

## From Global North to Global South: Exploring Creative City Policy Mobilities and Their Urban Impacts

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### Abstract

An increasing number of cities of the global South are introducing the creative city policy and pledging to adopt creativity as their main developmental focus to improve the living conditions of their population. Although European cities have long used this policy (Scott, 2014), many have been unsuccessful (Rius-Ulldemolins, Hernández I Martí and Torres, 2016). Since developing countries of the Global South are participating in such international models, more research is needed to address a gap in the knowledge on the North-South policy mobility and the urban planning effects of creative city policy in the Global South. This study presents a theoretical framework of creative cities focusing on the urban development of cities in developing countries by rehabilitating cultural creativity, diversity, and social inclusion. The research may provide a valuable knowledge base for international exchange of experience in the planning field.

**Keywords:** creative city policy, policy mobility, global South, urban planning

### Introduction

Creative city policy is a well-established approach to urban development (Costa *et al.*, 2007). This article interconnects research on global urban aspects of creative city policy and policy mobilities. In the past decades, considerable amount of research has focused on creative cities and policy mobilities of the global North<sup>1</sup> (Bunnell, 2015; Molho *et al.*, 2020).

Western cities have long used creative city policies to reposition themselves in the global urban hierarchy and to tackle their problems of rising social inequalities and tensions in the urban context (Scott, 2014). Its roots are in the 1990s, primarily Europe, North America, and Australia (O'Connor, Gu and Kho Lim, 2020).

Nowadays, an increasing number of cities in the global South (Molho *et al.*, 2020) are introducing the creative city policy and pledging to adopt creativity as their main developmental focus. They rely on Western theoretical frameworks to research the cities and use homogenising scripts of creative cities to interpret the cultural policies (Molho *et al.*, 2020; O'Connor, Gu and Kho Lim, 2020). That calls for further investigation due to different socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds. Among others, the relationship between culture and urban development (Russo and Van Der Borg, 2010).

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<sup>1</sup> I use the term 'global North and South'. It refers to the regions of Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Oceania. Most countries maintain low incomes and marginalised cultures and politics, although emerging BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, and China) complicate the division. As (Dados and Connell, 2012) state, 'The term Global South functions as more than a metaphor for underdevelopment. It references an entire history of colonialism, neo-imperialism, and differential economic and social change through which large inequalities in living standards, life expectancy, and access to resources are maintained.'

My study aims to prepare a ground for filling a knowledge gap by creating a theoretical framework within which practitioners and academics can approach these questions: How to approach creative city policy mobility from the global North to the South? What are the key features of urban planning effects of creative city policy on recipient cities?

### **Literature Review**

#### Creative City Policy

##### *Its History and Emergence*

The evolution of creative city policies spans the time of the post-industrial crisis, globalisation and the rise of neo-liberal ideologies. In response to these shifts, cities became entrepreneurs in a competitive market striving to attract capital and investors (Pratt, 2011).

This transformation was preceded by the crises of Fordism (Florida 2005, Landry 2008), characterised by mass production technologies predominant in the Western industrialised world until the early 1970s. These changes affected cities such as Detroit, Chicago, the English Midlands, the German Ruhr district, and parts of northern Italy.

The transition from Fordism led to the emergence of more flexible and specialised production models, altering industrial organisation and inter-firm relations. The trend was to liberalise institutional restraints on market competition and weaken the welfare state (Harvey, 1989), (Brenner and Keil, 2014).

These shifts also influenced the spatial patterns of growth (Brenner and Keil, 2014). Industries, like cinema (Storper and Christopherson, 1987), were increasingly clustering in metropolitan areas to improve the efficiency and competitiveness of entrepreneurs and lower production costs. This was possible due to the availability of a specialised and skilled workforce, reduced transaction costs, face-to-face problem-solving, and sharing of skills.

Costa (Costa *et al.*, 2007) suggests five origins for the increasing interest in creativity:

1. 'Creative city' concept developed by, amongst many others Charles Landry (2000), Peter Hall (2000), and Ralph Ebert *et al.* (1994) in connection with an analysis of 'creative industries' and practical applications via policies
2. Launch of 'Creative Europe' by European research institutions or the project of 'Creative Cities network' by UNESCO in 2004
3. 'Creative class' (Florida, 2002), as a critical driver of competitiveness and urban regeneration processes due to its talent, tolerance and openness
4. 'Creative industries' within the economic analysis originate from the industrial economic tradition, and a similar approach is 'creative economics'. It analyses their organisation in an institutional context, taking their particularities into consideration
5. The importance of creation and artistic creativity, leading to the study of not only the demand side but also the supply (Throsby, 2004)

While the definition of creative cities and creative economies varies (Costa *et al.*, 2007), most authors agree that creative industries include film, music, radio, television, publishing and advertising along with the support infrastructure (organisational or material) (Pratt, 1997). Despite the substantial economic contributions of creative economies, evaluating their impact

can be challenging due to their nature, which has both financial and cultural value (the process of creation is also essential, not only the outcome) (Pratt, 1997; Evans, 2005).

In practice, creative city policies aim to enhance the quality of life for urban inhabitants through targeted interventions in three main areas: (a) economic development, (b) social welfare/inclusion, and (c) urban development (Bianchini and Parkinson, 1995; Rato, Roldão and Mühlhan, 2009). There are benefits in combining all three perspectives (Boddy and Parkinson, 2004; Costa *et al.*, 2007). Figure 1 below gives an overview of the combination of approaches and typical examples of cities.

(a) Economic development is usually the central focus of creative city policies, with the primary objective being the job creation and formulation of industrial and creative strategies.

(b) Social welfare programmes focus on social inclusion or community character.

(c) Urban development plays a central role in shaping the city's physical landscape. It includes renovations and reconstructions to improve the image of the city, even a recreational strategy. These approaches are usually more or less modified and combined (Bianchini and Parkinson, 1995; Rato, Roldão and Mühlhan, 2009).

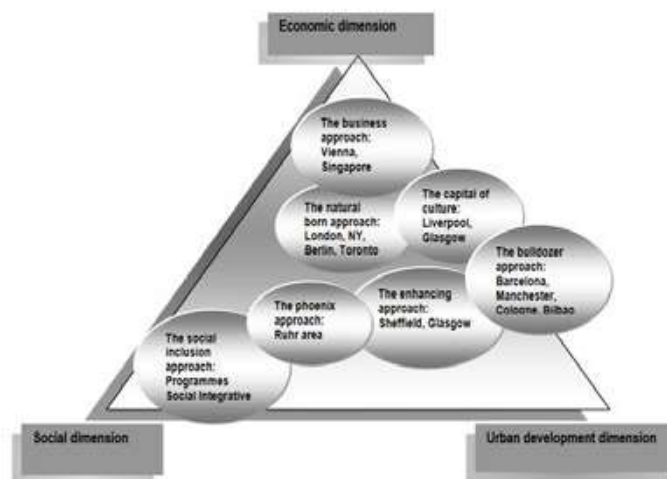


Figure 1 Typology of creative cities (Rato, Roldão and Mühlhan, 2009)

The paradigm shifts to focusing more on sustainability and distributive equity. From short-term to long-term impacts (Evans, 2005). From building flagship projects to incorporating small-scale public art projects with the stress of everyday use, social inclusion, and design quality (Boddy and Parkinson, 2004) to battle gentrification associated with high art venues and large redevelopment projects. Inclusion of local communities, engagement and consultation. Cultural activity should be incorporated as one key indicator of a city's quality of life (Evans, 2005).

#### *Limitations and Contradictions*

There are numerous limitations and contradictions to this neo-liberal urban policy. Much of the critique is centred on the fact that researchers predominantly focus on theoretical and empirical research on the global North and the lack of investigation of a broader range of contexts of different countries (Molho *et al.*, 2020). One example could be the spatial mobility of the creative class<sup>2</sup> (Martin-Brelot *et al.*, 2010).

Planners should focus less on land use and more on incorporating cultural, social, economic and environmental issues (Landry, 2000/2008).

The creative city has often been seen as easily transferable (Kong, 2014), homogenising (Molho *et al.*, 2020) and a 'fast policy' (Peck, 2005). However, the impacts of the policy could be short-lived (Russo and Van Der Borg, 2010; O'Connor, Gu and Kho Lim, 2020), and flagship events cannot do more than divert attention away from the real problems of cities (Mooney, 2004).

The central critique focuses on gentrification (McGuigan, 1996; Seo, 2002; Evans, 2005). Creative workers and productions depend on specific locations, but at the same time, they are threatened by delocalisation due to the rising valorisation of urban land (Vivant, 2013).

That leads us to another issue: the frequent omission of the topic of social exclusion in creative cities (Sasaki, 2010). The impacts of the policy could be socially exclusive (Russo and Van Der Borg, 2010). Groups such as the socially excluded, older adults and people experiencing homelessness are not being integrated (Landry and Bianchini, 1995; Landry, 2007; Müller, 2019). We also should not leave out spatial inequalities (Evans, 2005). Some cities have been unsuccessful in tackling local inequality problems and primary infrastructure access (case of Rio de Janeiro (Claudia Seldin and Gavinho, 2020)) or even enhanced the problems (case of Cape town (Malte Steinbrink and Ley, 2011)).

#### *Role of International Creative City Networks*

Cities are influenced by the increasingly uneven global inter-urban connections (Molho *et al.*, 2020) and seeking a change in their aspirations and identities, however successful in the long term and the extent of their implementation (O'Connor, Gu and Kho Lim, 2020).

To meet the challenges of globalisation and ensure cities' success, we must not rely on traditional political institutions but on individuals, groups and bottom-up processes. Global public policy networks must include groups from the global South. It is critical in the design and implementation of policies (Reinicke, 1999).

There is a great diversity of institutional frameworks and governance mechanisms in implementing creative city policies. Besides, many public bodies and organisations use these concepts locally and nationally. There are also supranational institutions, such as the

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<sup>2</sup> Empirical European data show that creatives are less mobile than in the United States due to cultural and institutional barriers. In a search for a location to settle, look for hard factors such as the quality of jobs. Soft factors such as cultural amenities only determine the particular district where to settle (Martin-Brelot *et al.*, 2010).

UNESCO, European Commission and OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development). Their focus lies in the multidisciplinary approach, management, and governance (Costa *et al.*, 2007).

UNESCO's "Global Network of Creative Cities," launched in 2004, has quickly spread to developing countries. Now, 350 cities in 7 fields worldwide are registered in the global UNESCO network. There are efforts to strengthen the connections between 'global South' cities (Molho *et al.*, 2020). Ahead of these designations, UNESCO declared the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity in 2001. Its purpose is to combat standardisation under globalisation (Sasaki, 2010).

#### Creative City Policy Travels to the Global South

An increasing number of cities in the global South are introducing the creative city policy in order to rescale and reinvent themselves (Molho *et al.*, 2020). However, this complex model cannot be re-applied without modification (Bianchini and Parkinson, 1995). All cities are diverse; thus, many formulas address all the city's problems (Molho *et al.*, 2020).

Luckily, not all global South cities accept imported models without changes (for example, Beirut and Istanbul took Dubai as an anti-model) (Centner, 2020). Many cities found alternatives and new approaches to hegemonic models from the West worldwide (Molho *et al.*, 2020).

From a practitioner's or policy outcome-oriented scholar's perspective, 'good' or at least promising solutions must also be transferable from one place to another. And they need to know how this might be done most effectively (Baker and Temenos, 2015).

Guidelines about how global creative policy circulates, vernacularises and is unevenly adopted can offer policy mobility theory. Where and to whom they travel and how they vernacularise depends on the institutions and actors who receive them. It depends on their position and power. Remember that conflicting interests around the globe also influence local policies (Molho *et al.*, 2020).

#### *Policy Mobility Theory*

An increasing number of scholars are paying attention to the circulation of urban policies (Baker and Temenos, 2015).

There have been numerous attempts to reproduce and implement various entrepreneurial development policies due to intensifying interurban competition (Harvey, 1989; Brenner and Keil, 2014), increasing globalisation of politics, society and economy (Hall and Hubbard, 1998), and the socio-spatial processes derived from it (Peck and Tickell, 2002; Baker and Temenos, 2015).

Emerging in the early 2010s (Baker and Temenos, 2015; Haupt, 2023), the policy mobility approach was primarily driven by critiques of the previous approaches by human geographers and urban studies scholars (Peck and Theodore, 2010; McCann, 2011; Peck, 2011; Temenos

and McCann, 2013). Later, it led to the emergence of urban policy mobilities as a sub-field (McCann, 2011; Baker and Temenos, 2015; Lovell, 2019; Haupt, 2023).

Policy mobility theory emphasises thought patterns and mindsets and the directions of movements that express power relations (Haupt, 2023).

#### *Key Features of Policy Mobility*

Critical features of policy mobility, besides the spread of policy between cities, include international (global) geographical reach (Haupt, 2023), the mobile and changeable character of policies (Peck and Theodore, 2010; McCann, 2011), that are modifiable right from the beginning of the process. Ideas, discourses, or synthesised models can travel in selective and partial forms (Peck and Theodore, 2010; McCann, 2011; Temenos and McCann, 2013).

How ideas/policies might change the places they are spreading to (Stone, 2004; Peck and Theodore, 2010; McCann, 2011; Temenos and McCann, 2013). Emphasis is more firmly placed on the effects of policy discourse and implementation on social life and practices (Haupt, 2023). The focus is more on the role of non-state actors, such as NGOs, consultancies, or multinational corporations, and how they influence governmental bodies with their mostly neoliberal policies (Peck and Theodore, 2010; Prince, 2010; McCann, 2011).

Another key feature is the significance of failed policy spread – policy immobility (McLean and Borén, 2015; Lovell, 2019) no longer studied from a positive point of view but to research the power relations and inequalities and drawing attention to failed or harmful policies that can also travel to different places (Lovell, 2019).

Policy mobilities literature has a critical perspective (critical of policy spread and society) (Haupt, 2023). Urban policy mobilities research has no defined paradigm or definitive approach. Instead, they draw from various epistemological perspectives spanning planning, sociology, geography and political science (Baker and Temenos, 2015).

#### *Critique of Policy Mobilities*

Early critiques focused on neoliberal policies, orientation toward the global North (Bunnell, 2015), and presentist outlook are being answered (Temenos, Baker and Cook, 2019).

Further critique of policy mobilities scholars addresses the work of scholars who rarely reach out to policymakers and politicians with suggestions on how to improve current practices (Haupt, 2023).

Söderström and Geertman (2013) and Cohen (2015) argue that focusing on Southeast Asian cities has led to the conclusion that we should further focus on understanding ad hoc networks and nonliberal urban practices.

For future studies Temenos, Baker and Cook (2019) recommend foregrounding the integration of policy mobility within the socio-spatial fabric of cities and urban life and (a) engaging with other conceptual questions in the field of urban studies, (b) enlarging the collection of studies outside of the Anglo-American area. That would be beneficial in policy mobility studies for

differentiating what is general and specific, and (c) conceptualising policies on dualities: local/global, fixed/mobile, territorial/relational—also adding mobilities of knowledge, people, materials and politics.

### **Shaping a Framework for Creative City Policy Mobility and Its Urban Planning Impacts Across Global Regions**

Stevenson (2004) highlights the necessity for new methodologies that combine approaches of anthropology, sociology, and cultural and urban studies that can be applied to evaluation models to measure physical, social and economic changes. Responding to the need for more conceptual and integrative groundwork, this paper creates ground for a novel framework for urban planning effects of creative city policy mobility from the global North to the South.

I ground my framework on the work of Evans (2005), Temenos, Baker and Cook (2019), and Müller (2015). The proposed framework involves types of evaluation, the three stages of policy mobility in detail, and key features of urban effects of creative city policy.

#### Types of evaluation

The following types of reporting can evaluate culture's contribution to development (Evans, 2005): (a) project evaluation and (b) programme evaluation.

(a) Project evaluation focuses on the project's process and results. It can use quantitative or qualitative evidence. Data are collected via unstructured interviews, focus groups, questionnaires and participant observations. It is ideal to start evaluating from the beginning of the project, during and after post-completion. The assessment area is not limited (it can be a local development area or national programme). The evaluation may include one or multiple projects (see Programme evaluation below).

(b) Programme evaluation includes multiple projects in one local, national or transnational initiative. It uses Project evaluation techniques and can be measured by standard output criteria, including performance indicators (comparing actual and targeted performance).

Academic discourses often counter overly optimistic official narratives on urban development. Unfortunately, it is not possible to access the necessary data. The studies include more technical quantitative impact assessments (economic/econometric) and area and sectoral case studies of a particular cultural activity like theatre quarter and fashion industry. „In some respects, the lack of ‘hard evidence’, of access to detailed data, decision-making processes and the basis to measure impacts over time, have limited more ‘scientific’ analysis, leaving little scope, outside political and policy discussions and micro-level case studies“ (Graeme Evans, 2005, 965).

#### Stages of Policy Mobility

Questions accompanying Table 1 below help us systematically trace North-South policy mobility and help in orientation and approach to urban planning questions in three time frames: (a) transportation, (b) transformation and (c) translation (Müller, 2015).

(a) Transportation happens when the policy is moved from place A to place B (Healey, 2012; McCann and Ward, 2012). It is transported and impacted by diverse people via various materials to different political systems. It does not come packaged but rather as selected elements brought to one place and assembled. It is of interest to study what parts of policies are immobile.

(b) Transformation is embedding policy into the local socio-material environment. It is usually changed, seldom not at all. Policy changes are due to interaction with existing policies, translations, interpretations, institutional settings and legislation. The carriers also modify elements of policies.

(c) Translation can be similar to policies' original intentions or have different impacts. Responses to its implementation can be studied from the perspectives of the public, private, and state sectors. Translation is not the end of the cycle; the policy can travel to a new place again.

Transportation	Transformation	Translation
1.1 Who and what moves and is moved?	2.1 What aspects of a policy change?	3.1 What actions does the policy create?
1.2 When?	2.2 For what reasons and through what channels does change happen?	3.2 How well is the policy able to align intentions and actions?
1.3 Where to and from?	2.3 To what extent is change intentional or unintentional?	3.3 Through what mechanisms is the policy applied?
1.4 How?	2.4 What is the role of already existing policies in affecting change?	3.4 What is the response to the policy?
1.5 Through what channels or events?	2.5 What other elements does a policy enrol?	3.5 Does the policy itself serve as a model for others?
1.6 Who and what does not move?		

Table 1 Transportation, transformation and translation of policy (Müller, 2015)

Mobility of urban planning effects of creative city policy is possible because of the mobility of (a) knowledge, (b) people, (c) materials and (d) politics (Temenos, Baker and Cook, 2019).

(a) Knowledge is transferred when there is a need for detailed policy or a global approach is desired. It can be local or outside expertise.

(b) Diversity among the team of people is beneficial; it includes all types of policy actors and their mobilities, as there remains a need for shared experiences and face-to-face meetings at conferences and study tours. It can be bureaucrats, politicians, activists, lobbyists, service managers, consultants, architects, etc.

(c) Materials are needed to circulate between people. They can travel in physical and virtual spaces through reports, PowerPoints, spreadsheets, maps, and visualisations. They are crucial for the actors to visualise the proposals and make connections to them.

(d) Politics is central to the mobility of policy. It reflects the current political conditions, ideologies and functions of the state. These conditions are globally different, and various policy advocacy and activism levels exist.

Where to and how is policy transported is seen in Table 2.

Transportation		
1.3 Where to and from?		
Primary recipients of the intervention	the state the region the city the community a particular group of actors the private sector	(Rato, Roldão and Mühlhan, 2009)
Transportation		
1.4 How?		
The level of participation of the population in the process	bottom-up top-down	(Rato, Roldão and Mühlhan, 2009)
Inclusion of multiple stakeholders	arts and cultural groups heritage associations and communities	(Evans, 2005)
Schemes structured to facilitate collaboration between those responsible for regeneration and those responsible for cultural activity	local authorities partnership bodies responsible for regeneration	(Evans, 2005)
Intended duration of policy	short middle long term	(Evans, 2005)
Integration into legal documents	strategic plan master plan budget	(Evans, 2005)

Table 2 Where to and how is policy transported

#### Key Features of Urban Development Effects of Creative City Policy

Urban development is usually directed towards transforming physically, socially and economically declining areas. The paramount principles lie in the sustainability of the place, aiming toward long-term improvement. Responding to the call for a more integrative approach, the evaluation also touches on social and economic domains.

People's needs across the globe are met differently. Guidelines can offer Maslow's hierarchy of needs, including physiological and safety, as the base (Maslow, 1943). The sustainable principles should, therefore, include the liveability of the place, people's quality of life, safety, inclusion and heritage conservation. Inclusion of all groups irrespective of income, ethnic profile, religion, skills, gender, disabilities, age, caste, or political orientation. Quality of life

depends on mobility and access to public amenities and open spaces, as well as on the living environment, densities, pollution, and health.

Monitoring should also include social and land use diversity and the multifunctionality of places. We should remember the authenticity and identity of the place and design quality, which does not rely on homogenising principles.

To attract creative individuals and companies, agglomerations should offer spaces for production (both enabling work from home, small-scale businesses and open coworking places for sharing information, knowledge and skills), consumption, commercialisation (shops, markets), socialisation and residence (Vivant, 2013). Government bodies at local and national levels can support innovative clusters (cooperation of private companies and research centres; networking of local producers) and industrial planning (rezoning large areas for cultural consumption and production) through urban policies (Vivant, 2013).

Graeme Evans (2005) noted that no universally applicable set of indicators for a particular intervention exists. Due to its context-specific nature, a pick-and-mix approach is required from Table 3. Standardised performance indicators and quantitative benchmarks are also not valuable in this context.

Area of intervention	quarter(s) city region	(Rato, Roldão and Mühlhan, 2009)
Extent of the physical intervention	reuse of land, brownfields	(Evans, 2005)
	rezoning large areas for cultural consumption and production, Industrial planning	(Vivant, 2013)
	requalification of quarters	(Rato, Roldão and Mühlhan, 2009)
	construction of an emblematic building	(Vivant, 2013)
	renewal/reuse of (historical) buildings	(Evans, 2005)
	upgrading of existing cultural facilities	
Places for consumption + production + commercialization + socialization	art galleries and visual art venues concert and music venues theaters, dance and drama venues cinemas multi-use venues museums libraries	(Duxbury, Garrett-Petts and MacLennan, 2015)

	<p>archives  historic buildings and structures  historic monuments  historic parks and gardens  historic landscapes  protected natural landscapes  archeological sites  world/national heritage sites  landmarks  shops  markets  public spaces  studios  festivals, events and public art schemes  enabling work-from-home  small-scale businesses  open coworking places for sharing information, knowledge and skills</p>	<p>(Vivant, 2013)  (Montalto <i>et al.</i>, 2019)    (Evans, 2005), (Vivant, 2013)    (Evans, 2005)</p>
Spatial distribution	<p>clusters of producers    innovative clusters for cooperation of private companies and research centres    innovative clusters for networking of local producers</p>	<p>(Evans, 2005)    (Vivant, 2013)</p>
Complementary infrastructure (investment in land preparation and transport infrastructure)	<p>air  road  rail/ light rail  metro  hotels  housing – houses, apartments</p>	<p>(Evans, 2005)    (Evans, 2005), (Vivant, 2013)</p>
Spatial accessibility of places for consumption, production, commercialization, socialization and complementary infrastructure	<p>for locals  for visitors    disabled  minorities  older adults  people experiencing homelessness  indigenous communities</p>	<p>(Evans, 2005)    (Landry and Bianchini, 1995; Landry, 2007; Müller, 2019)    (Duxbury, Garrett-Petts and MacLennan, 2015)</p>

Table 3 Key Features of Urban Development Effects of Creative City Policy

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

This research links creative city and urban development studies with policy mobilities. A theoretical framework has been created on the policy mobility of creative cities in urban development. The proposed framework involves types of evaluation, the three stages of policy mobility, and key features of urban effects of creative city policy.

The paradigm of the creative city shifts from focusing solely on the economic benefits of the arts to sustainability (in terms of physical, social and economic well-being) and distributive equity. From short-term to long-term impacts (Evans, 2005). From building flagship projects to incorporating small-scale public art projects with the stress of everyday use, social inclusion, and design quality (Boddy and Parkinson, 2004) to battle gentrification associated with high art venues and large redevelopment projects. Inclusion of local communities, engagement and consultation. Cultural activity should be incorporated as one key indicator of a city's quality of life (Evans, 2005).

A policy can only be packaged and implemented with changes on its way to a new destination. Moving policy loses or gains different directions depending on who moves it, what moves it, and where it is moved (Healey, 2012; McCann and Ward, 2012).

There is also no universally applicable set of indicators for a particular intervention. Due to its context-specific nature, a pick-and-mix approach when researching a city is required. Standardised performance indicators and quantitative benchmarks are also not valuable in this context. Academic discourses often counter overly optimistic official narratives on urban development (Evans, 2005).

Urban policy mobilities research has no defined paradigm or definitive approach. Instead, they draw from various epistemological perspectives spanning planning, sociology, geography and political science (Baker and Temenos, 2015).

Limitations include restricted access to both qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data is dependent on subjective opinions of individual actors. Quantitative data can also be difficult to obtain as developing countries are often limiting access or there is absence of data. Countries also use different categories and granularity in the datasets which makes it almost impossible to compare.

Recommendations for future research are further investigating what influences liveability and quality of life of the city, respecting needs of different cultures. Secondly, there is a need to respond to current climate challenges that create an unfavourable living environment. Next recommendation regards the digital revolution's effects on culture and urban planning.

### **Acknowledgements**

I thank the AESOP 2024 LOC for choosing my abstract.

I also thank my supervisor, Professor Karel Maier, for his visionary leadership.

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