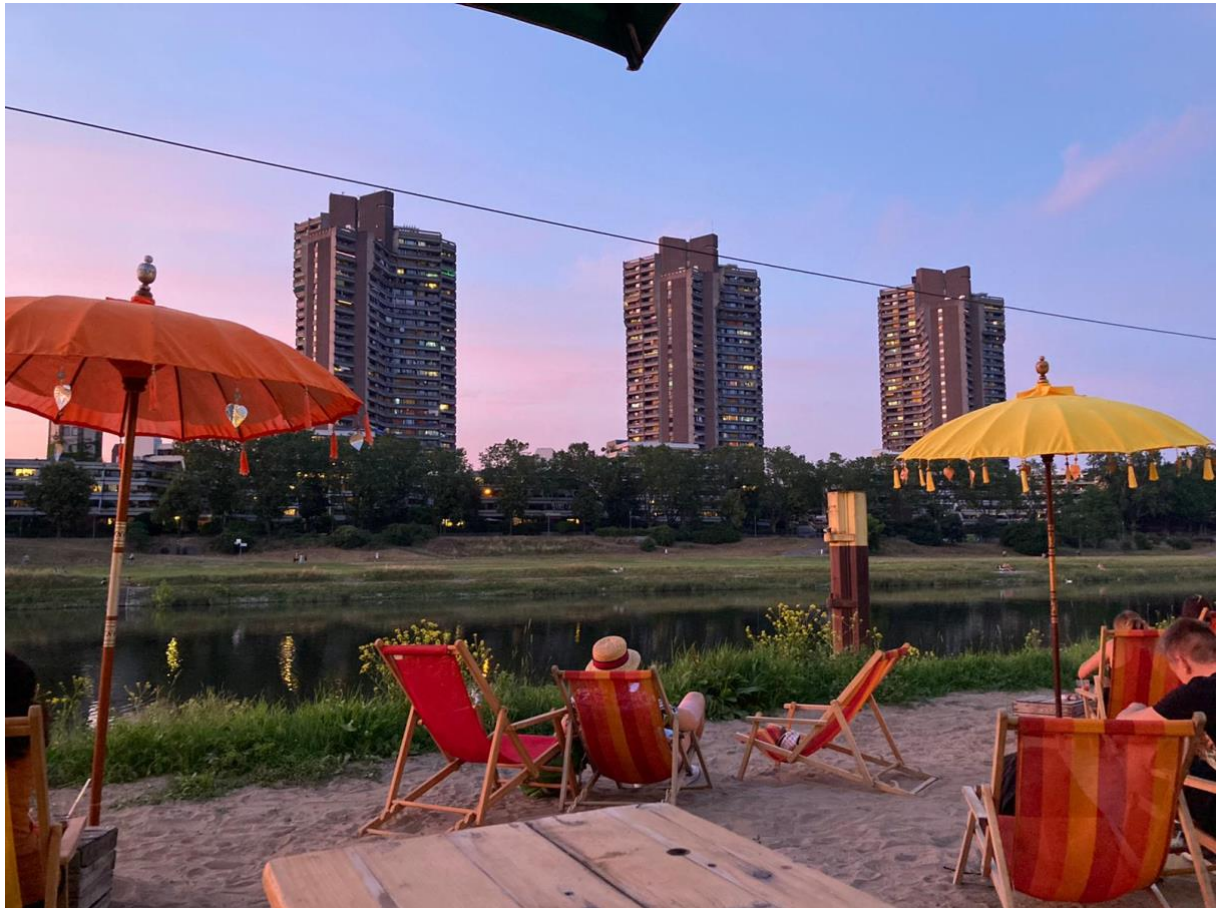# Between working class and creative city:
culture-led urban development in Mannheim

Master thesis
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Abstract

One notices a significant trend and attitude: cities have to be creative and want to be creative. A suitable strategy seems to focus on the cultural and creative industries as a resource for the cities' regeneration process and development. The powerful influence of culture and creativity cannot be denied; they make life in the cities more enjoyable and illustrate a high value for society. With rising popularity, there is also an increasing number of opponents who caution from the risk of the creative cities' hype in the discourse of urban development, like gentrification. However, the academic literature and research mainly focuses on popular cities and metropoles, whereas small to medium-sized creative cities are underrepresented. In order to give voice to cities outside of the spotlight, the research was built on the case of the German city of Mannheim, a post-industrial medium-sized city, which holds the title UNESCO's Creative City of Music since 2014. Enqueueing in contemporary discourse, this research explores the extent to which creative and cultural industries influence urban development in Mannheim and cultural policy's role within the process. The research draws on a qualitative strategy based on semi-structured interviews with a diverse set of voices of Mannheim's cultural and creative industries and the municipality as well as secondary data. The findings have demonstrated that the cultural and creative sectors play an essential role in Mannheim's urban development, particularly as part of the district regeneration of areas that are structurally weak. Furthermore, the interviews have emphasized the importance of urban society's participation and integration within the development processes and how placemaking and the provision of open areas for cultural activities present facilitating approaches for this aspiration.

Keywords
culture-led urban development, creative city, creative cluster, gentrification, sustainability

Acknowledgements

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1. Introduction

The concept of the creative city is an answer to the structural flux of former industrial cities towards a more knowledge-based society. Many cities that once had a flourishing industry were thrown into a crisis after "heavy production left" (D' Ovidio, 2016, p. 3). This challenged the economic situation because the cities' identity was shattered and, consequently, had to be rebuilt. A suitable strategy seemed emphasizing the cultural and creative industries as a resource for the regeneration process and the development of the cities. Today, the idea of a creative city has transformed into a mission statement. In terms of urban development, a significant trend and attitude have emerged: cities have to be creative and want to be creative. In fact, "cultural form of regeneration and the cultivation of creative industries are now common elements" (Breitbart, 2013, p. 3) of urban development. The creative city, a concept that was made particularly popular by Richard Florida and Charles Landry in the early 2000's, presents the ultimate goal for many urban governments. The powerful influence of culture and creativity cannot be denied; they make life in the cities more enjoyable and have a high value for society. The research is relevant because it delineates "how culture-infused economic opportunities are being understood and incorporated into planning" (Breitbart, 2013, p. 3). Nevertheless, with the rising popularity of the creative city concept, an increasing number of opponents have emerged who underline the risk of creative cities' hype. They criticize possible negative consequences such as gentrification, homogenization and a potential loss of identity.

However, the academic literature and research mainly focus on popular cities and metropoles, such as Sydney, London or New York, whereas small to medium-sized creative cities are underrepresented. "In particular, there is relatively little known about the process of small-city development" (Richards & Duif, 2018, p. 5). In order to give voice to cities outside of the spotlight, the research was built on the case study about the German city of Mannheim, which illustrates a significant development into a UNESCO's Creative City of Music in 2014. Mannheim's cultural and creative landscape experienced rapid progress in the last two decades but still has many goals ahead. The city was once popular for being an imperial residency. However, by the 19th century, Mannheim was considered an important industrial city. For decades, the city hosted production firms that drew guest workers, mainly from Italy and Turkey, contributing to the diverse city Mannheim is today. However, in the late 20th century, many firms moved away or shut down - the industrial boom was over, and the municipality Mannheim had to rethink the city's purpose. Since the city is already in possession of two big cultural institutions, the renowned national theatre and the museum Kunsthalle, the cultural sector offers a meaningful base to build on urban development. "Mannheim's approach to

sustainable development through culture transcends genre, orchestrating parts from all sectors and fields" (City of Mannheim, 2018). Consequently, Mannheim has acknowledged the opportunities for its urban, societal, economic and sustainable development that lies within its creative and cultural landscape.

Enqueuing in the modern discourse about creative cities, this thesis aims to explore the relationship of the cultural and creative sectors and urban development in Mannheim, regarding the following research question**: To what extent do creative and cultural industries influence urban development in the German city Mannheim, and what is cultural policy's role in that process?** Additionally, the two sub-questions of the **potential risks and dangers of described urban development** and **the sustainability of culture-led urban development strategies** will be covered**.**

To investigate the research question, the following structure was chosen for the thesis. Chapter 2 introduces the theoretical framework, which offers an insight into important concepts of culture-led urban development. Furthermore, the potential risks and challenges that this approach could entail are discussed. The literature review closes with possibilities to overcome those negative tendencies in order to guarantee sustainability within a creative city. Chapter three provides the methodology of the research, including research strategy, design, methods as well as potential challenges and limitations the research might include. Following, chapter four first gives a brief introduction of the city of Mannheim and an inventory of its cultural capital before displaying the results of the interviews. Finally, the results of the interviews are summarized and discussed in the context of academic literature and the research questions and are followed by recommendations for the city of Mannheim and suggestions for future research.

2. A creative city's scaffold: theoretical framework

To research and assess the impact of the cultural and creative sectors on urban development, a closer look at theory should be taken as many cultural policy strategies are based on academic approaches. The concept of a creative city cannot be reduced on a single definition but rather entails various theoretical components like ""creative industries" and the "creative class," which are said to undergird the "creative city."" (Krätke, 2012, p. 1). Despite the ambiguous connotation, the creative city terminology has found a place on a political level. In 2004, UNESCO built the Creative City Network to "promote cooperation with and among cities that have identified creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development" (Creative Cities Network, n.d.). As the concept of the creative city is utilized as a tool for urban development, the following part will display the fundamental approaches and concepts.

Before getting further into the theoretical framework, a few terminologies, which are frequently utilized during the thesis, are delineated. Despite the office UNESCO title, the term 'creative city' was utilized in a more open manner and referred to cities that are actively approaching urban development with the support of the cultural and creative industries. This leads us to the next clarification. The usage of the term 'cultural and creative industries' in this thesis includes every layer of David Throsby's concentric circle model from the core creative arts to the related industries (2008, p. 150) because in the modern urban world, all of those sectors shape a city in a different but more or less equal way.

2.1. Charles Landry and Richard Florida: a catalog for creative cities

Certainly, the impact of the arts and culture on the urban sphere has been delineated since the city has moved into the center of attention. Furthermore, the dynamics between cities' inhabitants and the urban development already had already been explored from the beginning of the 20th century when Daniel Burham has considered the city as a work of art itself - followed by Jane Jacobs, who in the 1960's shaped urban development discourse with her focus on the urban communities until now, to Sharon Zukin, a sociologist who focused particularly on the role of culture in urban spheres and its potential negative tendencies like gentrification with a focus on New York (Freestone & Gibson, 2006, p. 23).

However, suitable catalogs with strategies for the creative city have especially emerged in the late twentieth century, with Charles Landry and Richard Florida being the driving forces. At that time, the cultural and creative industries became increasingly important in regard to urban planning and development. One of the most important works in the framework of creative urban development theories in those times was published by the British academic Charles

Landry in 2000 with his publication "The Creative City: A Toolkit for Urban Innovators". Hereby, he illustrates possible instruments on how to run modern urban life and how to utilize the creative and cultural sectors in these processes. With his approach, he introduces "a new method of strategic urban planning" (Landry, 2000, xi) based on European cities because of his own empirical values. In his book, Landry emphasizes the importance of the right mindset of the responsible actors, which entails an open-mindedness to discover alternative possibilities for action outside of the comfort zone. Only then, urban planners and municipalities will gather the ability to utilize cultural resources of the city for its development towards a successful creative city. Furthermore, Landry's approach accentuates the importance of tolerance: from his point of view, acknowledged creative cities "are also the most diverse, tolerant and bohemian places" (Landry, 2008, p. xxxix)

Although Landry set the ball rolling and consequently shaped the discourse, one of the most cited but also criticized authors in this field is Richard Florida, an American economist and lecturer. With his "creative class" theory, he identified new opportunities for urban development and carved out the economic potential of the creative city. "The deep and enduring changes in our age are not technological but social and cultural" (Florida, 2002, 17). Cities have to restructure utilizing "new economic systems explicitly designed to foster and harness human creativity" (Florida, 2002, p. 66). In his opinion, the economy is increasingly developing towards a creative economy and, thus, is dependent on human resources. Knowledge and creativity are vital resources, and thus, the municipalities have to offer a suitable environment in order to captivate people who hold those abilities.

With the increasing importance of the creative industries, Florida recognizes new social groups based on an economic purpose. Hereby, the concept of the creative class emerges, "which consists of people who add economic value through their creativity" (Florida, 2002, p. 68). This class is distinguished by engaging in "work whose function is to create meaningful new forms" (Florida, 2005, p. 34) and consequently defines the creative city.

He differentiates between two groups within the class. Firstly, there is the "super-creative core", which is mainly responsible for innovation and the creation of new products: "along with problem-solving, their work may entail problem finding" (Florida, 2002, p. 69). Members of this particular core range from engineers over analysts to designers and artists.

This core is surrounded by creative professionals working in knowledge-intensive industries who "draw on complex bodies of knowledge to solve specific problems" (Florida, 2002, p. 70). A decisive characteristic is the group's ability to flexibly adapt to current situations and problems by thinking outside the box (Florida, 2005, p. 34).

To captivate the creative class, a city has to offer an environment with specific location factors that Florida describes as the three T's: technology, talent, and tolerance. In order to create an innovative milieu, an intensive examination with and provision of technology is essential since it is the "key to economic growth" (Florida, 2005, p. 6). The technological progress of a region illustrates the level of innovation, and his studies suggest a correlation between high-tech industries, innovation, and the creative class.

Closely connected to the first T technology is the aspect of talent that could be encouraged by the city with the support of the education sector. Training facilities such as universities and schools are essential as they increase human capital. (Florida, 2005, p. 6). The measuring of talent conducted by the level of a bachelor's degree and above is decisive (Florida, 2003, p. 10). In Florida's eyes, talent and knowledge demonstrate to the creative class how much talent and knowledge are present and available in the particular place. When fostering talent on all levels, a city's quality is improved (Florida, 2005, p. 6). Overall, the factor talent and regional development emphasize a distinct interplay, in terms of talent being a driving factor in urban development on the one hand and the other, "certain regional factors appear to play a role in creating an environment or habitat that can produce, attract and retain talent or human capital" (Florida, 2005, p. 109).

Tolerance presents a key role in Florida's concept. If a city emphasizes openness, inclusiveness, and diversity, creativity has more space and freedom to develop, and consequently, tolerance "enables regions to mobilize" (Florida, 2005, p. 6). Diversity is a key in order to guarantee innovation; "the more diverse and culturally rich cities are, the more attractive they are" (Florida, 2005, p. 138). Florida finds that the creative class and the high-technology workers value and consider diversity in characters, mindsets, and values important, and if a city but lacks tolerance, its progress will not be successful (Florida, 2005, p. 130).

Overall, cities or regions where a combination of those three T's occurs illustrate a more attractive environment for creatives who contribute to urban development and consequently, those centers present "truly creative places" (Florida, 2002, p. 250). In his research, Florida emphasizes a strong correlation between the three location factors, and with one T missing, a city's success already decreases. Only when offering technology, talent, and tolerance, the creative class can be attracted. Consequently, the regions with a significant emergence of the creative class "are more likely to be economic winners" (Florida, 2002, p. 235)

2.2. Critical voices and further developments

Both Landry's and Florida's theories were confronted with critique; however, Richard Florida's theories were particularly criticized. Various cities' policymakers and urban planners followed Richard Florida's ideas, even the German chancellor Angela Merkel has referred to Richard Florida creative class theory in a speech in 2007 (Krätke, 2012, p. 37). Nevertheless, critical academic voices towards his approach have increased. "Many authors claim that Florida's approach does not keep into enough account the social effect of an urban policy supporting the creative class and the cultural economy" (D'Ovidio, 2016, p. 30). Being "a cool-cities guru" (Peck, 2005, p. 740), his ideas seem to be too superficial and focus too much on the "trendy" city instead of the concept of creativity itself. The theory refers to an image-based approach than rather the actual essence of a city. "There is little evidence that people or businesses set much store on what Florida is prescribing" (Malanga, 2005, p. 40). Richard Florida does not depict any evidence that the attraction of creative class results in economic growth (Peck, 2005; Malanga, 2005), but "undervalues the relevance of institutional frameworks and historically rooted social relations in the development of local production networks" (D'Ovidio, 2016, p. 29). Furthermore, Florida's theory defines "certain functional elites within a neoliberal social order" (Krätke 2012, p. 40) as a region's driver but, on the contrary, promotes tolerance and diversity as essential values and thus illustrates contradictory aspects.

The importance shifted a lot more to "understanding the general role of creative and innovative capacities in contemporary urban development" (Krätke, 2012, p. 11). The pressure of the ultimate goal of being a creative city with all means possible slowly decreased. However, the question of how to use the cultural and creative industries' resources in terms of urban development is still present which is delineated in the following part.

2.3. Essential concepts within the contemporary creative city discourse

The neoliberalist approaches to culture-led urban development might be obsolete by now, but they had an impact on many cities and their urban planning, and furthermore emphasized essential notions that shape the contemporary creative city discourse and define how cultural and creative industries influenced the urban sphere. The following part will display concepts that are vital in the face of culture-led urban development.

2.3.1. Cultural policy for the urban landscape

As the origins of the creative city concepts already emphasize, the role of cultural policy is decisive in urban development. Generally speaking, today's cultural urban governances are

confronted with a more diverse set of issues than a few decades ago. Consequently, they have to be approached and handled across different areas of responsibilities. Whereas in the first half of the 20th century, the perception of arts and culture was mainly reduced to the highbrow arts, the contemporary cultural policy is shaped by technological change, and its "interest has grown in the creative industries as a source of innovation and economic dynamism" (Throsby, 2010, p. 1). Digitalization is indispensable, as it determines every work process and presenting new risks and challenges. Furthermore, municipalities have to act in a more global context to stay competitive without neglecting the local sphere which has also led to "changing urban forms and governance structures" (Richards & Marques, 2018, p. 9).

With this, cultural policy within cities certainly plays a significant role because it determines the direction of the urban cultural development: "policies aimed at the cultural economy have come to play an integral role in the urban development strategies of cities around the globe" (Grodach et al., 2017, p. 17). Cultural policy, being the instance that recognizes the value of the cultural and creative sector, decides which projects or organizations present more importance to be supported than others. Every city has its political agenda that establishes strategies and goals that influence how to operationalize the cultural and creative sectors, which then has an essential impact on the role arts and culture play in urban development. At this point, the city's capacity is a crucial factor in the possible means a city can take. The financial household, the physical space, and general attitude of the municipality and its politicians towards the arts and culture, determine the direction the urban development process will go.

However, in the past, cities have tended to gear their cultural policy strategies towards other cities, which often resulted in the reproduction of "similar problems across different places" (Grodach, 2017, p. 82). As a result, cultural policy has to be individually adapted to the urban context based on own resources and should not follow any agendas from other cities blindly. By now, there are several cultural policy narratives a city can tell to "approach arts and culture as a development asset" (Grodach, 2017, p. 82). The following thesis will display potential strategies cultural policies can take in the framework of urban development because a diverse set of instruments is more likely to be successful in culture-led urban development than a single measurement (Throsby, 2010, p. 143).

2.3.2. *Culture-led urban development and regeneration*

As the thesis title already suggests, urban development will present an essential concept of the research. However, the literature that the theoretical framework was built on, which primarily focuses on the relationship between the cultural and creative sector and urban development,

does not clearly define the term. In this context, urban development rather unifies a set of activities and processes in the city influenced by socio-economic factors. Consequently, in this thesis, urban development, namely the development of urban spaces, is considered a constant process based on the fact that a city is always in movement. No urban landscape presents stagnancy; some changes might happen in the background. Therefore, others are more visible. This being said, one can assume that every city aims to evolve and has this goal somehow included in their agendas, strategies, mission statements, or actions. To what extent this will take place is dependent on the city's ambitions, financial possibilities, infrastructure, cultural capital, and other socio-economic factors. Like already Florida's and Landry's approaches suggest, arts and culture can play a vital role in urban development if the city provides the needed appreciation and creative space (Markusen, 2006, p. 1968).

Since the positive influence of culture on urban development has been prominent in the last decade and based on this assumption, it would be logical to actively implement the arts and culture in urban planning processes; however, culture has not been on the agendas of municipalities for many decades. The city is considered the essential place where culture is produced, experienced, exchanged, and diversified. Those chances of culture functioning as a leader for urban regeneration have been a significant subject of various papers on urban studies and cultural development. As an urban development tool, the creative city is well received by those cities that see the importance of revitalizing and regenerating their urban space. In particular, cities that once possessed a flourishing industrial landscape but were then confronted with a massive "economic and physical decline" (Evans, 2005, p. 959) have relied on the arts and culture as an instrument for urban development. Culture-led regeneration approaches are "a feature of post-industrial cities in Europe in particular" (Flew, 2010, p. 86). Many European post-industrial cities have faced a crisis after manufacturing and coherent employment had been dismantled. Consequently, there was a certain pressure to define a new direction for the cities' development. Hereby, culture plays an essential role, and the potential of creativity has also moved into the center of cultural policy. Municipalities have recognized the chance that lies in the cultural and creative industries for the regeneration process. As a consequence, political agendas recognized the value of creativity and included "new uses to which it can be put to meet social, economic and political objectives" (Miles & Paddison, 2005, p. 834). The city of Rotterdam illustrates this approach excellently by being a city that was once known for its production but then faced a decline and had to reorient itself, consequently strongly utilizing culture as a tool for urban development: cultural events have presented essential elements in generating tourism (Richards & Wilson, 2006, p. 20). Nevertheless, one could ask why culture

in particular helps the cities to regenerate and revitalize? This approach is strongly connected with the general development of globalization, which presents an external factor that has influenced the competitiveness of cities, and in the recent years, the arts and culture have shown to be a valuable tool in this process. However, there is also a crucial internal factor that has to be taken into consideration. Creativity that comes from within the city presents a key element in urban development as it is "seen as a driving force in processes of innovation and technological change" (Throsby, 2010, p. 136).

Not only have cities changed towards centers of service and entertainment which mainly influenced the urban citizens' lifestyle and their cultural consumption - but work life and workspaces have also faced increasing changes, and forms of employment were restructured or invented.

Furthermore, cities are experiencing more competition with other regions, and consequently, a particular theme, such as culture, can encourage urban centers to present their individual identity (Lysgård, 2012, p. 1283-1284). The purpose of regenerating urban infrastructures led by culture is predominantly distinguished by "attracting people to live in, work in and visit a city" (Richards & Wilson, 2006, p. 12). However, in the last years, the concept of livability has moved into the focus of regeneration processes of cities and describes the process of making spaces more enjoyable to live in and to increase the quality of life in general (Throsby, 2010, p. 135). Consequently, the cultural and creative sectors are often implemented in neighborhoods that are distinguished by problems or considered to be so-called no-go areas to increase livability in those areas.

In order to guarantee a successful development process of urban space, the focus should not predominantly lie on the economic value. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that the cultural and creative industries present quite an important economic center in cities by now, which is already implied by the amalgamation of the terms 'industries' and 'culture'. Despite the increasing economic value of the cultural and creative industries, the profit should not be the main focus in urban regeneration processes but should also address the needs of the involved population and their identity:

> "culture-led regeneration perhaps provides a framework within which, given the right conditions, local people can re-establish ownership of their own sense of place and space and, perhaps more importantly, of their own sense of history." (Bailey et al., 2004, p. 49)

The changes cities might face certainly impact the citizens and their perception of their immediate environment. After losing the city's initial purpose, their sense of local identity might suffer. Thus, a culture-led regeneration of the urban space around them could encourage a new

sense of belonging. Cities are confronted with a diverse set of opinions and values in their regeneration processes because "spaces are experienced by the many different people who inhabit them" (Zukin, 1995, p. 294). As a consequence, in order to respect and consider the essential role of the inhabitants and to provide a high quality of community life, municipalities of the so-called creative cities have to engage them actively in order to generate a sense of social cohesion and cultural identity (Throsby, 2010, p. 143). Instead of copying and reproducing other cities' concepts, a city should consider the individual needs and values of its inhabitants and "pay more attention to individual expressions of creativity" (Richards & Wilson, 2006, p. 14) to regenerate the urban sphere in a sustainable manner.

To perform culture-led regeneration successfully, the city already has to be equipped with a certain cultural capital, which the approach can be built on: "cultural resources may have its own development potential as capital for urban development" (Cheng & Hsu, 2021, p. 1). Throsby (2010) differentiates between tangible and intangible assets; tangible features could be the public infrastructure or architectural buildings, whereas intangible characteristics present a more value-based approach, such as social networks or a sense of local identity (p. 135). With such a cultural and creative infrastructure, a city can individually consider how to implement its resources in development and regeneration processes and how to exploit the own potential. Hereby, the cultural policy and funding approaches of the city and the country it is located in could be considered a resource, and their strategies and financial situation shape the cultural and creative sector as well as their possibilities to develop and regenerate. Consequently, one should avoid leaning on practices that might not be suitable for the own city as well as its cultural and creative industries. In the thesis' methodological part, an inventory of the cultural and creative resources, as suggested by Throsby, was implemented within the case of Mannheim.

2.3.3. Creative clusters, hubs, and milieus

The discourse of creative cities and urban development has eloped in the last decade. The terminology of creative clusters also referred to as hubs or milieus, has distinguished the academic literature presenting "alternative source for urban cultural development" (Mommaas, 2004, p.507). Florida has already mentioned that creative workers tend to "cluster in places that are centers of creativity and also where they like to live" (Florida, 2002, p. 7). Although his theories have faced numerous critics, the concept of clusters or creative hubs still prevails today's discourse. "Clusters have been promoted as a means of encouraging the regeneration of deprived inner-city areas" (Bagwell, 2008, p. 32).

Within a city that approaches a culture-led regeneration process, certain quarters protrude for being creative or presenting a rather extensive cultural capital. Those hubs are often considered to be thriving power behind urban development due to their innovative characteristics. A creative cluster can be defined as "a well-identified and labeled city area where a high concentration of culture stimulates the presence of concurrent services and activities" (Cinti, 2008, p. 71). One cannot define a consistent type of cluster, but it rather comes in different shapes and sizes; they reach from a romantic, artistic quarter to a hip creative center in a former factory site. At first sight, they might not have much in common, but they share distinct characteristics, advantages, and externalities that will be delineated in the following.

General business theories on how clusters are formed indicate the importance of "location and inter-firm linkages or networks to productivity" (Bagwell, 2008, p. 32). The formation of clusters is more likely to happen in urban spaces because "labor and capital are both heavily concentrated in cities" (Rosenthal & Strange, 2004, p. 2121). Those agglomerations of enterprises depict interactivity and relationships among each other; without any, they would not be considered as clusters. The proximity between the organizations allows "a repeated exchange and a sense of belonging to the same community" which furthermore fosters the productivity of the cluster itself (Belussi, 2018, p. 1802).

The formation of clusters is particularly recognizable within the cultural and creative industries that "tend to concentrate mainly around large and medium cities forming creative local production systems" (Lazzaretti et al., 2008, p. 1). Instead of being located all over a city, cultural organizations rather settle down near other comparable enterprises in a specific urban environment and thus form a cluster. Creative hubs do not necessarily resemble each other, but rather appear in a variety of forms; some presenting artistic quarters whereas others are characterized by more media-related enterprises: it "has been evident from pre-industrial artist and crafts-based communities, to contemporary cultural industries quarters in "postindustrial" cities" (Evans, 2009, p. 33). A possible reason why particularly cultural organizations tend to cluster is that the creative and cultural industries are regarded as knowledge producers (see Wu, 2005; see Evans, 2009), and consequently, the organizations within the economy "require specific locations or spaces to work" (Gottdiener, 2000, p. 98).

In some points, the characteristics and aims of cultural and creative clusters might differentiate from the more traditional economies, which can be explained by the general nature of the creative industries. Whereas in more common clusters, the economic profit is the first priority, the creative hubs are distinguished by small and medium-sized enterprises with flexible organizational structures with intrinsically motivated employees where individuality and

creativity are considered to be more important than the commercial purpose (Bagwell, 2009, p. 34). Although the monetary aspect might not play such an essential role as in other clusters, the literature predominantly focuses on the advantages clustering can provide for the creative and cultural industries and the city they are located in. "A common pool of labor, knowledge, information and ideas" (Wu, 2005, p. 2) present beneficial resources creative and cultural hubs have to offer, and the actors within and outside this system can profit from. Those amenities attract other enterprises to settle down in that specific area to profit from the infrastructure. The potential of cooperation that lies within hubs also promotes building relationships that are vital in the creative and cultural industries. Providing a solid infrastructure is particularly beneficial for cultural organizations: "the role of social network ties – that is, the networks of relations between individuals that provide support, feedback, knowledge, insight and resources" (Clare, 2012, p, 53) is especially emphasized in successful creative clusters. Because of their small size, some activities could be rather expensive, and consequently, cooperation with others might help to save money and time. Creative clusters often provide an atmosphere of trust because of the relationship between the actors. Thus, there is less competitive energy but instead more possibilities for knowledge transfer (Andersson et al., 2014, p. 393). Hereby, newly founded enterprises or artists can not only learn from the established ones, but clusters also provide the potential for a collaborative discovery process that could even result in new cultural goods or practices.

The stated benefits of clustering not only affect the cultural and creative organizations but profit the entire city they are located in. Several positive externalities accompany creative hubs in favor of their environment. Indeed, those areas depict a possibility to supply the region with employment and attract other valuable creative workers and organizations who want to profit from the creative buzz of the cluster. The clusters have the power to shape the city's image, bring life to a specific area, and guide the city. Although the initial process of clustering might happen spontaneously in many cases, the policy can and should foster the formation with the help of specific instruments and incentives such as "workspace provision, business advice and training, grants and loans, and the development of physical and soft infrastructure" (Bagwell, 2009, p. 34).

2.3.4. *The creative making of places*

Within the creative cities and urban development, the importance of placemaking has been identified, and its vital role has been reflected in literature as well. Academic research has increasingly thematized the role of place concerning the cultural and creative industries. When

thematizing the making of a place, one has to consider what defines a place and what differentiates it from other concepts. Literature offers various definitions of 'place':

> "places are not bounded, isolated entities (...). Rather they are usually and perhaps increasingly in a globalizing world located in a series of extensive economic, political, and cultural networks with varying geographical scope. They are best thought of relationally." (Agnew, 2011, p. 326)

Furthermore, a place should not only be reduced to its geographical characteristics but rather stands for "dynamic and constituent of negotiated social activities that are constantly being made in and through practice" (Clare, 2012, p. 52). Hereby, the places develop into a meaningful space with an identity shaped by individual and collaborative actions. Consequently, places never have the same meaning but are perceived through individual and collective experiences. The creation of such places can be guided by different visions. However, within the creative one, cultural organizations and artists have alongside other residents the possibility to narrate their story through the city's landscape. In the past decade, academic literature has often referred to the terminology of creative placemaking. Placemaking is interpreted in various ways and presents a rather fuzzy concept that can be traced back to the fact that cultural placemaking is utilized in very individual manners. None of the places is comparable as they are always distinguished by a social, cultural, and historical context. However, looking at the academic discourse on creative placemaking, the definition of Anne Markusen and Anne Gadwa has been most widely adopted:

> "In creative placemaking, partners from public, private, non-profit, and community sectors strategically shape the physical and social character of a neighborhood, town, city, or region around arts and cultural activities. Creative placemaking animates public and private spaces, rejuvenates structures and streetscapes, improves local business viability and public safety, and brings diverse people together to celebrate, inspire, and be inspired." (2010, p. 3)

This definition already depicts the essential who, what, and how that the creative placemaking process entails. By advocating placemaking, municipalities acknowledge the "role of arts and culture in driving place-based community development" (Frenette, 2017, p. 334). Creative placemaking cannot be pinned down to one particular definition. Instead, the individual actors instead exploit it in various ways, and thus, there is a variety of different strategies, actors, and outcomes (Chu & Schupbach 2014, p. 65). Whereas many urban regeneration research papers focus on big cities with "big problems, big plans, and big budgets" (Richards & Duif, 2018, p. 3), creative placemaking seems to function on a relatively universal level and depends on strategies that can be easily adapted to smaller cities and their needs as well. However, the main

goal is to "to advance humanity through artistic initiatives that build healthy, strong communities" (Webb, 2014, p. 36).

Due to its flexibility, creative placemaking depicts an excellent way for political agendas to utilize the cultural and creative industries as an urban regeneration tool. Also, in an economic sense, placemaking depicts benefits: "creativity itself is essentially footloose, value creation in the contemporary economy is closely bound to place" (Richards, 2020, p. 3). In successful placemaking projects, community building and development seem to present a leading role. The empowerment, activation, and opportunities for and by the community are vital components in urban regeneration. The making of a place with the support of cultural and creative value presents a valuable instrument. Therefore, it is crucial to have an understanding of the neighborhood's community concerning its historical and social context: "helping a community begin to understand its historical, cultural, economic, and social context is an essential foundation for developing and building sense of place" (Soule et al., 2011, p. 37). In order to guarantee an inclusive place that celebrates diversity and direct the help and support to the people who experience the space, "authentic community collaboration and a deep commitment to social change through the arts" have to present the key activities (Webb, 2014, p. 35).

In comparison to other strategies that are often distinguished by a certain exclusivity, creative placemaking presents the opportunity to provide participation in the process of many actors of urban society and, thus, is a chance to foster cultural diversity (Markusen & Gadwa, 2010, p. 4). "It is often the goal of Creative Placemaking to institutionalize arts, culture and creative thinking in all aspects of the built environment" (Wyckoff, 2014, p. 6). In the history of urban development, the focus has frequently been on the marketing of places, which has primarily been applied "to promote cities and towns in order to attract investors, tourists and residents" (Eshuis et al., 2014, p. 152), rather than the making of a place. This behavior could eventually present a reason for the failure of some urban regeneration projects: "an attractive external image should be a by-product of placemaking, not the goal" (Richards & Duif, 2018, p. 16). Placemaking illustrates a much more inclusive process, where the image of a city and its marketing still play a significant role, but moreover, includes "non-market processes and an effort to improve the quality of the lives of all those who use the place" (Richards & Duif, 2018, p. 16). By handling creative placemaking as a social practice by revitalizing cultural and creative initiatives and fostering the urban society's participation and utilizing it in the confrontation of structural changes, cities can provide and guarantee an increase in diversity, livability and simultaneously boost innovation of the creative and cultural sector (Wyckoff,

2014, p. 8). Like other urban planning methods, creative placemaking builds on existing structures, urban resources, and the social capital of the cities (Stern, 2014, p. 85).

Nevertheless, now the question arises on how placemaking practitioners can design a creative place that is successful and sustainable. With this, the activation of partnerships across different sectors is significant and fundamental (Markusen & Gadwa, 2014, p. 36). Significantly, the relationship between the different stakeholders has to be considered carefully because their input is vital to the creative placemaking process. Due to the potential conflicts because of different interests, it has to be appropriately managed (Frenette, 2017, p. 342). Furthermore, the city and its municipality have to offer enough room for participation and consequently has to "establish a moral relation that from the start acknowledges people's "right to the city" which is to say their right to local citizenship" (Friedman, 2010, p. 159). Creative placemaking depends on the individuals who narrate the stories of a place; thus, the cultural and creative activities and their initiators should present the core of the process because of their ability to inspire (Markusen & Gadwa, 2014, p. 35). With the artistic initiative, a place does not only have the opportunity to change the physical aesthetic and appearance, "but also the aesthetics of belonging" (Webb, 2014, p. 35). However, the planners of creative placemaking should not blindly utilize cultural activities but rather implement arts and cultural programming because it can help with establishing "a structure of happenings and plans that ensure that these activities will continue to flourish" (Soule et al., 2011, p. 8). Although human and cultural values are crucial for the success of creative placemaking strategies, the necessity of investments has to be considered. When cities decide upon implementing creative placemaking in their urban development process, they most likely have to invest in specific resources to guarantee success and sustainability. Financial support is inevitable in order to realize artistic projects, create an infrastructure, and increase the value of the public sphere. The city also has to invest in resources other than material ones, such as effort and time in the process of placemaking to ensure the longevity of the creative places (Richards & Duif, 2018, p. 118).

2.4. A creative city's shadows

2.4.1. Gentrification and its following

The risks and negative aspects of using the creative city as image creation, and commodifying art and culture, are frequently discussed by various authors: "it can endanger uneven development […], and a familiar gentrification process could follow where the artist shifts from pioneer to victim" (Breitbart, 2013, p. 2). Although the term gentrification contains various connotations, Harding and Blokland find it "useful to reserve the term 'gentrification' for those

processes of urban change that actually include displacement, as this brings some conceptual clarity to a highly politicized theme" (2014, p. 145). Gentrification enforces a neighborhood's community's transformation and often ends in "exclusion and displacement" (Hahn, 2010, p. 120) due to high rents, for example. In areas where cultural and creative industries' clusters exist, gentrification proceeds as "the movement from junk to art and then on to commodity" (Ley, 2003, p. 2528). In the late 20th century, academic literature already focused on the relationship between creative and cultural industries, urban development, and gentrification. Sharon Zukin, who has mainly written about New York's development, has recognized that the presence of artists "puts a neighborhood on the road to gentrification" (Zukin, 1995, p. 23).

Morgan and Woodriff define two distinct phases of gentrification in urban centers, which is displayed in the following (2019, pp. 44-45). At first, a post-industrial area becomes the focus of students, bohemians, and creative precariat members due to low rents. Shortly after, commercial activities suitable for the neighborhood's new lifestyle in this area will increase: bars and cafés will open, galleries and performing spaces as a stage for the artists will be created. The vibrant atmosphere and other young creatives will be attracted to live and work in the hip and cool environment. The new arising creative businesses play a significant role in the areas and the gentrification process since they "not only provide spaces of consumption for residents and visitors to develop a lifestyle but also provide visible opportunities for neighborhoods to develop a new place identity" (Zukin, 2011, p.163) Due to the area's rising attractiveness, the municipality will discover the potential and importance. Although they might first support the young creatives with low-rent space, it is often only a short-term solution and the start of the negative gentrification progress. Cultural policy programs, in many cases, "seek to derive unique qualities from the idea of temporality" (Haydn & Temel, 2006, p. 17).

Soon after the area has been established, the second phase follows to allow "the broader property market to wake up to the potential for intensified commodification" (Ihlein, 2009, p. 48). Other middle-class professionals arrive and influence the increase of rents (see Murzyn-Kupis & Dzialek, 2017; see Morgan & Woodriff, 2019). Having more financial capacity, they are "undermining both the tenure of long-term poor/minority residential tenants and also of the independent businesses and cooperative ventures" (Morgan & Woodriff, p. 46), which have emerged in the first phase of the gentrification process and "lower-income residents are forced to move away" (Zukin, 1995, p. 120).

At this moment, the creatives' ambiguous role in the gentrification process is emphasized (Murzyn-Kupis & Działek, 2017, p. 20). The artists and creative workers who initially discovered the area's potential and engaged in the revaluing process now have to find another

place to live and work with more affordable rents. Hereby, the risk of a vicious cycle can be noticed since artists and creative workers could be considered the "avant-garde of gentrification" (Ihlein, 2009, p. 48). Some academic literature defines the artists as the actual intermediaries of gentrification by providing essential information to the real estate market about certain areas' potential (Murzyn-Kupis & Działek, 2017, p. 20). By moving to another area due to increasing costs and the changes in the environment, the danger of repetition of the previously described gentrification process is present and, in most cases, cannot be hindered. In the discourse, a "sustained consideration of culture in the sustainability of cities is almost entirely absent" (Nadarajah & Yamamoto, 2007, p. 8). In order to guarantee healthy maintenance of the creative and cultural hubs without the displacement of the artists and creatives and more impoverished citizens, political agendas have to secure stable rents and encourage creative activities. Furthermore, there has to be interaction and communication between all the actors to include all the voices and to create a diverse place for everyone.

Followed by gentrification, homogenization of urban space is a common problem as well. Remarkably, the neo-liberal policy, approached by Richard Florida, is said to force an intense homogenization process (D'Ovidio, 2016, p. 35). Although creative and cultural centers, at first sight, represent a certain authenticity and individuality, a negative tendency could be urban homogeneity. It becomes evident that municipalities and governments on an international level follow similar strategies in their path towards a creative city and commit a certain 'policy borrowing' (Gerhard et al., 2017, p. 7). Generally speaking, "cities tend to use the same language and same strategies in order to build a new image" (D'Ovidio, 2016, p. 33).

This results in places without any distinct features that could be located in any city, enforcing an inevitable loss of identity and diversity, ending in a "placelessness" (Ritzer, 2007, p. 62). "If, the toolkit methods of building creative urban areas are applied, the result can often be a "McDonaldized setting"" (Hahn, 2010, p. 115). Consequently, those environments demonstrate a rise of only one particular type of resident and develop towards a homogenous environment that lacks diversity and inter-cultural communication (Hahn, 2010, p. 121). One does not only recognize an effect on the urban setting and its population, but João Romão also identifies a homogenization process impacting the culture itself by:

> "the symbolic capital of an area (related to its authenticity and uniqueness) generated the creative externalities and spillovers created by cultural producers and creative agents ("the underground") is tendentially destroyed (through a process of normalization) by market or institutional forces and branding strategies (the "upperground"), implying an unequal distribution of benefits related both to the extraction of symbolic values and to the processes for its future creation." (2017, p. 54)

2.4.2. *Not for everyone: exclusivity and inequality*

Besides the issues of homogenization and loss of identity that follow many gentrification processes, cities that utilize the culture-led urban regeneration strategy are frequently confronted with the issue of being too exclusive and the resulting inequality, although "creativity is considered as a tool for fighting against social exclusion in cities" (D' Ovidio, 2017, p. 32). Generally speaking, inequality is a problem that arises in various urban development projects and it has been a dominant topic in the last years. Many cities display similar stories from a growing duality in urban centers. Particularly in cities or clusters where culture and creativity are the guiding force, exclusivity and inequality seem to be shadowing the positive aspects, although the arts are often utilized as a means to foster diversity and unify people. As a result, academic literature has been concerned with the question of what exactly is causing the rather negative tendencies and how to create urban regeneration processes more sustainably.

"Urban inequality belongs to the most popular and striking issues in current urban studies." (Gyuris, 2017, p. 41). Although Richard Florida claims that his approach fosters tolerance and diversity, the practical realization of the theory has particularly caused a lack of diversity, exclusion and inequalities in a variety of ways in creative urban spaces. Especially the importance put on the cities' competition and the economic profit, which is deeply anchored in the approaches by Florida and other neoliberal economists and writers and bears inequalities within and between communities (Hahn, 2010, p. 123). Hereby, "culture has mostly been used for instrumental and financial ends for the past few decades, and cultural industries have long been praised for their contributions to innovation and economic growth whereas its other social values and benefits have been ignored or not taken seriously enough (Lavanga & Drosner, 2020, p. 98).

Comparable to many other concepts in the field of urban regeneration, the concept of inequality might be construed in various ways and is perceived at an individual level, but, unfortunately, they appear in every city at some occasion (see Avelino & Rotmans, 2009). Particularly in the framework of urban development, the discourse about inequality is strongly connected to power and a political sphere because they frequently result from a conflict between the interests of the various stakeholder groups (Gyuris, 2017, p. 49). Although the thought of multiculturalism has been embedded in political agendas, "a stark fact in the exemplar creative cities and local clusters, however, is the coincidence of economic and social inequality" (Evans, 2009, p. 1024). Not only do the more traditional creative city approaches foster segregation due to the gentrification process that crowds out the local inhabitants who are not able to afford the

rent anymore, the culture-led development also creates spatial inequality (Bereitschaft & Cammack, 2015, p. 182).

The inequalities not only arise in the realm of the neighborhoods and their inhabitants. Regarding the cultural and creative industries, the chances are also not equally distributed, which is reflected in the creative workforce and emphasizes the issue of exclusivity. The creative labor market is often characterized by a certain exclusiveness and represents a lack of diversity in gender, race, and physical abilities: minority groups are "underrepresented in creative industries and the same structural patterns of inequality by gender, age and ethnicity in other labor markets are also observed in creative industries sector" (Baycan-Levent, 2010, p. 576). Entering the networks created within the creative cluster is not as easy as one might imagine since they demonstrate a certain exclusivity that might not be visible at first. Cultural clusters run the hazard of lacking diversity and presenting only a relatively similar type of creative workers (Freire-Gibb, 2014, p. 9). However, what is essential for culture-led urban development is realizing and accepting those negative tendencies and the willingness to work on them to guarantee diversity in urban societies, which "contributes to the improvement of the creative capacities of cities and regions" (Baycan-Levent, 2010, p. 566).

2.5. The creative city's future or how to be sustainable

The recognition and acceptance of the potential negative or problematic tendencies is a first step in the direction of sustainability of cities that decided to encourage their urban development process with the help of culture to finally recognize that the neo-liberalist approaches do not present a sustainable future but rather encourage exclusion and inequality within and between communities (Oakley & Ward, 2018, p. 15). Consequently, culture-led regeneration cannot be regarded as necessarily successful. The actors of the cultural and creative industries have not been considered and included in the urban planning process from the beginning. Frequently, cultural organizations or artists are confronted with the result that initially might be addressed to them but only because they have not had the possibility to participate in the decision and planning process. In order to guarantee sustainable success of the creative city, the interests of every stakeholder have to be considered and the possibility of participation has to be granted. To eliminate these tensions that result in the potential negative tendencies of some creative city's tendencies, communication and exchange between diverse interest groups is needed. Cultural policy has to appreciate and exploit "the role of community arts, everyday creativity, and artists in cities aiming to contribute to the goal of a sustainable future" (Duxbury et al., 2017, p. 221). Recent literature has increasingly raised the question of how to create a more sustainable environment within creative cities or clusters. Thus, the themes of culture and

sustainable development are increasingly united in political agendas. Also, the United Nations addresses the importance of sustainability in an urban context and the importance of overcoming the negative tendencies mentioned above within the framework of their 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs): whereas goal 10 is all about reducing "inequality within and among countries", goal 11 stands for making "cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable" (United Nations, n.d.). One recognizes a general awareness and a growing need for change. Instead of imposing a prefabricated concept to each city, "the first step towards creating a socially and environmentally just urban world is to understand the urban world we currently live in" (Boudreau et al., 2009, p. 10). Instead of wanting to turn the own city into a creative city with a prefabricated policy and development plan followed by deficits and downsides, municipalities should precisely carve out the distinct characteristics of the place in order to create a space that guarantees cultural sustainability, fosters diversity and is distinguished by an authentic identity. "The concept of culturally sustainable development may be useful for reconnecting and reconciling culture with the economic, societal and environmental pillars." (Lavanga & Drosner, 2020, p. 98).

Already in 2001, Hawkes recognized the importance of sustainability within cultural-led urban development. Hereby, he identifies four pillars of sustainability which incorporate cultural vitality, social equity, environmental responsibility, and economic viability. By including a balance of all those aspects into the public planning, cities and urban spaces are able to guarantee a sustainable future (Hawkes, 2001, pp. 25-26). However, within the theoretical framework, the concept of sustainability has been interpreted in various ways, and its initial meaning has become blurred: "the word has become such an all-encompassing buzzword, a signifier onto which so many different aspirations and agendas have been projected, that it does not really mean anything anymore" (Isar, 2017, p. 150). Despite its broad conceptualization that is also emphasized by the 17 SDGs, the terminology of sustainability unifies a valid set of visions that furthermore could be utilized as a driving and aspiring force in the framework of culture-led urban development (Duxbury et al., 2017, p. 215).

However, when talking about sustainability within the process of culture-led urban regeneration, literature illustrates a more precise approach to sustainability. Kirchberg and Kagan present a possibility on how a creative city that simultaneously fosters sustainability could look like: places that "practice ecologically resilient, socially equitable and inter-culturally vibrant modes of life" (2013, p. 141). An alternative for cities to utilizing the cultural and creative industries only as a purpose of economic growth would be the encouragement of "sustainable prosperity where success is not measured by high levels of material consumption

but rather the capabilities to engage with cultural and creative practices and communities" (Oakley & Ward, 2018, p. 4).

In order to create a sustainable creative city, there have to be efficient strategies and approaches that should be individually customized to the individual cities or clusters because every place has its own needs and characteristics. However, there are some methods to follow in a sustainable development process. As particularly the cultural and creative industries are mainly dependent on funding, cultural policy should provide financial support that supports sustainable development. "Funding opportunities have shaped the kinds of activities engaging our artists or entrepreneurs" (Lavanga & Drosner, 2020, p. 106). If specific programs are created that focus on sustainability initiatives in the cultural and creative industries, the core and values of communities can be moved towards a more sustainable environment as well. Furthermore, Duxbury et al. (2017) suggest four other roles cultural policy could implement and how culture could be utilized in order to foster sustainable development: cultural urban development should include visions of sustainability in order to "safeguard and sustain cultural practices and rights" (p. 226).

2.6. Concluding remark

A striking and sometimes irritating observation during the construction of the theoretical framework was the sometimes-vague description and perception of the concepts discussed in the previous part. At some points, it was proving to be quite challenging to figure out valid definitions. The initial context of the theory and research done in the field has not always been identifiable. Moreover, a lot of research focuses on big cities and metropoles, leaving speculations if the same approaches can be applied to cases that do not correspond with the cities. The following research part aims to shed light on some of these concepts and provide some clarification to establish further a framework with more distinct concepts and strategies that might also be applicable to urban centers that are not Berlin, New York, or London.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research strategy: qualitative

The research is based on a qualitative strategy. Because the motivation of the thesis is the understanding of a real-life example, a qualitative strategy presents the most constructive form of research for the thesis' intention as it focuses on contextual conditions and experiences (Flick et al., 2004, p. 120). The theoretical part suggests that within creative cities, the key actors of the cultural and creative industries are not necessarily involved in critical decision-making processes and decisions are often based on rather theoretical assumptions. However, the "social world must be interpreted from the perspective of the people being studied, rather than as through those subjects were incapable of their own reflections on the social world" (Bryman, 2012, p. 359). Consequently, qualitative research allows the stakeholders to present their experience and views with and on the questioned topic, which furthermore can depict a base for cultural policy recommendations and further research.

3.2. Research design: case study

The theoretical framework and the research's initial motivation point towards a suitable research design, namely a case study, which allows the researcher to examine a subject, detected in the real world. In this specific research, the case investigated is the German city of Mannheim and its cultural and creative landscape. This case was explicitly chosen in order to expand the already existing research on creative cities that predominantly focuses on major cities and metropoles, like Berlin, Barcelona, or New York (Gregs & Duif, 2018, p. 3). However, there are many European small to medium-sized cities that have UNESCO's 'creative city' title, Mannheim being one of them, which have flourishing cultural and creative industries that utilize their cultural and creative industries for urban development strategies. This thesis aims to present a more diverse picture of the creative city approaches and indicates that small to medium-sized cities might require different strategies than metropoles.

Case studies were ill-reputed for many decades in academic research because of their alleged "lack of control" and missing "scientific value" (Campbell & Stanley, 1966, p. 69). Nevertheless, it has become an accepted research method in recent years because of its potential. A case study allows the researcher to examine "a contemporary phenomenon in its real-life context" (Yin, 2009, p. 18). Since Mannheim has not been explored yet in detail, it made the research even more exciting as well as relevant but also "necessary for real progress at this stage in the field's development" (Porter, 1991, p. 116). Although the thesis explores only a sole case, it "contributes to scientific development" (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 228). If a more

diverse set of case studies exist, a much more realistic representation of the examined world can be found in academic literature, stimulating further research. The discourse around creative cities could profit from more case studies to be more inclusive and to support the cities in finding suitable cultural policy strategies.

3.3. Research methods

3.3.1. Secondary data

To "assimilate reliability and validity" (Bryman, 2012, p. 389), the research process started with the analysis of secondary data, which has contributed to the further research approach. This process presents an excellent base to gain an impression on the specific case of Mannheim and to introduce its infrastructure. With this, cultural policy papers and reports about the cultural and creative industries were investigated to identify the role of cultural and creative industries as well as urban development. Furthermore, an inventory like the one suggested by Throsby (2010) was done to demonstrate the city's cultural capital and resources, which further implicated which culture-led urban regeneration strategies could be suitable for Mannheim. The secondary data shed light on the case and builds an essential base for the following interviews.

3.3.2. Semi-structured interviews

This thesis aims to present a diverse set of voices of the cultural and creative sphere in Mannheim and to capture those individual perceptions and views on the field of culture-led urban development in Mannheim. As a result, qualitative interviews were conducted because they offer space "to explore the views, experiences, beliefs, and motivations of individuals on specific matters" (Gill et al., 2008, p. 292). Furthermore, qualitative interviews depict the possibility of being "flexible, responding to the direction in which interviewees take the interview and perhaps adjust the emphases in the research as a result of significant issues that emerge in the course of interviews" (Bryman, 2012, p. 470).

The researcher was interested in particular themes and concepts deduced from academic literature but still wanted to maintain flexibility, and thus, semi-structured interviews presented the right path. An interview guide was conducted with questions that refer to themes based on essential concepts that were delineated in the theoretical part. Yet, the indvidual interviewee could answer openly and address issues that are essential for him or her in this particular context in depth (Corbetta, 2003, p. 270). The focus of the questions remained, but because of the different roles the interviewees have in Mannheim's cultural and creative sector, some of the questions were adapted to the particular interview scenario.

The choice of the interviewees has played an essential role because the research was dependent on the results of the interviews. It was vital to have a diverse set of stakeholders in order to reflect a realistic capture of the case Mannheim. Hereby, it is crucial to keep in mind that the interview aims not to be representative but rather to obtain different individual experiences (Valentine, 2005, p. 111). Based on the prior research, the respondents were selected and contacted via e-mail. Hereby, the system of 'snowballing', which "describes using one contact to help you recruit another contact, who in turn can put you in touch with someone else" (Valentine, 2005, 117), was beneficial because respondents who were not easy to reach could be approached. The final group of 11 interviewees is composed of a respondent from the cultural office, the responsible employee for cultural urban development, the night mayor, the head of an independent performing arts institutions, a concert booker and promoter, two members of an alliance for creative workers, one project manager of an urban art gallery, and three people who work as artists or musicians. It was essential to not only interview respondents who are actively involved in urban development but rather to research how actors of the cultural and creative sectors experience the development. A list of interviewees, including date and place of the interview, function as well as gender can be found in appendix A. The interviewees signed consent forms which can be provided upon request.

The interaction between interviewer and interviewee plays a significant role because it is more than a mere conversation between two people. The interview has to be managed in a self-conscious, orderly and partially structured manner in order to obtain the results that can be considered a serious contribution of reliable data to the research in question (Longhurst, 2003, p. 113). However, due to the current Corona pandemic, some of the conversations proceeded online via zoom where it is more challenging to establish an interpersonal relationship. Nevertheless, a qualitative interviewer should be an attentive listener. When complying with the essential skills, show certain flexibility, and most importantly, not judge (Longhurst, 2016, p. 112), the atmosphere can also be comfortable and intimate in an online environment.

The interview guide's questions (see Appendix B) were already categorized by connecting them to the research question and sub-questions to have an overview of the vital themes. The recordings of the 10 interviews with 11 respondents, as one interview was conducted with two persons, were transcribed and due to categorization done beforehand, the answers could be assigned to the questions. Now, the researcher was able to identify key subjects which were addressed in all the interviews.

As the interview guide already pointed out themes from interest, it presented a helpful preparation regarding the coding process, which presents the "starting point for most forms of

qualitative data analysis" (Bryman, 2012, p. 575). After elaborating a sort of coding guide, "every interview is coded according to the categories" (Flick et al., 2004, p. 256), which were already determined in the previous step. Open coding was manually performed, which is defined "as the process of breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualizing and categorizing data" (Strauss & Corbi, 1990, p. 61). The codes were categorized into themes that responded to the ones from the interview guide in order to put the findings into the context of the research questions. The transcripts were thoroughly perused as well as analyzed, and suitable quotes by the interviewees were marked according to the themes. The coding table (see Appendix C) illustrates exemplary codes that could be defined during the analysis of the interviews, and they are grouped with one or more suitable themes, which were already established in the interview guide (see Appendix B). Finally, codes and themes were categorized within the associated research and sub-questions.

3.4. Challenges and limitations

With every research, there are specific challenges and limitations to be regarded that could come along when carrying out a case study and qualitative research. The problem of restricted generalization in this type of research is always brought forward as a first refutation. Especially in the field of culture-led urban development, it might be challenging to find generalizable answers to the problem statement. The case of Mannheim indeed delineates individual features and processes within their cultural and creative landscapes as well as political approaches that might not be applicable to other cities. However, the research does not declare universal applicability but rather wants to add valuable data to the contemporary discourse about culture-led urban development.

The case of Mannheim was selected based on the researcher's own experience within the city. Consequently, there could be a risk of influencing the research's results due to "supposed subjectivity of interpretation" (Bryman, 2012, p. 509). Although this personal relationship with the research subject might have stimulated the thesis's motivation, the awareness of this potential risk has already been present. It has maintained the right amount of distance.

Since the technique of semi-structured interviews was chosen, it is the responsibility of the researcher to get the answers to the topics one would like to address in the research, and due to the inexperience with qualitative interviews, one has to be particularly aware and attentive. Sometimes it was challenging to direct the respondents back to the initial question because they were enthusiastic about their work and tended to digress. However, providing room for "the discussion to unfold in a conversational manner, offers participants the chance to explore issues

they feel are important" (Longhurst, 2003, p. 107). The thesis' initial aim was to capture the individual perspective on Mannheim, its cultural and creative landscape and urban development. Consequently, particularly in those moments, essential and valid statements were made by the respondents.

Finding the appropriate interview partners presented another challenge. Although the initial commitment of the potential respondents did not depict a problem, some never responded again. One interviewee who would have been a beneficial candidate because of his involvement in creative placemaking has canceled the appointment on short notice at the end of the interviewing process. Consequently, the group of interviewees had to be restructured, and not as many respondents could be interviewed as aspired. This event certainly impacted the time management of the thesis and had worked against the aim of including an even more diverse set of respondents.

4. Results

4.1. An inventory of Mannheim's cultural capital [1]

4.1.1. Introducing Mannheim

As a first step, an introduction of Mannheim will be given because in contrast to other researched cities, it is a rather less-known German city. A few background facts are furthermore essential to comprehend and assess the development of the city in relation to the cultural and creative landscape.

With its around 320.000 inhabitants, Mannheim lies in the southwest of Germany in the state of Baden-Württemberg. It is close to renowned cities like Frankfurt, Stuttgart, as well as Heidelberg, and the French border is not too far away. Due to its excellent position, including the two rivers Rhine and Neckar, it has a good transport connection in every direction and consequently presents a central transit point in Germany.

Mannheim was once a residential town, which is still recognizable because of the baroque castle. This also explains the extraordinary arrangement of the streets in the city center, as they are ordered in quadrats all leading to the castle of Mannheim, which today hosts the renowned University of Mannheim, mainly known for its economy and marketing studies.

With its harbor, the city became an industrial center in the late 18th century, which has generated several inventions, e.g., the two-wheeler. Due to its possibilities of industrial work

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[1] The information was mainly taken from the website of the city of Mannheim: www.mannheim.de

Mannheim attracted many guest workers in the 1960's, in particular from Turkey and Italy, a development which influences Mannheim's urban society until now.

Today's Mannheim is characterized by its multiculturality: 45,6 % of the inhabitants depict a migrant background. This diversity is embodied in the city's identity and defines the actions, the landscapes, the offering, and many more aspects of urban life. Recently, the municipality has published a *Declaration on Living Together in Diversity* which manifests "coexistence in a spirit of openness and understanding", "equal rights", and the importance of "working against discrimination" (City of Mannheim, 2020a, pp. 1-2).

Unlike other post-industrial cities, Mannheim still has industry left, particularly chemistry and industrial production such as engines, although it is not as much as it used to be in order to define it as an industrial center. However, in the last decades Mannheim has focused on other areas and pursues new targets. The city has established a reputation for being an ideal center for startups and innovation and has even been evaluated as an excellent place with helpful conditions to start an enterprise (Kollmann et al., 2020). Also, the cultural and creative sectors play an essential role and have developed in the last years, which will be precisely examined in the next part. Furthermore, the city strives for digital innovation and is Smart City since 2020, Mannheim, intending to develop its digitalization progress for a sustainable future (Smart City, 2021).

Since the thesis discusses the urban development of Mannheim, one should take a look at how the city is planned and tackles development. Urban development has been an essential topic since the second world war when a significant part of the city was destroyed by bombs, and the urban center had to be rebuilt, which is noticeable by the city's rather brutal architecture in some parts of the city. By now, the municipality commands over its own 'geoinformatics and urban development' department, which above all constructs planning concepts for an organized development.

As shown in Figure 1, the relatively compact structure of the city depicts the 17 municipal districts of Mannheim and emphasizes that the city center, where the main activities and offers take place, is made up of only four districts: Neckarstadt-West, Neckarstadt-Ost, Schwetzinger Vorstadt, Innenstadt/Jungbusch. The rest of the city is made up of suburbs, which in most cases have their own center, however, only with minimal facilities.
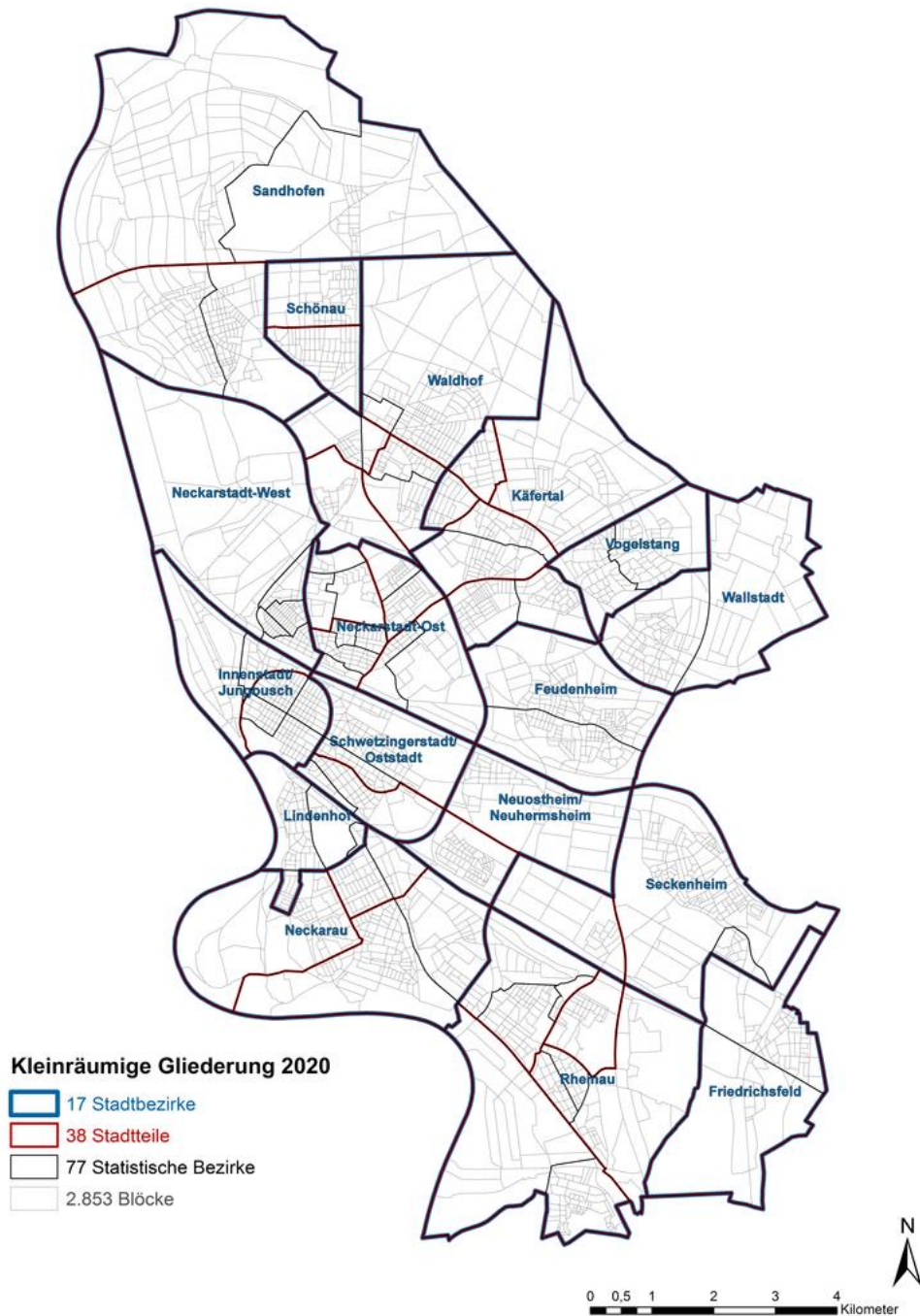
Figure 1 *Map of Mannheim (City of Mannheim - Department of Geoinformation and Urban Planning, 2020)*

An essential point in the frame of urban development that has been present in recent years is the theme of conversion areas. When the American forces left around 2012, the city of Mannheim suddenly commanded around 500 hectares of new space. When cities attain their total capacity, the remodeling of the additional areas presents a welcome possibility to build and provide more housing space. The municipality aims to create attractive, climate-ecological,

and sustainable utilization of the spaces and has several projects planned. A downside is the location since the conversion spaces are situated somewhat outside the city center and do not provide an ideal infrastructure or public transport. The city of Mannheim offers its citizens the opportunity to take an active part in the design process. On the website https://www.mannheim-gemeinsam-gestalten.de, citizens have the possibility to give a vote out of a selection of possible projects for the spaces.

Generally speaking, one could say that Mannheim is a compact city where development has tradition and diversity is a crucial value. How the cultural and creative industries are involved in the city and its development will be delineated in the following.

4.1.2. Mannheim's cultural capital

David Throsby suggests that when it comes to urban growth and renewal, one should "think of cities as collections of capital assets" (2010, p. 133). In order to evaluate Mannheim's cultural capital, an inventory of the tangible and intangible assets was conducted. UNESCO describes Mannheim as "a major regional center with a rich cultural offering: Mannheim is recognized for its institutionally established cultural sector (museums, theatres, festivals, cinemas) and lively independent creative scene" (UNSESCO, n.d.). With regard to the thesis scope, not every single asset is delineated to its full extent.

4.1.2.1. Intangible assets

An important factor of cultural capital is if and how municipalities appreciate the cultural and creative industries and shed light on the city's priorities. Consequently, policy papers and reports and the website of the city of Mannheim were examined in order to discover Mannheim's intangible assets.

An essential intangible asset is the cultural and artistic tradition within Mannheim which has a long history. Already when it was a residence city, there was a particular artistic and cultural interest noticeable. During its glory times, the court had a preference for the belle in life and has welcomed famous writers and musicians like Schiller, Goethe, and Mozart. It is even the founding place of the 'Mannheim School' of classical music technique. Even though Mannheim has established into an industrial center, the devotion to the arts and culture has never vanished entirely. Still today, Mannheim sees itself as a city of arts and culture. As a consequence, the city of Mannheim recognizes the funding of arts and culture as its responsibility and obligation which is underlined in the funding guidelines (City of Mannheim, 2020b).

In 2015, the city published *Modell Mannheim*, a paper that depicts a modern city's strategic goals. In here, the 6th goal states that Mannheim is in the leading group of particular cultural and creative-economical characterized and perceived cities. Consequently, a dominant goal is to strengthen the cultural and creative industries (City of Mannheim, 2015, p. 26). Back then, the city of Mannheim had initially planned to apply for the UNESCO's program 'Cultural Capital 2020', which was shelved in the end.

A step in the direction of being a creative city was initiating NEXT MANNHEIM, handled as a subsidiary of the city, that refers to itself as a "startup ecosystem for urban innovation" with an interdisciplinary approach (NEXT, n.d.). Besides tech startups, their focus lies primarily on the cultural and creative industries and their connection to urban development. One of their areas of responsibility bears the name *Kulturelle Stadtentwicklung* (cultural urban development) and consequently emphasizes their potential role as an interface. *NEXT* regards Mannheim's "exciting cultural landscape" as a key advantage for development and innovation (n.d.). Within the context of *NEXT,* Mannheim furthermore was the first German city to hire a night mayor to provide an advisory intermediary between the clubs, gastronomy, concert venues, the inhabitants, and the municipality. Especially the position of the night mayor underlines that the city has recognized the importance of a certain sense of place and therefore requires intermediaries who can capture the urban society's concerns.

Outside of the networks provided by the cities, in the last years, artists and creative workers have joined forces in networks and initiatives. Examples are the *Bündnis für Kulturschaffende,* an association for creative workers, or *HIER Netzwerk*, a cooperation of independent performing arts organizations.

Another immaterial feature that shapes the cultural capital of Mannheim is the UNESCO title creative city of music since 2014. The membership report from 2018 illustrates how the city supports and handles the cultural and creative industries to justify the title. Within the report, the city of Mannheim states that its "approach to sustainable development through culture transcends genre, orchestrating parts from all sectors and fields" (City of Mannheim, 2018, p. 2). Furthermore, the municipality also aims to "democratic processes for urban development and strengthen participation in processes that promote cultural activities" (City of Mannheim, 2018, p. 9). Finally, the report emphasizes that the aim as a creative city is to act global and that regional and local connections play a vital role.

As already mentioned, Mannheim is characterized by its diversity which is also reflected in the arts and culture. Cultural participation and inclusion are significant claims in Mannheim's political agendas and cultural organizations which becomes particularly apparent in the report

Leitbild Mannheim 2030, a mission statement that is oriented towards the United Nations' 17 sustainability goals. Every citizen should have the possibility to attend cultural activities in an easy and low-threshold way (City of Mannheim, 2019, p. 13).

Throughout the various policy papers, particularly those published in the last years, the goal of sustainable development has become predominant. The sustainable development goals in particular present a guiding force. In this process, the city of Mannheim sees culture as an essential driver of sustainable social coherence and coexistence (City of Mannheim, 2018, p. 11).

4.1.2.2. Tangible assets

The following part gives an introduction of the cultural and creative industries of Mannheim by introducing cultural organizations.

As mentioned above, Mannheim is a creative city of music, and consequently, music seems to be an essential part of the cultural activities. *Alte Feuerwache* is a concert venue where musicians of very different genres perform; also, the venue *Capitol* hosts concerts and musicals.

Moreover, The *SAP Arena*, which generally functions as an ice hockey stadium, is the ideal venue for bigger acts, such as Metallica, for example. One can also find smaller stages throughout the urban city where particularly less-known acts have the opportunity to perform. Furthermore, music festivals of various genres take place throughout the year. There is the renowned *Enjoy Jazz Festival*, the alternative rock music festival *Maifeld Derby* or the popular techno festival *Time Warp*, which invites music enthusiasts from all over Germany and Europe every year.

Additionally, universities play a significant role, as they offer education in music in particular and encourage the creation of human capital. The *Popakademie Baden-Württemberg*, as the name already suggests, teaches popular music disciplines, such as producing and songwriting, and also offers music business programs. The *Mannheim University for Music and Performing Arts* educates students in the more classical music fields, such as orchestra and opera singing, as well as dance.

Although Mannheim is considered a creative city of music, other cultural and creative sectors are variously represented as well. One of the oldest institutions in Mannheim is the national theatre that was founded in 1777. Despite the alternating location, it has remained as one of the first municipal repertoire theatres in Germany that attracts visitors from outside of Mannheim due to its excellent reputation. The second organization of comparable size is the

Kunsthalle, a museum for modern and contemporary art, displaying works from Manet to Francis Bacon, which has characterized the city for more than a hundred years with the aspiration to present a space of art for everyone. Both cultural institutions are handled as municipality's inhouse-organizations which implies that a main part of the organizations' financial support comes from the city itself. They certainly present an essential part of the city's cultural capital and offering and act as cultural flagship which attracts art lovers from outside the city.

Although those institutions are the first to appear when searching for cultural activities in Mannheim, the city has a lot more to offer. Besides the big national theatre, independent performing arts institutions that long from classical drama and experimental performances to cabaret, can be found. Mannheim also has a few galleries and two more museums, *Reiss-Engelhorn-Museum*, which has a historical concentration and *Technoseum*, which has its focus on science. Also, photography and film find their place in Mannheim, particularly with the festival *Biennale für Aktuelle Fotografie*, as well as the international film festival.

In the last years, the public space has been frequently utilized to display the cultural and creative energy of the city. The open urban art museum *Stadt.Wand.Kunst* allows artists to realize their creativity in urban space and eliminates the elitist barrier that frequently surrounds arts and culture. It allows full cultural participation and offers the possibility to enjoy art without having to enter a particular building (Stadt.Wand.Kunst, n.d.). The art displayed is mostly street art and is more accessible for a broader mass. Another exemplary project that enlivens the cityscape is *ALTER,* which refers to itself as an open space that is neither exclusive nor profit-oriented (ALTER, n.d.). The place is situated close to the river Neckar and offers sporty and cultural activities and events. It also entails a kiosk and attracts a diverse audience.

Another significant tangible asset is the creative and cultural incubator buildings that are situated in the urban center. The first one built in the district Jungbusch is the *Musikpark* which was initially an incubation center for music organizations in particular and hosts a diverse set of freelancing musicians, agencies, sound studios, and many more. Inspired by this success, another creative industry center can be found only a few meters away. *C-HUB* calls itself an incubator for Mannheim's new working class. Concerning the enterprises and freelancing creatives who utilize the center's accommodations, this new working class represents creative workers of the creative industry sectors architecture, fashion, design, film, and modern visual art. In another part of the city, Neckarstadt-West, another incubator center is *Altes Volksbad-Creative business*, which addresses "creative startups who want to get busy" (Altes Volksbad, 2020). It hosts a concert location and is the home of enterprises in the area of music, fashion,

design, film, food and journalism. All of those incubator centers are interconnected in the sense that they are all initiated by subsidiaries of the municipality of Mannheim.

Concluding one could say that Mannheim already depicts essential cultural assets to further build on in terms of culture-led urban development. How this is experienced in practical implementation will be ascertained in the following interviews.

4.2. Interviews

The following part of the chapter will display the findings of the interviews. In order to preserve the anonymity of the respondents, they are referred to with numbers. The list of interviewees, the interview guide as well as the coding table can be found in the appendices.

4.2.1. The perception of the city

When asking about the city itself, it was quite evident that Mannheim is generally perceived as a diverse city: "diversity is the DNA of Mannheim" (interview 6). Interviewee 9, who is a fundraising manager of a cultural venue and a project manager of an open urban art museum, referred to Mannheim as a melting pot that offers many possibilities:

> "So especially when it comes to people of the city who are so diverse and multicultural in their views and approaches, there is great potential for new things here. In many respects, that's really what's interesting about the city." (interview 9).

Respondent 2, a freelancing musician and board member of an organization for jazz musicians, observed that this also brings a certain "openness to the city", which is one of the essential advantages of living and working in Mannheim. Furthermore, interviewee 1, a fine artist, appreciates the city for its "down-to-earth" attitude, which other respondents confirmed.

When asking the interviewees why they decided to become culturally or creatively active in Mannheim, most mentioned practical reasons. Interviewee 7, a visual and scenographic artist and graphic designer with an own enterprise, acknowledged that when she moved to the city for her communication design studies, she was not aware of the culture and creativity happening in Mannheim. Also, respondent 8, the head of an independent performing arts institution, just wanted to leave because of the lack of cultural activities after she finished school. However, she suddenly recognized Mannheim's cultural value when she moved back to the city. Particularly the advantageous location of the city was mentioned multiple times. Closeness to the southern part of Germany as well as to cities like Frankfurt or Cologne and the proximity

to France increases the attractivity of Mannheim as a location to live in (see interview 2; see interview 7).

Respondent 8 described Mannheim as a city that is not on anyone's radar and that many people refer to as a "filthy city which is ugly". Respondent 11 mentioned that from the outside, "Mannheim is often laughed at […] and has a strange image". However, respondent 8 assessed this unobserved status of the city as something valuable:

> "I also think that something so unobserved gives culture a tremendous boost [...] I don't think that would be possible anywhere in a city where you're under such observation, where there's also a lot of competition [...]. So, Mannheim is not this designated super city. That gives you a lot of freedom."

She furthermore mentioned that when young creatives, who perform in her venue, or even her friends visit Mannheim, they are surprised about the number of cultural events and are enthusiastic about its unpretentious attitude and open community. Many respondents underlined the potential of the city. Interviewee 4, who is the night mayor of the city, emphasized that the city offers room to "design it a little bit by yourself, because not everything is already done like in Berlin, for example," which makes Mannheim particularly attractive for creatives. Also, respondent 6, who works in the department 'Kulturelle Stadtentwicklung', noticed that "compared to other cities, Mannheim simply still has potential for development". Mannheim is experienced as a cultural and creative city by all interviewees. For respondent 10, the initiator of an association for creative workers, DJ and event promoter, this applies for "both the producing and the consuming point of view". Within this context, all interviewees acknowledged UNESCO's creative city of music-title the city holds since 2014. However, the reaction towards the title was torn. Some respondents do not see the necessity in the title:

> "I don't understand the purpose. Creativity exists wherever there are people. In this respect, every city is probably a creative city. I've never dealt with this, but I assume that because it's happening everywhere, this title, it's somehow important for cities to promote themselves." (interview 8)

Also, interviewee 9 endorsed the benefits of the title, such as networking or funding possibilities, "but that's all it is". Nevertheless, for respondent 11, who is an active member in an association for creative workers and works in the independent theatre sector, the title "is a clear result of the fundamental urban policy decision of "We want to be a creative city".

Respondent 3, a self-employed concert booker and promoter, described Mannheim as "an industrial and workers' city, now transformed into a cultural and media city, which is also reflected in the cityscape". Nevertheless, some respondents remarked that Mannheim is still a working-class and industrial city. Interviewee 6 referred to Mannheim as an "old industrial city, while it still has a manufacturing industry". Respondent 4 emphasized that the working-class and creativity do not exclude themselves:

> "Of course, it's still a working-class city, but I think it's quite a nice mix between a working-class city and a cultural city. That actually complements each other quite well. This working-class city image gives a new creative impulse as if the city was only a creative city [...] So, then it is more diverse and thereby not one-sided, just a healthy mix."

4.2.2. Capturing the cultural and creative landscape

The high diversity of the city was reported to be also reflected in the cultural and creative sector and offering, which was highlighted by responder 11:

> "There's something metropolitan about the diversity that this city offers culturally. Basically, every subculture, every scene is somehow represented here as well as every genre, and I find the range of cultural offerings above average compared to other cities of this size that I know." (interview 10).

However, the fact that it is not such a big city and its compactness of the cultural and creative scene presents an advantage for creative workers. Respondent 7 reported that as a creative professional in Mannheim, "you are special and more in focus; consequently, you are more visible". In this context, respondent 8 mentioned that she hopes that "Mannheim will never be culturally oversaturated because that could also cause a bit of damage.".

Some respondents experienced music to be the most popular sector in Mannheim due to the UNESCO title. Interviewee 1, a visual artist who is active in Mannheim for decades, recognized that "the music sector plays a significant role in Mannheim and in this field, Mannheim has an excellent nationwide reputation and actually, the focus in Mannheim lies on music".

However, respondent 2 did not have "the feeling that the music necessarily plays the first role". A similar thought was communicated by respondent 4, a concert promoter, who does not see much variety in musical offerings:

"Despite the music academies, the musical offer is really limited here, although Mannheim is the Creative City of Music. There are a few showpieces here, but a lot of it is simply repetitive. I think there is often a gap between the claim and the reality in Mannheim."

Interviewee 5, who works at the cultural office, indeed labeled music as a large field in Mannheim. Still, she also experiences a substantial development boost in other cultural sectors like performing and visual arts.

Those respondents who have been active in the cultural and creative scene for a longer period of time have recognized a change. Mannheim, "especially in terms of culture, has developed in a good direction" (interview 1). Respondents 3 and 8 both found a similar explanation for this progress. Since some cultural activities or organizations were not present, people had to become active and create the arts and culture they were interested in. Interviewee 7 furthermore mentioned that complaining about the lack of possibilities to work creatively or lack of cultural activities will not change anything. Consequently, she considers it necessary that creative workers make the conscious decision to stay in Mannheim because it "means a lot for the city as well as the cultural and creative industries".

By now, Mannheim "has a very strong festival and event program […] but there's also the supposed high culture with the national theater, for example" (interview 6). Furthermore, the "possibilities for creative workers have increased in the last years" since they are more offers to display art, such as festivals, for example (interview 7). Respondent 10 reported that he has met several people who were attracted to Mannheim because of the cultural scene:

"One argument why they chose Mannheim as a place to study, was that there is simply a high level of cultural attractiveness here and that this is simply an incentive for them, because they say that you get something offered here, you can do things here, and you can also actively participate if you want to."

In the view of all respondents, an essential characteristic of the creative and cultural scene is its openness. Respondent 10 stated that the atmosphere within the creative setting is rather informal, "there is no elbow behavior". The respondents mentioned several networks initiated by the creative workers themselves within the scene. *HIER-Netzwerk*, a union of independent performing arts institutions or *Rat für Kunst und Kultur*, a council for arts and culture, which acts interdisciplinary, are both associations, founded in the last years with the purpose to find a collective voice (interview 5).

Also, the more prominent cultural players in Mannheim have recognized the importance of cooperating with the independent scene (see interview 10). Respondent 9, who herself works in one of the bigger institutions, sees cooperating with the independent scene as her obligation. Such an environment makes it a lot easier for creatives who are new to the city to gain a foothold in the scene: "if you come to Mannheim as a newcomer, you will make contacts really quickly" (interview 7). However, interviewee 9 observed that "this awareness that you can only make things happen together, was not always there," but in her eyes, the cultural scene has realized the importance of cooperation and solidarity in the last years. Respondent 11 agreed: "We support each other when there is a need or try to find a common voice to strengthen our position towards the city administration." (interview 10).

4.2.3. *Cultural Policy*

The cultural policy presented a vital topic during the interviews. Interviewee 6, who contemplated the proceeding from the municipality's point of view, acknowledged that in Mannheim, the support of the arts and culture is strongly anchored. In his eyes, it has been prominent for a long time because the two most significant cultural institutions, the national theatre and the museum *Kunsthalle*, are both financed by the municipality. Still, he also underlined that the funding apart from the big institutions, has been developed enormously by now. The municipality does not only focus on the big cultural players but also, as confirmed from respondent 11, "there is an above-average willingness to enable and support even unusual projects on the part of the municipality" (interview 10).

Most of the interviewed creative professionals experienced the municipality's valuation and appreciation for culture and creative work, which is particularly underlined in the trust shown by the city:

> "I can't complain about that at all. There is always a contact person, both on the administrative side and on the political side. There's trust, and we're actually always talking to each other, so if there's anything we can turn to them and vice versa." (interview 8).

The good cooperation with the cultural office is being approved from both sides. Respondent 2 mentioned that the cultural office is "very open, keen and signals a willingness to talk". The three interviewees (4,5,6), who work for the municipality, emphasized that their role is to provide "an infrastructure […] to bring all the creative actors together and to densify it because we know that innovation takes place when people meet" (interview 6). Respondent 5 reported

that the cultural office has developed support measures to link the cultural actors and offer conditions where creative projects can evolve. Furthermore, she affirmed the importance of questions such as: "what is missing? How does creativity emerge? How is innovation developed?" and, most importantly, to include the cultural scene by asking them, "what do you need?".

Many respondents referred to cultural participation as another essential focus of Mannheim's cultural policy, which can be led back to the multicultural urban society of the city. The cultural office acknowledges its responsibility to "strengthen civil society engagement and enable participation" (interview 5). The interviews demonstrated the possibilities offered by the city to attend cultural activities despite your origin and your financial situation: "there are enough opportunities to enjoy culture here, even if you don't have the big bucks" (interview 4). However, respondent 8 regarded 'culture for everyone' as a relatively weak and unrealistic concept; it is "totally okay if someone is not interested". Also, respondent 5 stated it should be more about being open, reflecting on its own position as a cultural organization, as well as including society "because society changes and art has to change with it".

Unlike in other cities, respondent 10 experienced a "certain approachability of Mannheim's policy" which allows citizen initiatives or even as a single citizen to get involved "if you make an effort". The latter point was thematized by different creative workers. If you want to participate in certain cultural-political decisions and really change something in Mannheim, "you have to become really proactive" (interview 2).

Not every interviewee agreed with the supportive role of cultural policy. Respondent 1 experienced a decrease of support programs from the city in the past years: "as far as visual artists are concerned, there is little funding, many grants have been abolished in the course of the last few years". Furthermore, she felt that the city of Mannheim focuses on specific cultural projects but overlooks the cultural value of others. The venue of their association for visual artists entails a print workshop, which she reported to be one of Germany's most prominent ones, attracting many people who want to do printing courses. Although artistic printing techniques are even considered a German UNESCO immaterial cultural heritage since 2018, she felt that the cultural policy completely ignores the value and potential of the workshop.

Furthermore, the internal structure of the cultural office is referred to as "strange" and unclear (interview 10). It has been alluded by various respondents that sometimes jurisdiction of cultural policy is not transparent, neither for the creative professionals nor for the administrative level of cultural organizations. Interviewee 9 said that in some cases, no department of the municipality feels accountable and she is sent from one office into the other.

Moreover, respondent 2 reported that he would wish to see "more transparency and explicit communication from the municipality" on how the selection for the Culture Committee, for example, proceeds. However, there was a general understanding and acceptance that this is how the municipality works and that especially those structures always need more time to progress: "they're only human, too, and we humans usually need learning effects to keep us moving" (respondent 11).

Additionally, the importance of the personality and interests of politicians was highlighted. The mayor of the city, Dr. Peter Kurz was referenced as someone who appreciates the arts and culture and recognizes their importance for the city's development:

> "We are fortunate to have Mr. Kurz as a mayor because he is naturally committed to culture. You can see that in the events he attends and, in the organizations, where he is the patron. There is no opening where Mr. Kurz himself is not present, which means that the appreciation of culture is important." (interview 1)

4.2.4. *The role of culture in urban development and regeneration*

The fact that cultural and creative sectors play a vital role in the urban development for the city of Mannheim noticed respondent 9 in the establishment of the department *Kulturelle Stadtentwicklung* and other engagements that show that "the city is on the right path". Also, interviewee 10 observed culture's increasing value "as the city, in general, realizes that creative people are needed for a flourishing urban development".

However, many respondents had not had a set definition of what cultural urban development means and did not see themselves as experts in this field (see interview 5), or referred to it "as a rather open term" (interview 8). Respondent 8 viewed the term with mixed emotions because "with the term culture-led urban development, I am always afraid that someone will make decisions on paper about what a district needs in order to function culturally."

Most of the respondents talked about urban district development and regeneration instead of referring to the whole city. Reportedly, culture played a vital role in the areas with a negative image, the so-called no-go zones. Respondent 6 named cultural and creative industries as a helpful accompaniment for urban regeneration with an example in the context of Mannheim with the example of Jungbusch:

"A district that was very structurally weak, had a lot of problems, even a high crime rate. We had all the problems that a problem district brings with it. And then, bit by bit the city began to install cultural and creative industries here, so to speak."

The importance of culture in those areas was further emphasized by respondent 4. In his eyes, with the help of cultural projects, musical play in particular, negatively connoted places could be destigmatized and turned into places where people want to spend time. Respondent 9 confirmed the importance of establishing a district culture and pursuing a "culture-led urban development where the arts and culture increasingly go back to the streets and the public" because "then you also get a self-perception or a self-identification with the district, with art itself".

Interviewee 1 mentioned that their cultural association, located in a municipality-owned building, was supposed to move to Neckarstadt-West in order to "bring this lighthouse function to a district that has a rather bad image". However, as they strongly disagreed, the city discarded the plan. Additionally, some other respondents thematized the city utilizing the arts and culture as an image tool:

"I always have the feeling that the cultural institutions are used more to present the city's luminosity to the outside world and less to provide this deep cultural service, so to speak. In other words, it's often more about image than about the value of culture itself." (interview 2)

The big cultural institutions are primarily referred to as flagships, especially utilized for external effectiveness and an overall image (see interview 2). Interviewee 3 noticed a similar observation, particularly in the context of urban development where real estate agencies actively advertise with the creative scene of Mannheim:

"Well, the cultural scene is always taken as a kind of figurehead and is highlighted [...] So the cultural and creative scene is also used as a location factor and instrument. Whether one allows oneself to be instrumentalized for urban development is something that everyone has to decide for themselves."

The behavior of the cultural scene was also picked up by respondent 10, who said that in his experience, the cultural and creative workers in Mannheim have a particular pride and an attitude of "if I don't feel like it, I don't participate".

Furthermore, respondent 10 also mentioned the importance of culture in the development process of recently acquired conversion areas.

> "I mean look at the example of Franklin. Thus, it is a completely new part of town that is being developed, and the fact that people are already thinking about where culture can take place here during the planning stage is something that I think simply shows what's going on."

However, interviewee 8 was somewhat disappointed about the realization on the conversion areas, stating that the ones that are "city-bound, like Turley" offer "only fancy apartments". Hereby, she furthermore underlined that within the framework of culture-led urban development, she is always in favor of "coming into being and not for planning"; a thought which was also shared by respondent 2, who views it critically when municipalities plan from the top instead of letting it emerge naturally.

When it came to the economic purpose of the cultural and creative industries within the urban development, it was not referred to as a significant or negative factor. Respondent 1 mentioned that certainly arts and culture have to be somehow profitable, which becomes present in the figures such as the number of visitors, cultural organizations publish. However, she also acknowledged that there is an awareness that not every exhibition or performance is pleasing for many visitors but has a high value because of its artistic innovation and, consequently, has eligibility. Respondent 4 argued that the commercialization of culture is "per se not bad [...] people also want to earn money with it" and that Mannheim represents a good mixture of "commercialized culture and independent culture". Respondent 5 stated that it is the city's responsibility not to force a production logic onto the cultural sector due to economic benefits. The cultural office has to give a certain freedom to experiment artistically to encourage the flourishment of creativity, which will have a positive and sustainable impact on the city.

4.2.5. Creative clusters

When asking the interviewees about potential areas with a high emergence of cultural activities and creative workers, almost every respondent mentioned the district Jungbusch, some also Neckarstadt-West. As mentioned before, those two quarters have been no-go areas but now are considered to be the hip areas of the city: "Jungbusch is the so-called in-quarter where the most of the activities happen, as well as Neckarstadt" (interview 2). For interviewee 6, they are also the "most attractive for the creative and cultural workers because they are diversity districts".

The initial step in the establishment of the creative cluster Jungbusch can be led back to the municipality of Mannheim. Interviewee 1 and respondent 2 have recognized the change after the first creative incubators, handled by the city of Mannheim, and the Popakademie have opened. Also, respondent 7 experienced a massive change connected to the creative incubator:

"The change came with C-HUB, something happened there […] and now there are somehow all those hip restaurant and cafés conjured out of nothing" (interview 7).

The excellent infrastructure and the networks encouraging creatives to settle and connect are the reason and an advantage for settling down in creative clusters. Respondent 7 emphasized the good support system within the network as the people "always check on you […] and help you". Furthermore, the proximity within the cluster to other creative workers of different areas is a vital advantage because "in this way, communal projects arise" (interview 7). Especially the effortlessness of connecting and networking was highlighted by respondent 4 as well:

> "Particularly at Jungbusch, down at the canal, you can easily get into a conversation with creatives and you can exchange easily and also collect new impulses and develop new ideas. That is what I find the most important" (interview 4).

The infrastructure certainly has an effect on the creative people working there and on the consuming part.

> "It's always kind of an overall event. One goes to the cinema and afterward goes for a drink or goes out for dinner and afterward visits the theatre. The infrastructure has to be conceived together. And consequently, the culture has settled down mainly in those areas." (interview 5).

This statement already hints at the gastronomical offer of the creative cluster. Respondent 10 reports that "Jungbusch's focus is completely on gastronomy" and interviewee 7 mentions that many "cafés and restaurants have emerged and have also increased the quality of life". She also underlines the benefits of the gastronomical offer for creative workers because "you can have meetings there, have lunch or dinner, or just drink a coffee in your break; it has something from a small Berlin". This atmosphere seems to have an external impact as well. Interviewee 1 noticed that by now, Jungbusch "attracts a different audience with all those bars; Friday and Saturday night it is a nightlife district"; also, respondent 3 referenced it as an "audience magnet".

Nevertheless, this particular affection to the district is not necessarily endorsed by everyone. Interviewee 3, a concert promoter and booker, criticizes the concessions made by the municipality as they shortened the blocking times for that area which were not necessarily applied in other parts of the city where he had his own concert location but did not experience any admissions and consequently, had to close the venue. Also, respondent 2 argues that not many cultural activities are happening in the other parts of the city. The live music clubs that once existed there are closing due to the lack of followers.

However, it is important to mention that for respondents 5 and 8, those clusters do not play the most crucial role, at least not in their reality, because Mannheim is not big enough to really evaluate this or see the city as clusters. Furthermore, particularly respondent 5 emphasized that important cultural activities are happening in the suburbs as well, even though on a more amateurish base. Nevertheless, she underlines the importance of variety in the cultural offer of a city:

> "I don't see it like something is clustering in one place with the consequence that too little is happening in other districts. It is exactly this variety that should be appreciated" (Interview 5).

4.2.6. Negative tendencies

Some of the respondents have noticed the regeneration processes also produce negative tendencies. Respondent 4 says that people want to move to a "cultural district, where a lot is happening", but "when the rent is rising, and you cannot afford to pay it anymore, some have to move away and cannot participate in the cultural activities there". Also, interviewee 7 noticed that since a real estate company bought out many buildings, the former residents and bar owners are no longer there. In this context, respondent 3 observed a "non-transparent mixture of interests of cultural workers with the upgrading of the district but also profits of the real estate owners".

Interviewee 1 mentioned that despite Jungbusch's hip image, there are still "problematic structures which have also remained and eventually collide with the new people and organizations". The cultural districts represent two kinds of realities that could not be more contrary:

> "There are simply strong contrasts in Jungbusch. There are these new buildings on the harbor with luxury apartments, and some businesses are also there. Then there is chic gastronomy and on the other side, of course, there is still a lot of misery and

precarious life of people who come mainly from Eastern Europe. And these two worlds sit a hundred meters next to each other." (interview 3)

In terms of living together or side-by-side, respondent 4 spoke of different zones within the district Neckarstadt where each zone entails a different clientele which "lives past each other". The change of people coming and living in this district was also detected by respondent 3 with a rather negative view:

"What I didn't like so much about Jungbusch was that people didn't appreciate the culture anymore. […] You can see a change in these places, maybe in the very beginning it was really about the music and the culture […] It has become much more superficial, perhaps less binding. The affiliations to the locations are missing. You used to be very strongly connected to certain stores because that was your own scene that met there, and that has become a bit more mainstream and has definitely changed."

Also, respondent 2 called Jungbusch a mainstream area where a lot has stayed on the surface and "the people who moved there are not necessarily the creatives themselves but only normal people because it is hip to live in such an area […] and the subcultures disappeared".

When it comes to the role of the cultural and creative scene in this development, respondent 11 experiences a lot of mixed emotions within the cultural community about the urban regeneration processes in the creative districts:

"I believe when you are moving around within Neckarstadt, you cannot avoid the issue. And I would say, the creative workers are torn because it involves a gentrification process and consequently problems as well" (interview 10)

However, respondents 4 and 6 both view the cultural and creative sectors as drivers of the gentrification process. In their opinion, people are always attracted to places that present creative energy. Besides, respondent 4 recognized that now where the rent has risen in the district Jungbusch, many of his friends who are active in the cultural and creative moved to Neckarstadt because of the lower rents. However, this area now develops itself in a similar direction. That is why:

"It is an important aspect that many creative and cultural workers do not consider themselves as involved in the gentrification. Yet artists are key drivers of the gentrification process. It has to be said in all clarity. If the reflection on the own role takes place, one has already gained a great deal." (interview 6)

4.2.7. Solutions

However, instead of focusing on the negative side effects, all interviewees underlined the positive impacts, means, and projects to conquer those adverse developments. In the eyes of the interviewees, especially cultural projects play an essential role in bringing together the urban society. For interviewee 9, urban development is always connected with societal development and societal impact. If art has the possibility to be presented in public, the inclusion of urban society can take place. She has observed that a "newer thinking is to say, "hey, we need to somehow involve the population in the critical process." The importance of integrating the society into the urban but as well as the cultural development was referred to in all the interviews: "Only if you involve the people of the city, the city can develop properly. If you just predefine everything, it will not work" (respondent 11, interview 10).

Hereby, the connection to the concept of placemaking was mentioned by interviewee 6, who regards creative placemaking as a great method to integrate Mannheim's inhabitants and use the city's scape. In order to improve the situation in Mannheim, his department will even hire a responsible person for creative placemaking:

> "Placemaking is always a collaborative act. We will hire someone who develops formats for the public space together with the actors on-site, and question how can I further develop, improve, and expand the quality of stay in the public space with the stakeholders who are already there. In my view, this is necessarily a participatory and inclusive process where everyone should have a say, and everyone is also offered the opportunity to take part."

During the interviews, several projects and events were mentioned where the collaborative process is encouraged in order to avoid exclusion. In particular, *Nachtwandel* was acknowledged frequently as an occasion "where both worlds are united" (interview 7). It is a cultural event that takes place every year in the creative district Jungbusch for two days. During that time, the bars, cultural institutions, and restaurants are involved. However, the entire neighborhood gets the chance to actively participate and shape the event as everyone is invited to offer either food or art and culture in their backyards. Another project which all the participants mentioned was the project *ALTER*, which was especially highlighted as an ultimate success by the two interviewees 5 and 6 working for the municipality because of the project's good "understanding of the environment and neighborhood" (interview 5). The city of Mannheim permitted the project's initiators to temporarily use the free space culturally. *ALTER* demonstrates "how well that works when you incorporate cultural life into normal life […] how

uniting such a thing works and that people from different backgrounds sit together at a concert and listen to it" (interview 10).

Within this context, one of the main topics in almost every interview was the topic of open space ('Freiflächen') - in particular, their necessity was agreed on. As already touched on before, the outside and public in Mannheim play an essential role: "a lot happens outside […] as many people live in cramped apartments" (interview 4). Consequently, the respondents regard free areas and their cultural use as crucial in order to bring urban society together. For interviewee 9, this has a lot to do with reclaiming public spaces and creating a third place that presents "an opposite pole" to digitalization.

One of the reasons why respondent 10 and respondent 11 have founded the association for creative workers, was to demand more opportunities to utilize free and public spaces for creative and cultural purposes to "improve cultural participation" and "to use the resources which are already in the city" efficiently. They stated the necessity of "those places if a city wants to develop further". Furthermore, both respondents pictured the free spaces as an excellent chance for the cultural and creative scene to have more performing possibilities and promote young talents by giving them a stage to experiment.

Also, interviewee 4 depicted free spaces as a chance to support cultural development because when newcomers get the opportunity to test their skills, they might become professional artists or musicians themselves one day, which would also profit the city. He, as the night mayor, sees himself appointed to get into the conversation with the municipality, the cultural scene as well as other stakeholders in order to guarantee the provision of those places:

> "It simply needs much more open space. We have to stop setting up building after building in all the cities and always just exploiting new neighborhoods, but without any cultural offerings. Instead, we need to develop areas that can be used for culture. And to facilitate the processes that the creatives can play there. This simply brings the community of the city together."

A deficit in free spaces that can be used of cultural and creative purposes was also acknowledged by respondent 2, who, especially as a musician, endorsed the "creation of open spaces where it is possible to operate and organize concerts and other cultural activities".

This issue was also taken up from the municipality's side. Respondent 5 agreed that "it needs something like free spaces, where you can somehow think independently of production or perhaps only in small formats". She further complimented the potential of Mannheim's cultural and creative scene, which has many great ideas to happen on the open spaces, and stated

that the already existing projects were successful and have shown that this concept makes sense in a city like Mannheim.

4.2.8. Needs of the creatives

The provision of open spaces has already presented a vital claim that the creative workers have highlighted. However, during the interviews, some other needs were expressed that should be regarded since the satisfaction of the cultural scene presents a step towards a sustainable approach of culture-led urban development:

> "The idea of the Creative City only works if you have creative people in the city and can keep them, and in order to keep them, you need certain structures and support." (respondent 11, interview 10).

Having interviewed people from various disciplines, different improvement requests were made. A recurring point mentioned was the lack of space to either perform or create art. Interviewee 2 stated that "what is missing are enough venues, in other words, opportunities to make music, for example, live clubs". This observation was confirmed by respondent 10 as well:

> "The demand is immensely high when it comes to studio space or, above all, performance opportunities. That is a huge problem. So, I think you can ask any person in Mannheim who makes band music; performance opportunities and rehearsal spaces are always the number 1 thing that are wanted more. And that's exactly what the city has to finally understand."

Respondents 1 and 7, who are both working as visual artists, criticized the lack of appropriate atelier space. Respondent 7 remarked that her working space, which is located in one of the creative incubators, looks and feels like an office, making it almost impossible to create a creative atmosphere. For her, an atelier with a proper workshop and surrounded by other artists would be more suitable in order to guarantee a creative workflow. Interviewee 1, reported similar conditions which have persuaded her to rent an atelier in the neighborhood city Ludwigshafen a few years ago because there were more suitable spaces:

> "The studio situation is a prerequisite to be able to attract artists. There has to be affordable space, and I think that is also the city's task to provide public studios to attract and maintain an artist community. Because that is actually what brings

radiance to the city. In other words, where more artists live, of course, there is also a more vibrant culture and a development." (interview 1)

Another difficulty that was mentioned is the politician's lack of knowledge of the cultural and creative sectors. Respondent 9 mentioned the claim that those who are active in cultural policy and make decisions about the money for the arts have to display a specific competence and expertise in the field. In her eyes, a solution would be to receive cultural education, in the form of workshops, for example, on the decision-maker level to understand the area they make significant decisions on.

5. Conclusion and discussion

First of all, the analysis of the interviews emphasized that culture-led urban development and regeneration certainly play an essential role in the city of Mannheim, which gives the thesis entitlement. Even though Mannheim was once an industrial center, and partly still is, it certainly presents the right setting for culture led urban development. As already mentioned in the beginning of the thesis, the cultural and creative sectors present a welcoming way to regenerate the post-industrial city scape (see Evans, 2009). Although the research has shown that Mannheim still hosts producing companies, particularly the interviews have highlighted that, by now, Mannheim is perceived as a creative city that entails the appropriate UNESCO title and that has recognized the value of its cultural and creative scene for its urban development. Mannheim's cultural and creative scene is a diverse one. As a consequence, the city contains a significant cultural capital that presents a strong foundation for urban development strategies (Throsby, 2010, p.134). Also, the fact that the municipality has created a field of responsibility called *Kulturelle Stadtentwicklung* signifies that Mannheim is aware of the potential within the creative and cultural industries for urban development. Instead of instrumentalizing the cultural and creative industry, the municipality recognizes their value and embeds them into many strategies and developments regarding urban development. The cultural office apprehends the importance of adapting their support and planning to the needs of the creatives. Therefore, in this way, the municipality gives the creative and cultural scene the confidence and realization that they can make a difference in Mannheim.

Mannheim has a specific approach to implement the cultural and creative sectors in urban development. The interviews have illustrated that culture-led urban regeneration is mainly targeted to areas that suffer from structural problems. The city of Mannheim and the creative actors both see culture as a way to destigmatize negative and problematic places and

thus, offering the neighborhood communities more possibilities for identification. However, the interviews emphasized that it is not only about the communal aspect since the municipality depicts a "strategic use of culture as a means of upgrading and enhancing districts or cities" (Hahn, 2010, p. 53), which is particularly noticeable in the context of the creative clusters.

Like already mentioned in the theoretical part, creative clusters can present a driving force behind urban regeneration (Mommaas, 2004). The research has validated that also Mannheim relies on creative clusters as a chance for urban and district regeneration. Particularly in those no-go areas mentioned earlier, Mannheim took the initiative to incorporate cultural institutions such as creative incubators or a music education academy which were reported to be the initiating point of the districts' transformation into creative clusters. By now, especially the district Jungbusch, seems to have developed into a creative hub which not only has an effect on the neighborhood due to the settlement of cultural organization, followed by an increasing offer of gastronomy, but it also impacted the cultural and creative infrastructure; in particular, the network opportunities and the consequent advantages within Jungbusch have been highlighted by the creative workers.

Academic literature has thematized various negative tendencies that result in a creative cluster or urban development processes, which were discussed in the theoretical part. Also, the city of Mannheim depicts certain risks and challenges that might arise in the processes of culture-led urban development and thus, provides an answer to the second research question. In contemporary cities, gentrification seems almost indispensable, which could also be detected in the case study. The interviewees have outlined that, especially in the creative districts Jungbusch and Neckarstadt, gentrification is an issue with the creative and cultural scene presenting one of its drivers. By now, particularly Jungbusch has experienced a total transformation. From an area that has once been considered the blot of the city, the district has grown into a hip district that attracts a different type of inhabitants than before. Consequently, one recognizes "the exchange of people of a 'lower' status with those of a 'higher' one" (Hahn, 2010, p. 38). In particular, a young middle-class is attracted by the district due to its creative and vibrant atmosphere. This also resulted in an enormous increase in rents that has caused a fluctuation of many former inhabitants and shop or bar owners who were not able to afford the rent anymore. Nevertheless, it is not the case that only this new type of inhabitant is living in the neighborhood. However, the creative districts display two parallel worlds residing in different zones just within a few meters. This enormous contrast also reveals a specific form of exclusion happening since the two realities do not encounter frequently. The gastronomy offer

does not necessarily present a place where everyone is welcomed due to its price range and a rather fancy atmosphere.

The literature argues that the problem of homogenization could emerge in the framework of gentrification (Ritzer, 2007). Some respondents indeed have argued that the district has lost its individuality and cultural expression and, by now, presents a mainstream district where culture is rather present on the surface. Consequently, the development might have forced a commodification of culture that is not an unusual process in creative clusters (Ley, 2003, p. 2528). However, other interviews have also highlighted that Mannheim and the creative districts still demonstrate sub-cultures and experimental art aside from the more mainstream pleasing creative works. Hence, it is a question of perspective.

Literature also reports a potential loss of identity as a negative tendency. However, Mannheim demonstrates that a city cannot only either be a working-class or a creative city but flourishes in being both. The city and its inhabitants are aware and proud of the working-class identity and do not want to diminish it but rather see its potential to develop creativity.

The research has shown that the city of Mannheim is somewhat aware of the risks and challenges that could result in culture-led urban development. Especially throughout the interviews, it became evident that the cultural and creative scene and the municipality are dealing with these negative developments. Regarding the third research question, being aware that not everything works perfectly, presents a first step towards establishing a more sustainable approach to the creative city concept. Kagan and Verstraete define sustainable creative cities as "cities that should embrace participatory, bottom-up, intergenerational approaches […] and build on their capacities and resources to create tangible and intangible values for the present and the future." (2011, p. 16).

This research has depicted a similar way of thinking and strategy within the context of Mannheim. The city recognizes the importance of including the urban society into the processes and developing a collective sense of the urban sphere. Mannheim appreciates the needs and notices the value that lies within its inhabitants and cultural and creative industries and sees an importance in implementing this into their culture-led urban development tools.

Remarkably, the municipality regards placemaking as a chance to design their development strategies more inclusive and provide a participatory approach to shaping the city in a collective process which fits into the theoretical framework of placemaking. In this moment, the topic of public and free space has proven to be a vital need of the creatives and a way to enforce a collective sense of place and encourage citizens' engagement in urban development. Furthermore, those places demonstrate an excellent opportunity to bring together

an urban society in a more natural and informal way, and most likely, they also demonstrate more chances of participation because those places do not present any barriers. Throughout the research, it was evident that the municipality wants to offer more room for exchange, communication, and discussion. This becomes very prominent with their efforts to provide intermediaries such as the night mayor between all the different types of stakeholders.

Another point that has been particularly dominant in academic literature and research is the economic opportunities cities see in utilizing cultural and creative sectors in their urban development processes (Breitbart, 2013, p. 3). However, in the case of Mannheim, economic profit does not play the most crucial role. The city provides a healthy balance between commercialization and free arts and culture. An environment of artistic freedom is ensured in which creative workers do not feel under pressure to succeed economically.

There is an increasing awareness to not regard cultural, urban, societal, economical and sustainable development as separated but rather appreciate their worth as a whole. Mannheim and its cultural and creative actors acknowledge arts and culture as a valued tool to sustainability in urban development and emphasize that culture has to be given room and possibilities to develop sustainably. Furthermore, the research has emphasized that urban society should always present the base to guarantee the city's sustainable and flourishing progress.

6. Recommendations and future research

Although the artistic working people make the impression that they feel appreciated and valued and the city's approach to a creative city promises a sustainable future, there are a few points of improvement and recommendation which the municipality could implement.

Throughout the desk research and the interviews, it made the impression that Mannheim endeavors to gather specific titles, such as 'creative city' or 'smart city', they even planned to apply for the cultural capital in order to gain recognition from outside the city as well as internationally and to act in a more global competition. Nevertheless, especially the cultural and creative actors do not care much about titles and the constant comparison with other cities; they smile at it and take it for insignificant. It is the down-to-earth and unpretentious character they appreciate and which also impels them to continue to be creative in Mannheim. Consequently, Mannheim should concentrate on the scene's individuality, expertise, potential, and resources instead of striving for international acknowledgment and image improvement. Mannheim should not lose itself in this comparison and as the city already has a lot to offer. Indeed, those titles often entail monetary benefits, but that should not be the main focus in

sustainable urban development. In order to not adapt their identity and thus, might lose its authenticity, Mannheim should therefore embrace its potential and make use of its resources because that is exactly why the city is attractive not only for the cultural and creative workers.

The fuzzy concepts that were noticed in the theoretical framework can also be detected in some agendas and descriptions regarding the culture-led urban development of Mannheim. Particularly the department *Kulturelle Stadtentwicklung*, which is part of *NEXT* Mannheim, a branch of the municipality, displays vague descriptions and terms on their homepage. There is much usage of concepts found in academic literature, such as placemaking, urban innovation, and all those terms are referred to in English. The fact that the office frequently changed its name in the past was reported in the interviews as well, and thus, many referenced it the wrong name or could not remember the current title of *NEXT*. Furthermore, it became evident that their role and field of responsibilities as well as the position of the department *Kulturelle Stadtentwicklung* were not that clear to everyone. In order to communicate their purpose and goal explicitly, the city of Mannheim should draw on comprehensible terminology because concepts such as 'creative placemaking' and 'cultural innovation', are not necessarily familiar within the cultural and creative scene. This would also have a positive impact on the cooperation with the different stakeholders.

Although Mannheim tries to provide opportunities and open areas for creative placemaking, many of them seem to take place temporarily or only infrequently. Nevertheless, the municipality and the cultural and creative scene recognize the success of the projects and their positive impact on urban society's sense of identity and togetherness. As a consequence, the cultural policy in Mannheim should enable the creation of projects and creative places that can sustain in the long run. Another recommendation, similar to this, is based on the needs of the cultural and creative scene, which were expressed in the interviews. The city of Mannheim should offer more space for the creatives to either produce their art, such as ateliers or rehearsal rooms, or possibilities to exhibit and perform their artworks, such as galleries or live music stages. Only if the city's creatives have the space to work in an appropriate environment where they have freedom, creativity can emerge that profits the city´s development.

Throughout the thesis, the lack of relevant research and literature on smaller or medium-sized cities has been a prominent theme. One of the interviewees also emphasized this issue in the context of his work as a night mayor. He reads many guidelines on creative urban development, which all refer to cities such as Sydney or London and therefore, cannot be applied to Mannheim one to one. One cannot compare a city like Mannheim to a metropole such as London because its infrastructure requires different handling but "there is still a lack of

coherent analysis" (Gregs and Duif, 2018, p. 5). In order to establish guidelines for smaller cities that are not as much in the spotlight, the discourse on culture-led urban development and creative cities needs further research on a range of cities and regions that are medium or small in size. Only when capturing and analyzing the approaches and needs of those places, valid and realistic guidelines can be set up. However, every creative city should appreciate their individuality and not blindly copy other strategies but consider them as a potential guidance and not the solution to everything.

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8. Appendices

Appendix A- Interviewee list (The list with the interviewees' names is in the author's archive.)

Date & place	Interviewee	Function	Gender
17/05/2021 Mannheim	1	freelancing visual artists and board member of a professional association for visual artists	female
18/05/2021 online	2	freelancing musician and board member of an association for jazz musicians	male
19/05/2021 Mannheim	3	concert booker and promoter	male
21/05/2021 Mannheim	4	night mayor	male
21/05/2021 online	5	employee at cultural office	female
25/05/2021 online	6	employee at cultural urban development & cultural innovation office	male
27/05/2021 Mannheim	7	freelancing visual artists with focus on graphic design and scenography	female
04/06/2021 Mannheim	8	head of independent performing arts institution	female
09/06/2021 online	9	fundraising manager cultural venue and project manager of open urban art museum which the institution initiates	female
10/06/2021 Mannheim	10	founder of association for creative workers; DJ; event promoter in independent scene	male
10/06/2021 Mannheim	11	member of an association for creative workers; postdoc in cultural science; works in the independent performing art scene	female

Appendix B- Interview guide for semi-structured interviews

Personal questions
- Could you briefly summarize your function, activities and responsibilities?
- Since when have you been active in the cultural scene in Mannheim?
- Was there a particular reason for you as a cultural worker to choose Mannheim as a location, if so which one?

Perception of the city
- How would you spontaneously describe Mannheim as a city?
- Is Mannheim a creative city for you?
- Do you feel that art and culture are part of Mannheim's identity? In the past it was perhaps more industry and now culture is possibly the new hobbyhorse?
- Since 2014, Mannheim has been part of the UNESCO network as a Creative City? Was that present for you back then? Did you feel that the title influenced the cultural scene in Mannheim in any way?

Cultural and creative landscape
- Are there any particular characteristics for you that make up Mannheim's cultural scene?
- Is there a particular cultural form or creative sector that is particularly present in Mannheim for you?
- Have you noticed any changes in the cultural sector, but also in the city itself, in recent years? If so, which ones?
- Do you think that Mannheim's cultural sector and the cultural offerings attract other creative people to Mannheim?
- Do you feel that the arts and culture play an important role in Mannheim's city politics? Is its value recognized?
- In your experience, is art and culture particularly promoted? If so, which areas and how easy is it to get these grants?
- Are creative people offered to participate in certain decisions of Mannheim's cultural policy and also in terms of urban development?
- How do you experience the general cooperation within the cultural scene but also with the municipal side?
- How do you experience cultural participation in Mannheim? Do you feel that everyone has the chance to experience art and culture? And to be actively a part of it?
- Is the cultural sector in Mannheim more commercialized nowadays? What do you think about the term culture and creative industries?

The role of culture in urban development and urban regeneration
- Is urban development and district renewal a present topic for you and why? I
- Does culture and the creative scene play a role in urban development? If so, to what extent?
- Do you feel that cultural projects or organizations are used to upgrade certain places?
- Do you think that Mannheim's cultural and creative industries have an impact on the city's development?

Creative clusters
- Are there places in Mannheim that are particularly attractive for artists and creative professionals?
- What distinguishes these places? Why are they perhaps more attractive than others for creatives?

- Do you see any advantages for creative professionals to settle in such a cluster?
- Does Mannheim's cultural policy support these creative clusters?
- Do you have the feeling that the city of Mannheim makes an effort to create creative places or even initiates them?
- Do you have the feeling that these creative clusters have an influence on the environment, for example its environment?

<u>Solutions for sustainable culture-led urban development</u>
- Could the cultural sector in turn perhaps also help to counteract these negative developments?
- Are there also enough places to exchange ideas with all participants? And maybe also places to create common creative places? People often talk about creative placemaking here? Is this also happening in Mannheim?
- How can such places function? What do you have to pay attention to?
- How do you see the future of Mannheim's cultural scene? Do you think the cultural sector is sustainable as it is right now? Or what do you think is needed for a sustainable coexistence? Do you see room for improvement?

Appendix C- Coding table

Research Questions	Themes	Definition	Exemplary theme codes
To what extent do creative and cultural industries influence urban development in the German city Mannheim, and what is cultural policy's role in that process?	Creative city	How the city is perceived	- Cultural city - Identity - Working-class - Titles - Vibrancy - Image - Diversity - Potential - Values - pride
	Cultural policy	How cultural policy supports the cultural and creative sectors and what are its aims	- Funding - Agenda - Support - Cooperation - Instruments - Strategies - Politician - Cultural participation
	Cultural and creative landscape	The structure of the cultural and creative sector and their needs	- Sectors - Institutions - Activities - Variety - Cooperation - Networks - Possibilities - Freedom - Space - Values
	Culture-led urban development & urban regeneration	The role of culture in the urban development and regeneration processes	- Change - Urbanistic upgrading - No-go areas - District regeneration - Chances - Quality of life - Commerce - Flagship projects - "Stadtteilkultur" - Image - Instrumentalization - Community - Neighborhood - Success
	Creative clusters	The existence of creative clusters and their characteristics	- Networks - Hip districts - Gastronomy - Cultural offer - Incubators - Proximity - Night life - Creative atmosphere - Innovation

			- Advantages
What are the potential risks and dangers of culture-led urban development?	Negative tendencies	Which negative tendencies could result from culture-led developments	- Exclusion - Parallel worlds - Gentrification - Driver - Loss of value - Intransparency - Real estate market - Mainstream - Commercialization
How can the sustainability of culture-led urban development strategies be provided?	Solutions & Future developments	What is done against the negative tendencies in order to guarantee sustainable cultural and urban development	- Dialogue - Collaboration - Inclusion - Intermediaries - Placemaking - Public space - Open space - Civic engagement - Initiative