

THEORIZING THE EXPERIENCE ECONOMY: TOWARDS A FUTURE AGENDA?

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ABSTRACT

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German Nachtleben, German approaches to the night-time economy

The detailed consideration of a night-time economy (Bianchini 1995; Lovatt, O'Connor 1995; Chatterton, Hollands 2002/2003; Roberts, Eldridge 2009) is quite new for German cities. With the exception of some research work concerning the legal aspects of various places of entertainment - building regulations, noise regulations, etc.- and recent research activities dealing with spatio-temporal issues in the context of urban planning and design (Läpple, Mückenberger, Oßenbrügge 2009; Henckel, Eberling 2002; Eberling, Henckel 2002), no noteworthy discussion on the spatial implications of contemporary nightlife has taken place within German planning practice or research (Schmid 2010).

Against the background of discussions regarding the role of the cultural/creative economy for urban development in the last decade and the increasing importance of place branding to both regional marketing and tourism, nightlife - as an indicator for urbanity par excellence - and its economic and cultural aspects is attracting more attention in urban policy within major German cities (*ibid.*).

In 2008, the City of Berlin - a main destination for music-oriented tourists from all over Europe (Rapp 2009) - commissioned a survey on the economic potentials of the local (music) club scene (Grigutsch, Kretschmar 2008). Hamburg issued similar studies also commissioned by local politics (Birnkraut 2006, FHH 2010). The latest study places a strong focus on spatial and legal issues as well as possible potentials for spatial development of the entertainment district of Hamburg-St. Pauli. Mannheim - a town with about 300,000 inhabitants that labels itself 'Musikstadt' - consider the 'the sustainable strengthening of the local music-oriented astronomic scene' as crucial for the success of their development and place branding strategy, which also encompasses the education sector and businesses (www.mannheim.de).

The presentation will provide an overview of recent activities/strategies of major German cities within this specific field of urban economics and will attempt to draw parallels to the approach of the research network Experience Economy and Spatial Strategies.