

Drivers of Creative Economy: A window on Albania's future development

Few decades ago companies such as Samsung and Kia were perceived as cost-driven oriented competitors, and South Korea as a manufacturing country, but the quantic leap that has moved these companies and South Korea to compete globally and to get a leadership position has been mainly related to their capacity to move and integrate their attention from a simple focus on manufacturing to technology-, design- and creative-driven orientation.

The 2nd international forum on Creative Economy organised by Adriapol Institute has offered a unique opportunity to reflect and discuss the role that creative economy is playing and the relevance that the creative drivers occupy for the future development of Albania and the Balkan region. Nowadays the creative industries represent the most fast growing sector in Europe and they play an increasing role not only to support economic development but also as a driver to enhance welfare and quality of life. The understanding of their position is fundamental both to support the ongoing development dynamics of Albania and its region, and most importantly to envision how to sustain growth and wealth creation.

The actual development pillars of the national development namely, Good Government, Accessibility, Technology and Digitalisation, and Education, correctly define the fundamental infrastructures grounding the present and future development of the country. They define the pillars to drive the growth of Albania and can be further enriched and strengthened by incorporating a creative- and cultural-based perspective. This equals to acknowledge the strategic relevance of design, culture and arts for the future development and to define a strategy and a set of actions to leverage creativity. Indeed, the development of the tangible infrastructure has to be coupled with a focus on developing the intangible infrastructures that include: people's critical thinking and entrepreneurship behaviours, social capital with a focus on a clear definition of a set of shared values and stable normative environment, and a strong identity and image.

Creativity offers the field of knowledge and practices to identify new pedagogic approaches for student and adult education methods and systems; provides the tools to shape a context and atmosphere in which people can be gathered and engaged into conversations aimed to define and understand the importance of defining common fundamental values and norms; contributes to define and communicate national identity and image into a framework of sustainable and peaceful development. On the other hand, the development of the creative economy, by supporting the creative industries and the arts, provides two main 'value creation venues'. On the one hand, the arts and creative industries contribute to the social and cultural value creation and represent a main driver for social innovation, cohesion, and personal and society expression. On the other hand, the arts and creative industries define an economic sector in itself that contribute to economic and wealth creation, and most importantly can be deployed as a vector to enhance the value creation capacity of the manufacturing industry and other traditional industries creating a platform to increase the value added of the current national

productions as well as to stimulate and sustain the development of new business ideas, innovative companies and the service industry.

As Europe is reflecting on the strategic relevance of culture and creativity for sustainable development, Albania and the Balkan region can expand their growth opportunities by capitalising on the competitive and value creation opportunities that arts and creativity offer. For this reason the activities and initiatives of Adriapol should be further encouraged and extended as well as new governmental initiatives should be promoted including the creation of creative and innovative incubators, liaison offices, and laboratories in which to experiment and translate into actions projects and programs for creativity and culture for local, national and macro-regional development.

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