

НОВИ ПОДХОДИ И ИНОВАЦИИ
NEW APPROACHES AND INNOVATIONS

CREATIVE INDUSTRIES IN THE KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY

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Abstract: *The article reviews the strong economic arguments, which support the new role creative industries acquire in the knowledge economy. It explains why creative industries increasingly feature as a key component in economic strategies and the concept of creativity and innovation-based growth is embraced by countries at various levels of development. The article analyzes the United Nations General Assembly resolution on creative economy for sustainable development, which marks a new level of policy commitment to this area. It reaffirms the key importance that the intellectual property system plays in monetizing creativity and its role as a major enabling factor in the creative economy ecosystem. The article reviews the system of indicators of the creative economy and arguments in favour of improved empirical research and higher synergy on the international level.*

Keywords: *creative economy; economic growth; sustainable development; intellectual property; creative industries indicators*

I. Creative economy – conceptual underpinnings

The terms “creative industries” and “creative economy” have entered the policy space in the last 20 years and have established themselves as an indispensable part of the knowledge society. What makes creative economy so special and how do we explain its appeal to so many countries, politicians, entrepreneurs, industries, academics and civil society. Perhaps the first reason is that creativity represents a resource abundant in all countries and it can be used to underpin endogenous growth, whereby the country does not rely on external factors. The second reason is that creative industries evoke in our minds a perspective, which is very much linked to a future, where the main asset will be knowledge, supported by technology. This forward-looking orientation meets an excellent response in all societal groups. The third reason is that creative industries represent a positive agenda – all policy makers would like to focus on

a positive perspective, thus avoiding difficult discussions on everyday problems such as unemployment, structural economic problems or inflation. The notion of creativity is associated with positive thinking with no particular limits.

While this first group of reasons relate more to the perception of creative economy, there is a different explanation, based on economic evidence. Creative economy has established itself as a key driver of economic growth. According to a recently published study by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) the creative sector, underpinned by intellectual property (IP) protection, represents a significant share of the national output – 5, 54% of the GDP and 5, 78% of the total employment in over 60 countries that have been surveyed.² The analysis shows that there is a significant positive correlation between the creative industries share of GDP and the capacity of countries to innovate, their competitiveness and government effectiveness, which measures the effects of its institutions, policies and other factors on productivity.

Following the downturn associated with COVID-19 Governments are looking at ways to rebuild their economies. Many governments are focusing on the creative sector, which is expected to return to its long-term trend of growing faster than the national economy. A major driver for creative economy growth remains the disposable income enabling consumers to spend more and meet their demand for goods and services, which are essentially outputs of the creative economy, such as music, films, videogames, e-books, podcasts or mobile applications. In the digital age consumers are spending more time engaging with creative products, hence new opportunities emerge to monetize creativity, using new business models based on subscriptions (Spotify, Netflix, etc.). According to a report, published by Deloitte in 2021 extrapolating from earlier trends suggests that the creative economy in major economies could grow with 40% by 2030 and generate additional 8 mil. jobs.³

The strong links between creative economy and economic performance are rooted in the nature of the creative economy ecosystem. It is a circular, rather than linear system whereby creative supply chains generate constant demand across the creative industries. One creative's output e.g. a book or song often becomes raw material inputs for new products e.g. a movie or a theatrical production. An audiovisual product may use content from literature, music or design and drive demand for the products from the upstream and downstream industries. A video game is typically using products from multiple creative sectors – stories, images, animation, music, software and alike. Creative industries often use shared intellectual property, which can produce spillovers through IP licensing – a story can generate multiple sources of income while using it in different creative products through appropriate licensing modalities.⁴

Creative industries rely increasingly on creative technologies. Artificial intelligence provides new tools for collaborations across the creative sector, which would require new approaches to education and skills building policies. Creative technologies are undertaking the role of horizontal facilitators with spillover effects across the economy, the social and cultural development.

One particularly important aspect of the creative economy is its intrinsic relationship with intellectual property. Literally all existing definitions of the creative economy recognize the role of IP as its organizing principle and as the main mechanism through which value can be generated and maximized. Creativity translates in the creation of new knowledge, this new knowledge needs to be protected and further developed and here the intellectual property protection mechanisms play a key role. We are witnessing increased demand for IP services around the world and the registration of IP applications indicated that even in the difficult economic climate during the pandemic the growth rate of filings for IP registrations (encompassing different forms of IP) outperformed the global economy growth rates.⁵

II. The creative industries in the policy debate

The impact of creative industries on economic growth has naturally triggered a significant policy interest across the globe. The topic has gained international dimensions and is now an element of the policy debate on recovery.

Creative economy has been discussed on the level of the United Nations since 2004. It **officially entered the UN global economic and development agenda** during the XIth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD XI) in São Paulo, Brazil. Since then the acknowledgement that the sector was becoming increasingly important came in multiple international forums, involving countries at all levels of development. The G-77 Plan of Action (Doha, 2005); the Mauritius Strategy adopted by the Small Islands Development States (SIDS) (2005); the Nairobi Plan of Action (African Union, 2005); the First and Second African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP) Ministerial Meeting of Ministers of Culture (Dakar, 2004; Santo Domingo, 2006) all recognized the importance of cultural and creative industries for development. In the subsequent years three UN Creative Economy Reports were published, the UN Secretary-General organized High-Level Panels on the Creative Economy and Industries for Development, which triggered additional policy attention. It culminated in the adoption of **Resolution 74/198 of the General Assembly of the United Nations A/RES/74/198 declaring 2021 as the International Year of Creative Economy for Sustainable Development.**

The resolution was adopted by consensus on 19 December 2019. While it was initiated by the Government of Indonesia, 27 countries co-authored and eventually 81 countries became cosponsors of the resolution. The resolution was preceded by active discussions in the Second Committee of General Assembly. The sponsorship of the resolution indicates a large support which comes across all regions – not only from developing countries having an active creative industries commitment as Colombia, Indonesia, Philippines, Brazil and Kenya among others, but also from developed countries such as Australia, Canada, Norway and Ireland. Co-sponsorship is an expression of commitment, in other words, these 81 countries had announced their intention to actively implement the resolution and organize activities to this end. In terms of UN practice, this resolution and its broad support placed the issue of the creative economy very high on the UN agenda.

It would be relevant to discuss three aspects – why was this resolution adopted, what are its main elements and what can be expected henceforth.

Twenty years ago, the creative economy was seen as primarily a phenomenon of a few developed economies. However, more recently such processes as the World Conference on Creative Economy (WCCE), initiated in South-East Asia, and of the Orange Economy in Latin America have accelerated South-South and triangular cooperation. Countries like China, Thailand, The Republic of South Africa, the Republic of Korea, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and many others adopted pro-active policies on creative industries. It was not surprising that so many developing countries co-sponsored the UN resolution on creative economy of 2019.⁶

The creative economy has grown and became one of the powerhouses of our times. Investors are increasingly getting the idea that there is a lot of potential and economic opportunities in the creative economy. The value of the global market for creative goods doubled from USD 208 billion in 2002 to USD 509 billion in 2015 and now the total value of global creative economy is estimated at USD 2.253 trillion. It is among the most rapidly growing sectors of the world economy, generating nearly 30 million jobs worldwide and employing more people aged 15–29 than any other sector.⁷ While the nature and scope of the CCIs can vary from one country to the next, they are recognized by Member States as an engine for economic development and increasingly supported by international development partners.

This political commitment to advance the creative economy has not been matched by the same level of mainstreaming the creative industries in economic policy nor by relevant public policy investment. Over the past 20 years the major drivers in the creative industries have been market forces and the private sector.

Public policies have remained fragmented. The contribution of the creative economy to sustainable development was insufficiently acknowledged. Only a few countries, mostly in the developed world, made the creative industries the backbone of their economic growth strategies. A strong commitment was needed to support the sector and facilitate its contribution to a more sustainable future.⁸

What are the key elements in the resolution?

The first new element is the **link between the creative economy and the UN Sustainable development goals** as formulated in 2015 and the recognition that creative economy can contribute to reinforcing the delivery of the 2030 Agenda. The creative economy could relate to the following specific Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – quality education (SDG 4.7); gender (SDG 5); economic growth, employment and decent work (SDG 8); reducing inequality (SDG 10); sustainable cities and settlement (SDG 11.4); sustainable consumption and production (SDG 12).

The resolution provides a **descriptive definition of the creative economy**, referred to as:

*“...the creative economy, known as the “orange economy” in a number of countries, involves, inter alia, knowledge-based economic activities and the interplay between human creativity and ideas, knowledge and technology, as well as cultural values or artistic, cultural heritage and other individual or collective creative expressions”.*⁹

This definition reproduces elements from existing national and international approaches, while paying tribute to the “orange economy” typical for some Latin American countries. It is to be noted that the preamble clearly mentions that *cultural and creative industries should be part of economic growth strategies*. In this way the definition evokes the link between creative industries and other economic and areas and refers to its role for promoting diversification, technological upgrading, research and innovation, including the creation of quality, decent and productive jobs. This places the creative industries as a horizontal issue and reaffirms that they can have a positive impact in many other economic and social areas and bring in positive externalities.

Interestingly, the definition does not mention intellectual property as a key element that defines the subject area of the creative industries. It refers to the need of strategies to appropriately protect and enforce intellectual property, which indicates that intellectual property is seen as an implementation tool, rather than as a key mechanism for monetizing creativity.

The resolution is focused on the potential of the creative economy to support sustainable development in the **developing countries and countries in**

transition. The broad and positive response confirms that this was a topic of interest to a large group of members of the United Nations.

The resolution mentions the **key players in the UN system**, engaged with the promotion and implementation of the concept of creative economy for sustainable development, namely – United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). Indeed, these are the key organizations that traditionally are active in this area. The resolution does not provide for a mechanism to coordinate better their efforts, which have at times been overlapping.

The resolution spells out the linkages between the creative economy and other key economic and social areas, with a special focus given to **the digital environment**. It states the need for creating an enabling environment for the promotion of the creative economy, through the development of digital technology, innovative and digital economy, e-commerce, building relevant digital infrastructure and connectivity for supporting sustainable development, increased public and private sector investment in creative industries and the development of relevant legal frameworks.

A new element, which has been present in the debate, but never given such prominence is the importance of producing **regular, reliable and comparable data** on the contribution of the creative economy to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. This is a recognition of the problem of different and inconsistent data, which circulates and at times suggests unfounded conclusions.

The resolution **does not provide a financial mechanism for its implementation**, inviting member states to meet the cost of all activities that may arise from the implementation of the resolution from voluntary contributions. It encourages all to observe the year in accordance with national priorities to raise awareness, promote cooperation and networking, encourage sharing best practices, enhance human resource capacity and promote an enabling environment. It is not uncommon for this type of resolutions in the UN not to provide dedicated resources for implementation.

While the resolution was negotiated and adopted before the pandemic hit the planet, throughout the year of its implementation the focus shifted towards the **role of the creative economy in the recovery process** – a driver in solving some of the difficult issues coming out of the pandemic.¹⁰ The theme “Creative

Economy for Inclusive Development and Global Recovery” was adopted in multiple events in implementation of the resolution.

The implementation of the resolution is **left to the member states**. A particular role is reserved for the UNCTAD Secretariat, which is requested to report to the 77 session of the General Assembly on the implementation of the resolution. This places the topics once again on the UN agenda and suggests a key role for UNCTAD in operationalizing the implementation of the resolution.

As of this moment, the report on the implementation of the resolution is still being drafted. Therefore, we can only refer to some national and international efforts that have taken place. A number of organizations and countries developed strategic documents to address the complexity of issues around the creative economy, others focused on programs targeting very specific areas.

UNCTAD developed a roadmap focusing on trade and data collection. UNESCO developed a plan for policy actions in the following directions:

- review the status of artists and cultural professionals;
- data collection, public support schemes and education;
- support the digital transformation through adapting the regulatory framework, digital creativity, international agreements, digital literacy, skills and competences, among others.¹¹

Indonesia adopted a 3-step strategy – “Reworking Recovery, Resilience Reimagined, Robust Revival”. The United Arab Emirates launched the Creative Relief Fund to provide financial support to impacted creatives and enterprises and a Training Program to assist creatives in acquiring the required skills for the creative economy. Together with UNESCO, the UAE recently proposed a decision called “A Framework for Culture and Arts Education” that was adopted unanimously by its Executive Board.¹²

Indonesia, the UAE and Oman scheduled major events throughout the year, culminating in two summits, held in these countries in December 2021.

The impact of the pandemic on the creative industries is yet to be fully established. The closures of borders, venues and physical distancing measures affected whole segments of the creative economy. Live performance and venue-based industries have been the hardest hit, impacting livelihoods, artist mobility, market access and artistic freedom, together with broader repercussions for the value chain of suppliers and service providers. The crisis has exposed particularly the difficulties in countries, where public support schemes for the creative sector are not in place. At the same time, a number of sectors such as video games and mobile applications have recorded remarkable performance and two-digit growth during the pandemic.¹³

In the months and years to come it is likely to see a higher level of policy commitment to creative industries on global, regional and national levels.

III. Key issues on the creative economy agenda

As a concept in development, the creative economy still needs to deal with some fundamental issues. The first such issue is defining the scope of the creative economy. This issue is primary importance because the defined scope will have a tremendous impact on the size of the creative economy, on the type of policy interventions, which can support it and on the instruments that can be applied to seek improved performance and optimal impact. Several different approaches can be identified to this issue:

- The relatively easy and somewhat simplified approach, adopted by a number of scholars and countries, is to select and codify which economic sectors and occupations should be included in the definition. This approach inevitably implies an arbitrary choice of these sectors and introduces a great deal of subjectivity. Its advantage is that the selected areas can be easily mapped out to economic sectors, statistical information can be collected and aggregate numbers may be compiled on creative output, employment and trade. The downside of this approach is that there inevitably exist creative activities, which fall outside the selected sectors – such as upstream and downstream services related to the inputs for the production of certain creative goods and services and their distribution channels. The second challenge is that the situation from country to country may differ and a sector which is very dynamic in terms of creative inputs in one country may be less intensive in another country, hence the pre-defined scope of creative industries may not be fully relevant for certain jurisdictions. The third limitation of this approach is that it does not take into account the possibility of intellectual property licensing of the same content, through different IP rights, which can ultimately show the intense relationship and interdependencies that exist in the creative economy.
- Another approach is to use the criteria of intensiveness of use of the creative assets. This has resulted in the elaboration of such terms as intellectual property – intensive, copyright-intensive, trademark-intensive, design-intensive or patent-intensive industries applied widely in the US and by the European Commission.¹⁴ The advantage of this approach is that it carries a significant political influence as it attempts to describe the entire area where the subject matter in question is predominant. The limitation of this is that the principle of something

being intensive, basically suggests that it is above an average value which is selected. This means that while focusing on certain activities for example as “copyright-intensive” would essentially disqualify activities, where creativity, protected by copyright plays a role, which is below the selected average. Hence, certain activities will not be accounted for and not reflected in the final estimates. It has to be stated, however, that this approach is applied mostly to policy research, in the sense that it needs to provide an estimate to inform policy makers and monitor trends, and should not be regarded as an empirical statistical survey.

- A third approach is to place at the heart of the definition a selected criteria – culture, trade, intellectual property, content, or other. The definition in this case will always be biased, as it will lean towards one criteria. These approaches are normally favoured by organizations, which have special responsibility in a given area. The advantage is that it is very clear what is being referred to, the selected criteria is often linked to a system of indicators and data sets which are produced on a regular basis through a standardized framework. This is rather important for empirical research, which needs to rely on data, especially when trends are to be monitored and comparisons are to be made. UNCTAD prioritizes trade in creative products and services, UNESCO focuses on culture at the heart of creative activities. In the case of WIPO the selected criteria is the level of dependence on copyright material. This enables a more nuanced approach to various economic activities and the inclusion of all portions of activities that can be attributed to copyright. This is being done through a set of statistical methods and, when necessary, the complementation of this approach with industry studies, qualified judgements and various calculation techniques.¹⁵

Another important and fundamental issue is **the selection of optimal indicators** that characterize the creative economy. Naturally, indicators follow the decision taken on the scope of definitions, discussed above. We can identify in the research literature a clear tendency towards focusing on two indicators, namely the creative output as percentage of GDP or GVA (gross value added) and employment as percentage of national employment.¹⁶ These two indicators are constantly being referred to as the most representative in terms of economic importance. In recent years we have witnessed attempts to quantify the embedded creativity suggesting creative activities and occupations in professions which are not necessarily related to the essential creative industries.¹⁷

Trade is another indicator, which appears in many studies, mostly as an import/export ratio. Researchers are facing difficulties with this indicator at least in two dimensions. Firstly, trade is reported according to the customs nomenclature in products, while economic activities are listed under industrial classification codes. This means that it may be problematic to link these codes in a consistent manner, as there is no direct correspondence. The second difficulty is linked to the fact that services are not properly reflected in most countries trade statistics. Creative services are generating value through the intellectual property system and payments across borders are reflected in the balance of payments or other specialized reporting frameworks. There is no universal standard in this regard and it is a challenge to many research teams to identify credible information sources.

In the search of optimal indicators, we note an increased interest towards more dynamic indicators such as the contribution to the real GDP growth, productivity, output and employment multipliers for the sector and by industry.

Data analytics has evolved over time as new technical tools become available. A new approach to indicators is to capture the digital transactions with creative products and services, using network data where creatives are more active, while tracking the traffic generated by creative activities. In these cases, complex data bases are created and referenced to isolate the desired segment.

Indicators are broadly quantitative and qualitative. As it may be expected, the quality indicators are more problematic and can be captured only through indexes and survey work, which affects precision and consistency over time. Using definitions, which are difficult to quantify requires modelling and use of indirect techniques, which may render research costly and inaccurate.

Another dimension for improving indicators is the search for optimal indicators to measure economic efficiency in the creative industries. This is ultimately a very important economic and business dimension, which requires a set of its own measures, based on establishing a benchmark – efficiency as compared to what? This aspect has been studied in relation to selected areas of creative industries, such as the efficiency of collective management of copyright and related rights, the efficiency of cultural institutions, and efficiency in distribution of creative content, among others.

Concluding remarks

The creative industries have become an inseparable part of our economic reality. Creativity is acquiring a central role in growth strategies and supports the solution of complex social and economic problems. The creative economy has gained a high political profile and has generated significant policy interest on the

level of the United Nations, on regional and national scale. The adoption of the UN resolution on creative economy and sustainable development marks a new level of international commitment to this area. The high profile of the creative economy needs to be matched with further work on conceptual issues, which are affecting international efforts to quantify the creative economy. This will support solid and evidence-based policy making on creative industries and would enable our society and economies to benefit even more from creative outputs.

БЕЛЕЖКИ

- ¹ The views expressed in this article are the sole responsibility of the author.
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- ⁶ **The Global** Summit on the Orange Economy in Medellin, Colombia, in 2019, stated that the orange economy “represents an enormous wealth based on talent, intellectual property, connectivity and of the cultural heritage of (Inter-America) region”. The Bali 2018 WCCE conference acknowledged “the vast potential and significant contributions of the creative economy to enable global economic growth, social and cultural development in the framework of the fourth industrial revolution”.
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КРЕАТИВНИТЕ ИНДУСТРИИ В ИКОНОМИКАТА НА ЗНАНИЕТО

***Резюме:** В статията се анализират силните икономически аргументи, които подкрепят новата роля на творческите индустрии в икономиката на знанието. Това обяснява и защо творческите индустрии намират все по-голямо приложение като ключов компонент в икономическите стратегии и концепции за растеж, основан на креативност и иновативност, около който са се обединили страни от различни етапи на своето развитие. Анализира се още резолюцията на Общото събрание на ООН относно креативната икономика за устойчиво развитие, която бележи ново ниво на политическата ангажираност в тази област. Потвърждава се съществената роля, която системата за интелектуална собственост играе за монетаризирането на творчеството и неговите функции в екосистемата на креативната икономика. Статията представя системата от индикатори, отнасяща се до креативната икономика, и разглежда аргументи за подобряване на емпиричните изследвания в тази посока на международно ниво.*

***Ключови думи:** креативна икономика; икономически растеж; устойчиво развитие; интелектуална собственост; индикатори на креативните индустрии*

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