

**CREATIVE ECONOMY AND CREATIVE
COMMUNITIES. INTEGRATION OF THE
URBAN DIMENSION INTO GOVERNANCE
THEORY**

Abstract

The main paper's objective is to highlight the necessity to implement the topic of creative economy in Romania, mostly regarding creative communities and urban economics & policies. The paper is aimed at describing the state of creative communities & creative cities in Romania. The term of creative communities is widely used in the context of the knowledge-based society & creative economy. Its importance to sustainable development, wealth and prosperity is recognised mostly due to the amplified crisis effects, context according to which the creative communities and the creative industries have moved to the mainstream. The special needs of creative communities - considered to be flexible communities, supporting intercultural dialogue (intercultural city communities) - are more and more reflected within policy development at micro, meso (regional) and macroeconomic levels. This paper will focus on the regional level, highlighting the importance of urban policies.

Keywords: creative communities, creative cities, creative economy, creative class, intercultural city communities.

JEL CODES: R11, R58, R59

**ECONOMIA CREATIVĂ ȘI
COMUNITĂȚILE CREATIVE.
INTEGRAREA DIMENSIUNII
URBANE ÎN CADRUL
TEORIEI GUVERNANȚEI**

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Rezumat

Principalul obiectiv al lucrării este de a sublinia necesitatea implementării în România a conceptului de economie creativă, în special cu privire la comunitățile creative, economia urbană și politicile urbane. Lucrarea își propune să releve stadiul atins în dezvoltarea comunităților și orașelor creative în România. Termenul de comunități creative se utilizează frecvent în contextul societății bazate pe cunoaștere și al economiei creative. Importanța sa pentru dezvoltarea sustenabilă, bunăstare și prosperitate este recunoscută în special datorită amplificării efectelor crizei, context în care comunitățile și industriile creative s-au mutat în prim plan. Nevoile speciale ale comunităților creative - considerate a fi comunități flexibile, deschise spre promovarea dialogului intercultural (comunități urbane interculturale) - se reflectă tot mai mult în dezvoltarea unor politici la nivel micro, mezo (regional) și macroeconomic. Această lucrare se concentrează predilect asupra nivelului regional, fiind subliniată importanța politicilor urbane.

Cuvinte cheie: comunități creative, orașe creative, economia creativă, clasa creativă, comunități urbane interculturale.



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1. INTRODUCTION

Motto: "In the age of ideas, creativity provides a long range and competitive advantage for the economy" (OTIS Report on the Creative Economy of Los Angeles, 2011, p. 3).

It is obviously that all over the world, mostly after 2000, a new approach for urban development and for the urban and regional policies development emerges. Many urban economists like Richard Florida and Charles Landry consider that creative communities, creative mega regions and creative cities have an important potential to recover even during crisis time. Neighbourhood communities such as intercultural city communities and mostly areas near borders (where diversity and multicultural environment can allow more space for diversity management) are considered to be quite relevant within this framework. As highlighted in previous work (Suciu, 2009) I consider that this topic is also relevant for Romania taking into account the fact that our country has old traditions in cooperation and partnership relations mostly within the areas near the borders.

One of the main challenges for the creative communities and for the creative industry sector is how to encourage a long-term and sustainable development of the new type of innovative and creative businesses, mostly within creative cities and creative communities. It seems that there is quite difficult to identify creative workers, called also by Richard Florida as creative class (Florida, 2004) due to their diversity (understood in a complex sense, in terms of cultural diversity that is more relevant for creative communities than ethnic, religion or other way to look traditionally for diversity).

2. BRIEF LITERATURE REVIEW. THE NEED TO PROMOTE, IMPLEMENT AND DEVELOP THE CREATIVE COMMUNITIES AND CREATIVE ECONOMY DURING CRISIS TIME

The global crisis that has made its presence felt mostly since 2008, has already affected to a large extent all sectors of activity, regardless of country, region or continent. It has not avoided the creative sector or creative domains. Despite the potential of the creative economy to generate growth & wealth and to create jobs, the creative economies must face the same threats that all economies face. Some authors (Florida, 2009) believe that mostly within the complex context amplified by crisis, urban policies, specially dedicated to the creative cities and creative communities have a key role to play. The question is to what extent crisis affected the creative sector and what are its prospects for development in today's context. As the global crisis affected without exception all areas and industries of the economy, the creative economy could not avoid this major global changes.

The current social and economic landscape could be described broadly by the disappearance of a large number of jobs and the remaining being at risk, businesses which go bankrupt, owners that move etc.

All these phenomena occur simultaneously worldwide in all industries. Within this complex landscape creative communities are considered to have more flexibility for recovery and some of the creative regions, like the megaregion Ontario, are compared symbolically with the Phoenix bird (Florida, 2009). This is also a strong belief manifested all around the world as the Creative Economy Report 2010 suggested. The Creative Economy Report 2010 argues that "while the creative economy's growth is not in itself a panacea, it does potentially offer more resilient, inclusive, and environmentally viable paths to recovery. Even if there is no one-size-fits-all prescription, governments can play a catalytic role by putting in place the policies, regulations, and institutions needed to strengthen their creative economies. Overall, the creative economy sectors can contribute a lot to growth and prosperity, especially for developing countries seeking to diversify their economies and build resilience to future economic crisis" (Creative Economy Report 2010, pp. XX)

In this respect, another report, the Moody's Report, examines the structural factors that determine each metropolitan area's comparative advantages for long-term growth & development. These comparative advantages are separate from the business cycle. The Moody's Report suggests a number of structural factors that define a metropolitan area's comparative advantages over the long term: demographics, income and wealth, growth, costs and industrial structure. These factors combine in different ways for each metro area, creating a nearly infinite range of comparative advantages across the country. The Moody's Metropolitan Comparative Advantage Report provides an in-depth look at the comparative advantages and the long-term outlook for each of the 381 metropolitan areas of the United States of America. The report investigated 381 metropolitan regions, out of which 302 were already in strong recession and 64 were at risk of recession. When the research was conducted, only 15 of those 381 regions were still experiencing economic growth. The regions which were the least affected, according to the survey, were those regions rich in oil and other natural resources (e.g. Texas and Oklahoma), who were declining energy prices. The Washington DC region still provides and creates new jobs in law and administration, due to nationalization of financial companies and fiscal expansion. At the opposite pole are the regions less associated with massive funding, which are most affected by the crisis.

In this context, sooner or later, all world regions will be affected by the recession, to some extent and for a certain period. As the crisis deepens, some regions will be more affected than others. Moreover, it is likely that by applying proper urban policies, certain regions or cities will have fully recover, reaching back their past performance. Some others regions may not be able to come back again.

However, the world economy is deteriorating, and the response of different regions to these new conditions is various.

Los Angeles Region can be considered as an example of a best practice for creative communities. According to the 2011 Otis Report on the Creative Economy of the Los Angeles Region - that marks the fifth edition of the annual reports starting in 2007- two are considered to be mostly relevant facts regarding this regional creative economy:

- The creative economy is powerful in Southern California. It produces in excess of \$200 billion in total sales and receipts, and is one of the largest employment-generators with over 640,000 direct and indirect jobs.
- The creative economy is even more powerful considering its high multiplier effect on other aspects of this regional economy. For example, 20% of tourists to the region are cultural tourists, and are responsible for 30% of tourism revenues because they visit longer and spend more.

The creative economy is very important for the Los Angeles region's economic growth. About 642,300 employees work directly or indirectly in the creative economy of Los Angeles. Los Angeles County based firms in the creative economy earned an estimated \$115 billion in revenues during 2010. California and local governments received an estimated \$3.1 billion in taxes tied to these activities. With 300,800 direct employees in Los Angeles County, the creative industries rank fourth out of 66 industry clusters, behind health services (421,000 jobs in 2010), local commercial services i.e. business to business services (360,000 jobs) and hospitality (303,000 jobs). The creative economy is among the top employers in the Los Angeles region. The talent that drives the creative economy is also a resource for a long-run sustainable competitive advantage. Firms develop a competitive advantage when they implement strategies that other firms cannot duplicate. Regions develop a long term sustainable competitive advantage when they attract creative people because creative thinkers provide the seeds of innovation from which germinate economic growth (2011 Otis Report on the Creative Economy on the Los Angeles Region, pp.12). According to the American Traveler Survey, the leading source of data on U.S. Tourism "Los Angeles has the highest percentage of visitors who attend museums, musical theater performances, and jazz concerts of the seven leading U.S. cities" (American Traveler Survey, 2010, p. 37). Statistics data for Los Angeles illustrate that, while manufacturing is experiencing continued decreases in employment, companies involved in the creative industries such as design and/or research and development units within the creative community of Southern California are generating more and better paid jobs. The region has a competitive advantage in creativity.

Southern California is in a unique position to maintain its creative workers, because there is a specialized infrastructure of institutions that provide training as well as challenging opportunities for artists to work across industry sectors. These industries all rely on a continuous supply of innovation, inspiration and new ideas.

An important concern is ensuring that young people are provided with a robust and well-supported creative oriented education. By taking into account the trends visible today, it is estimated that creative industry employment in Los Angeles region will attain a total level of 352,300 jobs during 2015, up by 4.2%, or 14,300 jobs, as compared to 2010 levels (2011 Otis Report on the Creative Economy, pp.16). The digital media sector is expected to grow the fastest between 2010 and 2015, with employment rising by about 10%. Employment in other creative industry, such as industrial design, is expected to increase in the 7% to 8% range between 2010 and 2015. Growth will be almost as fast in the entertainment sector, with employment expected to increase by 6.6%. Moderately good employment growth, in the 4.5% to 5% range, is projected for art galleries, the communication arts sector, and for visual and performing arts. Moderate employment growth, about 3%, also is projected for the fashion and architecture and interior design sectors (2011 Otis Report on the Creative Economy, p.17). According to *the United States of America' CEO Challenge Report, 2011*, employers rate for creativity and innovation is among the top five skills that will increase in importance over the next five years (Mitchell C, 2011). Stimulating innovation and creativity and enabling entrepreneurship are among the top ten challenges of U.S. This example proves how much smart and creative cities matter in the spatial and urban development policies. It is also a recognition of the high share of city-regions in terms of national employment and population development and it helps for increasing knowledge about the complexity of economic, social and political interactions between core cities (such as the creative city of Los Angeles) and surrounding regions by local, regional and by national policy actors.

According to this context there are some challenges of city regional governance manifested in a different way on the:

- Micro-level:
 - competitive attitudes by local state actors, predominantly in locational and mostly urban policies;
 - different perception of problems of city regions, various logics of spatial action and interaction;

- Meso-level:
 - strong position of one or more core cities (monocentric versus polycentric vision);
 - reluctant participation of the local level (lack of multi-level-governance);
 - lack of a culture of cooperation between municipalities within the city region, institutional asymmetries (e.g. in the case of cross-border regions), slightly different governance and political cultures in planning (within a national state, between states).

Thus there is a broad discussion about grasping analytically and developing politically city-regional governance in order to be inclusive and competitive (figure 1).

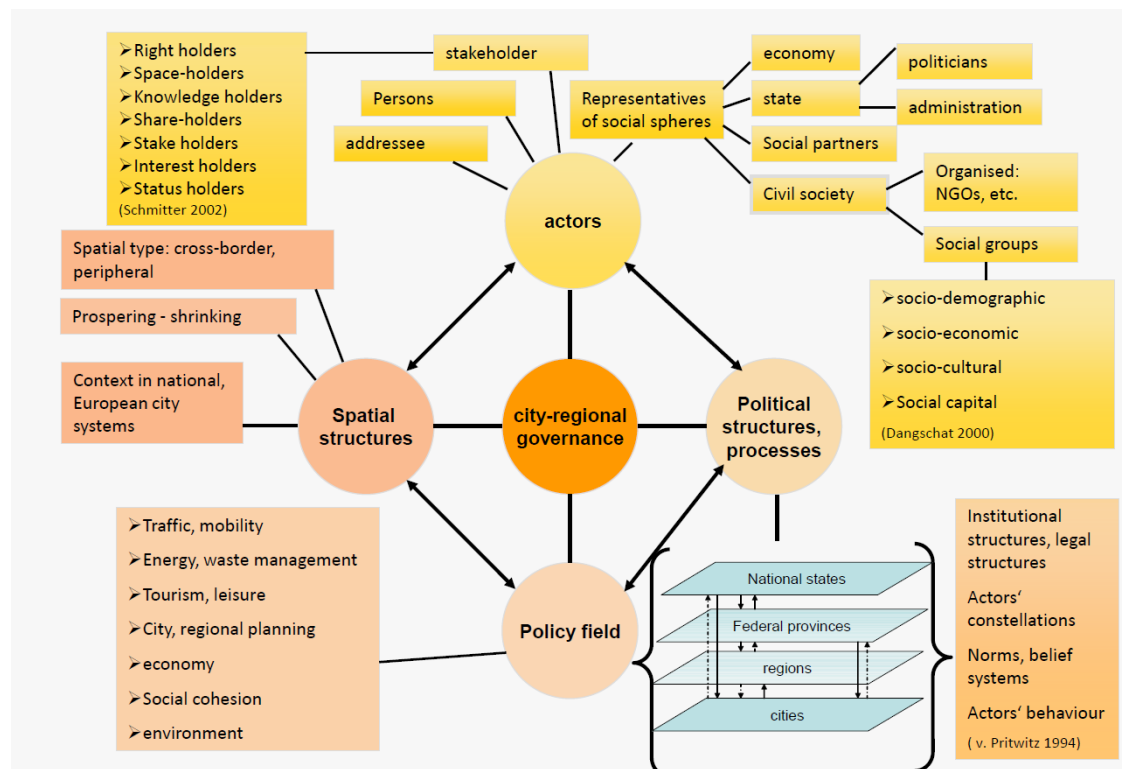


FIGURE 1 - HOW TO DEVELOP POLITICALLY CITY-REGIONAL GOVERNANCE IN ORDER TO BE INCLUSIVE AND COMPETITIVE?
 Source: Alexander Hamedinger: Understanding City Regional Governance – the Integration of 'Space' into Governance Theory, RSA Winter Conference 2011, London, p. 4

As illustrated in figure 1 there is a need for developing an analytical approach to city regional governance, which integrates governance and spatial factors more systematically. Governance embraces all ways of steering and coordinating interactions collectively; set of actors, institutions, political structures, political cultures (identity) and interactions determining city-regional development (Blatter, 2005). By focusing on understanding all forms of collective actions city governance can be considered as an ongoing process based on different rule systems (market, hierarchy, networks).

The basic features of city-regional governance are: vertical coordination; horizontal coordination; inclusion of state and non-state actors; definition of strategies and projects. Some authors suggest to integrate governance and spatial theory (figure 2).

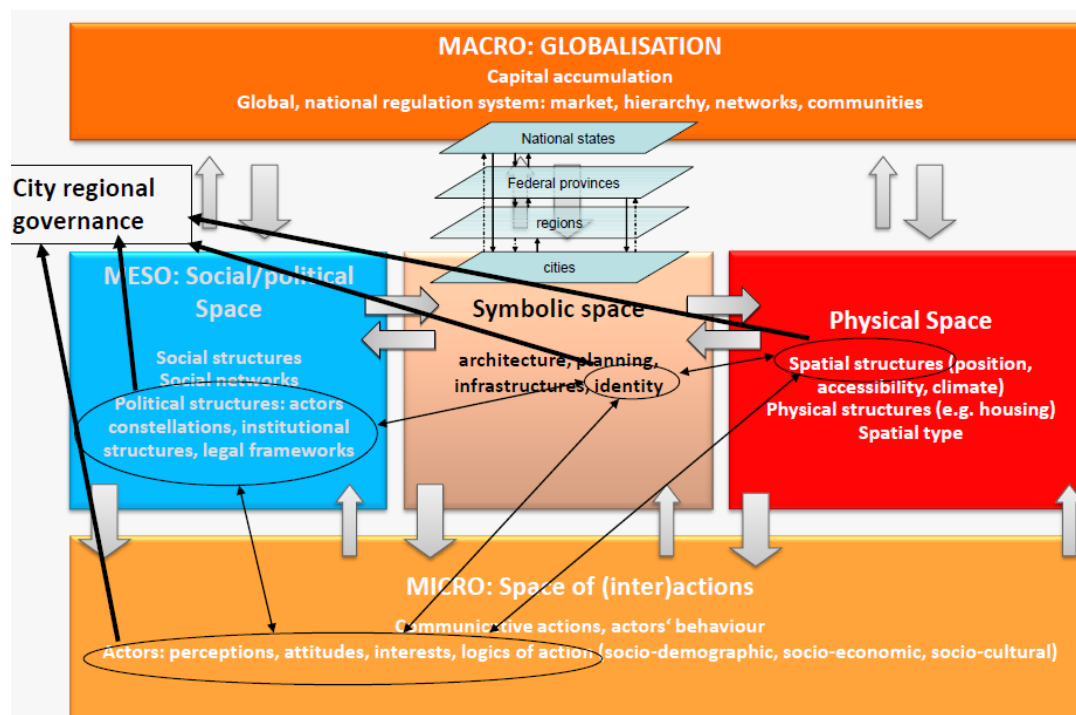


FIGURE 2 - INTEGRATING GOVERNANCE AND SPATIAL THEORY MORE SYSTEMATICALLY

Source: Alexander Hamedinger: Understanding City Regional Governance – the Integration of 'Space' into Governance Theory, RSA Winter Conference 2011, London, p. 12

Lefebvre argue that: "state and territory interact in such a way that they can be said to be mutually constitutive. This explains the deceptive activities and images of state officials. They seem to administer, to manage and to organize a natural space. In practice, however, they substitute another space for it, one that is first economic and social, and then political. They believe that they are obeying something in their heads – a representation (of the country, etc.). In fact, they are establishing an order – their own" (Lefebvre, 2003, p. 87). He also consider that: „City-regions are socially constructed and politically as well as economically produced, contested by various actors' and institutional interests" (Lefebvre, 2003, p. 93). To support this idea some authors suggest that:

- city-regions can be defined statistically, but their spatial reach depends on the interaction in question;
- national states show different histories of „politics of city regions" (Kantor and Savitch, 2010).

The term, city-region is loaded with different meanings in different countries (e.g. Austria, UK, Germany).

City-regions and urban policies need a more relational understanding about internal and external dynamics. Hence there is a need for a relational, constructivist understanding of space. E.g. cross-border regions: cannot be taken for granted, outcome of a process of social construction. As Perkmann argued „bounded territorial unit composed of the territories of authorities participating in a cross-border cooperation” (Perkmann, 2003, p. 5).

The European Union faces a fundamental policy challenge regarding mostly: the need for global leadership and capacity in science, technology and innovation through the development of existing centres of excellence; promotion of cohesion through the accelerated development of newer and peripheral member states. There are new insights into the challenges of multilevel governance.

The joint meeting of experts from EU and USA, Rockefeller Foundation, Bellagio, Italy had highlighted the need to explore the mutually beneficial multi-national collaboration in documenting the results of investments in research-development-innovation (R&D&I) mostly by developing the proper landscape for the creative communities by providing science as an international activity with scientists and engineers collaborating and moving across borders. A monitoring system had been developed by the European Commission within the context of FP7 to facilitate a more coherent and systematic use of performance indicators. The 2020 strategy is arguing for a new "outcome-orientated" measure for R&D&I focusing on the importance of monitoring systems which can measure the performance and outcome of R&D&I related projects such as the pilot application of STAR METRICS project. In Great Britain, where the national strategy "Creative Britain" had been adopted in 2008, a bottom-up local recreation approach is applied for projects such as: Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) 1 April 2011; "Creative Gateways" and "Corridors"; "NW England" interface for DG Regio.

OECD proposes to identify functional areas surrounding the largest cities based on structure of places of residence (urban or rural). The approach proposed by the OECD leads to the identification of 42 so-called urban labour market areas on district (county) level. The approach is based on two fundamental criteria: population level and rate of development. There are also several principles: maximum distance; continuity; proximity; coherence; exclusiveness. Based on this approach, in Poland there had been identified three metropolitan areas. The Spatial Development perspective states that the final delimitation should be carried out when the regional spatial development plans are going to be made and that they should be based on functional relationships existing in those areas.

Some of the new metropolitan/urban areas that require a special attention today are the creative urban communities developed mostly based on the emergence of creative and cultural industries.

If the creative and cultural industries were not substantial sources of revenues and economic growth before, during the past few decades they led to the revival of many European regions where the traditional industries had disappeared and left behind a desert landscape and a decaying society.

It is the case of Newcastle-Gateshead urban conglomerate in Great Britain, former mining region. Gateshead and Glasgow placed the creative industries and the cultural activities at the centre of their development strategies. At present, this region is flourishing due to the development of the creative industries, and examples can be offered from many other geographic regions in this respect. It was thus proved that the creative economy has a major role in any society through social inclusion, urban regeneration and personal motivation they generate. Hundreds of years before art and culture did not represent productive activities, even though they used to have intrinsic value.

3. CREATIVE CITIES, CREATIVE COMMUNITIES, CREATIVE REGIONS AND THEIR REVITALIZATION POWER FOR THE ENTIRE ECONOMY

While the concept 'creativity' is ubiquitous in everyday life, the concepts of a creative city, creative gateways, creative communities and creative corridors reflect a variety of examples with special applications of creativity to urban economic progress. For the purposes of this paper, the creative city will be viewed as an important engine for creative regions and as a general movement that uses the application of this concept primarily in the revitalization of cities and whole regions in terms of strengthening the competitiveness of cities that are based on creative community potentials.

The city in the 21st century takes precedence in terms of the number of residents who live in it. Certain sociologists who deal with the phenomenon of the city go so far as to claim that the global society in the 21st century is going through great paradigmatic change, because it is making a transition from a society of the national state to a society of the city.

Cities have always been and still are the focus of modern society and they are socially, culturally and economically dynamic entities and they are the engines of regions where they are placed.

One of the ideological mantras of globalization is that it does not matter where you are. The technology is "aligning" the playground-market and the world has become a sort of flat global village. Some authors as Pine and Gilmore (1999) argue that increasing competition in the market means that 'goods and services are no longer enough' and that producers must differentiate their products by transforming them into 'experiences' which engage the consumer. Today's global economy has as its highest "peaks"

of experiences smart and creative cities and regions that are drivers of world economy. They attract mostly talented and educated people from all over the world.

The creative cities and creative communities generate knowledge and largely contribute to the global innovation. Each of them is closely illustrating partnership and networking of related activities of a group of special people called by Richard Florida (considered to be a contemporary famous urban theorist) "creative class" (Florida, 2004). It becomes more and more clear that the main sources of the creative potentials in cities and regions are their people. What makes the creative city? It is people - people interacting with other people (Hawkins, 2002).

'Today, we need creativity to be able to connect, collect and measure the impact of different spheres of life for a holistic understanding of the city i.e. how it materially affects our perceptions, in order to grasp the delicate ecological system of our lives and make it sustainable. We need, in other words, the skills of a broker, a person who thinks through several disciplines, which is in a network and connects - we need 'softer' skills' (Landry C & Bianchini B, 1995, pp. 17).

Contemporary cities see their development through different models: smart city, intercultural city (this idea will be developed later based on Constanta case), environmental city, green city, slow city, cool city, etc. All these models are linked to changes with the economic and social aspects of the city starting from creative individuals and independent organizations to different administrative and policy systems. Creativity is available to each city through their creative individuals and if the city promotes creativity and enables those individuals to show in public their creativity and talent the city space would be enriched and it will become even more creative (Florida, 2005). Although creative solutions usually cost very little they have big effect that shows example from the world such as Montpellier (Landry, 2000).

4. NETWORKING AND PARTNERSHIP IN THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

For ten centuries, Europe, then America and Japan were able to mobilize to their advantage four necessary elements of a sustainable development: population, technology, economy and raw materials. Thus, some Western towns seem to got relatively all the resources and technology. It is the case of cities such as Bruges, Venice, Antwerp, Amsterdam, London, Boston and New York. Later, California was able to mobilize many talents, capital and raw materials. Foreigners who have come here made up one quarter of the total number of patents and more than half of start-up sites created in Silicon Valley in the period 1995-2005 were set up by the newcomers in the U.S. Thus I considered important to mention previously the case of Los Angeles as an example of best practice for creative communities. Emphasis must be placed both on the creative economy in a broad sense, but also in areas such as

nanotechnology, biotechnology, information technologies and communication, cognitive sciences, neuroscience, complexity and cross disciplinary sciences.

These areas may develop only in interdependence. Based on these techniques the creative industries may revolutionize the practice of many industrial and service sectors, particularly regarding health, education, media, banking and consulting. However these technologies might bring about, some ethical problems, because of the uncertainty about their impact on human nature and democracy.

Many big cities are the venue of a diverse and innovative economy, built around a wide range of creative industries such as: advertising, architecture, art and antiques market, crafts, design, fashion design, film, interactive leisure software, music, television and radio, stage arts, publications and software production (Hawkins, 2002). High technology companies are the most illustrative example of innovative and creative diversity of these cities, whose growth is largely due to the creative economy. Richard Florida's studies and measurements have shown that for instance New York City is a Mecca for fashion designers, musicians, filmmakers and artists rather than specialists in finance.

According to Richard Florida, the first who saw in the various economic and social structures the true engine of growth was urbanist Jane Jacobs. Jacobs considered that congestion and gather hood in one place of several professions and types of people are a key source of innovation, the capacity of making really new things, which in the long term, may preserve the capacity and power cities. The current crisis may serve as an opportunity for creative economy to play its revitalizing part in the cities and in the creative regions potential of which is higher than usual potential sites. In such places, the creative economy can stimulate growth by attracting investment and talent based on specific urban policies.

Currently, we are already witnessing the decline of old consumer combinations car-house, which was the basis for post-war growth. Instead, new consumer trends and lifestyles appear.

Richard Florida considers that this is the era of emerging creative mega-regions, which focuses on housing market affordability and creative talent from several specific areas. The same author believes that the current crisis is affecting differently the three social classes: working class, service class and creative class. Those who are part of the first two categories are often tied to a job or region because of skills, while the creative class members can deal with current changes and prosper due to their flexibility. Credit crisis as part of a succession of crises (advertising bubble, bubble Internet / dotcom) are bubbles that generated fictitious wealth. The solution Florida proposed is not the return to the original situation, but consists in building a creative new and sustainable ecology, to improve the present situation in a new and creative way. In this process, the creative class can play an important role of catalyst. Richard Florida argues his theory using the example of Ontario mega region.

Despite the general economic decline, Ontario had a positive development because of the transition from work based routine to creativity.

Rutiniere activities, which are mainly based on physical ability or on the opportunity to follow a specific mechanical process, can be carried out much cheaper in emerging economies, but will not stand in developed economies. Richard Florida proposes the following recommendations for Ontario in the context of the Creative Age (Florida, 2009): encourage the creative potential of its people by enhancing creativity in all activities and including as many people as possible in the creative activities; strengthen the creative abilities through the education system; promote Ontario as a creative mega region, transforming diversity in the foundation of economic prosperity; attracting talent in Ontario strengthening managerial skills, establish new social safety nets; investing in skills to newly arrived immigrants; the general strengthening of the mega-region and investment in connectivity.

These recommendations can be followed by other countries, regions or economies. In other words, creativity, skills, diversity, talent, entrepreneurship, tolerance, education throughout the entire life (life long learning), early education and openness are type of answers that can make a difference in this period of uncertainty and instability, together with the potential of creative economy and creative class. People do not need to look just for bubbles of speculation or other income generating worthless, but to increase their creative potential. While the prosperous regions are now in decline, welfare and economic revitalization depends on the creative economy (Keil Roger et Julie-Anne Boudreau, 2010).

Creative economy, creative communities and creative class are protected from the effects of the deep crisis, unlike the well-being created in the traditional industrial system or between bubbles.

5. THE STAKES OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY IN THE EMERGING COUNTRIES OF SOUTHERN AND EASTERN EUROPE. THE CASE OF ROMANIA

In Romania, the concept of creative economy, as well as the one of creative industries and cities, is still at the beginning of its research; there are no broad researches or specifically focused works on this topic, as it is the case in those countries that initiated and promoted this concept.

The existing statistics at national level in Romania do not allow a fine and precise classification that outlines the creative industries exclusively as it is the case in Great Britain and Australia.

Rather, activities in Romania are divided according to a broader classification. Thus, several blooming creative activities in Romania cannot be separately analysed due to the classification procedure and statistical reporting (Schebesch K.B., Suci M.C., 2010). The general conclusion regarding the creative

economy and industries in Romania is that the structure of classification of the economic activities in Romania does not particularly focus on them.

Actions aimed at developing Romanian creative economy and creative cities must take place in a wider context, an international one, in the South-eastern Europe space or even in the European Union. Nordic countries are the most eloquent example of such cooperation among nations, which can only lead to the development of the creative economy and cities.

One Romanian town – Iasi – was elected the creative town in Romania. This project was part of a larger Central and Eastern European programme, conducted by the British Council. The purpose was actually to map the creative industries in this creative town in order to create awareness about these companies and bind them all in a network. In some previous published papers it was developed more the idea of the creative city in Romania, based mostly on Iasi case (Suciu, M.C., 2010; Suciu, M.C., 2009).

The measures taken in Romania in support of the creative industries are not yet part of a national coherent strategy or policy. However, there have been several incentives for the software industry for some years whereby the profit was not taxed on such activities. Moreover, the crafts are supported by a national programme whereby craftsmen can benefit by financing provided the activity remains basically and mostly manual and it preserves the traditions.

According to Richard Florida the most important factors influencing the creative economy and creative communities are the 4 “T”: Talent, Technology, Tolerance and Territory. The last two “T” highlight one of the most interesting dimension for a contemporary creative city - the intercultural city.

The intercultural city had benefit on some considerations in the last years due to European Union initiatives. There are a number of examples of best practices of communicating commitment policy developed by other Intercultural Cities. One of the notably example is the Norwegian city of Oslo. In 2001 this city adopted the declaration ‘*Oslo—a city for all*’, declaring itself an open and inclusive city, and put in place commitment policy named ‘*OXLO – Oslo Xtra Large*’ (The OXLO Bulletin, 2010). The example of the Italian city of Campi Bisenzio, which launched an official webpage communicating its intercultural urban policies is also interesting. The website *La Città Visibile* (the Visible City) provides information and advice regarding diversity and the integration policies of the city. It serves as a platform describing the Italian Network of Intercultural Cities (*La Città Visibile* /the Visible City, 2012).

According to these best practice examples the Council of Europe and the European Commission had launch an Intercultural Cities programme. The new Intercultural City Index has been designed as a new benchmarking tool for the cities taking part in the pilot phase of the programme as well as future participants. The Intercultural City Index analysis is based on a questionnaire involving 69 questions

grouped in 14 indicators with three distinct types of data. Indicators have been weighed for relative importance.

For each indicator, the participating cities can reach up to 100 points (which are consolidated for the general ICC Index). The term "city sample" refers to the weighted average of the 45 cities included in the Index at this moment in each of the fourteen areas of intercultural governance. According to the overall index results collected in May 2012, the maritime city of Constanta from Romania has been positioned 43rd among the 45 cities in the sample, with an aggregate intercultural city index of 32%. It has been ranked 24th among the 25 cities with over 200,000 inhabitants (figure 3) and 21st among the 23 cities with less than 15 per cent of foreignborn residents.

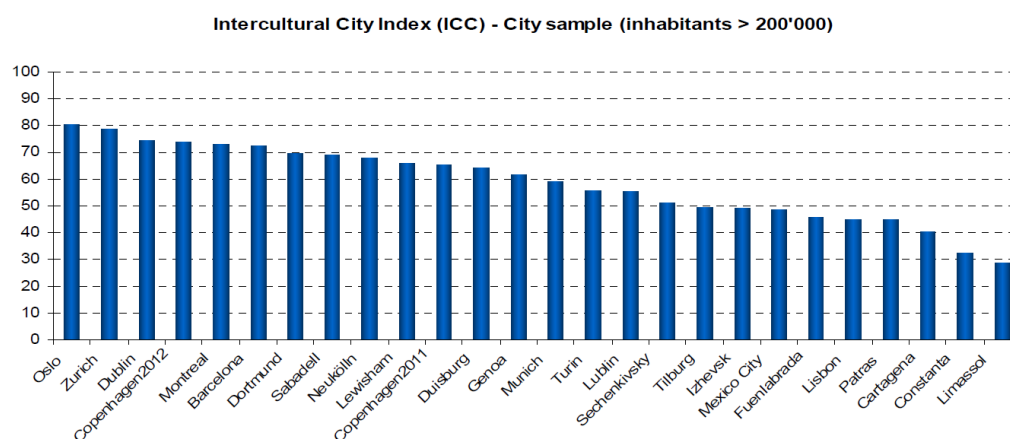


FIGURE 3. CONSTANTA' POSITION ACCORDING TO THE INTERCULTURAL CITY INDEX
 Source: Constanta: Results of the Intercultural Cities Index, A comparison between 45 cities, 22 May 2012, in
 "Intercultural cities. Building the future on diversity", Retrieved 20 July, 2012 from:
http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/culture/Cities/Index/Constanta_en.pdf, p. 4

The results of the ICC Index, May 2012 show that Constanta performs better than other cities in some policy areas, such as education, language and governance, and can be a source of 'good practices' for many other cities in these areas (figure 4).

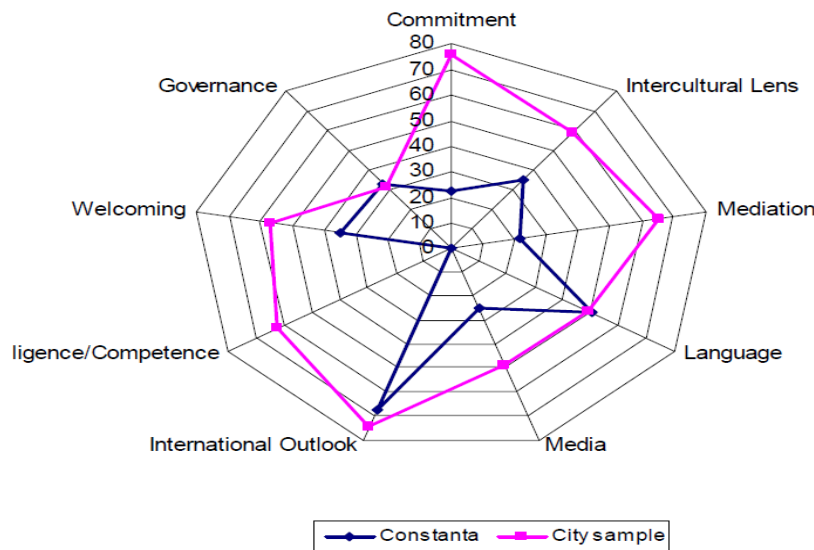


FIGURE 4 COMPARING CONSTANTA' PERFRMACE REGARDING THE 9TH DIMMENSIONS OF ICC INDEX WITH THE CITY SAMPLE

Source: Constanta: Results of the Intercultural Cities Index, A comparison between 45 cities, 22 May 2012, in "Intercultural cities. Building the future on diversity", Retrieved 20 July, 2012 from: http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/culture/Cities/Index/Constanta_en.pdf, p.3

One of the most powerful and far-reaching actions which a city can take in making it more intercultural are the processes of democratic representation and decision making. As illustrated in figure 5, Constanta's governance policy attainment rate (33%) is higher than the city sample's rate (31%). Constanta has been ranked 11th among the 25 cities with a population of over 200,000 inhabitants and 10th among the 23 cities with a foreign-born population of less than 15%.

ICC-Index - Governance - City sample (inhabitants > 200'000)

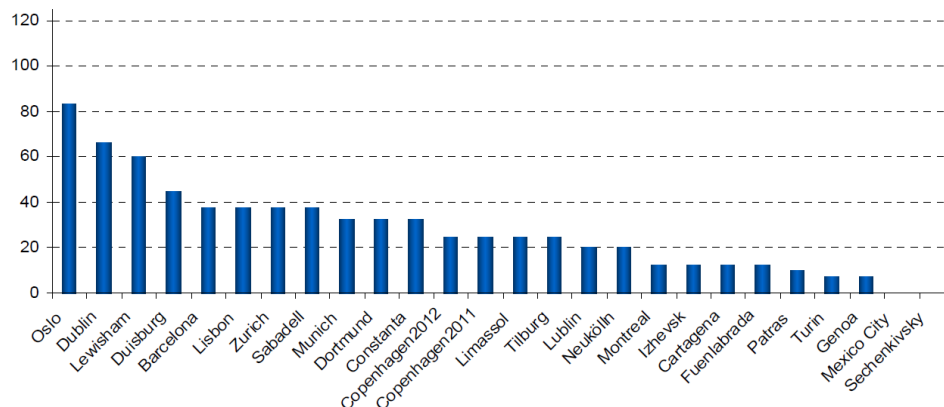


FIGURE 5. CONSTANTA RANKING ACCORDING TO THE ICC INDEX ON THE GOVENANCE DIMMENSION

Source: Constanta: Results of the Intercultural Cities Index, A comparison between 45 cities, 22 May 2012, in
"Intercultural cities. Building the future on diversity", Retrieved 20 July, 2012 from:
http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/culture/Cities/Index/Constanta_en.pdf, p. 24

However, the remaining policy areas (i.e. commitment, neighbourhood, public service, business and labour market, cultural and civil life, public space, mediation, media, international outlook, intelligence/competence and welcoming), have been marked with the city's underperformance. For instance, Constanta's achievement rate in the area of business and labour market is twice as low and in the areas of commitment, mediation, cultural and civil life is thrice as low compared with the city sample's rate. At the same time, none of the goals set in the neighbourhood and intelligence/competence policy areas have been achieved. Constanta may wish to look into further examples implemented by other Intercultural Cities as a source of learning and inspiration to guide future initiatives. Such examples are provided in the *Intercultural Cities database* (http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/culture/Cities/guidance_en.asp).

In Romania the concepts of the creative economy and creative cities are still at early stage even though there is a time of discussing the creative economy on a highest level in the country. Exploitation of knowledge and creative skills is one of the most lucrative industries in the world; the only problem is that in Romania it is not easily converted into capital.

Lack of awareness of the importance of creativity in companies on the one hand, and outdated education system that does not encourage the development of creativity, on the other hand, are the main problems of the creative industries in Romania.

6. BRIEF CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As the international experience proves it seems that times of crisis may offer opportunities to look at new options, approaches, and strategic directions. Within this broader vision provided by the creative economy and knowledge based society, the creative communities and cities are fire engines for the creative regions. In Romania, the concepts of creative economy and creative cities are still in early developing stage and they are still based on enthusiasm of creative organization and individuals. There is a need to continue the research dedicated to this topic. Further research of cross disciplinary research teams might make the difference for Romania. Mostly regarding the long-run perspective of prosperity and sustainable competitive advantage to be focus not only on the national level, but also on the local and regional one, with a special attention dedicated to urban economics and urban policies.

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