



**“Smart Creativity, Smart Democracy”**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Council of Europe Platform**

**Exchange on Culture and Digitisation**

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**Conference Report**

 **ARS ELECTRONICA**  **BUNDESKANZLERAMT ÖSTERREICH**  
KUNST UND KULTUR

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## Introduction

The Council of Europe together with the Ars Electronica organised the Second Platform Exchange on Digitisation of Culture, in follow-up to the request by European Ministers of Culture at their 2013 conference to engage the Organisation in this topical issue. The meeting was held within the framework of the Ars Electronica Festival (3-7 September) in Linz, Austria 4-5 September 2015 and was supported by the Austrian Government. Its title was “Smart Creativity, Smart Democracy”.

The Platform Exchange aimed at exploring how digitisation could best be used for facilitating access to and participation in culture and creativity, with a view to strengthening democratic participation. In so doing, it wanted to identify and raise awareness of recent innovative digital applications in Europe for increasing citizen participation in cultural activities, including the lessons learnt in establishing these and any good practices acquired and observed. Where possible, it further examined whether these applications actually boosted audience engagement and creativity, and whether they really did appeal to a larger public and attract new audiences.

Ars Electronica, an enterprise of the city of Linz, is a pioneering cultural institution focusing on the interaction between art, technology and society (see also [wwwhttp://www.aec.at/news/en/](http://www.aec.at/news/en/)). The festival theme for 2015 was “Habitats for the 21st Century”. The festival ensured strong visibility and a multitude of constructive and positive synergies for the Council of Europe Platform Exchange.

### 1. Opening Session: Speeches

**Mr Gerfried Stocker, Artistic Director of Ars Electronica** opened the Platform Exchange on the Impact of Digitisation on Culture, “Smart Creativity, Smart Democracy”. He extended his thanks to Claudia Luciani, Director of Democratic Governance and Kathrin Merkle, Head of the Division of Culture and Democracy for having taken up his invitation to organise the event in Linz, in the framework of the Ars Electronica Festival. He introduced the festival’s main theme of the Post City, the aim of which was to envisage how our cities would look in the future, so as to work on the social and economic dimensions of the digital revolution.

He said that a major part of the work of Ars Electronica was considering how the role of culture within the current digital transformation was a means of connecting to broader audiences. Culture was a tool that allowed us to take everyone on this journey. By reaching out to as many people as possible, by building their confidence with regard to the digital transformation, by letting them know there would be plenty of opportunities for them, the digital challenge could be turned into an opportunity.

**Ms Claudia Luciani, Director of Democratic Governance, Council of Europe**, thanked the Austrian authorities, both Federal and Upper Austria for their hospitality. It was an honour to have come from the initial discussions in Baku in 2014 to the Ars Electronica Festival in Linz in 2015. Digitisation and culture had been a major theme at the Council of Europe following the 2013 Council of Europe Conference of Ministers of Culture. The Council of Europe had been working on culture from a number of aspects: governance and policy-making, language policy, cultural and heritage protection. Digitisation

and culture was a new area for the Council of Europe. The organisation was interested in understanding current trends and finding ideas and solutions for its member States and their citizens in relation to this area.

The Council of Europe's starting point in this area was human rights, democracy and the rule of law. With regard to culture it was therefore interested in participation and access by the largest number of citizens (democracy), enhancing the diversity of cultural expression (human rights), and promoting creativity as part of what was the cornerstone of human rights, namely freedom of expression.

Two years ago in Moscow (2013), European Ministers of Culture requested that a Platform Exchange be set up, and that guidelines be drawn up to guide them in their thinking and policy making in this field. The first Platform Exchange in Baku, Azerbaijan, 2014 resulted in the Draft Recommendation on the Internet of Citizens, which was to be adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in autumn 2015. The Draft Recommendation focused on 3 chapters: modernising cultural institutions; facilitating digital creativity and media literacy.

The current platform was on the power of creativity, with the creators and artists providing the focal point for discussion. A series of questions would be asked, such as : was digitisation enhancing creativity, co-creativity or intercreativity? Was it really bringing new audiences? Could we see a link between participation, creativity and democracy? Was this new collaborative culture building trust and cohesion?

**Mr Kimmo Aulake, Vice-Chair of the Council of Europe's Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape** spoke about the Council of Europe's draft Recommendation on the Internet of Citizens. The Recommendation was a guide for European governments to reinforce access to and participation in open culture so as to strengthen democracy and it established a link between these elements. This link, while self-evident to many participants at the Linz Platform, was not yet universally embraced. Lately, however, culture's role in fostering democracy had received increasing attention, and it would seem to be emerging as a mega-trend.

It was important to place the Internet of Citizens' Recommendation in the context of current theories on democracy. Current theories could be summarised as striving at a system of governance that enabled the development of everyone's full potential, which facilitated the "good life" by allowing and ensuring space for debate and processes for reconciling, or at least accommodating, differences. Democracy did not just represent one value among many, such as liberty, equality or justice, but was the value that could link and mediate between competing concerns.

This kind of democracy could not function unless some general conditions were met: value pluralism, strong civic education, public culture and institutions supporting the development of 'reflective' preferences, and the existence of deliberative bodies and practices. Furthermore, in order to ensure everyone's rights and freedoms, rights should not be exercised in a way that would constrain or limit the rights of others.

In order to meet these conditions, the principle of autonomy had received a lot of attention in political science lately. It built on the idea that people should be free and equal in the determination of the

conditions of their own lives, be they political, economic, social or cultural. This meant they should be able to participate in processes of debate and deliberation as free and equal agents. It was precisely in the context of current thinking on democracy and globalisation with its concomitant problems where the Internet of Citizens, and therefore our draft Recommendation, took its meaning.

In this framework, and having reiterated the link between culture and democracy, the Recommendation recalled that the internet, and especially the internet of citizens, should be seen as a space for cultural diversity and value pluralism and a crucial deliberative practice.

Mr Aulake concluded with the following points:

- 1) Our democracies were under pressure. Economic depression and austerity together with the number of asylum seekers and migrants had prompted many politicians and citizens to resort to more or less openly racist and xenophobic discourse and even hate-speech. From a democracy standpoint, this meant rejecting the fundamental principles of human dignity, equality and freedom, as well as the negation of others' rights to participate in the deliberation process.
- 2) Democracy was not a static concept. It had evolved and should continue to evolve to retain its appeal and legitimacy.
- 3) The internet was a game-changer in communication, both between 'things' and people. The Internet of Citizens offered an unprecedented possibility for people to deliberate as free and equal agents and should be developed as such to foster this indispensable element of democracy.
- 4) The Council of Europe Steering Committee on Culture, Heritage and Landscape had welcomed the draft recommendation and had had an intensive discussion on it at their last plenary in June. In the committee, the work on digital frontiers of democracy had allowed the Council of Europe to give a meaningful contribution to, and to widen the scope of general protection and promotion of, human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

**Mr Jaroslav Andel, Artistic Director-at-large, DOX Center for Contemporary Art, Prague** said that as the main driver of civilizational change, digitization was bringing about contradictory trends and imbalances, eg the concentration of power on the one hand, versus economic and political decentralization on the other hand; surveillance versus privacy, control versus openness. These contradictions related directly to the underpinning of democracy. In this context, we could speak about digital justice.

Arts and culture had a direct bearing on our capacity to face today's complex issues, such as the diminished public sphere, the growing speed and complex ramifications of technological change. They had brought multiple benefits to the well-being of democracy: art invited participation and so surpassed the division between observing and doing; art safeguarded a long-term view: not only did it provide a counterweight to the fast evolving world of technology, but also helped to make sense of it. Art inspired transdisciplinary collaborations as it transgressed boundaries of specialised disciplines more easily than other human activities.

Though artists were grappling with the speed of change like everybody else, they dealt with digitisation in a non-instrumental way, reflecting on its social, cultural, and aesthetic implications, and contributed

thus to its acculturation. Artists and cultural institutions could act in multiple roles as catalysts, mediators, facilitators, and designers in developing feedback loops between bottom up and top down approaches, between citizen initiatives and government programmes.

By correlating the today's challenges with the benefits that the arts and culture provided, the following questions, issues, and suggestions emerged:

How to foster endeavours that contribute to restoring the standing of the public sphere? How to encourage sharing and cooperation over competition? How could this development be further promoted and protected by incentives and an appropriate legal framework? How could artists who explore and question the impact of new technologies be supported, and thus help balance technological innovation with its acculturation and critical reflection? How could grass-root activities that tackle both local and global issues be supported, reaching across different disciplines and institutions? How to encourage the creation of new alliances within and across different fields by sharing ideas and resources? How to harness the synergy between the arts and education at government and grass-roots levels in emphasising imagination, critical thinking and problem solving? How could we open and sustain new spaces in which innovation and creativity, art and culture were not a commodity—in which we related to them not as consumers, but as citizens and human beings? Could art help culture to innovate in ways that were not commodifications?

This was an important juncture for the Council of Europe to take a leadership role in reinvigorating civic participation when both the ethos of democracy and the unity of Europe were tested.

**Mr Dereck de Kerckhove, Professor, University of Toronto and former Director of the McLuhan Program in Culture and Technology** illustrated the importance of arts and culture for democracy using the photo of the small child, Aylan Kurdi, washed up on a Turkish beach. This photo, 3 days prior to the Platform Exchange, had had a huge impact worldwide on views on migration and had galvanised a great many European governments and people into action. He also shared insights on a project called Thinkwire, the purpose of which was to encourage communities to be involved with each other, to work together. Through Thinkwire, a person had 280 characters to make an argument to a moderated panel discussion group. The discussion was open to the general public, but only members of the panel participated in the discussion. Any problem could be discussed over a period of time in very specific terms, with no digression. In one such discussion, participants focused on migration. An artist, Ingo Gunthers, who presented his work at the Ars Electronica festival 10 years ago, created the idea of a “refugee republic”, where refugees would be given passports. While the artist had created the idea, he was not the one to implement it, such as the administrator, who had to organise passports for refugees of the Republic. Gunthers' concept was subsequently applied to the development of an Iraqi refugee village, which had 58 000 people. The effect was that they eventually began to build more solid, permanent structures, and established a community.

## 2. Session 1: Statements and Questions Round with Artistic and Digital Cultural Innovators

**Jeremiah Diephuis, Digital Media Department, University of Applied Sciences Upper Austria** spoke about digital games in a co-located gaming environment. The aim was to have people in the same physical space so they could observe each other and play together, whether they were playing cooperatively or competitively. Games were an interesting tool for learning and a tool for participatory processes and could be used for a diverse range of reasons, such as for motivating people to do sport or to take a look at their ecological footprints, etc.

Games provided a working model. Players could focus on one particular process, for example. They could play as often as they wanted without wasting resources. Games had rules; attempting to circumvent those rules was what made playing games fun. They also provided feedback loops for learning as people tried out different moves. Games also had consequences, but none that actually affected people's lives. In this way, they provided a sense of safety, because nothing could go wrong and the game could be reset. People learned that for every action in the game, there was a reaction.

They were currently working on a project called Urban Complexity which combined a co-located set-up with the topic of urban planning, and got people involved in the participatory processes.

Funding in gaming was a problem. The budget for producing commercially successful games could be anything between 400-500 million euros. For more heavy weight public game projects, the budget was approximately 10 000 euros. Games should not just be for children and should be targeted at as many age groups as possible.

Games were an exploratory tool, which enabled people to look at an issue and appreciate its complicated aspects. But then an additional activity was required for transfer to take place, eg a discussion. There were a lot of great games that enabled people to see a situation from another's point of view. In a game, people made their own decisions, those decisions had consequences and they built people's opinions as a result.

**Dominique Roland, Director of the Centre des arts (Cda) of Enghien-les-Bains and Artistic Director of the International Digital Arts Biennial „Bains Numériques“, France** spoke of three projects they were working on.

The first was a project being run by a multi-disciplinary team for autistic children. One of the activities set up was a musical workshop for the children. The activities focused firstly on the absence of body awareness, which to differing degrees was a major element for autistic children. They chose sound, music, rhythm and hand gestures and body movements, and by using an alphabet and a sort of grammar, they produced a series of musical sounds. The people involved in this work were researchers in science, in technology and artists.

The second project was designed for people over the age of 70, to give them free access to the internet. It targeted people who had never used the internet before, but who today were able to work as a group:

they could now write a blog, and they worked on certain themes. An artist acted as mediator between the creation of the blog and the participants. The group carried out research projects: for example one such project was carried out on “Egypt and the artist”. The project was not academic. The approach was an immediate approach, participants learnt by doing, rather than by learning concepts in a conventional way.

The third project was for students who did not speak French and were in a transition phase, or students in a lycée, who were unable to do maths. It used programmer-designers who worked with space. That meant working with algorithms, as well as with language and texts. A game was at the centre of this practice, where students were led into writing a text, but also worked on maths on the basis of algorithms.

**Mr Jérôme Villeneuve, Research engineer at Association pour la Création et la Recherche sur les Outils d’Expression (ACROE - Grenoble, France), coordinator of the European Art-Science-Technology Network (EASTN)** gave a presentation on the approach taken by ACROE and EASTN. ACROE had 40 years’ experience in the field and was financed by the French Ministry of Culture and Communication. EASTN was financed by the European Union under the Culture programme.

Their approach consisted of 3 steps, but firstly, it was necessary to note that the field of Art-Science-Technology, as they understood it, was seen as a discipline in itself, rather than a collection of its separate constituent parts:

1. Five internal workshops to build a common culture, by understanding and integrating the competences, the actions and the needs of each of the partners from the three separate fields of Art, Science and Technology, fields that were sometimes vastly different from each other.
2. Forty residential artists who moved between the different partners so as to produce 40 original and very different artworks, which dealt with “tangibility”. The network considered tangibility as the fundamental problem of the digitisation of creative digital tools.
3. Presentation of these artworks, tools, concepts, the partners and the EASTN artists at 8 festivals organised or co-organised by the network.

Digitisation was not just about exchanges and the internet was not its only, or even its main, tool. While the effects of digitization in this limited sense were considerable and undeniable, digitisation actually implied far more, and ACROE and EASTN believed that creative digital tools were more important, whether they were on- or offline, tangible or intangible. This raised many questions, particularly in terms of the new forms emerging from the development of these tools, their usage, how they were taught, or the changing process of creation, the modes of production and distribution and education of the public.

ACROE and EASTN believed that the concept of the Creative Digital Citizen necessarily involved the following 4 elements: research, creation, education and distribution. There was no digital creation without research into tools; research “for” creativity could not be envisaged without research “by”



creativity. It was also crucial from the very beginning to think about how and where the artwork would be distributed, and how it would be exhibited to the public. Exhibitions could no longer depend solely on the artwork itself, but must also focus on how it was created.

The traditional linear model of Research/Engineering -> Pedagogy/Assistance (notably one-to-one towards individual artists) -> Creation -> Dissemination (often one-shot) was no longer viable, and gave rise to the following questions: how should the constituent parts of the model be developed? What was left in terms of knowledge, know-how and the tools? Which science or culture was necessary? What was the citizen's role? Should s/he be confined to the end of the process as the mere consumer of exhibitions and other performance artwork or throw-away tools of technology?

ACROE and EASTN were against the traditional approach and were piloting a new European approach: one that was systematic and integrated in a non-hierarchical way the research-creation-education and distribution elements. EASTN wanted to be an organic network, involving institutions which, despite their lack of expertise in all four of these main elements, were active and looking for synergies. The aim was to acculturate the public to the Art-Science-Technology discipline so that they could "do culture". They wanted to develop an education that was creative so as to reinforce citizens and equip them with all they needed to take full advantage of the creativity available to them through digital tools.

**Ms Kata Krasznahorkai, Curator at the Collegium Hungaricum Berlin and Researcher at the University of Zurich** spoke of a project where performance artists were asked what dreams and utopias were linked to Europe's creative city – Berlin and how they would address this issue from different aspects of performance art. One of the most striking pieces was made by a Bulgarian artist in May 2015 and was called "Immigration in a box". He managed to travel to Berlin from Varna with only €100. He wanted to change cultural environment, to be somewhere where he could express himself. After a difficult journey, he locked himself in a wooden box and stayed there. The only sign of life was his breath and a camera which showed him in the box. On the box was a sticker "Handle with Care. Contains an immigrant". The only way he could keep contact with other cultural actors was via digital media. His presence was almost secured with those communication tools. For the Collegium Hungaricum - which had a one year interim period without a director - this type of art managed to generate a new, very dynamic, young audience, and more than doubled the number of visitors. But they only had very limited financial means for managing the project.

The project began before the refugee crisis in Europe. However it addressed the inner-European integration of the artist, so they had to think about it in a broader context. Democracy was based on presence, the freedom of public and private spheres. It was based on participation and interaction. Culture was indeed the basis of democracy, but democracy was not the basis of culture.

The Hungarian association "Migration aid" was a volunteer civil initiative helping refugees arriving in Hungary. They were at the core of what was called performing democracy. Solidarity and effectiveness, sharing and participation were key features, all was performed and organised via Facebook. The third most important thing for these migrants after clothes and water was a smart phone. Not only for saving their lives, but also because these were the last archives of lives that had been left behind and the

archives of cultural roots as well. In the current situation, it was necessary to reflect on cultures' relevance for European society, which was facing one of the biggest challenges since the end of the cold war. In this, the responsibility of intellectuals was enormous. Jaroslav Andel had said that the role of art was to connect ideas to feelings and emotions. In the era of digitisation, communication was based increasingly on presence and emotional attitudes, by using communication Apps stating that one was there; that one was alive. But where were the intellectuals? Who heard their voices? The internet of the citizens desperately needed their voices and presence. The instrumentalisation of culture as described by [Mr Andel](#) made its intellectuals speechless.

The goal of the Council of Europe to recognise new cultural and creative domains was crucial for the future of Europe. Arts which were explicitly based on presence, access and participation and direct interaction like performance art was one aspect of the cultural domain which had to be supported more intensely. It was an underprivileged area of culture since its economic impacts were rather moderate. The European idea would be devastated if culture did not act beyond economic reason. And if this European idea was lost, or misused as a fig leaf for political agendas, Europe would not be able to face migrants' crises in future. Because the new citizens of Europe had witnessed that smart phones saved their lives on their way to democratic ideas. But what were they going to experience once they arrived there?

**Mr Luka Frelj, Association Ljudmila, laboratorium for science and art, Slovenia** spoke of "Culture.si" which was a digital encyclopedia of Slovenian culture, run by artists for more than 20 years. It was an open access digital media laboratory, producing new media art and education. It used Wikipedia technology. It contained information on Slovenian culture, contacts, information on events, image archives with meta-data. This information was available to anyone interested in Slovenian culture.

Culture.Si had a wide public. It brought existing resources together in the Slovenian language on Slovenian culture, as well as sent information to many databases, from libraries, archives, museums, etc. It enabled people to research information that they might not otherwise find. It was a shared information space that gave a voice to all, including the marginalised media. It also enabled new ways of discussing and contextualising what others were doing.

This was a good example of a cooperation between the Ministry and an artist-run NGO. The Culture.Si approach was not glossy, but was in-depth and practice driven, covering fringe and mainstream content. It also boosted good media coverage of Slovenian culture. Creative commons (CC) licensing had been very beneficial: people could use information free-of-charge and it boosted media coverage of Slovenian artists abroad.

One of the problems for the site was how search engines work. Some work had gone into this, such as open search to standardise how search engines work, how they present their results, but this worked more in theory than in practice, so the team had to write scrapers for each database.

Another problem was that privatisation of resources led to limited public access. Content could be lost to walled gardens. Living culture was seen as underrepresented in applications such as Europeana which stored national archives.

**Ms Lucia GARCIA, Managing Director of LABoral, Spain** reported on her association that was set up in 2007 and explored the confluence between science, technology, art and society. LABoral had 4 areas of action: research, production, education and dissemination. They were interested in new forms of creation that had emerged, and she highlighted the creative and critical use of technology.

LABoral offered a cross-cutting programme aimed at all audiences. It was a place for acquiring knowledge. It was an initiative of the Government of the Principality of Asturias for strengthening technological culture and for finding new alternative models for creation. In the golden mile of knowledge and innovation, in the former Universidad Laboral, more than 5000 people studied, worked and created, integrated by private companies and institutions. Laboral provided access to the best contemporary creation - works by local, national and international artists. Co-productions were organised with highly prestigious international institutions. There was education and cultural mediation.

Laboral was a classroom for knowledge, for creators, the education community and the general public. Laboral shared knowledge through activities and developing educational tools. They had a laboratory for creating new learning spaces and organised production internships for creating educational tools. They had resources and infrastructures for creators, work groups and educators.

Fablab Asturias had digital manufacturing machines for creating real and virtual prototypes. They had a strategic agreement with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). The Fablab was part of a global network. They also had audiovisual labs, with production and research internships. These were aimed at national and international creators, developers, musicians and production firms.

The European Digital Art and Science Network (EDASN) was aimed at fostering collaboration between artists and scientists. The European Network for Contemporary Audiovisual Creation (ENCAC) focused on visual arts, sound creation and digital culture. They used multiple communication channels: web, iTunes, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and had had a great impact on Asturian, national and foreign mass media, such as CNN and Forbes.

**Ms Irene Agravina, XXLab, collective in art, science and free technology, Indonesia** spoke on behalf of a group of women from Indonesia, who all came from very different academic and professional backgrounds (anthropology, the arts, engineering and health). They were among the winners of this year's Ars Electronica prize for their project turning soya waste into a material they called "bio leather". They had set the project up following their participation in a workshop initiated by Austrian artists. The workshop enabled them to learn about electronics and technology, using open sourced software.

They were amateurs in science and knew nothing about microbio fuels before embarking on their project. The project began in their kitchens, but was not their invention. They knew that it would be difficult to find the required knowledge in Indonesia. This project enabled them to use the waste water from making Tofu which had been having devastating effects on their country's water and was generally problematic for Indonesia. Following the initial success of the project, they then asked a group of Indonesian women to make the liquid. This empowered these women financially and in terms of knowledge. The women previously had had low incomes and worked as homemakers.

The project had thus enabled them to increase the liquid's value as a means of production. XXLab were still developing the idea, and there was much left to do, such as collaborating with producers, and other creative people, to push the material to its limits. Their ultimate aim was to share their knowledge on the internet and through workshops.

**Ms Alex Verhaest, Media Artist, Netherlands**, also among the prize winners at the Ars Electronica festival 2015, worked with interactive films. Her award-winning film was activated by an actor dialling a phone no. The interaction remained binary, i.e., there was no feedback loop, so users could not affect the storyline.

Her creative work in this area had inspired her with regard to citizen participation. She related her own real life example of a train journey in Europe where clients were asked to give feedback on whether they were happy with the WC service provided, using a QR code to scan “yes” or “no” via smart phones and tablets.

Feedback loops for democracy were important: if we could notify a body of people about the state of public conveniences on trains, then by the same token voters could be informed personally of their part in the decision-making processes, or could be kept informed of the changes on the specific policies they were interested in. Closing the feedback loop would improve civic engagement as citizens would feel more empowered and ready to participate in politics. The current state-of-the-art technology enabled this in Europe. It was already being done on a small scale by NGOs, humanitarian organisations, etc. Consideration should be given to using such feedback loops on a larger scale. QR codes could be scanned, people could subscribe to newsletters on specific subjects of interest to them, social media would become a conceptual medium, rather than the personal social media it was today. She cited the example of a successful app already in use in this way at the local level– “Fix my street app”.

She advocated free internet access for all European citizens to boost the economy. However, more needed to be done to combat hate speech on the internet through education. Furthermore, search engines without commercial algorithms should be available. At present, this part of the internet was being governed by private companies. It should be public, and governments should be more present in this sphere.

**Mr Patrick Bartos, Creative Region Linz and upper Austria** spoke on behalf of the Creative Region in Upper Austria, responsible for developing the creative industries in Austria. He spoke about copyright and how for large companies this was a main source of income. New ways were being sought on how to organise co-creation processes productively. They supported open source principles for the development of processes and products in the field of design. He talked about the democratisation of design processes.

The Open Design Symposium 2012, organised by the Creative Region Linz, was designed to be an academic event but also hands on as an outreach project to get people involved. It aimed to encourage easy access to open design, common design, and common licences. Designers were paid for their designs, which became openly available for reproduction. An open furniture project was organised for 6

young designers to design stools and chairs. These plans were made available for all on the internet. In 2012/2013 this was the major furniture event for Upper Austria.

The next hands-on workshop was the copycat bag in 2013. This project required participants to bring their bag, to analyse their bag, to identify the features they felt were wrong with it, and to design the perfect bag. One woman actually made a business out of it. But anyone had access to the design. In 2014 an outreach project was set up to get people interested in design who had previously never thought about it. This year Creative Region Linz introduced tool boxes, where the creators could borrow tools for a reasonable amount of money. They could also have access to a 3D printing lab. These initiatives were being carried out in order to make creative processes more available and democratic.

**Mr Hideaki Ogawa, Key researcher of Ars Electronica Future lab, Austria** talked about the Future Innovators Summit (FIS) developed in 2014. FIS is a creative system for prototyping for the future. It set up 6 groups composed of artists, scientists and engineers.

Their aim was to

1. unlock the creative energy;
2. facilitate the creative process;
3. extract creative questions.

They were interested in capturing the idea of “other” thinking: to identify and ask the proper questions. Often in industry companies failed to ask the right questions. FIS focused on these creative questions.

The innovators devised creative questions such as “how can we encourage boldness in citizens for them to take responsibility”?

They were trying to involve industry in this process. Industry was shaping the world and making it difficult for people to act individually. It was thought the type of forum offered by FIS could be a catalyst for these kind of discussions. Fundamental questions had to be asked from different people’s different standpoints. They should be effective and address real and challenging situations. Mr Ogawa said that by working together with industry, FIS could make a better society.

**Mr Pierre-Yves Desaiwe, Head of Digital Media and Contemporary Art, Royal Museum of Fine Arts of Belgium (per Skype)** said that online collections were becoming the norm, as more and more cultural institutions put their collections online. Today people were building up archives of their lives, using tools such as Instagram, but when it came to cultural heritage, the aim was to replicate the work of art. Instagram and cultural heritage replication were the two faces of digital culture that had to be taken into account by cultural institutions. This meant that art museums must create dynamic visits to their institutions, allowing visitors to share their experience, by sending pictures etc through social networks. The difficulty was that many museums, for practical, legal and copyright reasons, did not allow viewers to take pictures of exhibits. This issue needed to be addressed. Cultural institutions also needed to ensure good wifi connections, which were not always easy to obtain in old 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings. There

also had to be a long-term scientific strategy for digitising collections, to give extra metadata extra content that had been validated by scientific staff. This could also entail legal problems, such as encountered by Europeana and the Google Art project, where images currently have copyright issues – these also needed to be addressed.

Digitising meant giving the audience things they would not normally see when they were in the traditional museum, such as was the case of *The Fall of the Rebel Angels* in the Royal Museum of Fine Arts of Belgium, which enabled people to zoom in on the different parts of the painting online. Some museums feared this approach might deter audiences from coming to the museum. One way of avoiding this was to offer this experience within the museum, giving the painting an added value.

In digitising works of art it was important to give the audience access to what was really invisible. In collaboration with a company in Paris, the Royal Museum of Fine Arts had set up a show around 2 paintings, using lots of multimedia information, videos, touch screens, so that people could really discover how the painting had been created and what was under the paint. Mr Desai wanted this to be available as an added value in museums and galleries as the audience walk around the rooms.

Today, digitised collections were the first access point to the physical collections; they were collections in their own right; they thus required a new type of curator, one that could work in the digitised world. In the Royal Museum of Fine Arts Belgium they had created a digital museum department which served as an interface between physical collection and digital work.

It was important that contemporary art museums began to acquire digital art, because there was a still a big gap between digital art centres focusing on digital art and traditional art institutions based on 19<sup>th</sup> century models.

Digital artworks shared problems with traditional ones, eg a 15 year-old digitised artwork had to be restored because the new software was unable to operate the older software, owing to different formats. High resolution pictures of artwork made 20 years ago were too old to be used today.

Art museums should embrace digital culture as a whole, and not see digitisation merely as a means for making digital copies. They were indeed physical artefacts. Museums would have to reinvent themselves and reinforce their role as digital keepers of artwork.

### **3: Roundtables: What did We Learn? Tools and Dead Ends**

The participants to the Platform Exchange divided themselves into 2 groups to discuss innovative digital cultural and creative ideas and examples that would contribute to societal transformation processes towards “Smart Creativity - Smart Democracy”; to examine to what extent innovative digital practices boosted creativity, audience engagement and participation; to examine how different actors ran and financed such new ventures and their typical cost; to assess how such innovative practices could be transferred into the context of participants’ institutional or independent work; to suggest what steps and priority actions could be taken to enhance accessibility, creativity, vitality and diversity of democratic digital culture.

In discussing the above-mentioned questions, one workshop (moderated by Josef Huber) looked at copyright, public funding of culture, crowdfunding and their effects on citizen access.

Crowdfunding should not be seen as an alternative to state funding. Current experience showed that state funding had not greatly diminished with the arrival of crowdfunding. However, with crowdfunding, people had to acclimatise to the idea of paying for something if they wanted it. Younger generations were more prepared for this.

The current copyright legislation in Council of Europe member States was seen as out-dated and the protection period too long (life plus 70 years). Artistic creation should be seen more in line with other ordinary jobs, where payment for services rendered did not extend beyond the time worked. Remuneration should not be related to the market success of a creation. Artists additionally had social roles: that of enabling other artists' artistic expression, but this was less prevalent today. Art was not just about the expression of the elite, it should be a fundamental mode of expression for all citizens.

It was suggested that in much the same way as public finance was used to finance scientific research, it should be used to finance artistic creation, since they had a similar function. Often there was not enough public money available to fund all projects, and the private sector should help fund arts and culture. The disadvantage of private funding was that it could lead to certain restrictions being placed on the artistic work/creation. But at the same time, should a creator be prohibited from selling his rights to private companies?

Public cultural funding could be dependent on a set of principles and indicators. Principles and indicators were an important part of helping people to understand what was at stake. The Council of Europe was working on indicators for assessing the democratic impact of culture, and could also look at indicators for the societal impact of culture.

Resources were still being allocated predominantly to the predigital world. The new digital developments were not being taken into account, and this hampered people's entry into the digital sphere. Audiences had changed and had become "networks", "communities", "subcultures", but this was not yet the vocabulary of the decision makers. Terms such as "smart" and "crowd" were concepts from the corporate world. Decision-makers were embracing them but had no role in forming them. By using these words, the public sector was serving the corporate world by accepting their vocabulary.

The internet was good at combatting geographical discrimination. National cultural institutions should be compelled to use the internet so that all could have access. This was obligatory in Sweden but had not necessarily resulted in low income or unemployed people having access to culture.

Today's cultural institutions were anachronisms and would not survive. They existed within a framework of nationalism and had been set up in previous centuries. Attention should now focus on developing the new tools and the new digital subcultures. Those active in digital subcultures were not the same people going to traditional cultural institutions. Cultural policy makers should also take them into account.

Culture should have a more international outlook: digital formats could inspire artistic collaborations with artists in different countries, so as to move away from the more nationalistic view of artistic creation. Language, however, was often an obstacle to this.

In the second workshop (Lee Hibbard moderating), 3 key questions were asked:

1. What constituted an Internet of Citizens?
2. How and why did it relate to enhancing democracy?
3. What could the different stakeholders do to make it a reality?

The participants agreed that digital capacity was a democratic right and Internet accessibility therefore needed to be free and technically easy for all citizens. Unlimited access to tools of expression and exchange would develop creativity in society and empower citizens. Reducing the distance between decision makers and citizens was very much on the agenda. More direct communication would eventually enhance digital citizenship.

Citizens needed a reliable platform for exchange and further drawing up of ideas and suggestions. Practical tools and the question of how to engage with audiences were key. A reliable platform needed a short and long-term roadmap. The gap between audiences and cultural networks could be closed through the use of existing professional networks to act as multipliers and enhance the impact of cultural action. A European digital network could also act as a link to existing cultural portals and contribute to inclusiveness.

Connectivity had definitely to be scaled up to serve fully the objective of inclusiveness. Other questions to emerge included: how could younger audiences be attracted? How could the challenges of migration and mobility and inclusiveness be addressed? How could audiences and their varying engagement be measured and researched? Quantitatively or qualitatively? How could they be engaged in best practices? More research on a larger sample of cultural institutions and practices was required.

There was a need for more flexible cultural programmes and it was necessary to go beyond established culture and find new trends – e.g. combining “old” and “new” culture. The Council of Europe was there to stimulate debate, offer collaboration tools and overcome mistrust between governments and citizens. In countries where culture was not well understood, people needed to come together, strengthen their networks and make a strong platform for the internet of citizens.

#### **4. Conclusions**

The Internet of citizens was important in terms of ownership and influence, in determining how digitisation worked and should work. Smart creativity, smart democracy meant adopting an intelligent approach, whereby the repetition of shortcomings and mistakes should be avoided. If it was clear that



certain provisions were not fully working, such as copyright, then they should be amended and optimised. The word “Smart”, developed by the corporate world, could also be replaced by “wise”.

Citizens should be helped to create the internet they required, rather than be told what they needed. Scientists, artists and entrepreneurs could collaborate in this and a network for the Internet of Citizens be established.

Claudia Luciani closed the the Platform Exchange thanking participants for the very candid debates and rich materials provided. Some of the topics discussed in Linz coincided with the topics from the first Platform held in Baku in 2014, albeit from different angles. The Council of Europe already had important work to base itself on, eg the draft Recommendation on the Internet of Citizens. Once these guidelines were adopted by the member States, they could be referred to with a certain authority and widely disseminated.

The Platform Exchange and the guidelines were contemporaneous processes. Now the next steps would have to be defined. The Linz Platform Exchange examined digitisation from the creator’s perspective and exposed different concerns. The Council of Europe would try to take the most relevant ideas forward from Linz in its forthcoming work programme. In view of the Platform Exchange’s multi-stakeholder approach, the Council of Europe would set up a Facebook group to maintain the connectivity between the platform participants and the organisation. The page can be accessed by Platform participants <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1626736304275115/>. The Facebook page has been created to inform the general public of these effects. An online publication gathering the various contributions to the Linz exchange would be produced by the Secretariat and put online on the Council of Europe website: [www.coe.int/linz2015](http://www.coe.int/linz2015).

In order to take the work from the Linz event forward, the Council of Europe invited prospective hosts for future Platform Exchanges to contact the Secretariat. The Council of Europe also invited all participants to use the currently draft Recommendation on the Internet of Citizens in their own environments.