Governing Urban Diversity
Creating social cohesion, social mobility and economic performance in today's hyperdiversified cities

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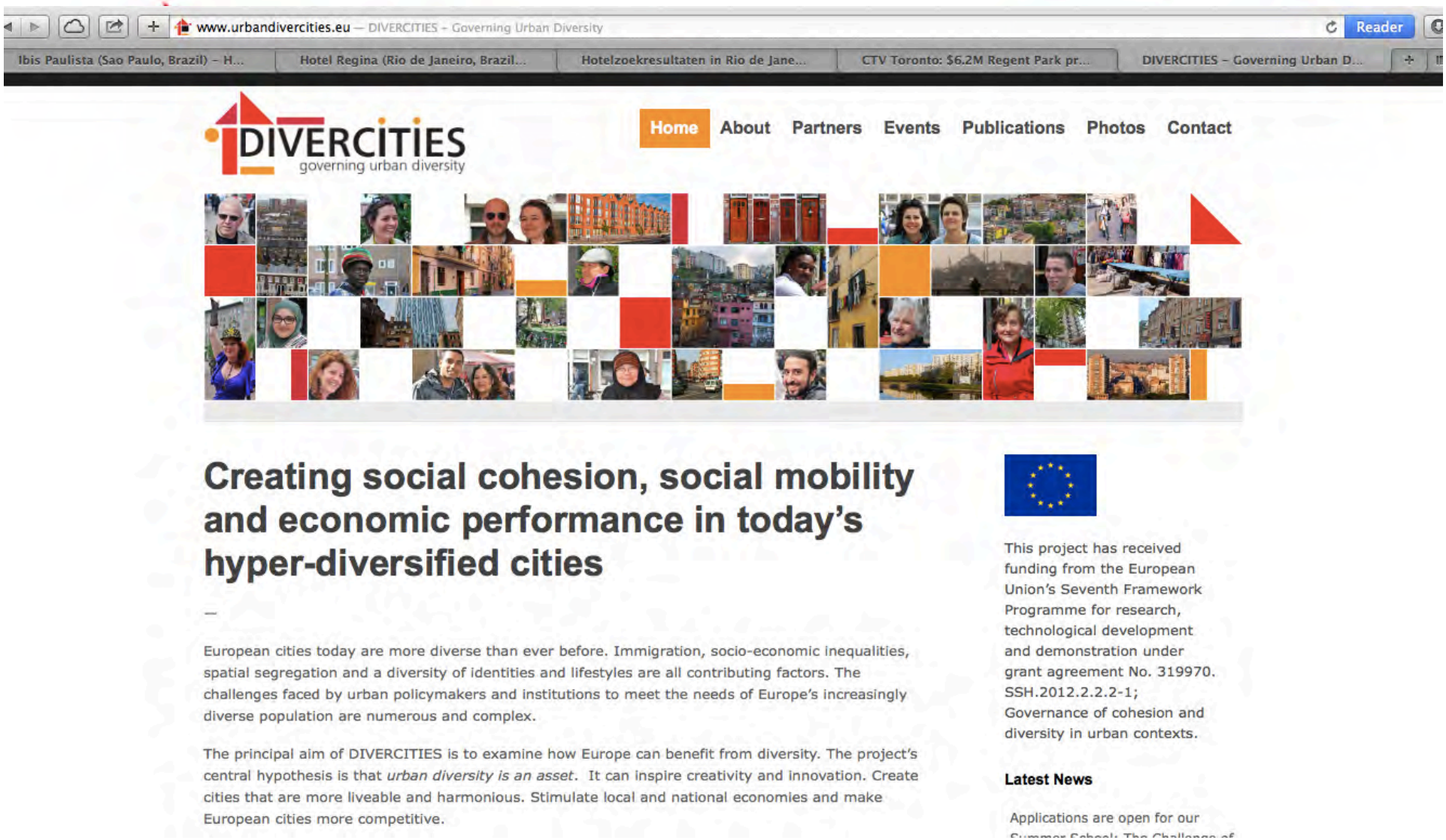


DIVERCITIES: Some facts

- EU 7th Framework Program
- 1 March 2013 – 28 February 2017
- 14 partners, more than 50 researchers
- Utrecht University as principal investigator
- Budget: M€ 6.5
- In 13 European cities and Toronto exactly the same research (mainly qualitative)
- www.urbandivercities.eu

Diversity matters…

In deprived neighbourhoods diversity may contribute to the **'internal bonding'** and **'mobility on the social ladder'** with respect to jobs, income, status and power, and **stimulate economic performance of individuals and entrepreneurs** through policy instruments that **address actual needs** and **create shared activities for meaningful encounters**

Background

- Cities have become **more diverse** than ever before
  - Individuals who at first sight appear to belong to a **fixed group may show different attitudes and behaviors.**
  - They may live in the same neighborhood, but **lead very different lives and have access to different opportunities**.

- **Classic categories** on the basis of ethnic, social and economic variables may be too simple and insufficient

- **New governance arrangements are needed** to increase communication between diverse groups and to facilitate social cohesion, economic performance and social mobility.

Diversity > superdiversity > hyperdiversity

- New **complexities** and challenges of urban diversity
- **Intense diversification** of the urban society
  - Complex and liquid urban identities beyond ethnicity and race

Hyper-diversity

A strong diversity of the population, not only in socio-economic, ethnic and cultural terms, but also with respect to *lifestyles, attitudes and activities*

(Tasan Kok et al., 2013)

In other words:

- *The **basic characteristics** do not explain everything*
- *It is not only about ethnicity or income*

Addressing the actual needs

- Understanding the **needs and capacities of an increasingly complex urban society** needs a wider framework than **ethnicity and race-based definition;**

- **Tailor-made policies** are needed to address the **actual needs** not to address needs of **assumed ethnic identities**;

- Putting people under broad categories leads to **integration and social-mix policies** both of which aim social cohesion but fail in reality.

- The central focus of the DIVERCITIES research project is to understand **the conditions under which urban diversity can positively affect social and economic well being** of individuals and groups suffering from socio-economic deprivation (Tasan-Kok et al., 2013).

Under which conditions can urban hyper-diversity positively affect social and economic well being of individuals and groups suffering from socio-economic deprivation?

- ***Social and spatial conditions*** **in the neighborhood** that help nurture diversity of residents and turn it into the advantage of the residents (socially and economically).
  - Spatial and social configurations in the area in terms of organization of space, and organization of social relations and perception of diversity.

- ***Policy conditions and governance structure*** that define the approach to diversity that help nurture diversity of residents and turn it into the advantage of the residents (socially and economically).
  - Social and spatial policy approaches that influence the dynamics at the community/ neighborhood level.

How can **policies and governance arrangements** lead to better solutions in terms of social cohesion, economic performance and social mobility?

WP1 Project management

WP2 Communication

WP3 Research and conceptual guidelines

WP4 Assessment of urban policies

WP5 Inventory of governance arrangements

WP6 Fieldwork inhabitants

WP7 Fieldwork entrepreneurs

WP8 Cross-evaluation

WP9 Handbook and articles

WP10 Policy conference and PhD-School

Fieldwork (October 2014-March 2016)

- Interviews with (300) **policy makers** and (140) **community organisations** to understand the **perception of diversity**

- Interviews with (700) residents in selected deprived and diverse neighborhoods **to understand the influence of diversity on social cohesion and social mobility**

- Interviews with (560) entrepreneurs in selected deprived and diverse neighborhoods **on the influence of diversity on economic performance**

Results

1) **Academic impact: City Books** (14 cities) and refereed academic articles

2) **Policy impact: Handbook** (New and innovative policy instruments and governance arrangements that recognise urban hyper-diversity as a **positive aspect**; increase **interaction and communication** between the diverse groups in urban society; and **increase participation** to satisfy the needs of the communities.

Fieldwork results Toronto

WP6-Social cohesion and social mobility

- **50** interviews with Jane-Finch residents

WP7-Economic performance

- **40** interviews with Jane-Finch entrepreneurs

Glamorization of diversity ?

"In some ways the glamorization is like those Benetton ads right? It is the glamorization of poverty, this is a wonderful ground for academics to come and do research! […] diversity has worked in some ways against our own interest and certainly there is no interest in governments or other groups to recognize the needs of the community….except when it comes to elections." [Juan, 45, single male from Chile]

Social cohesion and social mobility (WP6)

- To what extent diversity matters for Jane Finch residents **for their 'internal bonding' and their mobility on the social ladder with respect to jobs, income, status and power?**
  - Which elements in the neighbourhood foster or hinder social cohesion and social mobility?

Social cohesion

- Most of our respondents rely upon **networks of support** within the area in their daily lives;
- More social contacts among **diverse ethnic groups** due to the high diversity in the area but relatively less contacts among diverse **age groups or genders**;

Social mobility

- **Negative relationship** between diversity and social mobility in the area;

- **Moving out of the neighborhood for better housing or employment** is an option for a lot of people if the opportunities would emerge, despite their attachment to the neighborhood.

Fostering elements

- ***Shared commonalities*** and ***activities*** foster social cohesion;
  - *When they have **something in common** (language, personal interests or shared similar experiences) or they **do something together** increasing networks of support, social contacts, sense of community and solidarity, and shared values*

Fostering elements

- **Formal employment resources** (*bridging capital*) play a bigger role (than *bonding capital*) when it comes to **finding a job**;
- **Immigrant enclaves**, are important within the neighbourhood for surviving as a newcomer (Logan et al., 2002) but the influence of strong ties among people from these enclaves in finding a job (or a better job) or establishing a business was not too evident in Jane Finch;
- Our respondents highlighted the importance of **local resources, opportunity structures and networks** to go against systemic barriers.;

Hindering elements

- **Domination of one group** (ethnic, social or cultural) mainly caused by the **strong ties among members** of the group, has a negative impact on solidarity and cohesion across diverse groups.
  - The bridging ties between strongly connected groups are needed

Hindering elements

- **Stigmatization** of the neighbourhood and other systemic barriers (for instance **discrimination** in the job market for newcomers) still play a negative role in residents' social mobility;

- **Lack of** neighbourhood **resources**.

Economic performance (WP7)

- Under what conditions does diversity turn into the **advantage of entrepreneurs' economic performance?**
  - Which elements in the neighbourhood foster or hinder economic performance?

Importance of individual characteristics

- **Individual characteristics** of the entrepreneur and the **neighbourhood conditions** play a role in the success;
  - Education, previous work experience, personal disposition, embeddedness in strong social networks, transnational connections and awareness of market gaps;

IT'S OBVIOUS
YOU WANT
ME

2013 JNI AWARDS

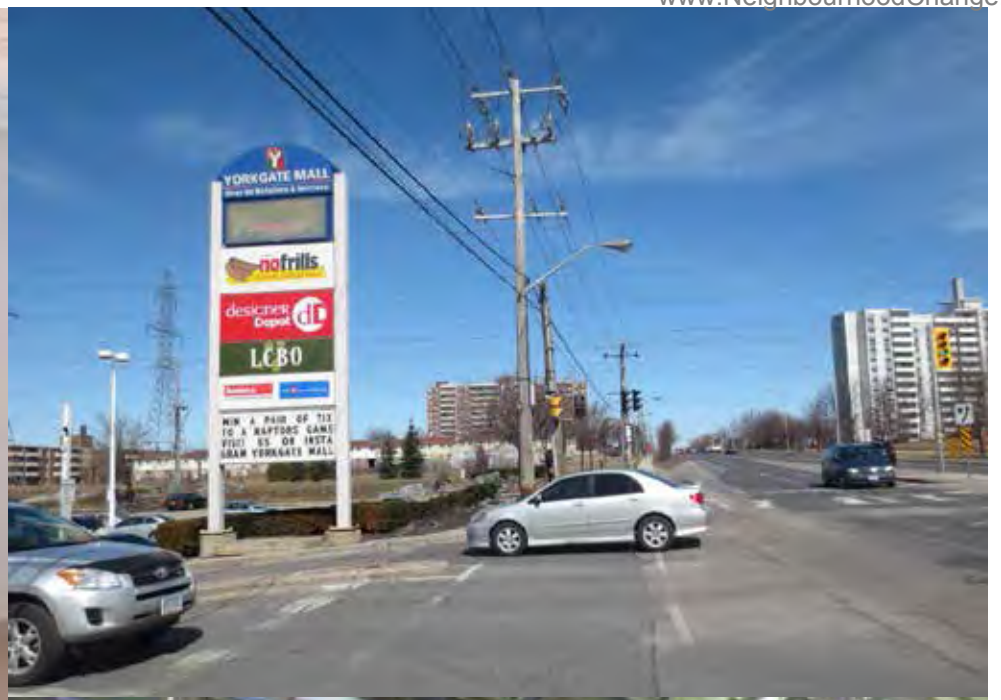
Dining Room
Electronics

Importance of *neighbourhood conditions*

- **Neighbourhood conditions** enable individuals or groups to strengthen their **creative forces** and **enhance their economic performance**;

  - **Organised entrepreneurship** provides the options to attend respective programmes and initiatives;
  - The **disadvantageous physical circumstances** negatively affect local business start-ups;
  - Arrangements **outside the institutional context play a vital role in providing opportunities.**

COMMUNITY
Every
One
Matters
Ontario's
Community
Health
Centres
HOURS


YORKGATE MALL
nofrills
LCBO

DIGITAL
PHOTO
SUBWAY
Fast Cash Advance
Pharmacia Drug

SOCIETY

- Diversity can create particular neighbourhood dynamics in which **entrepreneurs turn their creativity and success back to the community**;

- **Organised entrepreneurship support at the neighbourhood** level is fundamental to counterbalance deficits

- Need for **small, affordable office and retail space** to strengthen local entrepreneurship

General conclusions

- Policy support is needed for creating and maintaining non-conflicting relations at small-scale based on **commonalities and shared activities**;
- Policy support is needed for **supporting employment resources and creating a new image**;
- Organised entrepreneurship support at the neighbourhood level is fundamental to strengthen neighbourhood conditions and to **outbalance the strong dominance of individual conditions as being decisive over entrepreneurial success.**

General conclusions: Space matters!

- For cohesion
  - Lacking spaces of encounter and recognition
- For social mobility
  - Lacking spaces of redistribution
  - Unattractive redevelopment zone
- For entrepreneurship
  - Lacking spaces for local entrepreneurship and creativity