



Deliverable No. 2.3

Brief datasheet on regions, technologies, concerns

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1 Introduction

Ecosystem scanning of regions, technologies, concerns (Leader: UCD, Contributors: INOVA+, WAAG, RCA, BUL), Duration: M3-6

Using the Inclusive Design Framework and the pCr praxis, within this task, partners scanned and mapped the regions to facilitate the identification and design principles for the prototype wireframe - the planning and design for the layout and interface in preparation for the creation, in WP4, of an accessible digital mapping completed for locating, connecting Communities of Practice (CoP's) and/or Communities of Interest (CoI's), as well as for designing challenges for ATSI.

The regions covered by the project are: Ireland, England, the Netherlands, Germany, Croatia and Portugal (in terms of the physical location of the consortium partners and their main spoken/written languages). Some discussion arose in the planning phases around the importance of including native languages as well: Irish Gaelic, for instance, and any other native languages of individual artists selected and/or countries selected for arts-led interventions.

Initially, the consortium intended to present this deliverable as a brief simple data sheet, but given the richness of the data gathered at the sprint and the nuance of the findings, it was decided to offer the Miro Boards we did as a team and some contextual discussion, to help to move the project documentation forward from the verbal/experienced into a format that would best inform and support the data visualisations to follow.

1.1 The Need for Mapping

The aim of this mapping was to capture a detailed (though always partial and incomplete) list of the major artists known by partners to have the potential to add value to the VOICE network and project aims, and also to map the geographical, political, environmental and social concerns of the communities in all the relevant countries and cultures, with emphasis on the concerns that can best be addressed by arts-led interventions with inclusive co-design with communities of practice.

In this Brief Mapping Overview, we must keep in mind that whilst aiming to support small-scale artist-led interventions to European Innovation, we must also consider the much broader context. We seek overall to support artists in transferring knowledge gained through Arts praxis to their communities of practice, and to expand the reach of their communities by bringing successful artist-led intervention to new cultural contexts. With this in mind we prepare the ground for artists to work in what is described in WP5 in the pCr toolkit as 'HIGH CONTEXT CULTURE'¹, wherein "Artists often create work within nuanced and context-rich situations. In a high context culture, communication relies heavily on the surrounding context, non-verbal cues, and the relationships between people rather than just the words themselves."

¹ Hall, ET (1959) *The SILENT. LANGUAGE. DOUBLEDAY & COMPANY, INC., GARDEN CITY, NEW YOU. 1959.*

Our early mapping of concerns seeks to support the rich interconnections and also the culturally specific aspects of any artist-led intervention.

Step Two of the pCr process (outlined in detail in Deliverable D5.3), which includes and supports the VOICE Project’s Inclusive Design Methodology, entails a mapping of zones to capture the concerns of the ecosystem. In this process, stakeholders each map their own Micro-Ecology: Using the Zone Mapping Tools to create a map of the community’s relationships, data, organisations and resources. The overall Ecosystem is then mapped by comparing and contrasting the Zone Maps and noting key concerns, and also key differences.

1.2 The Mapping Process

The VOICE Consortium drew our maps of regions, technologies and concerns at the pCr/Inclusive Design sprint, as follows:

The Map of Maps: Ecosystem Mapping Summary

A full, readable version of the maps can be found at https://miro.com/app/board/uXjVVKRpan-c=

VOICE Consortium maps



Figure 1 VOICE Consortium Maps

UCD Maps: Ireland

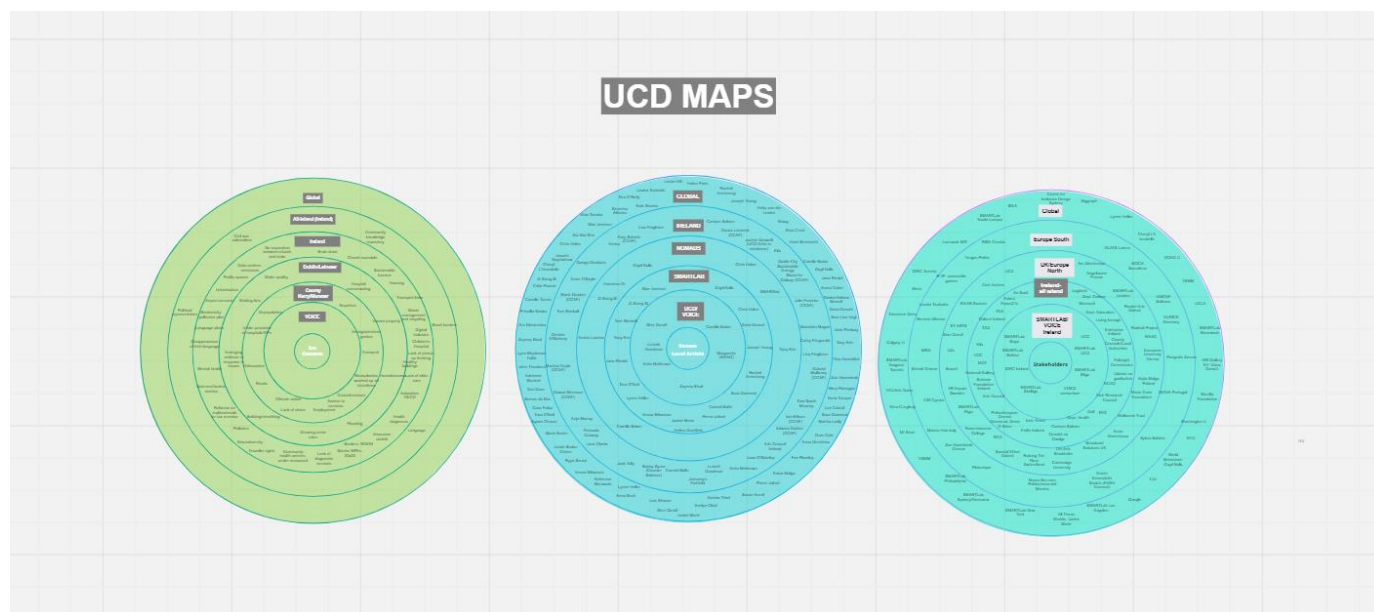


Figure 2 UCD Maps

In the artist-driven map by UCD, the central circle is comprised of the artists who are at the core of the VOICE consortium as these are the people whose ideas about the need for valorising artist-led interventions have been instantiated in the plan for this project, the aim of which is to extend as far as possible beyond this central circle whilst maintaining a tight focus on the need for inclusively co-designed arts-led interventions directly addressing eco-social and environmental issues facing Europe's diverse citizens today.

Each ring of that circle reaches further out, to include more artists and the cultural contexts they bring with them, as well as to cover a wide range of art forms from theatre, performance art, song and music, dance and spoken word, to digital film and animation, to fabric and textile 'sustainable fashion' to sculpture, fine art painting, light installation and creative technology interventions of diverse kinds, from the 'lowest tech' to high technology productions. The methods of community co-design are critical to each part of the map, and the aim of this 2d mapping is to create the nodes from which a digital map can be drawn, with 3D visualisation to develop in a dynamical format to show points of overlap, points of distinction and cycles of influence between and beyond the artists and cultures drawn on the maps.

The map of Eco Concerns can be read alongside the map by FF21C, also based in Ireland with a base in Kerry where SMARTlab Skelligs is based. These two maps are best considered together, and also provide interesting points of convergence and divergence that will be best visualised in 3D in the Digital mapping to follow.

FF21C Maps: Ireland

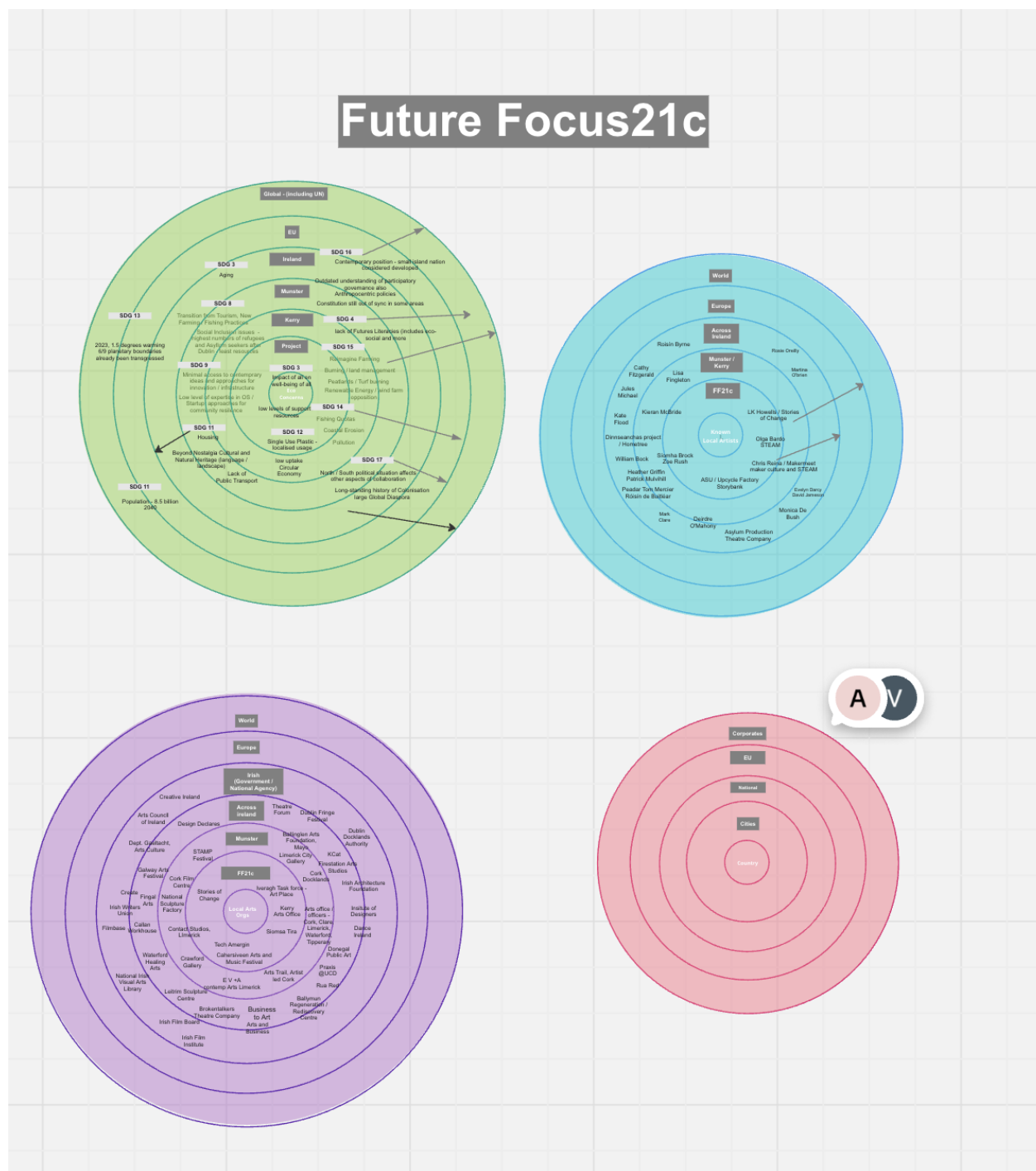


Figure 3 FF21c Maps

RCA Maps: United Kingdom

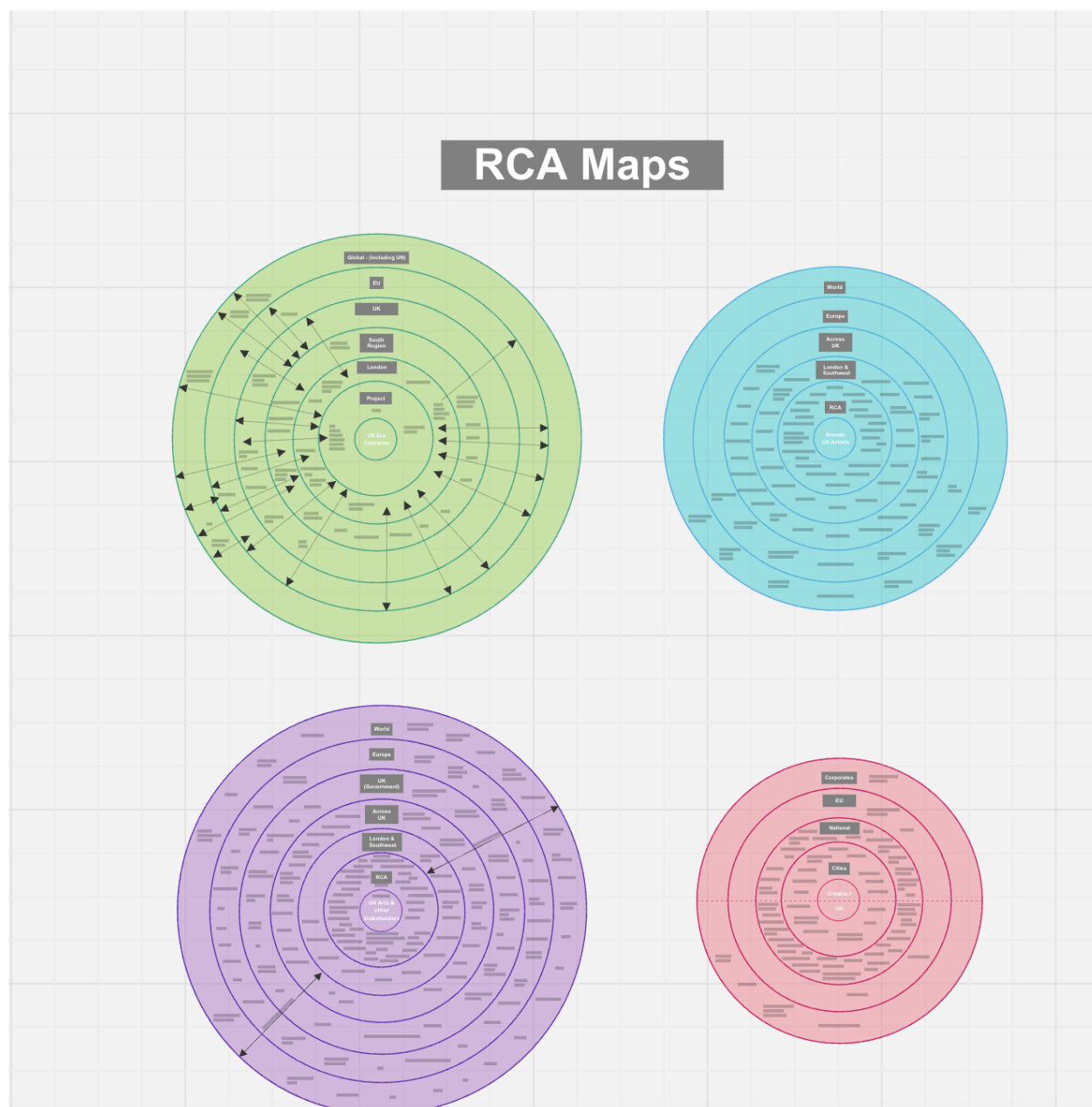


Figure 4 RCA Maps

Key concerns mapped from the centre of the map (RCA) to the edge of the map (the global context) have similarities but also differences, with some key concerns and patterns extending from London out to the farthest edge of global engagement, but with an intensity of issues, for instance, in the UK overall, concerns include Infrastructure Privatisation, with many examples breaking down into sections and then reaching out towards the edge. Eco-social issues are most frequently cited, with most arrows pointing both out and inward, showing a dynamic two-way flow.

Many artists and arts hubs and organisations are listed, with strong interconnections visualised. The SMARTlab network reaches across all the rings, providing a solid rationale for linking the artists in that network to the other artists in a systematic way.

BUL Maps: United Kingdom

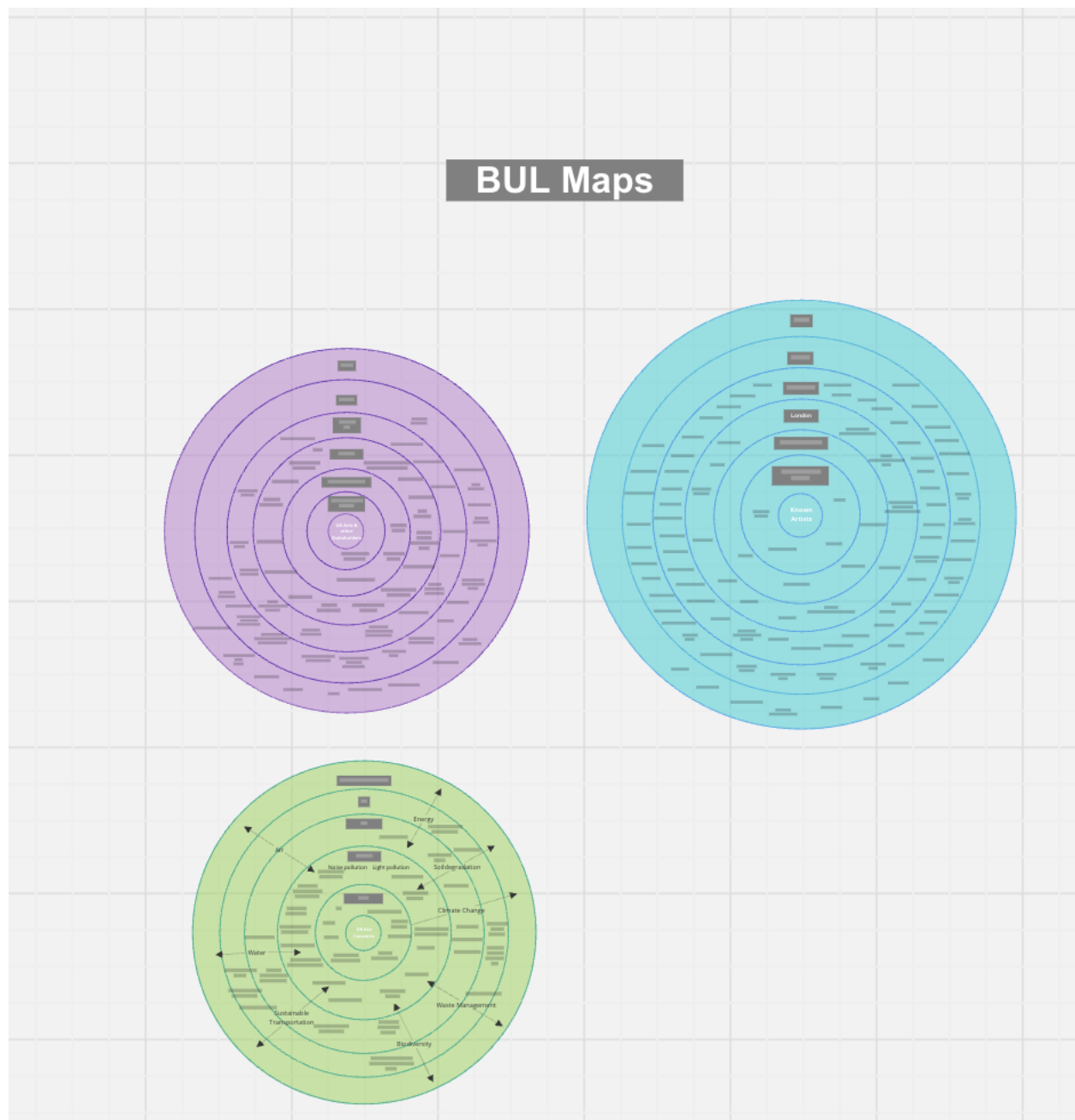


Figure 5 BUL Maps

Brunel University London maps a set of core concerns linked to the built environment and issues arising from pollution and related person-made environmental and eco-social issues.

They also list numerous artists well placed to make impactful contributions through ATSI engagement.

It is important to note that Brunel University London were not present at the joint pCr sprint but rather conducted their mapping exercise slightly later in the VOICE project, not at the same time as the RCA (the other UK partner). This may have led to slightly less parallels between areas of concern between the two English partners, as there was asynchronous dialogue during the sprint itself and no chance to suggest artists and specific interventions across the partnership.

Nonetheless, there are some interesting overlaps of concern informing the mapping for the Pilots and ATSI's, perhaps informed by the conditions in the UK after Brexit and related issues common to the two organisations in the context of a more distanced relationship to the European Union.

WAAG Maps: The Netherlands

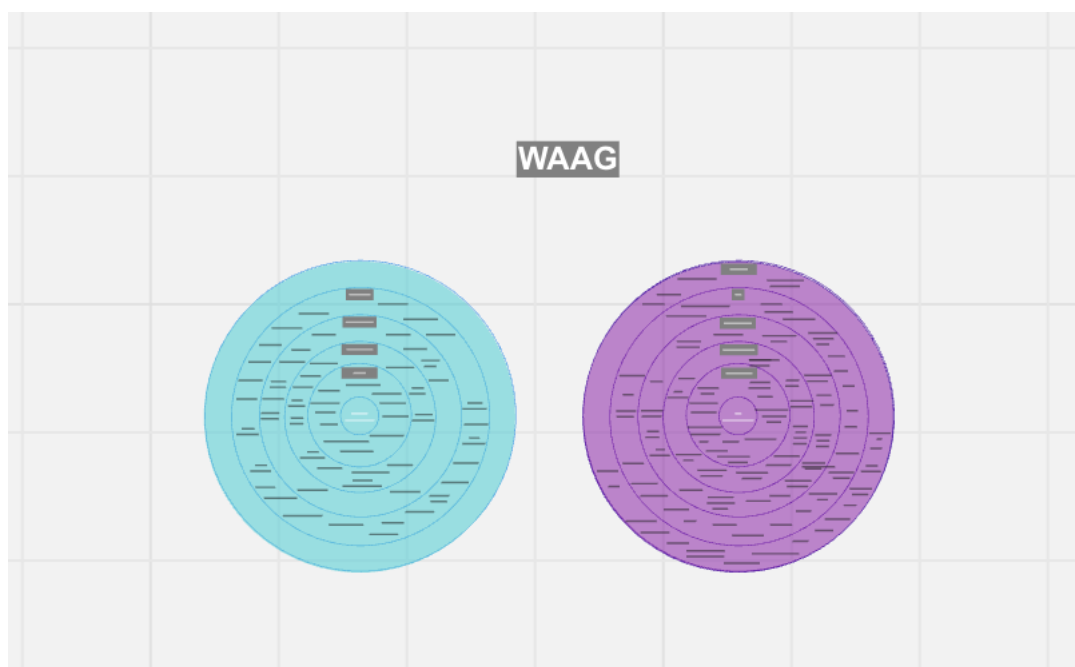


Figure 6 WAAG Maps

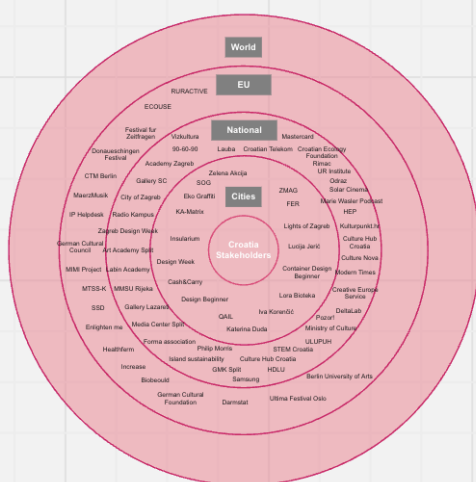
The WAAG team's maps bear some striking similarities to the UCD maps, which is not surprising as both took part in the early mapping of art and technology innovation and collaboration during the foundational RADICAL project² back in 1999-2001. Issues emerging in The Netherlands are key to the social influences in the maps, and there is a strong focus on artists working with ecosystems and sustainable materials and designs.

² Launch of the RADICAL Project Publication (notes as EU FP5 Best practice / Permanent Platform in Art and Technology) Institute of Contemporary Arts, London with the EU ISTV Programme

Eurice/RISE Maps: Croatia & Germany

Eurice/ RISE

Croatia



Germany

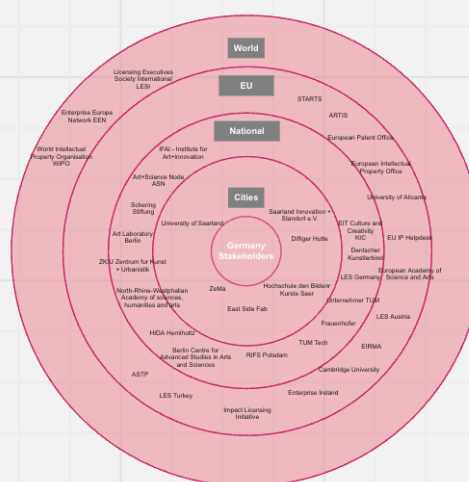


Figure 7 EURICE/RISE Maps

Eurice is based in Germany and Rise is based in Croatia, but the two partners are part of the same umbrella consortium, so conducted their sprint mapping jointly and covered both countries.

Both entities are project management and innovation entities, not universities and not specifically focused on the arts overall. Thus, these two maps bring a different perspective, as rather than focussing on individual artists, art hubs and networks of influence, they rather map the issues impacting on people in their daily lives as observed and captured by cultural agency representatives. It is interesting in this regard to note some parallels in the mapping between the two countries, and also some core differences such as the mention of corruption, negative mentality and civil war effects (similarly in some ways to the Irish maps), whereas the concerns in Germany focus more on war, right wing politics and environmental sustainability.

Inova+ Maps: Portugal

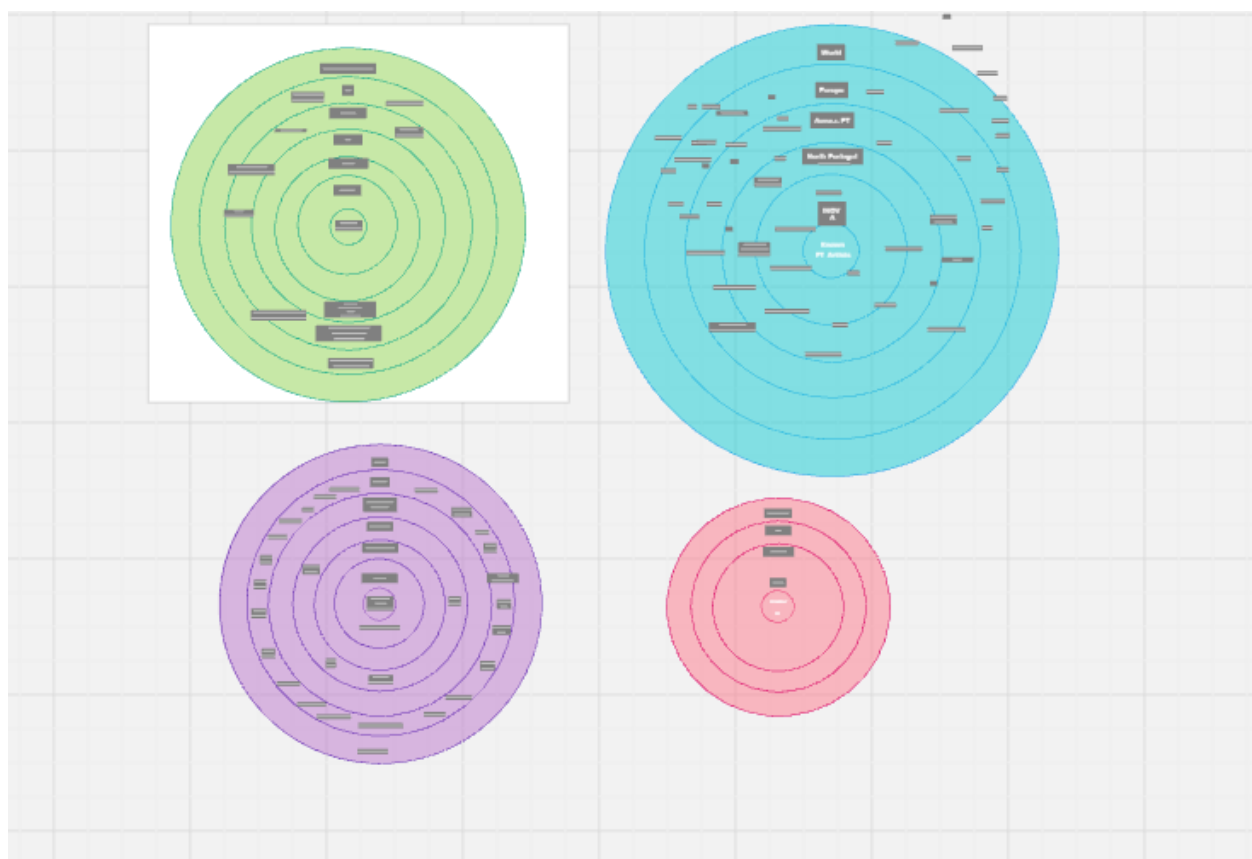


Figure 8 Inova+ Maps

2 Summary of Concerns

Whilst there are far too many nodes listed on each partner's set of maps to succinctly summarise the main issues in great detail, it is interesting to note overall similarities and differences between countries, cultures and the local versus global emphasis in each.

Overall, there were concerns expressed about the need for artists to inform geographical, specific and also interconnected issues arising from Communities of Practice.

Similarities in some deep concerns were, for instance, identified between the mappings of Ireland and Croatia, not only as captured in the maps themselves but also in the extended discussion during the spring, where the influence of relation on education, immigration/emigration and internal conflict were all part of the overall cultural zeitgeist, informing the kinds of interventions that artists might make and influencing suggestions that it might be valuable in VOICE to bring an Irish ATSI to Croatia, or vice versa.

The mapping exercise was instrumental in assisting the overall VOICE consortium to come to a joint understanding of major issues to address in the Pilots and ATSIs.

The next step is to visualise the mapping in digital format so that each Pilot and ATSI selected can best be supported and can refer to the rich resources of mentorship amongst the people of the consortium with all of their rich experiences and perspectives to share.

3 Technologies: a summary of findings from the pCr sprint

The sprint led most of the partners in the consortium to put down data points on paper and then to discuss their meaning and implications. In addition to themes arising as ecosystem concerns and ecological concerns specific to regions and common across regions, there were also a number of technologies mentioned in the discussion about the potential contributions of individual artists in the maps, both those who have made important historical contributions to the field, and those who are currently generating new art-technology initiatives, and who may yet invent new creative technology solutions too.

The fields of ‘old media and new media’ remain in dynamic ebb and flow, with tools from early ‘video jamming’ and interventions using interactive film and sound, early versions of eye gaze and simple avatar interaction, early 3D printing and fabrication, etc. to more recent developments in AI for Good, VR and AR and Mixed Reality, and immersive synchronous shared performance technologies of all kinds.

VOICE will consider any and all of these technologies as part of the evaluation of each artist’s work, each community’s needs, and each pilot and ATSI selected, from the ‘low tech’ to the ‘highest tech.’

We will outline major technological developments in the Voices of Voice report to follow, and will list all new technology developments created by the pilots and ATSIs in due course.

There is also another level of consideration to bear in mind with regard to technology: the technology of the VOICE platform itself.

3.1 Design Principles Arising for the Prototype Wireframe of the WP4 accessible digital mapping to support the selection and mentoring of the Pilots

Addressing all the concerns listed by all partners will not be feasible in this project, but focus on a subsection that includes concerns from each partner and region, tied to a mandate of delivery of knowledge transfer in Europe and engagement with the communities of practice in the relevant countries is key to success.

We will map findings from the five pilots and use that to refine the maps and plan the ATSIs accordingly.

A mentorship team composed of experts from all VOICE consortium partners and from the SMARTlab network hubs across the regions will be put together to best support the needs of artists and their communities of practice in each of the five ATSI pilots, and then for the rest of the ATSI as well.

3.1.1 Design Principles Arising for the ATSI

The lessons learned from the Pilots will inform the briefing for and selection of the ATSIs to follow. It is intended at this early stage to attempt to cover a broad range of art forms and practices across the project as a whole, with a strong coverage of regions, art forms and communities of practice.

The pCr Sprint, which included discussion and planning for the application of our VOICE Inclusive Design Framework, led to concrete outcomes in terms of mappings of regions, technologies and concerns to inform the project overall.

With this ecosystem scanning now complete, the project team can move forward to consider the technological issues involved in ensuring an accessible and easy to use, sustainable (lasting) digital mapping tool to connect Communities of Practice and to support the selection and delivery of design challenges for the Pilots and ATSI.

The Project team is moving forward to select the Pilots with these concerns in mind, and will use the Pilots and findings/feedback therefrom to shape the requirements for the ATSIs to follow.

3.1.2 Further Technological Points Arising for the Wireframe Mapping

As the maps of concerns are transferred from conceptual frameworks and intended plans for projects, into a digital format to capture the impact of each arts-led intervention, we will also need to keep a dynamic relationship fully in mind. A simple web page would not allow for the visualising of the complexity of concerns, expertise, and cycles of influence to be captured. Rather, we suggest that the wireframe take the form of a rhizomatic web design, with many ‘roots’ supporting the growth of many different living forms which intersect and inform each other over time: this seems most informative and representative of the Voice network. Each new artist-led intervention would then be visualised in relation to the others, highlighting influences that came before and showing the impact on others as well as how the image/network grows over time.

UCD will utilise that digital visualisation on the web in planning, co-designing and producing the Voices of Voice deliverable in due course.

3.1.3 Beyond the Initial Mapping: A Proposed Plan for the Visualisation of VOICE

Many EU projects create web pages, but they do not serve effectively either as archives or as dynamic visualisations of ongoing development. Most such websites are eventually ‘unplugged’ and the work of

previous generations becomes invisible. Similarly, new and emerging projects and trends between artists and their communities of practice are not often mapped and visualised in ways that enable new nodes or 'data points' to be added dynamically.

We suggest that, based on the multiple overlapping themes of our PcR Circles above, but also given the range of cultural, linguistic, and political differences in the framing of the circles, it will be important to visualise the VOICE network in a dynamic and sustainable manner.

The first part of that process is this initial mapping of key concerns. Then we will gather and publish the Voices of Voice, from early influencers whose work may not be immediately apparent and whose models can be used to bring the whole field further, to the new and emergent nodes of each Pilot and ATSI, and each artist involved therein.

But all that data needs more than a static map on the web, more than a standard database. It needs a living system visualised as such. Therefore, we propose developing a sustainable digital map on raspberry PI's, connected and held externally to any individual partner's cloud, with sustainable levels of energy consumption in mind (to align with our ecosystem approach and concern for the environment) as well as endurance of our work beyond the VOICE project itself. With such a dynamic map we would seek to ensure the longevity of our findings and thus to best support future EU projects, so that colleagues in the future will not need to 'reinvent' the wheel.

3.2 Examples of Visualisation Options

There are a number of visualisation options that show the relationships between artists, artist types, countries and media that the project could explore. There are a number of approaches that could be used to show relationships between data and exploratory routes through data sets.

Rhizomatic Network

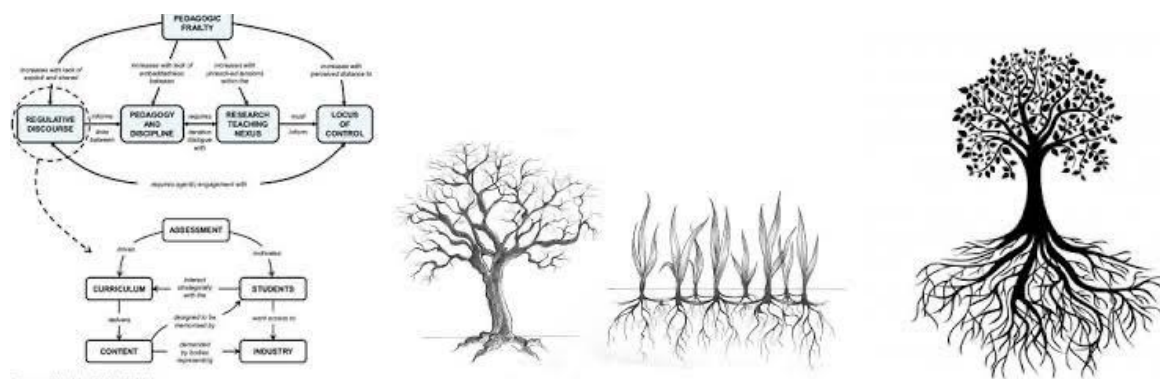


Figure 9 Rhizomatic Networks Visualisation, which features many roots leading to visible signs of the ecosystem 'above ground'

[illegible]

Figure 10 Radial Dendrogram

Shows the relationship between data points to show how different data points share relationships;



Force Directed Graph

To show an infinite number of data points and the links between them, overcoming some of the limitations of the other graph formats;

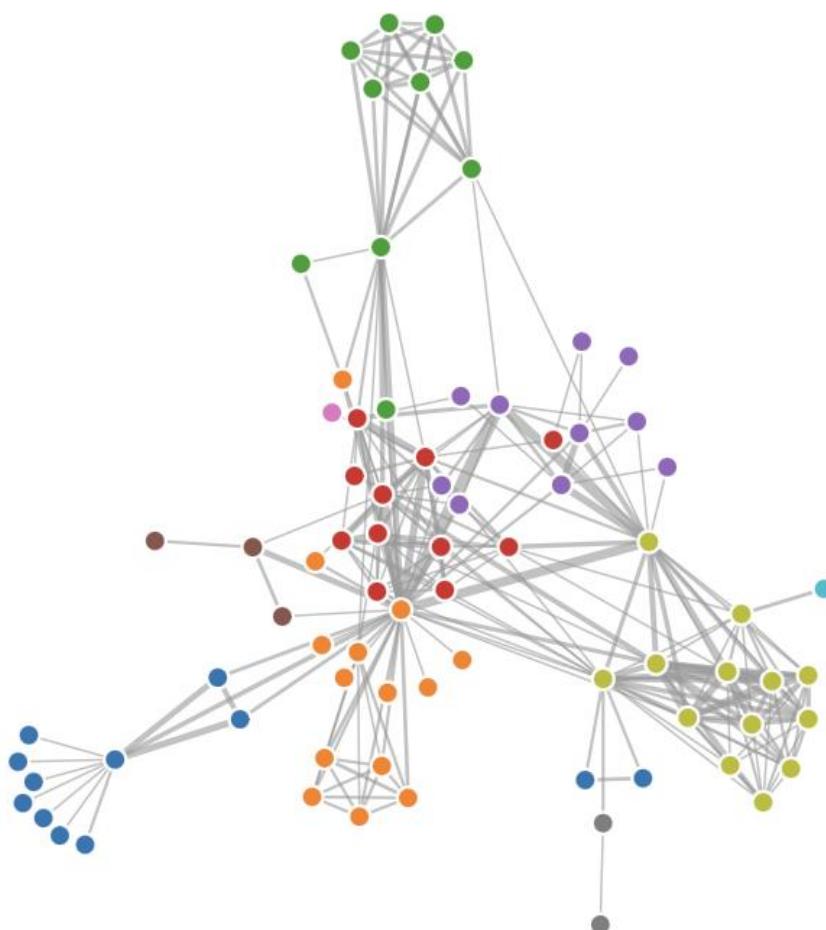


Figure 12 Force directed graph

Content Management System

The project could also look at producing a Content Management System (CMS) that will allow the existing knowledge to create the project website and associated resources (images/audio/video etc.) This also means that the website does not end when the project resourcing ends and will allow new artworks and artists to be added to the site over time in the future.

3.3 Hosting

The project could also consider how the project will be hosted and the sustainability of the hosting options so that the archive created is as carbon neutral as possible. Options being considered are low cost, low power computer systems that don't need conventional cooling / power requirements and can be connected to the internet outside of a traditional data centre location. Redundancy will be provided by multiple instances of the hosting product in different geographical locations. The hosting software will be configured to automatically deal with outages and continue service in the event of nodes going offline. This extra deliverable will be of use to other EU projects and ensure that projects can outlive their funding timeline.

Another option to consider in the hosting deliverable is that it could become a template for future EU projects and show how the solution could be scaled up to deliver continuity for multiple projects over an expanding timeline.

4 Conclusions

In producing this **Brief Datasheet on Regions, Technologies and Concerns**, it was necessary to do more than simply list words and numbers of instances of individual artists named by the partners in the VOICE consortium in our initial sprint: that would only tell the story of one set of conversations and visuals drawn at one point in time. So, although the partners in VOICE have spent decades engaged in this field and have deep knowledge and networks to share, which are well captured in our maps, it is still vital to acknowledge that there is inevitable and inescapable 'unconscious bias and 'bias confirmation' possible in the subjective act of mapping networks of people and their projects. We seek in VOICE to hear from as many voices as possible, and to capture many perspectives and many additional artists who may be visualised in the next iterations of the mapping as it evolves. We intend for the contents of the map of the VOICE network (like the project) to be dynamic. We will therefore plan a moderation strategy to ensure high quality and positive additions to the map as it grows, so that we can invite additional mapping from the EU arts and technology communities. This is our aim.

In Mapping the Data Points that must be interpreted in Visualised form in order to carry the process of VOICE forward, we seek a dynamic system respectful of all that has come before, and resonant with the many diverse voices of VOICE. It is also necessary to capture the process, the interim findings and each step of the evolution of the project in a dynamical way, and to preserve the findings in a sustainable format. This is our intention with this document. We welcome feedback on an ongoing basis as the project evolves.