

1. Introduction

**2. Creative clusters and the creative place: state of the art at EU level**

3. On-going processes within the partnership: partner profiles

4. Synthesis: approaching the implementation phase

5. Annexes

The meaning of creativity in spatial development | The Creative Ecosystem

Policies | Creative Strategies

People | Creative Class

Economy | Creative Industries

Places | Creative Cities

Creative Clusters in low density urban areas | The Ultimate Debate in Local Development

## THE MEANING OF CREATIVITY IN SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT | *THE CREATIVE ECOSYSTEM*

The importance of creativity has emerged as an essential resource to be competitive in the global world. Nowadays, creativity together with innovation and knowledge [the immaterial component of society] are differentiating factors that influence ideas, products, services and places leading to competitive advantages in all fields of economy.

The “Economy of Culture in Europe” report [European Commission, 2006] <sup>1</sup> states that *“Creativity is a complex process of innovation, combining some or all of the following dimensions: ideas, skills, technology, management, production processes as well as culture. Creativity has the ability to benefit almost all economic sectors.”*

In this context, the concept of creative ecosystem recently posed by the Portuguese think tank on spatial development INTELI it is very useful. The creative ecosystem is an environment of excellence focused on creativity. It comprises: creative people (creative class and entrepreneurs), creative economy (creative industries and clusters) and creative places (creative districts and cities). It is supported by specific creative policies (European, national, regional and local strategies) towards sustainable creative frameworks.

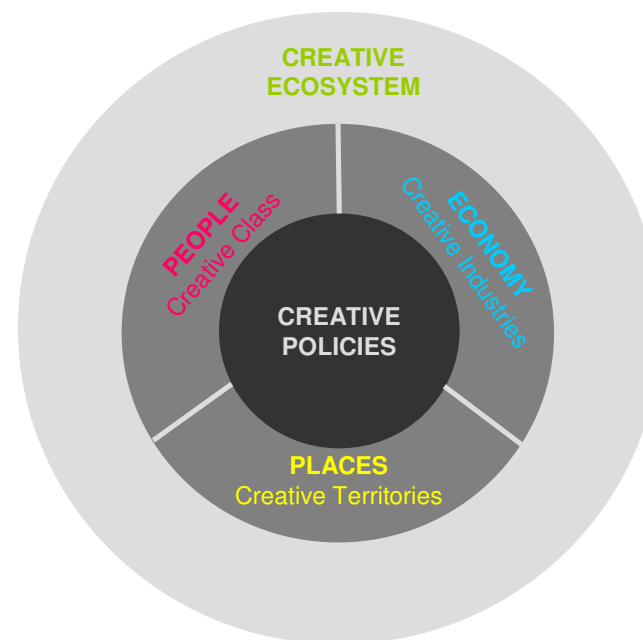


Figure 1. Creative Ecosystem

Source: INTELI, 2008

<sup>1</sup> EC (2006) *The Economy of Culture in Europe*, Study prepared by KEA, European Affairs for the European Commission, Directorate-General for Education and Culture, Brussels. [http://ec.europa.eu/culture/key-documents/doc873\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/culture/key-documents/doc873_en.htm)

## POLICIES | *CREATIVE STRATEGIES*

Concepts such as “creative economy”, “creative cities” [intelligent, innovative or learning cities] and “creative industries” have been increasingly present both in academic literature as well as in national, European and international public policies. In fact, international and European institutions like European Commission, OECD, UNCTAD or WIPO [World Intellectual Property Organization] have been widely recognizing the importance of creativity to economic development, such as:

- The OECD published in 2005 the report “Culture and Local Development” showing how public policies can foster culture as a lever for local economic development in terms of partnerships, tax relief, and other innovative instruments.
- In 2008, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development [UNCTAD] has published a report on Creative Economy<sup>2</sup>, expressing its vision about the subject.
- The European Commission made public in 2006 the report “The Economy of Culture in Europe”<sup>3</sup> stressing the importance of the creative and cultural industries in Europe in terms of employment and GDP.
- Currently, the EC is preparing the report “The Impact of Culture on Creativity” in the context of the **1999 European Year on Creativity and Innovation**<sup>4</sup>, to be published in February 2009.

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<sup>2</sup> UNCTAD (2008) *Creative Economy Report–The Challenging of Assessing the Creative Economy: towards Informed Policy-making* [www.unctad.org/creative-economy](http://www.unctad.org/creative-economy)

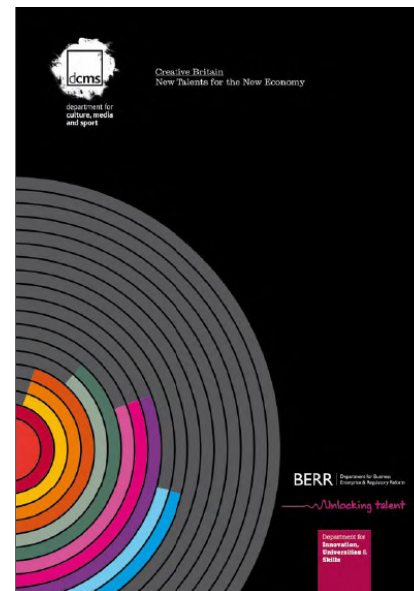
<sup>3</sup> EC (2006) *The Economy of Culture in Europe*, Study prepared by KEA, European Affairs for the European Commission, Directorate-General for Education and Culture, Brussels [http://ec.europa.eu/culture/key-documents/doc873\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/culture/key-documents/doc873_en.htm)

<sup>4</sup> KEA will also manage the project which includes as subcontractors BOP Consulting, a leading research consultancy on culture and creative industries in UK, Prof. Roberto Travaglini, specialist in cognitive studies and psychopedagogy at the University of Urbino and Mikkel Rasmussen, partner at ReD Associates (Denmark) and specialist in innovation management and cultural economics.

## Creative clusters and the creative place: state of the art at EU level

At national level, some European countries have been also developing strategies and policies oriented towards creativity. One of the paradigmatic examples is the United Kingdom: following the work since the creation of the **Creative Industries Task Force** (1997), the country has recently published the report *Creative Britain - New Talents for the New Economy* (2008) which postulates that “creative industries must move from the margins to the mainstream of economic and policy thinking”. The vision for the next ten years considers creativity as the engine of economic growth for towns, cities and regions. In this context, **Creative Britain** is a comprehensive action plan covering the whole creative process, from the grassroots to the global marketplace, including schools, the world of work... in order to make Britain the world’s creative hub.

Other European countries have been developing reports on its creative potential mapping or exploring the impact of creative industries, as well as some regions and cities have fostered development strategies based on their creative potential.



## Creative clusters and the creative place: state of the art at EU level

<b>Denmark</b>	The Ministry of Trade and Industry and The Ministry of Culture: <i>Denmark's Creative Potential - Culture and Business Policy Report</i>	2000
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Department for Culture, Media and Sport: <i>Creative Industries. Mapping Document</i>	2001
<b>Germany - North Rhine-Westphalia</b>	Ministry of Economic Affairs and Energy of the State of : <i>4th Culture Industries Report</i>	2002
<b>Spain - Catalonia</b>	Catalan Institute of Cultural Industries: <i>Handbook on the Cultural Industries of</i>	2002
<b>Austria – City of Vienna</b>	Ratzenböck, V. <i>et al.</i> for City of (MA 27)/Chamber of Commerce Vienna/Filmfonds Wien: <i>Untersuchung des ökonomischen Potenzials der Creative Industries in Wien (Survey of the economic potential of Creative Industries in )</i>	2004
<b>The Netherlands</b>	Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science: <i>Culture &amp; Economy: Our Creative potential</i>	2005
<b>Austria</b>	Mandl, <i>et al.</i> for Federal Chancellery, Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour of the , Austrian Federal Economic Chamber: <i>Second Austrian Report on Creative Industries (Zweiter Österreichischer Kreativwirtschaftsbericht)</i>	2006
<b>Belgium – Flanders</b>	Flanders District of Creativity: <i>Creative Industrie in Vlaanderen</i>	2006
<b>Spain – Andalusia</b>	Ministry of Culture of the Junta de Andalucía [Regional Government]: Strategic Plan for Culture PECA	2007
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Department for Culture, Media and Sport: <i>Creative - New Talents for the New Economy</i>	2008

**Table 1** Reports mapping or exploring (the impact of) creative industries

**Source:** adapted from EURICUR, 2007 <sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> EURICUR (2007) *An International Comparative Quick Scan of National Policies for Creative Industries*, Rotterdam.

### PEOPLE | *CREATIVE CLASS*

Human capital and talent are becoming the driving forces to achieve economic growth in the knowledge and creative economy, and the ability of attract and retain them builds regional competitive advantages. Florida and Tinagli (2004) <sup>6</sup> advocated that *“The winners and losers in the global creative economy will be those nations that are best able to attract, retain, and develop creative talent and harness their creative assets and capabilities.”*

Creative people or “creative class” <sup>7</sup> generate economic, social and cultural dynamism as well as have the capacity to create new ideas, new technologies and new content adding economic value through creativity. Creative people refer to people who work on science, engineering, architecture, design, arts, music, entertainment, etc. For Richard Florida the creative class also includes creative professionals in business, finance and law.

**Creative people and talents** are attracted to environments characterized by openness, a diverse and inclusive community and the existence of abundant and vibrant high quality experiences. They look for urban diversity, in spatial, social and economic terms, local uniqueness and community involvement.

Different segments of creative people search for different types of environments, for instance, students are attracted for cheap accommodation, prestigious universities, life style environments, etc. in contrast with creative people related to the media sector whose interests remain on urban diversity, creative spaces, cultural agendas, an son on.

In this context, the notion of **creative entrepreneurs** is also emerging. They are creative practitioners with the capacity to turn ideas into creative products and services for society. Their creativity surpass the artistic sphere; their entrepreneurial vision allows them to identify new opportunities in the marketplace, using business skills to transform ideas into products and into profits.

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<sup>6</sup> Florida, R and Tinagli, I. (2004) *Europe in a Creative Age*. Carnegie Mellon Software Industry Center.

<sup>7</sup> Florida, R. (2002) *The Rise of the Creative Class*. New York, The Perseus Books Group.

# Creative clusters and the creative place: state of the art at EU level

Type of Knowledge Workers	Attractions - Hard and Soft Location Factors
Scientists, Engineers and Creative Professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality of university milieu</li> <li>• Leisure facilities</li> <li>• Hedonistic environments</li> <li>• Accessibility</li> <li>• Life style environments</li> <li>• Access to cultural facilities</li> </ul>
Artistic, Creative People and Media Professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affordable space</li> <li>• Creative milieu</li> <li>• Entertainment</li> <li>• Creative spaces</li> <li>• Urban diversity</li> </ul>
Students ( Latent Knowledge Workers )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost living</li> <li>• Prestigious universities</li> <li>• Life style environments</li> <li>• Cheap accommodation</li> </ul>

**Table 2.** Hard and soft locations factors by different types of knowledge workers in cities

**Source:** Derived from Kunkmann (2005); Van den Berg et al. (2004)

## ECONOMY | CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

As creativity, innovation and knowledge are becoming the main drivers of economic development of cities and regions, a new creative economy is emerging: *“In the contemporary world, a new development paradigm is emerging that links the economy and culture, embracing economic, cultural, technological and social aspects of development at both the macro and micro level. Central to the new paradigm is the fact that creativity, knowledge and access to information are increasingly recognized as powerful engines driving economic growth and promoting development in a globalizing world.”* [UNCTAD, 2008].

At the heart of the creative economy are the creative industries. The concept of creative industries includes a diverse range of businesses in sectors where talent and individual creativity are the key factors of production and where the idea of business is crucial. The products and services resulting from creative industries have their value in creative, innovative and artistic attributes. This kind of industry is based on creative individuals in association with managers and technologists. This industry is simultaneously art, science and business.

### UNCTAD definition of creative economy

The “creative economy” is an evolving concept based on creative assets potentially generating economic growth and development.

- ↘ It can foster income-generation, job creation and export earnings while promoting social inclusion, cultural diversity and human development
- ↘ It embraces economic, cultural and social aspects interacting with technology, intellectual property and tourism objectives
- ↘ It is a set of knowledge-based economic activities with a development dimension and cross-cutting linkages at macro and micro levels to the overall economy.
- ↘ It is a feasible development option calling for innovative, multidisciplinary policy responses and inter-ministerial action.
- ↘ At the heart of the creative economy are the creative industries.

## Creative clusters and the creative place: state of the art at EU level

The concept of creative industries is broader than the cultural industries notion, encompassing not only creative contents with cultural and intangible nature but also other products and advanced services with a significant creative and innovative component, covering other sectors such as: Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), fashion, design, video, photography, cinema, computer games, architecture, visual arts, advanced services, etc.

The concept of creative industries emerged in the 1990s, through the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) of the UK government. Its first report (8) integrates a definition of creative industries which is still used and very popular: *“activities which have their origin in individual creativity skill and talent and which have the potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property”*.

However, this notion is not generally accepted and at least two additional different models can be identified in Europe (European Commission, 2006, cited here).

On one hand, the **French approach** carried out by the “Département des Etudes de la Prospective et des Statistiques” (9) defined creative industries as *“a set of economic activities that ally conception, creation, and production functions to more industrial functions of manufacturing and commercialising at large scale, through the use of material supports or communication technologies.”* In comparison with other definitions this approach doesn't take into account education activities, press critic activities, or the activities of collective management societies. In contrast with the UK approach which is one of the widest definitions.

On the other, the **Nordic approach**, which is derived from the concept of an emerging “experience economy” based on staging experiences, is related with everything that is considered as such by the consumer. In addition to the scope of the UK “creative industries” it also includes toys/amusement, tourism, sport, and edutainment.

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<sup>8</sup> Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), *Creative Industries Task Force*, 1997 [www.culture.gov.uk](http://www.culture.gov.uk)

<sup>9</sup> DEPS, *Aperçu statistique des industries culturelles*, n.º16 – January, 2006

# Creative clusters and the creative place: state of the art at EU level

Approach	French approach	Nordic approach
<b>“Creative Industries”</b>	<b>“Cultural Industries”</b>	<b>“Experience Economy”</b>
Advertising, architecture, the arts and antique market, crafts, design, designer fashion, film and video, interactive leisure software, music, performing arts, publishing, software and computer services, radio and television	<p>Publishing (books, newspapers, magazines and periodicals, music, sound recording and press)</p> <p>Audiovisual activities (production of films for television, production of institutional and advertising films, production of theatrical films, technical activities related to cinema and television, theatrical film distribution, video publishing and distribution, theatrical film exhibition, radio, production of TV programmes, TV channels editing, distribution of radio and TV satellite package programmes)</p> <p>And directly related activities (press agencies, multimedia, advertising)</p>	Fashion, visual arts, music, toys and amusement, tourism, books, theatre, radio and television, architecture, sports industries, design, print media, film and video, advertising, edutainment, content production, events, cultural institutions

**Table 3.** Scope of the UK, French and Nordic approaches

**Source:** Adapted from “The Economy of Culture in Europe”, 2006

# Creative clusters and the creative place: state of the art at EU level

CIRCLES	SECTORS	SUB-SECTORS	CHARACTERISTICS
CORE ARTS FIELD	Visual arts	Crafts Paintings – Sculpture – Photography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non industrial activities.</li> <li>• Output are prototypes and "potentially copyrighted works" (i.e. these works have a high density of creation that would be eligible to copyright but they are however not systematically copyrighted, as it is the case for most craft works, some performing arts productions and visual arts, etc).</li> </ul>
	Performing arts	Theatre - Dance – Circus - Festivals.	
	Heritage	Museums – Libraries - Archaeological sites - Archives.	
CIRCLE 1: CULTURAL INDUSTRIES	Film and Video		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industrial activities aimed at massive reproduction.</li> <li>• Outputs are based on copyright.</li> </ul>
	Television and radio		
	Video games		
	Music	Recorded music market – Live music performances – revenues of collecting societies in the music sector	
	Books and press	Book publishing - Magazine and press publishing	
CIRCLE 2: CREATIVE INDUSTRIES AND ACTIVITIES	Design	Fashion design, graphic design, interior design, product design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities are not necessarily industrial, and may be prototypes.</li> <li>• Although outputs are based on copyright, they may include other intellectual property inputs (trademark for instance).</li> <li>• The use of creativity (creative skills and creative people originating in the arts field and in the field of cultural industries) is essential to the performances of these non cultural sectors.</li> </ul>
	Architecture		
	Advertising		
CIRCLE 3: RELATED INDUSTRIES	PC manufacturers, MP3 player manufacturers, mobile industry, etc...		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This category is loose and impossible to circumscribe on the basis of clear criteria. It involves many other economic sectors that are dependent on the previous "circles", such as the ICT sector.</li> </ul>

	: "the cultural sector"
	: "the creative sector"

**Figure 3.** Proposed delineation of the cultural and creative sector (KEA)  
**Source:** The Economy of Culture in Europe, 2006

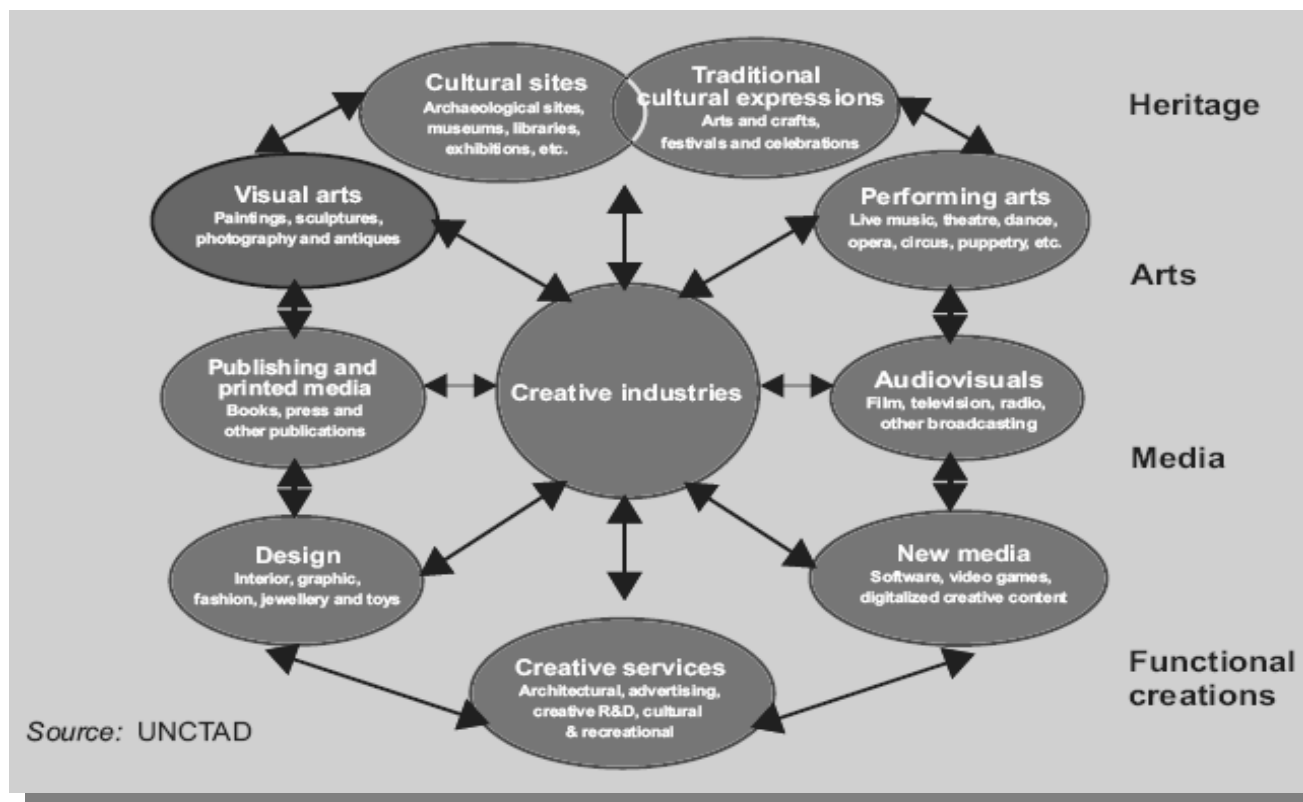
At the European level, the debate on creative industries started only recently. The first official European study on creative industries was prepared for the European Commission in 2006 – ***The Economy of Culture in Europe***. This study is the first effort to analyse the direct and indirect socio-economical impact of the cultural sector in Europe. It also proposes a new delineation of cultural and creative industries, which distinguish between the cultural and the creative sector.

At the international level, namely the **UNCTAD classification of creative industries**, comprises four different groups, taking into account their distinct characteristics. These groups are: heritage, arts, media and functional creations.

In conclusion, there is no official definition of creative or cultural industries at European level although there are national, regional and urban studies on creative industries, showing the variety of approaches and methodologies and the decisive impact of the creative industries on the overall economy.

Creative industries are central in the new agenda related to local economic development and place branding. Their growth is cluster-based and they have strong place-bound characteristics as they rely on local production networks.

# Creative clusters and the creative place: state of the art at EU level

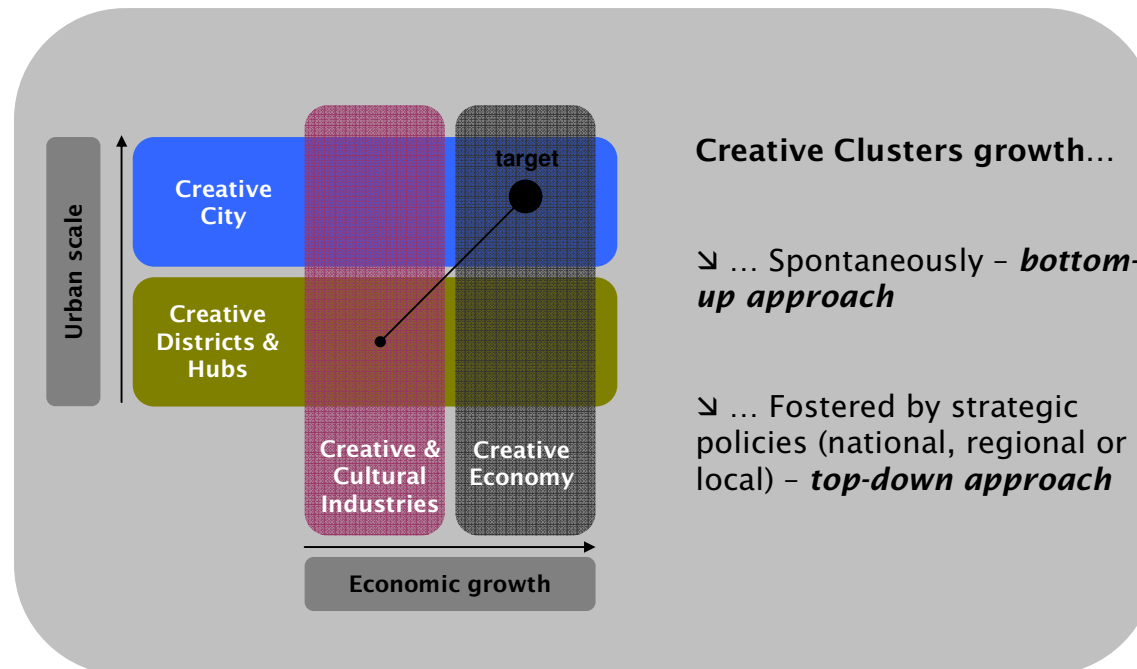


**Figure 4.** UNCTAD classification of creative industries  
**Source:** UNCTAD (2008) Creative Economy Report - The Challenging of Assessing the Creative Economy: towards Informed Policy-making

## Creative clusters and the creative place: state of the art at EU level

**Creative clusters** generally emerge organically in specific urban frameworks through relations of production, work, research, education, entertainment and leisure. Therefore, this type of clusters has particular characteristics, originating dynamic and distinctive urban areas as places to live, work, learn and play with a 24/7 life style.

Creative clusters can be promoted in a top-down approach by national, regional or local authorities who recognize the importance of their development or can emerge spontaneously in a bottom-up approach.



**Figure 5.** Creative clusters emergence  
Source: INTELI, 2008

## Creative clusters and the creative place: state of the art at EU level

There are enough examples around Europe of urban creative clusters developed around different types of creative industries, namely the *Cultural Industries Quarter* [www.ciq.org.uk](http://www.ciq.org.uk) in **Sheffield** oriented to music, cinema, television and radio; *Arabianranta* [www.arabianranta.fi](http://www.arabianranta.fi) in **Helsinki** focused on arts and design; *The Digital Hub* [www.thedigitalhub.com](http://www.thedigitalhub.com) in **Dublin** based on media and ICT; *22@bcn district* [www.22barcelona.com](http://www.22barcelona.com) in **Barcelona** focused on media, ICT, energy and health; or the *Museums Quartier* [www.mqw.at](http://www.mqw.at) in **Vienna** related with digital culture, fashion and design.

Governance	Connectivity	Clustering environment	Talent & social environment	Built environment	Cultural environment	Natural environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong leadership</li> <li>• Public-Private Partnership</li> <li>• Long-term and non-continuous development</li> <li>• Innovative urban Policies and Redevelopment strategies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good physical Accessibilities</li> <li>• First-class digital infrastructures</li> <li>• Seamless connectivity</li> <li>• Bridging elements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic specialization</li> <li>• Knowledge and creative industries</li> <li>• Entrepreneurship Culture</li> <li>• Proximity to knowledge infrastructure</li> <li>• Institutional cooperation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualified human Resources</li> <li>• Knowledge and creative workers</li> <li>• Diverse and multicultural environment</li> <li>• Foreign students, Workers and residents</li> <li>• Social networks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mixed-use Environment</li> <li>• Iconic and dynamic spatial concept</li> <li>• Distinctive architecture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distinctiveness and unique identity ('Genius loci')</li> <li>• Cultural and entertainment facilities</li> <li>• Vibrant and inspiring life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental quality</li> <li>• Distinctive landscape</li> <li>• Sustainable mobility schemes</li> </ul>

**Table 4.** Creative Clusters - Critical factors of success

**Source:** Cunha (2007)

*Creative Urban Spaces: "Innovation Hub" as an instrument of urban policy.*

Universidade Técnica de Lisboa – Faculdade de Arquitectura, Master Thesis on Urban and Environmental Regeneration

## Some experiences outside Europe on promoting creative clusters 10

### New Zealand

The government has identified nine strategic sectors with critical importance for the future, among them creative industries, chosen for both their inherent growth potential and their capacity to favour innovation and thereby enhance productivity in other sectors. New Zealand's creative industries include film, television, music, design, fashion, clothing and textiles and digital content production. A major project for the implementation of this strategy has been launched under the name Better by Design, which aims to *"raise awareness of and expertise in design-led thinking among New Zealand companies and to help companies integrate design through all aspects of their business, beginning with leadership, strategy and research, through to functional and aesthetic design, branding, packaging and distribution"*. [www.betterbydesign.org.nz](http://www.betterbydesign.org.nz).

### Shanghai

The Shanghai International City Creative Industry Forum, an annual event initiated in 2005. The Forum draws support from the Creative Industry Centre and eight business parks dedicated to creative industries, as well as three business clusters in the city.

The goals defined on the occasion of the first Forum were:

- > to strengthen international link and to set up joint projects
- > to place Shanghai in the world as "City of Design"
- > to link creativity to industry
- to emphasise the intellectual property protection value, which it is a key issue particularly in China.

<sup>10</sup> Cases taken from the report: Saublens, C. (2008) "Brain Power, the Main Driver for Europe's Growth, EURADA Scoping Paper. To know about more international case studies visit [www.creativeclusters.com](http://www.creativeclusters.com)

## PLACES | *CREATIVE CITIES*

Creativity has strong relations with territories and places. Creative workers look for places with particular environments, distinctive and diverse urban contexts favourable to creation and innovation.

Increasingly cities and regions are competing to attract and retain not only companies but talents. To promote creative clusters, cities need to ensure specific amenities to provide the needs of the creative industries such as flexibility, networking and high concentration of creative talented people. In the above mentioned report “Europe in the Creative Age” (2004) Florida and Irene Tinagli rated countries on the basis of their **Euro-Creativity Trend Index**. The best performers on this account at Country level were Ireland, Finland, Portugal, Denmark, Spain, Greece, Sweden, Belgium and Austria.

Therefore, cities should encompass particular features namely, cultural amenities, high-tech facilities, healthy places and a diverse and international atmosphere.

### **Creative City – Florida’s Vision**

For the author of “The Rise of the Creative Class” (2002) the key of the new geography of creativity is the 3T’s model: Technology, Talent and Tolerance. Richard Florida defines tolerance as openness, inclusiveness, and diversity to all ethnicities, races, and life styles. Talent is defined as those with a bachelor’s degree and above. And technology is a function of both innovation and high technology concentrations in a region. Thus, creativity and the creative class are based on places that comprise simultaneously the three factors.

### **Creative City – Landry’s Vision**

According to Landry (“The Creative City: a toolkit for urban innovators”, 2000) the concept of ‘creative city’ “is based on the idea that culture as values, insight, a way of life and form of creative expression, represents the soil from within which creativity emerges and grows, and therefore provides momentum for development” (Landry, 2000: 173). The author identifies seven key creative urban factors, which are personal qualities; will and leadership; human diversity and access to varied talent; organizational culture; local identity; urban spaces and facilities; and network dynamics. These are considered the preconditions for validating the creative capacity of a city: whereas a city can be creative in the presence of just some of these factors, it will only work at its best when all of them are present.

Therefore, creativity and culture represent an essential driver towards sustainable development at a local scale. Creativity and culture enable, for example, tourism and urban regeneration projects.

#### > Tourism – attraction of visitors through cultural and creative tourism.

It is clear that culture contributes to the development of the tourism sector. Culture is one of the main attractions for visitors. According to the European Economic and Social Committee on “Tourism and culture: two forces for growth” (2006) cultural tourism is one of the fastest growing areas of the tourism sector, related with art and nature, art heritage cities and areas with a particularly high concentration of historical assets and local traditions. In this context, tangible art heritage, such as historic city-centres, museums, monuments, archaeological sites; events, namely exhibitions, shows, concerts, festivals and other special events; food and wine customs; films and TV productions, are the main economic contributors for the tourism sector.

#### > Urban regeneration projects based on the creative sector.

Creative clusters could be key factors in processes of urban regeneration on distressed and derelict urban areas. According to Verwijnen (1999) <sup>11</sup> “*The notion of the creative city draws our attention to the fact that beyond traditional forms of urban renewal and urban regeneration, cities show a growing interest in creating districts imbued with a climate of innovation and creativity*”.

Creativity, science, arts and technology are at the service of creative urban regeneration processes. These processes are more than physical interventions, because cities are not only buildings and material infrastructures, but also people, networks, and other intangible elements, such as memories, history, symbolic capital, cultural identities – as places of interaction.

In this framework, creative urban regeneration is based on strategies of “integration”: integration of dimensions of intervention, integration of urban functions and integration of partners and resources. These “fusion places” foster a wide variety of interactions and different uses in a mixed-use environment, blurring the boundaries between physical, digital economic, social and cultural spaces. Towards creative urban regeneration oriented to build creative communities as places to live, work, learn and play.

### CREATIVE CLUSTERS IN LOW DENSITY URBAN AREAS | THE ULTIMATE DEBATE IN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

Both in academic literature and in EU and national policies and strategic documents, creative clusters are considered as viable only in big cities, due to the concentration of human, economic and institutional resources in these main urban nodes. However, creativity can act as a driving force for the development of **small urban centres** even as a driver to re-think rural development, combating the desertification and exodus of population to core and large cities.

Thus, the presence and the role of creative clusters and talents in low density zones need to be more widely acknowledged and better understood in order to pursue innovation policies and strategies aimed at developing small economies. Creative people live mostly in big urban centres, but are also attracted to small and low density environments characterized by the presence of endogenous assets, such as natural-rural and historical-cultural amenities and by a good and healthy quality of life.

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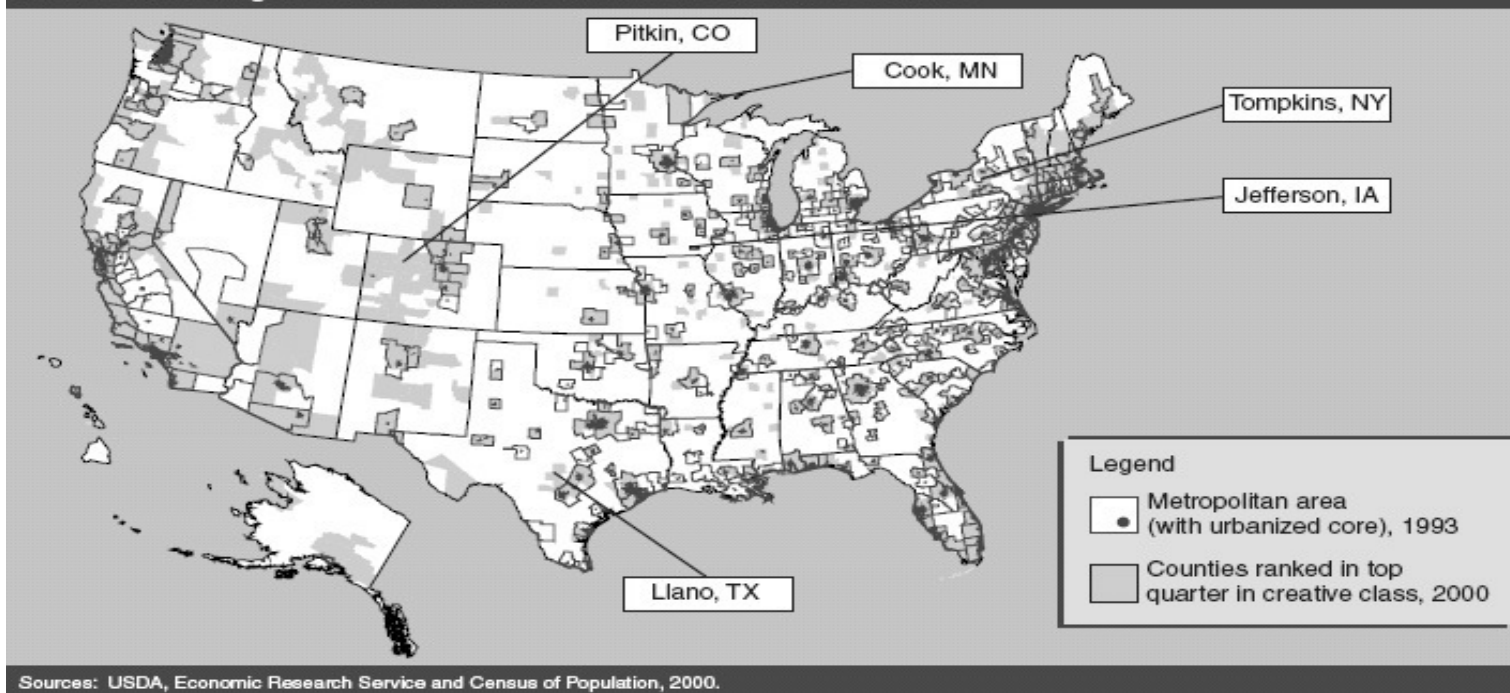
<sup>11</sup> Verwijnen, J. (1999) The Creative City's New Field Condition. Can Urban Innovation and Creativity Overcome Bureaucracy and Technocracy? In Verwijnen, J. and Lehtovuori, P. (eds.) *Creative Cities. Cultural Industries - Urban Development and the Information Society*, UIAH Publications, Helsinki.

## Creative clusters and the creative place: state of the art at EU level

“Despite an urban affinity, the creative class – perhaps more able and apt than others in the workforce to choose where to live based on quality-of-life considerations – can be drawn out of cities to high amenity rural locations”

[McGranahan and Wojan, 2007]

Rural counties high in natural amenities attract creative-class workers



## Creative clusters and the creative place: state of the art at EU level

These types of low density urban areas can attract especially talented young families, midlife career changers, active retirees and others in order to create a talent base.

Small creative businesses in the areas of design, crafts, art and antiques market, music, advertising, architecture, etc. are the result of the active entrepreneurial spirit of these talented people who want to live, work, learn and play in these communities. Therefore, as expected, places with a higher concentration of creative occupations tend to have more creative activities

Furthermore, creative industries provide a range of innovative inputs and knowledge spillovers to traditional sectors of rural and small economies: tourism, crafts, agriculture, gastronomy, textiles, furniture, etc., promoting their development and prosperity.

INTELI, a think tank on innovative spatial development based in Lisbon [www.inteli.pt], has proposed a **conceptual model** for a better understanding of how creative clusters in low density urban areas can be developed. This model will be a suitable framework of the **URBACT thematic network** on this issue.

Small urban centres with particular amenities should transform themselves into communities to live, work, learn and play - into “creative places”. They are characterized by important natural-rural and cultural-historical assets and by constructed amenities, such as arts and cultural facilities.

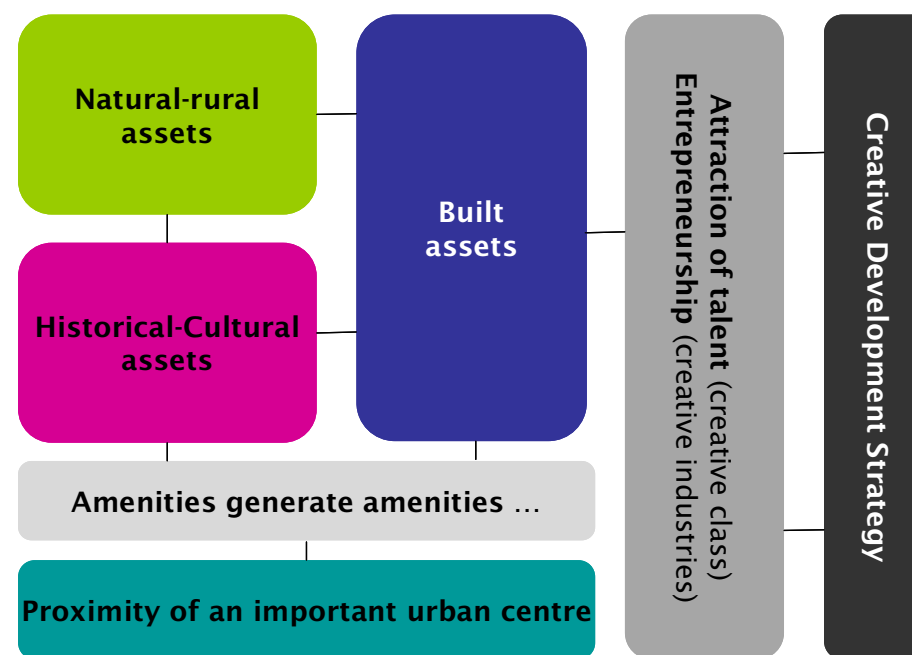


Figure 6. Low density urban areas as creative places

Source: INTELI, 2008

## Creative clusters and the creative place: state of the art at EU level

Concerning the **natural-rural assets** one can point the climate, landscapes... the physical and human geography. In what concerns historical-cultural amenities, there are the material and the intangible heritages such as memories and traditions. These amenities induce quality of life, symbolic capital and place identity.

Regarding the **built amenities**, there can be knowledge infrastructures, arts and cultural facilities, live-work houses, creative incubators, temporary creative events, etc. These assets create diversity, a vibrant environment and a mix of lifestyles.

It is also important to stress that small towns with good accessibilities are most likely to be creative class magnets. Nowadays, the **accessible-remote duality** is more relevant than the urban-rural one. Accessibility is a key. Consequently, the proximity of an urban centre is essential for a polycentric spatial development.

Low density urban areas should base their development strategy on the attraction and retention of talents and on the promotion of creative entrepreneurship, in coherence with their historical path, characteristics, dominant players, identity, etc.

Local and municipal policies have a role to fulfill, promoting strategies oriented to the attraction and retention of creative talents; enhancement of creative entrepreneurship; promotion of creative and cultural industries; creation of cultural and artistic facilities; launching of events, fairs, exhibitions and workshops; and promotion of creative urban regeneration. These development strategies represent a mix of history and technology; tradition and innovation.

### **Fiskars Village in Finland** - <http://www.fiskarsvillage.fi/en/>

The artisans, designers and artists who have moved into the old ironworks village have brought a new vitality to and transformed it into a much acclaimed centre for Finnish art and design. High quality conference, hotel and restaurant services, together with a variety of shops and workshops, offer visitors something to see and do throughout the year.

The village is located near the city of ( ), and comprises a set of natural-rural amenities, resulting from its location in a river valley with a particular natural environment; and historic and cultural assets associated with historic architecture ironworks. All this creates a unique and distinctive atmosphere.

### **Creative Industries in the Rural East Midlands** - <http://ruralculture-em.org/site/newsitem/id/138>

The report on “Creative Industries in the Rural East Midlands” (2008), stresses a regional overview showing the importance of the growing creative industries sector in the rural parts of the region. This work, commissioned from the Burns Owens Partnership (BOP), advocates that the sector has different characteristics from that often found in the urban areas, appearing to be a complementary relationship between urban and rural creative industries sector, which policy-makers should take account of in planning their support.

From the research study developed a picture emerges about the rural creative industries sector, where some strengths, weaknesses and opportunities were extracted.

Regarding some strengths:

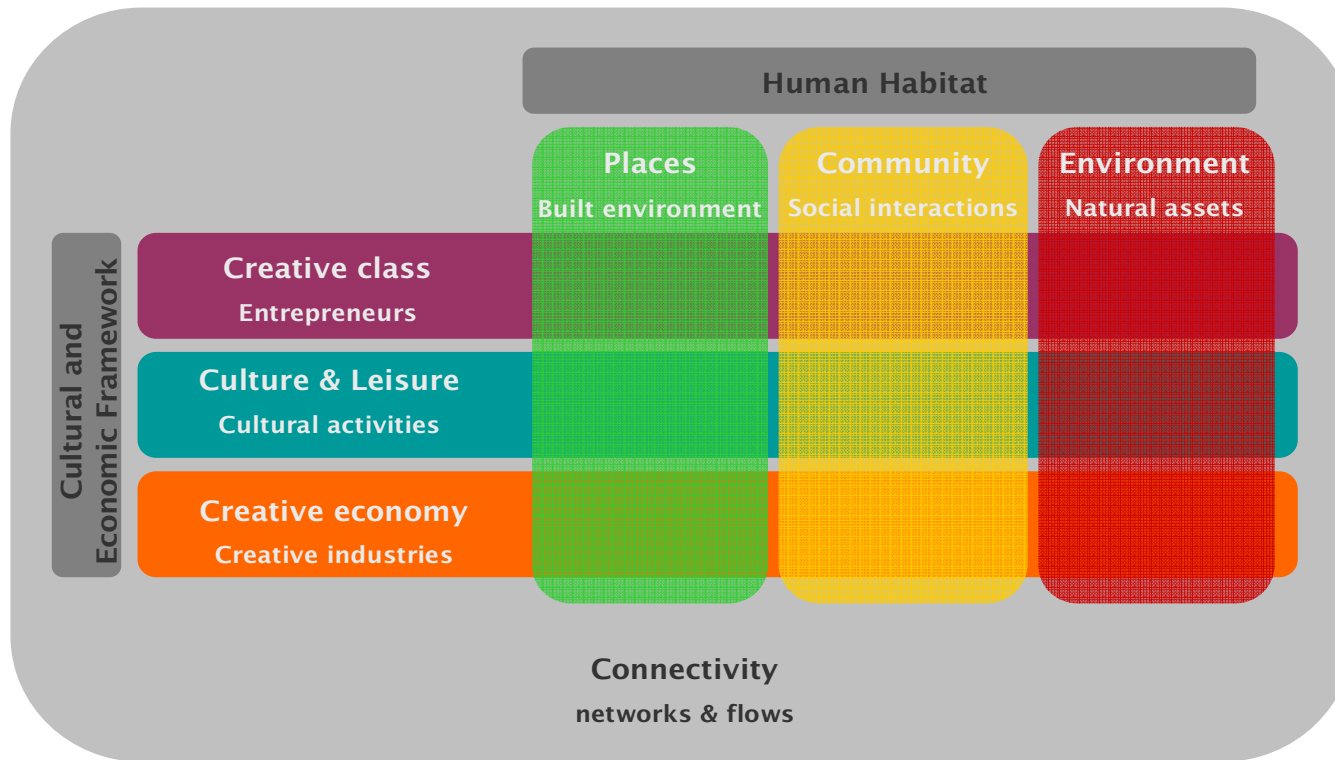
- ↘ Creative industries jobs and businesses are growing more than the economy as whole;
- ↘ Creative industries in many rural districts benefit from close proximity to urban economies which are well distributed throughout the region;
- ↘ Cultural and creative businesses are helping to attract visitors and tourists.

Concerning the weaknesses:

- ↘ Most companies are very small: 96% of rural creative businesses employ 10 people or fewer
- ↘ More peripheral districts appear to suffer from lack of a sort of superb-accessibility
- ↘ Local development policy is rarely focused on creative industries opportunities

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The aforementioned INTELI conceptualization of the creative local environment in midsize towns identifies three main different levels: human habitat, cultural and economic framework and Connectivity.



**Figure 7.** Creative clusters in low density urban areas: a model

**Source:** INTELI, 2008

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The human habitat is related with the endogenous characteristics of the city, town or village, regarding its places (built environment); community (social interactions); and environment (natural assets).

Places or the **built environment** is an important component to attract creative clusters, encompassing architecture of the place, the urban landscape and image, the public spaces, and other tangible aspects of an urban framework.

**Community** or social interactions is the component related with the local population who live and work in towns and midsize cities, and who gives the social atmosphere of the place.

The environment or **natural assets** of the place is another crucial dimension to attract and retain creative talents based on the natural landscape as well as the climate, biodiversity, etc.

Regarding the **Cultural and Economic framework** is associated with what creativity and culture can enable over the Human Habitat, through the attraction of creative people (entrepreneurs), creative activities and events (culture, leisure and education) and creative economy (creative industries).

The **connectivity** dimension is a critical driver for success of creative urban contexts since it fosters cooperation between creative workers, activities, resources and territories. This dimension encompasses both virtual (digital communications) and physical accessibilities.