



WB SUCCESS STORIES

Stories Behind Cities (Novi Sad, Rijeka and Timisoara)

Project Summary

Stories, narratives, and storytelling are central aspects of all cultures. Stories provide people with a sense of history, a sense of community, a sense of generations, a sensitivity to oral language and its importance to heritage. They play an important role in how other nations see us and how we see ourselves.

Croatia, Serbia and Romania have experienced a common history marked by conflicts, changing borders, and totalitarian regimes. Those 3 countries have not yet succeeded in creating new narratives that would distance them from the negative stereotypes that determine them especially in the Western European countries. Postconflict identity narratives are very difficult to change.

Clearly, we need new stories, stories that highlight human rights discourse and practices in Serbia, Croatia and Romania. In the coming years Rijeka (Croatia), Timisoara (Romania), and Novi Sad (Serbia) will be European Capitals of Culture in 2020 and 2021. This title has been used by many cities (especially those in the transition) to change or reshape their earlier narratives.

This project aims to reflect on the connections between urban narratives and city making in an interdisciplinary way. It deals with mapping new resources (urban stories, myths etc.) which will enable Rijeka, Novi Sad and Timisoara joining visions, data and actions to tell new stories. Cities will also explore their common heritage and stories that connect them through history.

This approach will provide multiple perspectives and will empower us to read our cities differently, and to rethink our blinkered and biased views. This project contains a research, educational and artistic part. The research part of the project is about exploring urban narratives through community involvement, the educational part will deal with developing new skills and storytelling techniques, in order to provide models of use of these narratives, and the artistic part will deal with creative ways of their transnational promotions.

Project website: <https://behind.city/en/>

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