

**SUMMARY REPORT**

**OF THE**

**VII INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL FORUM IN ULYANOVSK**

**14-15 September 2017**

The representatives of the UNESCO Creative Cities in Spain and Germany have participated in the VII International Cultural Forum in Ulyanovsk.

The key topic of the VII International Cultural Forum “Culture and Business: Creative Capital of a Modern City”, which was held under the UNESCO auspices, was the creative industries development in the regions of Russia. The representatives of two UNESCO Creative Cities – the director of the “Heidelberg – UNESCO City of Literature” programme, project manager of Heidelberg Department of Cultural Affairs Andrea Edel (Germany) and programming of activities and coordination manager of Granada City Council's Department for the Arts Jesus Ortega have come to share their experience in this sphere with the participants of the Forum.

In particular, on 14 September at the discussion panel “Public-Private Innovation Projects on Creation of Bookstore Chain as a Modern Approach in Development of Bookselling and Small Business in the Region” Jesus Ortega explained how bookselling is developing in Spain. He emphasized that the problems in this field are common in Spain and Russia and the main goal for Ulyanovsk and Granada, UNESCO Cities of Literature, is to support the development of local bookstores. He has also shared his experience in attracting people to bookstores in Granada.

“On 23 April, the day of Miguel de Cervantes’s death, a 10-day book fair started, where each visitor who had bought a book costing €12 or more was gifted with a free ticket for any cultural event or to any place of interest in the city. The main point is that the idea belongs to the bookstore owners themselves”, - Jesus Ortega shared.

On 15 September during the discussion panel “Can the Programme “UNESCO Creative Cities Net” Influence the Development of Creative Capital of a Modern City?” the director of the “Heidelberg – UNESCO City of Literature” programme, project manager of the Heidelberg Department of Cultural Affairs Andrea Edel has told there are 50 publishing houses and 25 bookstores per 150 thousand citizens

and 150 writers living in Heidelberg. Hence, she has shared her experience in establishing communication with local city communities with the aim of “UNESCO City of Literature” programme implementation.

“First of all, we have invited all local authors, publishers, bookstore owners, libraries and representatives of other literature communities in order to discuss the formation of our city literature community. Thus, the association was created where all these people, divided into several groups, are in charge of a certain sphere: public relations, communication with local population, establishing communications with business, etc. They gather twice a year at our special literature conference where we discuss the results of the last half a year. The document with the results is distributed in open access”, - Andrea Edel said.

The Ulyanovsk representatives were not left on the sidelines as well. The first results of the programme realization in the city were presented by the Head of the Department of Culture and Leisure of the Population of the Ulyanovsk Administration Elena Toporkova. She noticed that for 2 years of “Ulyanovsk – Capital of Culture” programme’s work 20 projects, including internetwork ones at 100 venues of Ulyanovsk, have been implemented, the city has participated in 6 cross-projects of the Network. Furthermore, the experience of Ulyanovsk as a Creative City was included into the UNESCO report dedicated to culture’s role in cities’ sustainable development. The presentation took place at the UN conference in Quito (Ecuador) in October 2016.

“We will have to build cooperation between the programme’s Directorate at the Department of Culture and other sectoral bodies of local authorities in order to be successful in attracting investments. Therefore, the Directorate should elaborate conceptual decisions which would serve as a fundament of Ulyanovsk investment policy after expert assessment. The UNESCO Literature City status gives us the opportunity to stimulate investments into literature events, infrastructural urban solutions, tourist sites, book publishing and bookselling”, - Elena Toporkova emphasized.

At the discussion panel on organizing social and advertising campaigns on promoting reading the Head of the Directorate of “Ulyanovsk – UNESCO City of Literature” programme Pavel Andreev has told the visitors about such projects as “Literature Tram” – a night tram tour around the city with reading works from UNESCO Cities of Literature – and “Literature Stool”, the main idea of which is to reconsider childhood memories of the Russians, in particular reciting poems standing on a stool. The authors of the project have decided to create such a stool in public space by making it a real character in order to revive the old forgotten tradition. According to Pavel, this format attracts more young people, they are fond

of social networks and they are keen on challenges: “According to the statistics, the projects are interesting for around 70% of young people at the age from 17 to 25. These ideas might seem not so serious, but probably thanks to them we will come to the point when the young start to read on their own”.

The experts of the Cities of Literature noted that the participation in the UNESCO Creative Cities Network provides incredible opportunities for studying worldwide experience and for information exchange and the obtained knowledge gives a wonderful chance for city’s economy growth.