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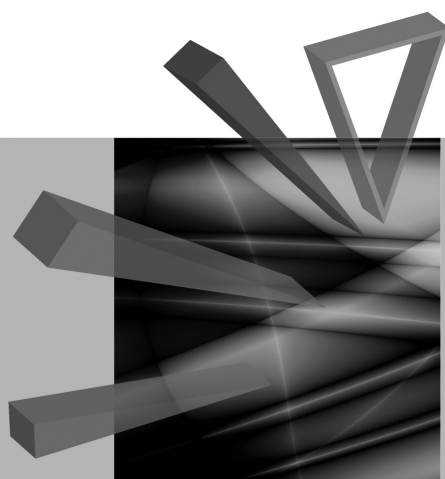
Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego we Wrocławiu

**RESEARCH PAPERS**

of Wrocław University of Economics

**286**

# **Regional Economy in Theory and Practice**



edited by

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Publishing House of Wrocław University of Economics  
Wrocław 2013

Copy-editing: Elżbieta Macauley, Tim Macauley, Marcin Orszulak

Layout: Barbara Łopusiewicz

Proof-reading: Barbara Łopusiewicz

Typesetting: Comp-rajt

Cover design: Beata Dębska

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Wrocław 2013

**ISSN 1899-3192**

**ISBN 978-83-7695-345-8**

The original version: printed

Printing: Printing House TOTEM

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## **CREATIVITY IN THE CONTEXT OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT – SELECTED ISSUES**

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**Summary:** This study discusses problems referring to the selected aspects of creativity in relation to regional development. Its first part illustrates theoretical aspects of creativity and regional development. Creativity was defined as the source of innovation, tolerance and social sensitivity in the process of territorial units' socio-economic growth. Next, basic assumptions of the 3T concept by Richard Florida were characterized. Factors referring to creativity and exerting potential impact on regional growth were presented, e.g. culture and art, place brand, innovation, tolerance, talent, regional identity. Selected creative industries, stimulating regional development, were also discussed among which the following were listed: advertising, architecture, art and antiques, publishing, film industry, fashion design, music industry, radio and TV.

**Keywords:** creativity, regional development, innovation, 3T concept, creative industries.

### **1. Introduction**

Nowadays we are faced with a whole spectrum of phenomena which make us search for new methods and concepts capable of influencing the development of such a complicated system as represented by a region. The globalization of the economy, new consumption patterns, an individual approach towards consumers' needs, the changing demographic situation, the advancing impact of culture and art on the perception of the surrounding reality, the growing aspirations of regional communities' representatives, intensified competition by other territorial units in both a national and international dimension, fluctuations in finance markets, crisis of confidence in the political and business elites, the need for entering into cooperation with other regions in the process of more extensive development projects' implementation – represent phenomena occurring within these processes.

Creativity, including the overall complexity of the defining concepts, seems one of the more interesting and relatively new areas analyzed in this context, which

may be applied as dynamic stimulants of regional socio-economic growth. This approach originates from following modern, non-material factors of regional development which gradually substitute classical, hard factors deciding about successful economic rivalry. Creativity also transfers human capital, currently perceived as the key development factor, into another level of functioning, at which it is transformed into creative capital.

The objective of this study is an attempt to discuss selected aspects of creativity in relation to regional development, with particular consideration of the components underlying creativity and exerting an impact on the above mentioned development.

## **2. Theoretical aspects of creativity and regional development**

Creativity may be understood e.g. as a mental process leading towards the creation of new ideas, concepts or associations, as well as relations with already existing ideas and concepts. Creative thinking represents a type of mental process which results in obtaining original and useful solutions. Creativity consists in the adequate integration of individual skills in order to concentrate them on a, so far, unexplored path and in this way establish a completely new value.

The above presentation of the concept of creativity is of particular importance in the context of territorial units' development. In the swiftly changing and turbulent environment of contemporary organizations, countries or regions, the ability of flexible adjustment to the occurring situation, an opportunity for taking advantage of an extensive palette of potential solutions may result in strengthening both the competitive advantage and attractiveness of a particular place.

Yet another, frequently occurring, phenomenon is the perception of creativity in the category of an individual talent manifesting itself in the capacity for generating new ideas, concepts and non-standard solutions, sometimes coming up in unexpected moments and originating inside the human mind [Green 2010, p. 4]. Professional literature also offers examples of concepts combining creativity with inborn motivation, which activates performance aimed at the set target's accomplishment opening up the way to both creative approach and solutions [Hennessey, Amabile 1988, p. 13; *The Impact of Culture...* 2009, p. 22]. Growth based on creativity may also support enhancing self-esteem which, following the feedback principle, will facilitate such development [Todaro, Smith 2009, p. 22].

In the process of theoretical considerations over creativity, one should not forget about openness of mind, tolerance and social sensitivity as the crucial elements of processes focused on the quality improvement of social life and understood as the combination of material aspects of life with less tangible items referring to the feeling of comfort, satisfaction, pride of the position accomplished in both private and professional dimension [Yuan, Yuen, Low 1999, pp. 3–4; Clark, Huxley, Mountford 2010, p. 22].



Based on the discussion presented so far, one may assume that creativity has a positive influence on the innovative processes by stimulating value creation in certain economic and social areas. However, it also has to be pointed out that one of the more important effects resulting from the above mentioned innovation processes should be the supply of innovative technologies and services to the final recipient, thus confirming the usefulness of initiatives undertaken in the context of socio-economic growth support. Innovations appear more frequently when one is open to new influences, market trends and a constructive dialogue is initiated with entities functioning in the proximal and distant environment, having incorporated potential innovation recipients and competitors in this process [Chesbrough 2003, pp. 43–44]. Supporting the creation of innovative, specialized, constructive knowledge is highly advisable for the purposes of the construction of absorption capacity, which may facilitate integration with global knowledge and result in innovative products and services development.

It has to be emphasized that creative personalities seem particularly desirable and sought after and may bring extensive input in the development processes occurring within territorial units, which should take advantage of such creative potential owing to its role in solving civilization's problems, generating new pro-development policy, stimulating economic processes, strengthening social tolerance as well as creating and implementing innovative solutions in both the social and economic sphere [Hall 2000, p. 33].

Providing the definition of regional growth turns out a relatively difficult task since this category has already been broadly theoretically discussed. For the purposes of this study certain selected and simplified approaches towards regional development characteristics will be presented.

Regional development can be understood as the transformation in regional productivity measured by the size of population, employment rate, income level and production added value. Regional growth also covers social development understood as the level of health care, wealth, prosperity, environment quality and creativity. The complex nature of regional development results in the fact that it is an outcome of activities simultaneously carried out by diversified entities representing public authorities, enterprises, organizations and the regional community. The processes identified within the framework of regional development, on the one hand constitute the effect of microeconomic activities occurring in the market economy, however, on the other, result from targeted operations performed by public entities responsible for regional policy establishment.

The condition facilitating ongoing regional development is defined as the long-term integrity and co-dependence of all its subsystems, i.e. economic, social, natural, institutional and political [Sepulveda, Edwards 1995, pp. 13–15]. This is manifested in a material way by means of proper usage and management of a given space. The definition of continuous sustainable development, regarding its quality,

may be understood as a vision or a signpost of long-term growth. With reference to real life practice, the activities undertaken by public authorities are expressed by defining strategic goals which should be verified by specific operational measures.

Regional growth should be identified with socio-economic development occurring in a region and referred to as the increase of regional economic potential manifesting itself by the improved living standards of its inhabitants and a higher level of competitiveness.

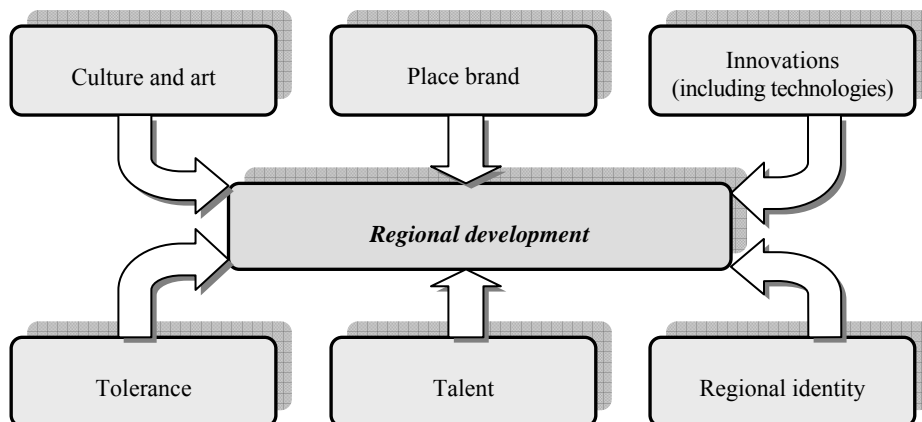
It may be assumed that the concept of regional growth is frequently used for the presentation of multidimensional quantitative and qualitative transformations in a regional territorial cross-section of the country. The complex identification of regional development represents a complicated and manifold process. In its theoretical and practical aspect, regional development is mainly identified with an increase of relative regional importance in both a national and international perspective, with higher management efficiency (optimization of conditions for running a business), with better living standards of its inhabitants, as well as with reducing interregional development differences [Pike, Rodriguez, Tomaney 2006, p. 7]. The new regional development paradigm emphasizes the key role of scientific and technological development enhancement tendencies by recognizing the overriding role of such factors as human capital, knowledge, research, creativity and innovation [Stimson, Stough, Roberts 2006, p. 388].

### **3. Creativity for regional development**

One of the more interesting approaches indicating the significance of creativity with reference to the socio-economic development of territorial units is represented by the 3T concept (Technology, Talent, Tolerance) by Richard Florida. Among the crucial assumptions of this concept, the approach to human creativity as the basic source of the above mentioned development plays the key role. It has to be underlined that the 3T concept is well adjusted to the previously presented theoretical aspects of creativity since it arranges, in an orderly manner, its particular dimensions and facilitates attempts to measure it. The Global Creativity Index represents an exemplary tool for such measurement, which refers to monitoring changes in the area of the creative economy in several dozen countries worldwide. Owing to its cyclical nature, a relatively broad spectrum of factors taken into consideration in the creative process and its territorial range, the index may be referred to as one of the more interesting initiatives related to analyzing territorial units' creativity, i.e. countries – in this case [Florida et al. 2011, pp. 3–4]. Regarding the 3T concept itself, in general terms the countries or regions which aspire to the position of creative ones and thus faster developing, competitive and attractive in the global market, should invest in new technologies, innovations, education and the development of their citizens as well as respecting their

differences and showing tolerance. Following Florida's concept, human capital is no longer observed in the traditional way as the source of entrepreneurship and economic growth, but is substituted by creative capital [Oort, Raspe 2007, p. 282].

The assumptions of the 3T concept emphasize creativity, as opposed to traditional production factors, as an inexhaustible and renewable source undergoing continuous improvement. It is assumed that each and every unit may be creative, our development and wellbeing do not depend on obtaining knowledge reserved for selected groups only, but on releasing creativity resources ingrained in every human being. It is assumed that in the end it is human knowledge, skills, creativity and aspirations which decide about the attractiveness of any particular place, and establish its tourist, cultural, market, social and political potential [Anholt 2007, p. 75]. It is also emphasized that all three Ts are crucial and keep strengthening one another for the benefit of growth and construct a network of relations stimulating creativity. Strengthening just one factor may turn out to be insufficient for the accomplishment of particular developmental objectives.



**Figure 1.** Factors related to creativity and potentially influencing regional development

Source: own elaboration based on [Florida 2002; Florida 2005].

Regarding the partly characterized 3T concept, one should take a closer look at a wider range of factors, directly or indirectly related to creativity, with reference to regional development (see Figure 1). Among these factors, an undoubtedly important role is played by culture and art. The increase of human activities in these areas becomes frequently identified with stimulating growth incentives leading towards regional space development. At the same time, new production, distribution and consumption methods may be observed, which result in a higher demand for culture as well as new products and services as its direct impact

[Norrman (ed.) 2006, pp. 6–7]. Once an assumption is accepted that our existence is more and more focused on consumption and societies are ideologically driven, culture and art seem to be distinctive determinants which motivate towards undertaking certain actions and activate the resources of human entrepreneurship.

Place brand, in this perspective, refers mainly to creating unique, positive experiences in the minds of potential clients as certain space users [Cigler 2008, p. 315]. In other words, people inhabiting places, the brand of which has already been well established, commonly recognized as well organized and managed, declare themselves as happier compared to populations inhabiting other regions and, at the same time, they present a higher creativity, cognitive desire, the need for improving their skills, extending knowledge and openness. Such a situation facilitates, in a natural way, their involvement in activities aimed at strengthening their territory's development.

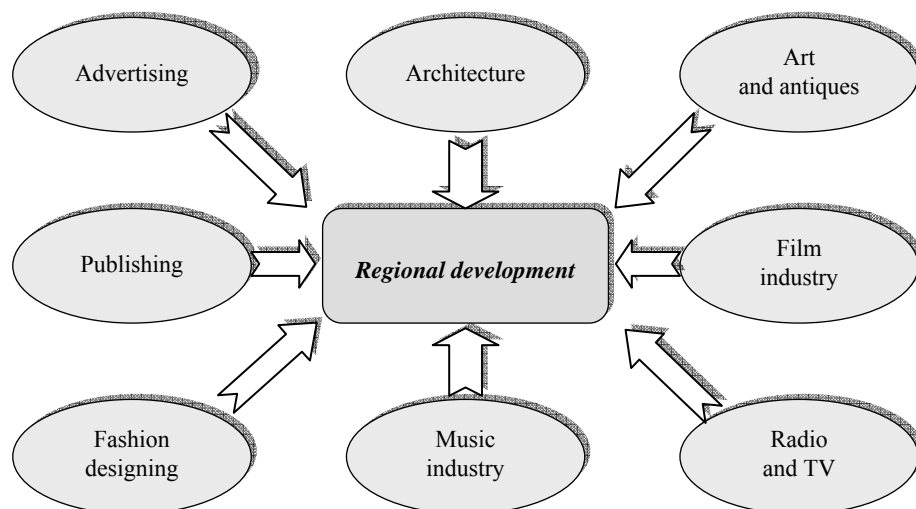
In recent years, numerous studies have been published which present the role of innovative technologies, products and services in regional development. Beyond any doubt, creativity does help in breaking away from mental patterns of regional communities used to the existing order and established rules. It allows to move to another level of thinking, in which innovations influence regional development and result in a higher quality of social life.

A certain simplification may be adopted where regional identity represents the feeling of identification with a particular fragment of space which we observe as part of ourselves. It is also emphasized that the existence of an emotional bond with a particular place, the surrounding landscape, the community residing in a given area, the products of material and spiritual culture represent important determinants of territorial identity [Deffner, Mataxas 2010, p. 50] as well as the broadly understood cultural heritage [Miranda, Adib 2007, p. 19]. A high level of regional identity facilitates establishing creative attitudes, unleashes human potential and besides the identity itself is invaluable for regional growth. An emotional bond with a particular place enhances the probability of undertaking development supporting activities.

Such factors as talent and tolerance result directly from the earlier presented 3T concept. It may be assumed that the indirect impact of these factors on regional growth originates from the associated, larger dose of optimism, acceptance for diversification, openness of mind, and creative inspirations of creative society's representatives who are supposed to represent stimulating agents for socio-economic development [Boschma, Fritsch 2007, p. 3].

The theory combining creative industries' development with regional growth has also become more and more popular. Creative industries, following one of the more popular definitions, can be characterized as activities resulting from individual creativity, skills and talent, which present the potential for establishing new jobs and wealth by generating and implementing intellectual property [*Investing in Creative*

*Industries...* 2009, p. 4]. It is assumed that creativity is the major factor of creative industries' manufacturing process, while intellectual property is a characteristic quality of its effect. The compilation of creative industries comprehensive overview is a matter for discussion. It results, to a great extent, from the available statistical classifications allowing for the construction of a comparative database of creative industries occurrence in particular regions or countries. The approach towards creative industries defining certain flexibility is also applied, which results from the specific and diversified nature of the activities conducted in a particular territory.



**Figure 2.** Selected creative industries stimulating regional development

Source: own elaboration based on [*Investing in Creative Industries...* 2009; *Creative Industries Mapping...* 2001].

Apart from the most often listed creative industries (see Figure 2) exerting an impact on regional development, the overview is frequently extended by activities related to museums, theatre, opera, performing arts, tourism, computer games and software, designing services, pattern design and handicraft. Within the framework of a different division suggested by Dutch authorities, all domains of culture are suggested to be divided into three groups: art (e.g. performance arts and photography, visual arts and artistic events), media and entertainment (e.g. film industry, audio-visual sector, literature and journalism), creative business services (e.g. design, fashion, architecture, computer games market, advertising) [*Our Creative Potential...* 2005, pp. 14–15].

An attempt to analyse the potential influence of creative industries on regional development seems more interesting. It is assumed, based on British experiences [*Investing in Creative Industries...* 2009, p. 6] that investments in creative industries

result in higher productive capacity. The gross value added, i.e. the value of all goods and services produced by all national entities less costs related to their manufacturing, presenting increased value of goods in a given period of time, generated by creative industries, grew in Great Britain by 4% in the period 1997–2006, compared to a 3% increase in the overall economy. A similar situation in the analysed time period, was observed in relation to establishing new jobs. The increase in employment in creative industries was twice as high compared to the total economy growth, respectively 2% and 1%.

Creative industries are observed as an important source for generating innovation, which on the other hand may result in opening new sales markets, production capacity increase, higher work efficiency and the increased competitiveness of entities offering innovative products and services, which taken together, stimulate regional development. Additionally, creative enterprises, as innovators in their sectors, disseminate innovative solutions by means of contacts with business partners.

Another phenomenon supporting the favourable impact of creative industries on regional development becomes their impact on material and social regeneration, revitalization, renovation of regional space, as well as strengthening social cohesion, having assumed that the projects resulting from activities performed within the scope of creative industries are placed in regional conditions and reality. Finally, creative industries are observed as sources of regional inhabitants' life quality improvement and investment attractiveness.

#### **4. Final remarks**

In conclusion, it may be assumed that creativity does represent the crucial component facilitating the intensification of regional development. Its value is manifested by a broad spectrum of influences referring to diverse areas of human activity. Activating human creativity and the implementation of its effects, in the context of regional communities' improvement of quality of life, seems one of the most important challenges of contemporary economy and social policy. Creativity is noted as an inexhaustible resource constituting, at the same time, the main source responsible for generating innovation, useful solutions, as well as an integral part of covering culture and art by business processes.

With reference to the discussed business sectors, observed as the driving agents of contemporary regional development, the largest difficulty is associated with their proper definition, specification and comparability based on the available statistical database. Apart from theoretical considerations, based on available studies, it may be concluded that they are undoubtedly these sectors and branches which feature extensive developmental potential, especially in times of economic downturn.

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## KREATYWNOŚĆ W KONTEKŚCIE ROZWOJU REGIONALNEGO – WYBRANE ZAGADNIENIA

**Streszczenie:** W niniejszym opracowaniu poruszona została problematyka odnosząca się do wybranych aspektów kreatywności w relacji do rozwoju regionalnego. W pierwszej części omówione zostały teoretyczne aspekty kreatywności oraz rozwoju regionalnego. Wskazano na kreatywność jako źródło innowacji, tolerancji, wrażliwości społecznej w procesie rozwoju społeczno-gospodarczego jednostek terytorialnych. W dalszej części scharakteryzowano podstawowe założenia koncepcji 3T Richarda Floridy. Omówiono czynniki powiązane z kreatywnością mające potencjalny wpływ na rozwój regionalny, takie jak: kultura i sztuka, marka miejsca, innowacje, tolerancja, talent, tożsamość regionalna. Przedstawiono również wybrane przemysły kreatywne dynamizujące rozwój regionalny, wśród których wyszczególniono m.in. reklamę, architekturę, sztukę i antyki, działalność wydawniczą, przemysł filmowy, projektowanie mody, przemysł muzyczny, radio i telewizję.

**Słowa kluczowe:** kreatywność, rozwój regionalny, innowacyjność, koncepcja 3T, przemysły kreatywne.