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Developing a City Brand

ABSTRACT

The article analyses theoretical aspects of a city brand definition, applying cases of various brands of Lithuanian cities. A brand is any sign or symbol which helps to distinguish goods or services for one person from the goods or services of another, and which may be represented graphically. The brand can be a variety of symbols, their combination, and other visual manifestations of information, such as words, names, slogans, letters, numbers, drawings, emblems; or spatial characteristics of the product itself – its image, packaging, shape, color, color combination or a combination of all these. City development usually includes an image dimension. The common ground for this is that a well-known toponym often generates events, investments, etc. Many cities are actively positioning and promoting their strategic intentions. Often times a city brand is associated with its fight for investment, tourist numbers, or successful businesses.

Objective: To scrutinize relevant theories applicable to city visual branding; to look through various definitions of the city branding and envisage some advantages and disadvantages they might pose; and to analyze various case studies so that we could summarize the methodologies of why and how we could better position our local products globally.

Methodology: The case study methods were used as part of a complex study and combined with in-depth interviews as well as benchmarking methods from various sources. In-depth interview method was used to obtain expert opinions on the subject. The in-depth interview method helped to analyze logo usage, goals, define pros and cons, and evaluate the results of logo design in urban development. This method was chosen to collect detailed and authentic material based on the attitudes and experiences of those involved in such a creative process.

Findings: The conclusion was reached that since a place prompts a lot of variables, in the future we need to consider more numerous components, such as population, industries, landscape, economies or history, etc. The hypothesis was confirmed about the variables of the city to be further considered for (re)branding, such as the cost, semantic complexity, societal charge, and the dynamics (changeability, or rigidity). As for the methodologies, we arrived at the conclusion that the best way to create a viable city brand is a collaboration between different stakeholders.

Value Added: The article adds to European experts' suggestion of rethinking the concept of design itself, as until now a one-sided approach to design as a means of schematizing a product has prevailed. This approach, even regulated by Lithuanian law, does not cover the whole process of creating and implementing an idea. "Design is a problem-solving approach that focuses on the user during its development. It can be applied in both the public and private sectors to promote innovation in products, services, processes and even legislation," says Dr Anna Whicher, expert on design policy and strategy of the European Commission. In other words, design has been increasingly integrated into the science, business, social and service sectors to maximize innovation.

As many as 63 percent of Lithuanian businesses do not use design solutions (product design, stylization or business strategy development) at any stage of production. This figure is below the EU average, where almost half of all businesses already integrate design solutions into their operations. Lithuania is also one of the 13 countries in Europe (out of 28) that does not have design policy documents or a community uniting organization, such as design centers in Great Britain, Denmark, Estonia or other countries. The paper invites Lithuania to re-think its design development policies at large, paying attention to urban design solutions in particular.

Recommendations: In further research, while selecting potential expert for city logo development, it is recommended that priority should be given to (a) responsible experts in strategic / territorial and national policy making or related activities, (b) experts with knowledge of sustainable development, (c) independent sustainable development analysts / consultants / private and academic or who have implemented specific project-based SDs both nationally

and internationally. The stakeholders in this process should be representing: 1) Public Sector, 2) NGOs, 3) Private Sector, 4) Academy and 5) Independent Experts.

Key words: city brand, city development, brand identity, design, logics, urban marketing

JEL codes: M31 Marketing; M37 Advertising

City Brand Theoretical aspects

"City branding or place branding plays a pivotal role in creating destinations around the World. Creating a single brand for a city helps highlight its offerings and interactions, allowing it to appeal to both tourists and residents alike. A city's brand is the same as a company's brand. It's a promise of value. It's how it wants to present itself to the world. Again, like company branding, good city branding can make a place seem desirable, but bad city branding can have the opposite effect. Some cities succeed with their branding efforts, others fail. But all should try." Tony Hardy

Nowadays, a new direction of public relations is being developed – development of the image of cities, regions or even states – creating a new urban brand. It is a special activity that helps to develop economy of the city and the region, attracts investment and positively influences not only the inhabitants but also the guests of the city. It is necessary to start applying similar marketing strategies to the city as to the product or service, thus selling the city to its target groups and, therefore, making money for the city. Urban marketers have recently begun to focus on urban brands. They try to analyze as many markets and target audiences as possible, because choosing the right marketing strategy for a city could increase the city budget several times. Nowadays, a lot of attention is being paid globally to building a city brand. This practice is correspondingly applicable in Lithuanian cities.

To start with the city brand construction, we should investigate the sustainable development trends globally. The Sustainable Development Goals are

a call for action by all countries – poor, rich and middle-income – to promote prosperity while protecting the planet. They recognize that ending poverty must go hand-in-hand with strategies that build economic growth and address a range of social needs including education, health, social protection, and job opportunities, while tackling climate change and environmental protection (<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/>). These 17 goals are depicted in the Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. The Global Goals for Sustainable Development



Source: United Nations web portal. <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>.

Cities have their own development goals, along with their brands that distinguish one city from another. City signs aim to attract tourists and investors. The city sign demonstrates the uniqueness of the city, showing the

characteristics of the city. According to Bakštys A. (2018), today Lithuanian districts and smaller towns are creating their own city brands. Cities are fiercely competing and are therefore choosing to increasingly invest in communication. Smaller towns and even separate districts have also started to create logos. Some of the largest cities in the world are implementing fantastic urban branding projects. These branding projects give cities, residents and visitors a new look. The urban brand is a vital and significant component of successful cities around the world. Local branding (including local marketing and local advertising) cover country branding, regional branding, and urban branding. Most major cities have developed their brands – for instance, Paris based on novels or Hong Kong based on commerce. For many cities, it is impossible to summarize a brand by a single word – they are multifaceted and ever changing. Subsequently, trying to artificially create city brands is a dangerous and sometimes a made-up business. The urban brand is not only about attractiveness but also about identification of a locale, even as a prerequisite of such. This opens a great opportunity to rethink the city identity as a coherent (and optimistic) articulation between internal factors and external conditions. The city brand must have a well-developed infrastructure, convenient transportation and logistics center, together with a cultural, scientific and sports center, including education institutions. The city must have a deep tradition of academic education, a positive and distinctive environment, a unique architecture, cozy old town, and green landscape. Tourists and citizens alike are welcoming a brand of this kind. The city brand can be used in various advertising clips, attributes during events, cultural events, or exhibitions. It is good for a city to have a developed city brand. An urban brand brings a person closer to the city if it matches the mindset of the individual how he or she imagines the city.

“We often talk about “brand” as if it is one thing. It is not of course – in fact, the meaning and the use of the term differs, quite markedly, depending on the context,” says Mark Di Somma in his blog dedicated to brands. He envisions 21 type of brands (www.brandingstrategyinsider.com):

- 1) Personal brand;
- 2) Product brand;
- 3) Service brand;
- 4) Corporate brand;
- 5) Investor brand;
- 6) NGO (Non-Governmental Organization) or Non-Profit brand;
- 7) Public brand;
- 8) Activist brand;
- 9) Place brand;
- 10) Nation brand;
- 11) Ethical brand;
- 12) Celebrity brand;
- 13) Ingredient brand;
- 14) Global brand;
- 15) Challenger brand;
- 16) Generic brand;
- 17) Luxury brand;
- 18) Cult brand;
- 19) Clean slate brand;
- 20) Private brand;
- 21) Employer brand.

Variables of a place

A place prompts a lot of variables. Neighbors, cities and nations are generating energy and excitement. Places connect us to each other in the ways that the online worlds cannot do. The urban brand reflects upon the relative quality, reputation and competitiveness of the place identity.

Table 1 presents various definitions of a city brand. According to Anholt (2008), city brand can be defined by compelling strategic urban vision. Besides, Gavénas (2012) summarizes brand identity elements as a sum of

strategy, structure, communication, and culture. What is more, Ashworth, G., J., Voogd, H. (1990) define city as a brand that meets functional, symbolic and emotional targets that our audience needs. Also, Ooi, Can-Seng (2008) suggest that a brand of a place creates a public image of the area as a whole. Finally, Knox, S., and Bickerton, D. (2003) define city brand as a unique urban visual, verbal and behavioral expression of business model.

Table 1. City brand definition

Author	Definition
Anholt, S. (2008)	City brand must define a realistic, competitive, compelling strategic urban vision.
Gavénas, E. (2012)	M. Kavaratzis (2004, 2007) using Balmer (2002) analyze city branding processes suggested corporate brand identity elements: * strategy (mentions organization vision, strategy, brand promise, activities) * structure (relationships between different parts of an organization) * communication (internal and external to the organization) * culture (internal and external to the organization).
Ashworth, G., J., Voogd, H. (1990)	Like brands, cities meet functional, symbolic and emotional targets audience needs, and the features that meet those needs have to be balanced, combined into a unique city plan - the brand.
Knox, S., Bickerton, D. (2003)	The city brand is a unique urban visual, verbal and behavioral expression of business model.
Ooi, Can - Seng (2008)	Place brand has four main functions: it creates a public image of the area as a whole; selectively and aesthetically conveys desired location characteristics; creates an image of the place that results in the area becomes unique and distinguished from others; shapes the public experience of the area.

Source: adapted by the authors from Anholt, S., Gavénas, E., Ashworth, G., J., Voogd, H., Knox, S., Bickerton, D., and Ooi, Can-Seng.

Cities must fight for investment, tourist numbers, and successful businesses. The strength of the city is that companies sometimes use the name of the city in their name, for example, 'Vilniaus duona', or 'Klaipėdos baldai'. A city brand helps to create the right image for the city, and the image depends

on whether the city will attract investors or young people. For instance, Cai (2002) defines means of city branding as consistent factor or their combination that helps to create a positive image of the city to gain recognition and make the city more visitor-friendly. Urban brands consist of the following: names, signs, logos, designs, and slogans. Cities have become important players in the market. City government representatives emphasize their influence on urban strategy and improve their brand management. However, the city brand meets undeniable challenges. One is that cities must use their symbolic capital - the brand - for the resources and influence the way how they bring to their perceived value in an increasingly decentralized, fluid and mediated or media-driven and defined environment. Urban branding also helps the city to function in the market and influence urban resources, thereby increasing attractiveness and export power of the city. The more successful it is, the more likely the city is to have long-term prosperity.

As Grevytė, G. (2013) cited S. Anholt (2005), there are six dimensions of location brands which show for whom and why a location needs a brand: tourism, population, export brands, foreign and domestic politics, investment and immigration, culture and heritage.

- Tourism in its nutshell means trips to relax, to experience new experiences or to have fun. Although in recent times the term had more to do with moving out of one's own living or working environment, currently, tourism also generates revenue for the city. Tourism has gained the potential to develop cities rapidly.
- Population is a demographic and statistical concept that expresses the size of a state, its region, a municipality, a city, a village, or any other type of settlement in terms of the number of people permanently resident in that area. The number of inhabitants adjacent to the area is one of the main indicators that determine the size of a residential area, its economic, social, functional and other possibilities.
- Export brand. Brands are some of the most important locations in the ways they create and maintain an image.

- Foreign and domestic politics. It is very important who governs the city and what policies are implemented in the city.
- Investment and immigration. Recently, cities have become centers for investment and business attraction. The more investment the city attracts, the richer it becomes and new jobs are created.
- Culture and heritage – ethnically, historically, aesthetically or scientifically – important cultural values have been taken over through several generations. Cultural heritage is divided into tangible and intangible heritage. The concept of cultural heritage has evolved for centuries. For a long time, it has been considered a unique architectural, artistic, archaeological and historical monument.

Competition between cities has been increasing lately. Many cities are competing and trying to present themselves for the best: including investment size, tourist numbers, economic growth, tolerance of foreign cultures, and appropriate policies.

Variety of city brand definitions

A number of authors describe the city brand differently.

Hayden, C., Sevin, E. (2012) analyze the period of public argumentation on city logo of Ankara, capital of Turkey. The authors analyze politicized relationships between insiders' concept and revealed identity. In describing of this conceptual link between the mechanism of brand identity and brand image), Hayden, C., and Sevin, E. (2012) seek to deconstruct the semiotic relation between ideas and logos and submit the importance of public reasoning in meaningful branding.

Kasapi, I., Cela, A. (2017) in their article "Destination Branding: A Review of the City Branding Literature" provide an overview of the brand concept and its origins, local and destination brands, which served as an umbrella for the concept of urban brand. Destination branding theme is more specifically the city-related subdivision. According to the authors, city brand research area

is still in its infancy, and shows that there is still scope for further research in this particular area.

Fernando Rey Castillo-Villar (2018) in his article "City branding and the theory of social representation" seeks to respond to previously raised issues and tailor urban brand goals to urban image management. The second part of article is dedicated to linking construction and design-communication processes of urban image through social representation theory. This conceptual framework is to be the theoretical basis for understanding the image of the city as a process of social construction facilitates communication between individuals and the city.

Vuignier, R. (2016) stated that the idea behind a local brand is now defined in such broad, inclusive terms that both terms are confused and used as synonyms by many authors (alternately). The author mentioned that the phenomenon is noticeable in this literature review: the authors tend to use both terms, and there is no significant difference content between articles that appear in search results for the keyword "placement marketing" and "local branding" and the most recent documents are simply presented in both.

Kavaratzis, M., and Kalandides, A. (2015) in their article "Rethinking the Place Brand: The Interactive Formation of Place Brands and the Role of Participatory Place Branding" try to provide the latest information understanding local brands by going beyond associations and adding one missing element: the interaction of those associations. Authors suggest rethinking the place brands based on two pillars: first, include more geographical awareness in local branding, and secondly, describe a process that allows local elements and local associations in order to combine and form a local brand.

Rivas, M. (2015) stated that branding can be an issue of internal marketing as well. A local brand construction method can be used to gain social weight for the projects and support emerging processes in the city which need to be installed in the collective imagination and can be increasingly seen as urban regeneration project toolkit.

Riza, M., Doratli, N., and Fasli, M. (2011) mention in their article "City Branding and Identity" that the brand, largely created from marketing strategies, is increas-

ingly used in urban marketing and advertising like products. The main purpose of branding for cities is to: articulation of the city in a globalized world. If the city claims to be successful, it must be cost effective and have an attractive image.

Chaves, E., P., S. (2017) stated that brands have three main functions: *navigation* that helps consumers choose a brand from a variety of options; *security* through brand communication the quality of the product or service, thereby communicating security to the customer decision making; and the *engagement* that brands provide through images and languages (Wheeler, 2012, p. 12).

City brand advantages and disadvantages

While place branding (consider place marketing and place promotion) is a new umbrella term encompassing nation branding, region branding and city branding (Lucarelli & Berg, 2011), there are certain opportunities and threats that brand construction brings.

“A place brand is a network of associations in the place consumers’ mind based on the visual, verbal, and behavioral expression of a place and its stakeholders. These associations differ in their influence within the network and in importance for the place consumers’ attitude and behavior” (Zenker & Braun, 2017, p. 275).

It therefore aims to affect the perceptions of a place and position it favorably in the minds of the target groups. Place branding can even be considered as a “governance strategy for projecting images and managing perceptions about places” (Braun, Eshuis, & Klijin, 2014, p. 64).

Therefore, city branding refers to all the activities that are undergone with the purpose of turning a City from a location into a destination. “Successful branding”, says Robert Jones, consultant director at international brand consultancy Wolff Olins, “can turn a city into a place where people want to live, work and visit” (Salman & Saba, 2008).

City brand construction (re-construction, too) have advantages and disadvantages.

Table 2. City brand advantages and disadvantages

Advantages	Disadvantages
Employment. Ratio of the number of people of working age to the total workforce. Full employment is when all those seeking employment can find work. Seasonal employment is a temporary employment in seasonal areas. It is very important that the city has the highest employment rate as it reflects the well-being of the population.	Expensive
Education. Education is the process of transferring knowledge and skills to educational institutions, and not only to individuals, formally or informally. It is very important that there are schools, colleges, universities in the city that contribute to the development of the city.	It is tough to change
Housing. It is very important that the residents of the city are provided with housing.	To create confusion
Social mobility. Social mobility is the movement of individuals, and sometimes groups, between different positions within a society's stratification system (between classes and strata). Movement in the social hierarchy can go up and down. A distinction is made between intergenerational and intragenerational (or career) mobility. Intergenerational mobility refers to mobility between the family's origin and the class or status of the person.	Means responsibility
Transportation. It is important that the transportation in the city is smooth and there are no traffic jams.	Can be changed to another city brand
Reduced costs	
Financial service provisions	
Educated labor force. It is important for business educate employees in the city.	

Source: created by the authors.

City brands: case studies

Lithuania has started its construction of city brands rather recently. Until 2014, Kaunas was the only city in the country that did not have a logo for city marketing. That same year, the approved brand was hesitated, whether it is informative, would those administering would be able to exploit it, or would they need it at all? The colorful, two-line letters of the city name and the word

'sharing' below them would be the logo of the city of Kaunas for the next five years. The winning advertising company 'Not Perfect | Y&R' created the brand. "Trying to objectively evaluate the face of Kaunas creates a modern and dynamic image: developed infrastructure, convenient transportation and logistics center, cultural, scientific and sports center in the middle of the country. The city has deep traditions of academic education, positive and distinctive environment, unique interwar architecture. All of this is Kaunas' identity, intertwined with Kaunas' city brand", this is how the creators of the brand then presented their work. They also claimed that they had decided to combine basketball, jazz, science, and sports in the brand. They argued that a proposed sign is multifaceted, and adaptable to a variety of different contexts. According to A. Cechanavičius, then deputy head of the municipal culture and tourism development department, all major cities had their brands that were used in foreign markets. "The city coat of arms is used in official settings, attributes, patterns, whereas the brand reveals things encoded in the human consciousness. What impression you receive for the first time you see a sign, is immediately about the city. People's thoughts about the city must be positive," he explained. According to A. Cechanavičius, the brand must encode certain symbols. When asked what symbols are visible in the new Kaunas sign, he named basketball - a round ring in the letter "S". "The experts have further explained that there is a symbol of science, but I will not tell you exactly where it is," the specialist added. According to him, the creators of the sign had to familiarize themselves with the history of the city, its strategy, and plans for the future; and to choose what symbolized the city. According to A. Cechanavičius, the word 'Kaunas' is divided into two parts. In the opinion of A. Cechanavičius, the mark distinguishing the city from the city should be used in all marketing means. "Our department participates in 6-8 international tourism exhibitions every year, where we would present Kaunas tourism opportunities using the new brand", then said the interviewee. Along with the visuals, the advertising company provided a guide on where and how the sign should be presented.

Rolandas Rimkūnas, Head of the Department of Graphics, at Kaunas Faculty of Vilnius Academy of Arts, gives his own opinion on this brand. First, beauty is not the key to the brand, he states. When creating any brand, or symbol, the first thing is to think about the purpose, that is, 'who will need it'? Does it explain clearly what Kaunas would sell under this brand? What Rimkūnas means is that Klaipėda, Druskininkai sells something that is clear. Urban planners often make many mistakes when it comes to beauty alone, whereas we need to start talking about the whole thing. Above all, it must be a competitive and fair product. If a product is poor, no good advertising would help, more likely it will turn to be the opposite – it will only destroy the image more quickly. Secondly, there must be articulate communication. If the image is only made because it is fashionable, then the result is what it is. A visualization – whether it is beautiful or not – will not help. As far as the heraldry system is concerned, one could judge whether the coat of arms complies with the rules. The coat of arms often portrays angry, defending males, and in business evil characters do not fit, thus, the positive branding of states or cities is a different story, Rimkūnas declares. Of course, one can judge which brand is more informative, and which is less. A trademark is like a flag, followed by a great deal of work. According to the lecturer, tourism companies must cooperate with the municipality and jointly develop relations under this sign. As for the kind of product Kaunas would obtain, it is hard to say, because interviewee did not participate in any consideration in creating this brand. In the past, designers had been asked to come up with a Kaunas brand. This meant that designers had to figure out which direction the city would go. This time, as Rimkūnas understands it, the job did not start with the designers, at least their help was not demanded. To sum up, the isolation politics is a serious symptom of the Lithuanian urban planning.

Romėna Savickienė, director of Klaipėda Tourism and Culture Information Center, says she saw the new brand of Kaunas on the Television news. However, it was still difficult for her to evaluate it, even so, at first it appeared to be difficult to read the inscription of the word "Kaunas". The success of a sign would depend on how it is communicated, in other words, where and how it would be used, Ms. Savickienė thinks.

“The brand of Klaipeda was created quite long ago. We took part in creating it ourselves”, says the specialist. The sign indicates that this city is located by the sea and is “well-intentioned”. The logo contains a boat, a smiley face, and a sail. The inscription describes how guests arriving in the port city should feel. In English, this note sounds exactly the ‘free style’. “In the tourism press, such as in our publications, we often used this badge on souvenirs, many people liked it, and they became recognizable. We wanted this sign to appear in the heart of every Klaipeda citizen, and maybe not all work had been done. Admittedly, it had already been said that this mark should be renewed”.

Vida Jurkienė, Head of State Language Control Center, at Kaunas City Municipality, explained: “I saw this trademark before it had been approved. I immediately commented on what was wrong. There should be a dash between the syllables ‘Kau’ and ‘nas’ as the syllable is moved to the next line. Also, the word ‘distinguishes’ is not very appropriate. The main form of this verb is ‘to divide’, meaning that it must be spelled correctly. The word ‘distinguishes’ is not a mistake, but it is a by-product of the norm.” However, these comments had not been taken into account, and the logo had been validated as presented. “This is true that no one discussed the logo with me, and I saw it already attached to some text and made my own comments about the brand. I do not like the current result, but once the mark has been registered, it is unfortunately not possible to change anything”. From a formal point of view, trademarks are not considered as text, they are not notes that are subject to strict language rules. However, the public sees such a logo as a text. “I didn’t even pay attention to the design; as I laughed and asked myself what the words ‘Kau’ and ‘Nas’ stand here for?”, Jurkienė confesses.

Case study of Vilnius

In 2019 a group of experts of design and advertising, together with representatives of Vilnius City Municipality selected a logo representing Vilnius’ celebration of the 700th anniversary in 2023.

The competition, which had a total of 75 entries, had been won by a concept proposed by graphic designer Edwin Grishin: three figures resembling 700.

According to the decision of the Committee of Experts, Simonas Urbonas was the second prize winner and Gintas Lapėnas made the third prize winner.

According to E. Grishin, the idea of the sign was born while he was living in Portugal, but was already considering his return to Vilnius.

"When I was designing the logo for Vilnius, I was thinking about what the city related to me. First of all, it did with the architecture that shapes the face of the city and our way of life. This is how the logo conveys the idea of a very simple tool used by architects - a ruler-stencil", E. Grishin quoted in his inaugural speech.

He said he wanted the mark to be "memorable, but not overly complicated."

"I was also looking for a solution to engage the public more actively in its use, not wanting it to be just a static symbol used only in the attributes of the institution," the developer said.

Mayor R. Šimašius hoped that the logo "would become a recognizable symbol of the celebration".

"And not only in Lithuania, Vilnius has already proved its ability to shine internationally and attract foreigners," the mayor said.

The winner has been in the advertising industry for nine years and had been specializing in branding for the past five years for the own studio, 'Pretty Much' Agency.

The logos were selected by a commission consisting of experts of graphic design, advertising developers, municipal representatives: Gediminas Lašas, Chairman of the Board of the Lithuanian Graphic Design Association, Tomas Ramanauskas, creator, lecturer and publisher, Donatas Kliunka, founder of Critical Design Agency Dovilė Gaižauskienė, designer Gabrielė Mišeikytė, municipal councilor Darius Kuolys, and advisor to the mayor Karolis Žukauskas.

Let us come back to one of the anonymous experts who is famous for winning the influencers' opinion on the public issues. He says "City and country images have been interesting to me since the time of my undergraduate writing, so here I put my opinion."

1) Mistakes are healthy. The expert states that he likes it when every city in Lithuania tries to do something with its image or brand; and although sometimes these attempts fail, but at least they give the impression that cities are starting to take care of their image (what is very difficult for our country, as we are not sure whether cities can succeed). And mistakes will sooner or later also lead to quality, because competition between cities will effect branding, and it will be improved. It is important that there is awareness, need and less moaning, that six-digit amounts are allocated to such things (NB: normal price, after all the work is done – it is not just drawing one logo, if anything).

2) Advantages:

a) Vilnius Logik. Initially the writer looked suspiciously at this slogan of Vilnius, but he confesses that he started liking it more and more because it can accommodate many interesting solutions. It also has viral potential (both for the domestic market and abroad) if it is to be worked on a city of interesting contrasts: “a city in the woods”, “a beer and wine mix” and so on. And everything fits within the framework of Vilnius Logik. The potential is really good, and here is probably the best slogan of the Lithuanian city from those he remembers (“Kaunas shares”, “Panevezys - a new direction”, “Klaipeda - free style”). The idea of Vilnius Logik will not be eternal, but “every five years it is possible to have fun”. From the tourist side, we notice when we travel: how interesting the country or city contrasts are, when a modern building stands next to an old ruin, when a small village is neighboring a tall church tower, when in a modern city, you find Shnipishkes behind Vilnius skyscrapers. Contrasts are certainly a ‘hook’ that can suit tourists, and this slogan can be based on more than just paper, as, for example, the barely-created Panevezys slogan of anything called ‘New Direction’ destroyed itself.

b) Use of verb symbolism for design elements is arguable. Knowing how many different symbols and signs a city needs, which are often not closely related to one another, it can be a great way to create a uniform

and boring symbolism for the whole city. And souvenirs with this design would look more fun to me than with the castle tower symbol.

3) Disadvantages:

a) The outline of a castle for a young, growing city is, in expert's opinion, too conservative, static and without any intrigue. Lithuanians always romanticize the Middle Ages, "but in doing so we will hardly attract the attention of foreigners who do not know our history". Neither tourists nor investors will look at Vilnius as a 700-year-old city – for a while we will still be interesting as one of the undiscovered capitals of the new Europe that appeared on the map just 20 years ago (or more precisely 10 years after EU accession). Therefore, this positioning conflicts with everything else Vilnius Municipality does, actively attracting tourists and investments to us as a new, undiscovered but interesting land.

b) The same with "City of Kings" – the expert argues whether maybe it was just a justification of Vilnius brand and this message would not be used in communication, but to associate Vilnius with kings is hardly right, because "we only had one, whereas monarchy did not survive and Europe, or Scandinavia, and there are plenty of capitals that had royal dynasties with Vilnius which cannot even compare with them in this respect". And if the king was just a metaphor, then the tower (and crown) in the trademark turned into the symbol or metaphor into a claim to the real city of kings. Vilnius is not like that, and it can be a city of princes, revolutions, baroque, or anything but kings.

c) Red color. It can be a joke that the mayor is making a nest here for the social democrats hatch, but if seriously, choosing a red color, Vilnius trips on the rake of neighboring larger cities – Riga and Warsaw. It does not matter that at the moment their brands do not have a dominant red color, but both Latvian and Polish national colors contain different shades of red, so their capitals will be identified with red (just like Tallinn will probably always remain a blue city). And "so often we complain that foreigners consider Riga our capital, and now we can complain about the fact that

the Vilnius brand advertises Riga - because Riga has both red and the castle, so why would the Vilnius mark not fit Riga?" Obviously, the coat of arms of Vilnius is red (now also the airlines), the validity of the red color is as it is, but in this case the context is stronger than the little-known coat of arms, airlines and 'Lietuvos rytas'. It is true that I am waiting with irony for the cards of Vilnius to be changed to red - after all, they should change if they create the city image neatly. And then most Vilnius residents will have a kind of red certificate.

d) The slogan is unrelated to visuals. No matter how the expert looks at the towers of the tower against a red background, he found it difficult to see anything encoded there under the slogan of Vilnius Logik. They even contradict each other (though perhaps this is where the meaning of Vilnius Logik lies deep and hidden). And anyway, in general, no intrigue is brought by visual sign. And for a city that is still changing and growing, it would like a more active and interesting symbol.

The expert imposes that Vilnius in Europe must be a bold, attractive, intelligent and at the same time cheeky but mature teenager caught by the best universities, not a retired solid, reliable man who slowly but very steadily mows the grass in his yard.

"Anyway, the good news is, that no matter how good or bad a city brand is, it won't do wonders or tragedies. How many of the last 5 foreign capitals visited do you remember? So why create that image?"

Finally, let us discuss the case of the scandalous G point as referred to the city of Vilnius.

In 2018 the advertising campaign "Vilnius, the G-spot of Europe" was presented in Berlin and London, predominantly on the Internet, and it said: "Vilnius is Europe's G-spot. Nobody knows where it is, but when it is, it's wonderful." The advertising poster depicted a young girl clutching a blanket-map on the place where Vilnius should be. During the campaign, web banners and video clips lead to a specially crafted website. In order to keep visitors' attention and encourage them to get to know Vilnius, it invited them

to play a special game: some questions were asked, and then a personalized map of Vilnius's attractions would be offered to the visitor. The government had previously asked the Vilnius municipality to postpone the launch of the campaign until the visit of Pope Francis in September. The Lithuanian Catholic Church had criticized that G-spot advertising strengthens the image of Vilnius as a sex tourism city. The advertising agency Go Vilnius, the capital's tourism and business development agency, said it was using some word play and metaphors to present Vilnius as a city where pleasure comes from, and advertising was not vulgar.

The idea of the advertising campaign was created by Jurgis Ramanauskas, Skaistė Kaurynaitė and Ugnius Mikšta, who then studied at the 'Atomic Garden' advertising school.

Figure 2. Representation of the City of Vilnius as the 'G' spot



Source: Authors of the poster: Skaistė Kaurynaitė ir Jurgis Ramanauskas. <https://madeinvilnius.lt/naujienos/miestas/vilnius-europos-g-taskas/>.

“The main insight of the campaign was that no one knew where Vilnius really is, but as soon as they find out and come, they are all very happy and in love with our city. This insight came from conversations with foreigners, including their lecturer. So when they realized that there was a place that no one knew, but when they discovered it, everyone was very pleased, then the G-point analogy offered itself”, J. Ramanauskas said. This work, created by students, was selected by ‘Atomic Garden’ lecturer Antonio Bechtle, who had abundant of international experience in advertising, to receive 25 awards, including one for a tourism promotion campaign in Peru. Mr Bechtle emphasized that while the idea was not his but his students’, he would boldly put his signature on it, as it is well suited to the target audience, which in this case are young, open-minded people from Western countries. “Based on my experience in advertising locales, I am convinced that this campaign is absolutely right and a big step forward in advertising for Vilnius as a destination,” says Bechtle. “Advertising speaks to the target audience, using humor and breaking established rules. What is important is that it articulates the feeling of an alien visiting Vilnius: that you have discovered something wonderful that has always been, but you have not known it yet.”

We may like it or not, the global context offers some examples that can be really inspiring for our co-patriots, while working on the city branding. For instance, in 2017, Werklig brand design agency created a new brand identity for the city of Helsinki in record time: 7 months. The wave motif from the coat of arms was taken for it and used in the city’s new branding, along with a ship and a crown.

Another example is presented in the literature with Paris:

“Using or not the symbol of the Eiffel Tower was our first question. Difficult to do without the great lady, to communicate effectively about the destination “Paris” to an international audience. However, we were aware of entering a visual territory particularly used and where the kitsch border is very close. We went for simplicity, and concentrated our efforts on a typographic design that can be seen as a Parisian skyline, the drawing of the “A” directly evoking the Eiffel Tower. The result is a minimalist typogram.”

According to graphic designer Tony Hardy, the 'A' in Paris become the legs of the Eiffel Tower. The 'I' becomes a feature because of the well-known "Tourist Information" symbol. That is how perfect blend for the city's Convention and Visitors Bureau has been developed (<https://dribbble.com/cannytony>).

Tomas adds that the "**I**amsterdam" concept and identity also has a great recognizable quality (...). If you've ever visited Amsterdam, the chances are you'll have seen the modern "I Amsterdam" text stood proud, contrasting against its background, the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam.

"The challenge presented was very clear. The city needed a visual system, a visual identity that could organize and simplify communication with the citizens and could at the same time define a clear hierarchy, bringing together the city and the city hall. We needed to represent Porto, a global city, the city for everyone." Eduardo Aires (<https://www.behance.net/gallery/20315389/New-identity-for-the-city-of-Porto>).

This is how identity for the city of Porto in Portugal was redesigned back in 2014. All the cases discussed earlier, bring us back to the theoretical backgrounds provided in the first part of the paper.

Conclusions

- 1) Upon the revision of relevant theories applicable to city visual branding, we came to the conclusion that since a place prompts a lot of variables, we need to consider numerous components, such as population, industries, landscape, economies or history, so that we could create a comprehensive concept for a city brand.
- 2) By overviewing various definitions of the city branding and notice some advantages and disadvantage they might pose, we confirmed our hypothesis about the variables of the city (re)branding, such as its price, semantic complexity, societal charge or responsibility, its changeability, or rigidity.
- 3) While providing various case studies so that we could summarize the methodologies of why and how we could better position our locales

globally, we arrived to the conclusion that the best way to create a viable city brand is a collaboration between municipalities and businesses as commissioners for the project, together with artists and designers, who know how to transform the ideas into signs.

4) Upon completion of our research we recommend that, while selecting potential expert for city logo development, priority should be given to (a) responsible experts in strategic / territorial and national policy making or related activities, (b) experts with knowledge of sustainable development, (c) independent sustainable development analysts / consultants / private and academic or who have implemented specific project-based on sustainable development both nationally and internationally.

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