



UvA-DARE (Digital Academic Repository)

Creative industries, creative class and competitiveness: expert opinions critically appraised

Bontje, M.; Musterd, S.

DOI

[10.1016/j.geoforum.2009.07.001](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2009.07.001)

Publication date

2009

Document Version

Final published version

Published in

Geoforum

License

Article 25fa Dutch Copyright Act (<https://www.openaccess.nl/en/in-the-netherlands/you-share-we-take-care>)

[Link to publication](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2009.07.001)

Citation for published version (APA):

Bontje, M., & Musterd, S. (2009). Creative industries, creative class and competitiveness: expert opinions critically appraised. *Geoforum*, 40(5), 843-852.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2009.07.001>

General rights

It is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), other than for strictly personal, individual use, unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

Disclaimer/Complaints regulations

If you believe that digital publication of certain material infringes any of your rights or (privacy) interests, please let the Library know, stating your reasons. In case of a legitimate complaint, the Library will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website. Please Ask the Library: <https://uba.uva.nl/en/contact>, or a letter to: Library of the University of Amsterdam, Secretariat, Singel 425, 1012 WP Amsterdam, The Netherlands. You will be contacted as soon as possible.

UvA-DARE is a service provided by the library of the University of Amsterdam (<https://dare.uva.nl>)



Creative industries, creative class and competitiveness: Expert opinions critically appraised

Marco Bontje*, Sako Musterd

AMIDSt – Amsterdam Institute for Metropolitan and International Development Studies, University of Amsterdam, Nieuwe Prinsengracht 130, 1018 VZ Amsterdam, The Netherlands

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 10 July 2007

Received in revised form 6 July 2009

Keywords:

Creativity
Knowledge
Competitiveness
City-regions
Europe

ABSTRACT

In the debate on urban and regional competitiveness, it has become fashionable to stress the growing importance of creativity for economic development. Especially scientist-consultants with a keen eye for what politicians and business people want to hear have taken centre stage in this discussion. Each city and region in the advanced capitalist world seems to prefer a label as creative city or region, and all look after the same type of industries and try to produce the same set of conditions, while investing in higher education and research institutes, networking and lobbying institutions, and the promotion of spin-off companies. A vast number of leaders and spokesmen of local and regional (quasi) governments believe that a major thing to do is to become more attractive places to live for creative knowledge workers or the 'creative class', as it is euphemistically labelled.

However, in academia there is a lot of scepticism with regard to the use of these concepts and their meaning for urban and regional competitiveness. Also citizen movements and NGOs, and some political parties, voice their concern about the extent to which policies that apply these concepts and ideas might only benefit an elite of higher educated, well-paid professionals while at the same time these policies might result in decline of other activities and in social polarisation and poverty as well.

In this paper we contribute to the critical discussion through a critical appraisal of local experts' views on developments in seven European city-regions, first with regard to policies towards the development of creative and knowledge-intensive industries; and secondly with regard to the impact the development of 'creative knowledge regions' may have in social and other respects. In contrast to the rather homogeneous yet dominant advice to facilitate 'the creative class', in this paper we will argue that a range of parameters related to the firms and regional institutional, geographical and historical contexts promote a much more diversified view on urban economic development.

© 2009 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

1. 'Re-inventing the city'

Local governments face the need to almost continuously 're-invent' their city or metropolitan region in reaction to structural changes in their local, regional, national and global societal and economic contexts. These structural changes are sometimes 'deep-structural' and imply major adaptations such as those that were required due to the transformation of European and American cities from a Fordist industrial to a post-Fordist type, but structural changes may also occur over shorter periods. These changes require responses from various actors since the changing character of the economy and society at large require adjustments in the local and regional institutional, material and immaterial conditions.

Currently, it is argued, a new and significant transformation would be on-going. Recent economic and geographic literature signals the rise of a new type of post-Fordist economy in the advanced

capitalist world¹ in which knowledge, information, creativity, design and symbolic value take centre stage (Zukin, 1995; Florida, 2002, 2005; Kloosterman, 2004; Scott, 1997, 2004; Storper and Venables, 2004; Hall, 2004; Pratt, 2008; Montgomery, 2007; Gibson and Kong, 2005). In the texts dealing with that transformation, it seems as if human capital, especially the ability to handle large amounts of information and to come up with bright ideas, has surpassed financial capital, raw materials, and labour in general as the key resources for economic progress. This is not to say that money, raw materials and labour in general have become redundant, neither that human capital was never important before; however, over the past decades the balance seems to have shifted towards human capital, and in particular, although not always explicitly stated, towards high-skilled human capital (Berry and Glaeser, 2005; Scott, 2004). In Europe, politicians, analysts and consultants voice their concerns about the extent to which 'the old continent' is able to catch up with the

* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: M.A.Bontje@uva.nl (M. Bontje), S.Musterd@uva.nl (S. Musterd).

¹ The literature signals these trends mostly in Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand, and to a lesser extent also in Japan and Southeast Asia.

emerging creative knowledge economy. The 'Lisbon Agenda', aimed at making the European Union the world's most competitive knowledge economy, sparked many initiatives at the EU level and in the individual member states to invest in creativity, knowledge and technology. At the EU level, the 'Year of Creativity and Innovation' (2009) and the initiative 'Europe INNOVA' are recent examples. At the national level, the UK pioneered in developing a comprehensive policy programme for the creative industries, while Finland was one of the first to stimulate innovation through the 'triple helix' model in which government, universities and business cooperate. Several European countries, regions and cities have meanwhile developed their own policy programmes for creative and innovative industries, often inspired by the UK and Finnish examples. Large cities and their city-regions are seen as the main engines behind the new economic growth. This is a departure from the image that large cities had until quite recently. Large cities are no longer mainly presented as accumulation zones of social and economic problems, but more and more as areas of economic potential (Peck and Tickell, 2002; Peck, 2005). However, not addressing social and economic problems does not imply that these problems disappeared!

As a consequence of the dominant quasi-academic and societal discussions in these spheres, cities and city-regions have started to market themselves as vibrant centres of creativity and knowledge and have taken actions to strengthen that profile (Lange et al., 2008; Yigitcanlar et al., 2008; Vanolo, 2008; Bontje and Crok, 2006). Of course, it can be expected that not all cities and city-regions aiming for a creative knowledge profile will indeed be able to have such a profile. It can also be expected that transformations towards creative and knowledge profiles will generate negative externalities, such as increasing social inequality (Peck, 2005).

It is our objective in this paper to evaluate some essential aspects of the development of creative knowledge industries and the cities and regions they are embedded in, as well as the possible impact of urban and regional policies aimed at stimulating that development. We contribute to the debate through local experts' opinions on this matter, which will be critically addressed in the empirical sections of this paper. We investigate – first of all – their thinking about the strategies that are required to enhance the competitive position of their city or region, especially in creative and knowledge-intensive industries. This will be elaborated upon in Sections 4–7.

Before turning to the critical analysis of the experts' opinions, we will, in Section 2, briefly elaborate on some key theoretical issues and on key concepts in the current creative knowledge debate, while in Section 3, we will deal with some methodological issues and arguments for the selection of the case studies. In Section 4 we will discuss the question to what extent a creative and knowledge-intensive economy actually is a topic of local or regional government policy. How seriously is it taken and what kinds of policy programmes and initiatives are being developed? This will be followed by a focus on the concrete form such policies should take according to the experts' views (Section 5). More specifically we are interested in the balance in policies between specialisation and diversification objectives with regard to the local and regional economy; this will be dealt with in Section 6. In Section 7 attention will be given to the issue of the proper geographic and administrative scale of creative knowledge strategies: the neighbourhood, the city or the region?

However, strategies will have intended and unintended consequences as well, and we address these consequences in Sections 8 and 9. First, by an investigation of the tensions between 'commercial' and 'non-commercial' urban functions that are developing due to creative knowledge strategies (Section 8) and second, by focusing on the perceived social consequences of creative knowledge strategies (Section 9). We will end this paper with some conclusions and future prospects.

2. The creative knowledge debate: beyond 'Florida-hyping' and 'Florida-bashing'

Over recent years, the debate on the competitiveness of regions has shifted focus from the traditional 'hard' location factors for companies (agglomeration economies, rent levels, availability of office space, accessibility, traffic and technical infrastructure, local and national tax regimes, etc.; see, e.g. Derudder et al., 2003; Taylor, 2004; Storper and Manville, 2006) towards a growing importance of 'soft' location factors. Such 'soft' factors include, for example, residential amenities (Gottlieb, 1995), aesthetics and cultural amenities (Clark et al., 2002), tolerance for alternative lifestyles and/or ethnic diversity (Florida, 2002), lively (sub) cultural scenes, and the creation of meeting places for business and leisure purposes. In combination with both the hard and soft factors there is also a position for theories that stress the importance of local networks (Grabher, 2002, 2004) and clustering of firms (Porter, 1998). In the recent debate on competitiveness and urban economic development some attention is given to knowledge intensity by almost all contributors to the debate (also those mentioned in this paper), yet two concepts dominated the scene, albeit not uncritically. These concepts are: 'creative industries' and 'creative class'. In the theoretical debate these concepts tend to be associated with soft conditions in particular, because firms and employees in creative industries are supposed to pay more attention to amenities and the quality of space in social, physical and functional terms compared to firms and employees in other economic activities. However, this is a first reason for critique. By no means have proponents of amenity-related theories shown that local networks, clustering, agglomeration economies, accessibility, and other factors are *not* the dominant factors anymore, even for the development of creative industries. A second reason for critique is the loose way in which these concepts are handled. We will briefly clarify what our understanding of the key concepts is.

2.1. Creative industries

Scholars like Sharon Zukin and Allen Scott have stressed that the symbolic value of products has become at least as important as their practical use. Products have to express the image of companies and match increasingly individualistic lifestyles. This development contributes to a rapid growth of economic branches that specialise in creating this symbolic value. There is some agreement among academic researchers that the 'hard core' of these creative industries branches include: advertising; architecture; arts and antiques; crafts; design and designer fashion; video, film, music and photography; visual and performing arts and music; publishing; computer games; software and electronic publishing; and radio and TV (Pratt, 1997; Kloosterman, 2004). These branches have recently also shown strong concentration tendencies in a highly selective group of metropolitan regions. Agglomeration economies and the availability of proper networks and an adequately skilled workforce may explain the spatial variations (Zukin, 1995; Scott, 1997, 2004; Kloosterman, 2004).

2.2. Creative class

The concept of 'creative class' has a wider connotation. Richard Florida is mainly looking at people and their professions and 'creative class' seems to refer to the level of skills rather than to a specific economic sector, like the creative industries sector. In fact, when he refers to the creative class, he tends to include highly skilled employees in creative industries *and* in (other) knowledge-intensive industries (such as finance, law, ICT, higher education, and R&D). Florida (2002) claims that we are entering the

'creative age', in which people with all kinds of original ideas will play a central role. Referring to Jacobs (1961) as one of his main inspirational sources, Florida argues that creative and talented people prefer to live in cities with a diverse population and a tolerant atmosphere. In his view, which is well-known by now, what cities and regions should attract is not the creative or knowledge-intensive companies, but the people that work for these companies or those who might start such companies themselves. The attraction of a 'talent pool' through (inter) national migration plays a prominent role in Florida's creative class concept.

However, as argued by several geographers and economists (Musterd and Ostendorf, 2004; Hall, 2004; Glaeser, 2005; Peck, 2005; Markusen, 2006; Storper and Manville, 2006), his use of concepts is rather loose and empirical evidence about attracting the creative class and encouraging economic growth by improving local soft conditions is far from convincing. Also Florida's suggestion that the conditions for attracting 'creative class' and subsequently 'creative industries' and knowledge-intensive industries can be met in a wide range of places, is unsubstantiated and thus heavily criticised. Hall (2004) argues that it is true that the world's great cities have always been centres of creativity and innovation (see also Hall, 1998) and in that sense he agrees with Florida that creativity and innovation are key factors related to urban development. Where he disagrees is how these centres have been developed. He argues that bundles of creative industries, or creative cities or regions, can hardly be created 'out of thin air' (Hall, 2004). Others, like Storper and Venables (2004) and Simmie (2005) have argued that innovation is not just about local conditions, but may be more dependent on how local assets are connected to global level opportunities.

The apparently direct relation between 'attracting creative talent', then 'being creative' on the spot and finally 'being successful' has (also) been challenged by Markusen and Schrock (2006). They concluded from a comparison of artistic occupations in US cities that the most successful artistic cities were neither the largest nor the fastest growing cities. Hoyman and Farici (2009) come to a similar conclusion, comparing 276 statistical metropolitan areas in the US. They claim that human capital is a much better predictor of economic growth than Florida's creative class. Finally, a different but related category of critique refers to the intended or unintended elitist connotations of the word 'class'. Several authors have blamed Florida for promoting a new round of neoliberal urban entrepreneurialism which would mainly benefit the higher educated, upper class part of society and increase socio-economic polarisation in city-regions (e.g. Peck, 2005; Wilson and Keil, 2008). Barnes et al. (2007) warn urban policy-makers not to expect creative class and creative city strategies to solve social problems or stimulate community formation. Wilson and Keil (2008) declare the urban poor to the 'real creative class' and state that the poor are completely neglected in Florida's creative class thesis. While Florida has shown increasing awareness of the threat of increasing social polarisation as a result of attracting the creative class to cities, he insists that in principle 'every single human being is creative', implying that also lower educated and people with less monetary resources could profit from 'the creative age'. This debate will probably continue for a while more since convincing evidence at either side ('elitist' vs. 'good for everyone') is lacking.

However, whereas there are plenty of reasons not to dwell on Florida's ideas for too long, we also should avoid 'throwing the baby out with the bathwater'. We believe that instead of dismissing his ideas altogether, we should continue the search for more convincing empirical evidence to either support or reject the 'creative class' hypothesis and affiliated concepts and ideas and also seek connections with the 'older' literature on urban amenities. This is the more important because meanwhile, more and more cities and city-regions have enthusiastically started incentive pro-

grammes for creative and knowledge-intensive industries and construction or reconstruction programmes for commercial and non-commercial 'creative milieus' (see, for example Arnoldus, 2004; Brown et al., 2000; Walliser, 2004 about Amsterdam, Manchester, Sheffield and Barcelona).

Scott (2006) offers a new framework to integrate the debates on 'the creative industries' and 'the creative class' with other theoretical insights. He suggests using the concept 'creative field'. This is defined as "a set of interrelationships that stimulate and channel individual expressions of creativity (...). At one level, this phenomenon coincides with the networks of firms and workers that make up any given agglomeration and with the multiple interactions that go on between these different units of decision-making and behavior. At another level, it is partly constituted by the infrastructural facilities and social overhead capital (...). At yet another level, it is an expression of cultures, conventions, and institutions that comes into existence in any agglomerated structure of production and work." (Scott, 2006, p. 8). As vague as the term 'creative field' might sound at first, it probably summarises the emerging creative complex better than 'creative industries', 'creative class' or 'creative city' could because it has the potential to combine elements from a range of other theories. A creative field may encompass networks of (potential) firms and employees in creative industries; it also does not exclude theories in which agglomeration economies are central; and due to the multi-scalar character of the concept of creative field, also clustering theories fit with it. Amenities and the importance of place of residence can find a place under the same umbrella as well. The crucial concept of path dependency, which takes centre stage in evolutionary economic geography (Frenken and Boschma, 2007; Martin and Simmie, 2008), also may be connected with the theories mentioned. While the path dependency concept within geography has recently mainly been applied to clusters of economic activity, it is also a relevant concept at the city-regional development scale. For example, as we have elaborated in more detail elsewhere (Musterd et al., 2007; Bontje and Musterd, 2008), city-regions with long traditions in trade, culture, creativity and business-to-business services can be expected to adapt easier to the demands of the 21st-century creative knowledge economy than city-regions that have to 're-invent' themselves departing from a specialisation in mass industrial production.

3. Methodology

Our contribution to the debate is built on a critical view of the literature as well as on a critical evaluation of the opinions of key-informants who are actively involved in understanding, and sometimes also stimulating, creative and knowledge-intensive industries. We interviewed these key-informants in seven European cities and their city-regions, which we also selected for further case-study purposes: Amsterdam, Barcelona, Birmingham, Helsinki, Leipzig, Manchester, and Munich. The rationale for this selection is that these are all important European cities and urban regions, which are roughly the same size category in terms of concentrations of population and employment, but with different histories and economic profiles. Table 1 gives a basic impression of the main economic and demographic differences between the case study cities, based on the most recent set of comparative data from the Urban Audit of Eurostat.

The combination of comparable city-regional size and different histories and economic profiles is important to us, since we argue that these conditions may have an impact on current opportunities, because of path dependency reasons (see Storper, 1992; Kloosterman and Lambregts, 2001; Pierson, 2000; Bontje and Musterd, 2008). It is therefore interesting, first, to investigate whether cities that are known as international decision making centres

Table 1
Basic economic and demographic indicators of the seven case study cities.

	City population ($\times 1000$)	Population city-region ($\times 1000$) ^a	Annual population growth city, 5 year average	% EU nationals	% Non-EU nationals	Unemployment rate	% Jobs manufacturing	% Jobs commercial services	% Higher educated working population
Amsterdam	739	1443	0.3	3.6	8.5	7.3	7.4	58.9	22
Barcelona	1579	4234	1.0	1.7	10.2	11.9	24.1	47.0	26
Birmingham	992	2357	0.2	n.a.	n.a.	8.5	17.0	49.2	18
Helsinki	560	1224	0.5	1.8	3.4	9.5	13.3	50.0	35
Leipzig	498	904	2.7 ^b	1.8	4.4	20.5	17.5	49.1	29
Manchester	437	2539	2.2	n.a.	n.a.	8.7	8.1	59.6	17
Munich	1249	2532	1.0	8.7	15.1	7.2	19.7	49.4	25

Source: Eurostat, Urban Audit 2004. All data are for 2004, except: % jobs manufacturing and commercial services Barcelona (2001) and % higher educated working population Amsterdam, Barcelona and Helsinki (2001).

^a City-region definition according to the definition of Eurostat for 'Larger Urban Zones' in the Urban Audit. For this definition Eurostat usually refers to city-regional definitions of national statistical offices. In some cases this does not correspond with the city-region as defined by local and regional policy-makers; for example most regional co-operation in Amsterdam takes place in a region with more than 2 million inhabitants.

^b The high figure for Leipzig mainly results from an annexation in 1999 which added about 50,000 inhabitants to the municipality of Leipzig.

(Amsterdam, Helsinki) differ from those who are not. Second, it is relevant to see whether cities that specialised as centres for highly skilled activities in engineering and other high-tech activities (Munich, Helsinki), adopt other policy strategies compared to regions with no dominant industry (Barcelona, Amsterdam). Third, in a similar vein, we are keen to compare cities and regions with a status as historical cultural centre (Amsterdam, Munich) with cities that more recently acquired such a profile (Barcelona). Fourth, we are also interested in the differences between cities with a clear and long-lasting history as industrial manufacturing centres (Barcelona, Birmingham, Manchester, Leipzig) and other cities. Fifth, Leipzig, which has a rich history as a cultural centre, offers the opportunity to compare between cities that experienced a rigid socialist regime with those that have not.

The empirical material we will present is based on semi-structured interviews with local experts in the seven case study city-regions.² The experts we interviewed were local and regional policy-makers and representatives of local businesses, knowledge institutions, culture, media, and citizen groups. All interviews took place between December 2004 and November 2005. Altogether, 86 interviews with 110 persons were conducted. Table 2 gives an overview of the types of local experts we have interviewed in each city. Additional empirical qualitative and quantitative material, largely confirming our critical analysis of the expert opinions, was gathered in the EU 6th Framework project 'Accommodating Creative Knowledge' (ACRE)³ to which we occasionally will refer as well.

4. Policy programmes and initiatives for creative knowledge cities and regions

In all seven case study city-regions, urban and economic development programmes paid ample attention to the role of creativity and knowledge. The emphases chosen in urban and economic development strategies varied considerably though, as well as the extent and the level of concreteness of the city-regions' creative knowledge policies. Among our case studies, Manchester seems to offer the most comprehensive programme for a creative

knowledge city-region. At the same time, this programme clearly has the strongest regional dimension: it is not just a Manchester strategy, but also a Greater Manchester strategy, including several sub-centres around the core city. Manchester is presenting its efforts as a 'Knowledge Capital' strategy (Garcia, 2004; Manchester City Council, 2005). The three main objectives of this strategy are formulated in marketing language: "developing the knowledge interface; improving the demand-supply relationship; securing a high quality physical, social and cultural environment; and ensuring that all city-region inhabitants profit from regional economic growth". The 'Knowledge Capital' aims at a growth in productivity and competitiveness, but most of all at the creation of 100,000 new jobs in 10 years. Whereas these ambitions are, in abstract terms, not very different in other urban regions, the measurable difference may be that Manchester also features several specialised public institutions like the Digital Development Agency and the Creative Industries Development Service. Economic restructuring and urban restructuring seem to be tightly interwoven in Manchester's policies, which is most of all visible in the transformation of run-down industrial zones like Castlefields and along the Manchester Ship Canal and the refurbishing of formerly neglected parts of the inner city like the Northern Quarter. Detailed academic research is supporting the hypothesis that there is a relation between investment in reconstruction of older parts of the city and economic development (Brown et al., 2000; Peck and Ward, 2002; Robson, 2004). However, it remains a difficult task to reveal the direction of causality.

Barcelona is a second example of a city-region with a very active and influential role of local and regional politicians and policy-makers in creative knowledge city strategies. It is probably no coincidence that both Barcelona and Manchester have put most of their efforts in recent decades in a rather radical transformation of the urban and regional economy, combined with an equally radical inner city and waterfront redevelopment. Only about twenty years ago, both city-regions suffered from economic stagnation and a quite problematic image as a business and living environment. Barcelona's recipe to overcome these problems is meanwhile well known: organising big events (Marshall, 2004; Walliser, 2004). The Olympics of 1992 sparked an impressive urban redevelopment programme. The next big event that was supposed to have the same urban economic renewal effect was the *Forum de las Culturas* in 2004. However, the effects of the Forum on the city's economy appeared to be less clear and this even caused the questioning of the event-driven development model (Pareja Eastaway et al., 2007). More recent initiatives focus on a more direct relationship between redevelopment and changing the economic profile. The most interesting example is the 22@-project, in which the

² The project also had a quantitative component, comprising amongst others a comparative analysis of data on the residence of creative knowledge workers and data on the location of creative industries. In addition, we paid specific attention to the role of path dependency in urban spatial, economic and socio-cultural development. Here we can refer to other project publications (Bontje and Musterd, 2005; Bontje and Musterd, 2008; Bontje and Crok, 2006; Musterd and Deurloo, 2006) for these analyses.

³ 'Accommodating Creative Knowledge' (ACRE) is a project in the context of the 6th Framework Programme, Priority 7 'Citizens and Governance in a Knowledge-Based Society'. This project started in October 2006 and will run until October 2010.

Table 2

Interviews per case study and per expert category.

	Policy-makers			Business ^b	Higher education		Other ^c	Total
	Economy	Strategic planning	Other ^a		University	Art/design schools		
Amsterdam	3	3		4	1	1	9	21
Barcelona	2	1	2	4	3		2	14
Birmingham	3		4	1	4	1	1	14
Helsinki	1		4	2	1	1	1	10
Leipzig	1	1	2	2	2		1	9
Manchester	2			2	1	1		6
Munich	5	1		4	3		1	14

^a This sub-category included policy-makers in the fields of housing, neighbourhood regeneration, culture, and policy-supporting research and statistics.

^b This category included Chambers of Commerce, other business representatives and intermediary organisations, and representatives of private firms.

^c This category included printed and audiovisual media, freelance consultants, NGOs, housing corporations, and politicians.

industrial complex Poble Nou is being transformed into an ICT and knowledge cluster.

A third city active in stimulating 'creative knowledge' is Amsterdam. There are a large number of policy initiatives, mostly in Amsterdam itself, but increasingly also in the sub-centres of the city-region. An example is the *broedplaatsen* policy, which is a concrete type of incubator policy providing affordable workspaces for starting artists and creative entrepreneurs (Bureau Broedplaatsen, 2008). In a dialectic of policy-makers and clients, locations are negotiated where both parties think their chances of success are highest. Especially for those who start a new firm and for self-employed persons, the residential histories of the places to settle, the local amenities as well as interaction opportunities with colleagues with whom projects may be run provide important explanations for their settlement and economic development (Arnoldus, 2004). The Amsterdam Innovation Motor, an attempt to encourage innovation in three promising segments of the city-regional economy (sustainability technology, life sciences, and ICT and new media) showed sensitivity for different location requirements, depending on sector and size of the firms (AIM, 2009; Bontje and Pareja, 2007). The local Amsterdam creative city policy-makers organise events as well, but with much more limited development scopes than for example Barcelona. Interestingly, some private initiatives have also emerged like the Amsterdam Creativity Exchange (ACX), a network of artists and creative entrepreneurs, and the yearly PIC-NIC event that emerged out of this network. More recently the CCAA (Creative Cities Amsterdam Area) was established as a public-private joint-venture. This is an organisation that stimulates growth of and networking initiatives between creative industries in the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area. Moreover, some urban redevelopment areas are specifically developed and marketed as creative working and living milieus (Bontje and Crok, 2006). Whether it is through policies or because of other factors remains to be seen, but the fact is that the creative industries in the Netherlands mainly tend to settle in the Amsterdam Metropolitan Region (Kloosterman, 2004; van der Groep et al., 2008). Whereas only 20% of total employment in The Netherlands can be found in that region, approximately 40% of all employment in creative industries is located there. In some sectors, such as the media and entertainment sector, employment even reaches almost 50% of the national employment. These percentages are hardly different when measured in terms of value added. Most of the firms are relatively small; the average size of firms in creative industries in the Amsterdam Metropolitan Region is 3.7 employees. Ten percent of the region's firms are in the sector creative industries, while only 6% of employment is in creative industries (van der Groep et al., 2008).

The policies related to enhancing creative and knowledge-intensive industries in Munich and Helsinki show remarkable similarities. In both cities, most is expected from technological innova-

tion, ICT and new media (Inkinen and Vaattovaara, 2007; Hafner et al., 2007). For Munich, this is a logical continuation of its post-war development path as a 'technopole', driven by multinationals like Siemens and BMW, the Technical University, and institutions like the German and European Patent Offices. In Helsinki, the focus on high-tech and ICT is much more recent and tightly connected to the development of Nokia. 'Creativity' is a much less prominent concept in Munich's and Helsinki's political agendas. One of the local experts in Munich even claimed that 'Florida was not read here yet'. However, while the city did not follow a 'Florida-model' – stimulating creativity through creating conditions that might help attracting talent – recent developments reveal that they do attract creative industries. Apparently Munich and the state of Bavaria follow a 'Porter-model'. They are (with or without much effort) creating the conditions that stimulate the development of clusters of creative industries (Hafner et al., 2007; Bayerisches Staatsministerium für Wirtschaft, Infrastruktur, Verkehr und Technologie, 2008).

Leipzig also seems to focus mainly on accessibility and cluster strategies in its urban economic development strategy (Lange et al., 2007). Until recently, Leipzig might be labelled as the least 'creative knowledge'-minded case study. Some of the key clusters identified by Leipzig could well be part of a 'creative knowledge' strategy (media and biotechnology), but others are rather traditional. Especially the high hopes attributed to car assemblage and logistics, and the actual success in attracting these activities, reveal that these industries are still of importance to this region. However, it is important to keep in mind the negative impact of the GDR years and the turbulence and 'shrinkage' during the first years after Germany's reunification on Leipzig's economy (Bontje, 2004). Seen against that background and the very high unemployment rates, it is understandable that Leipzig grasps every opportunity it can to attract large employers like BMW, Porsche and DHL and tries to develop an automotive and logistics cluster around them. Another ambitious project, 'MediaCity', around the regional broadcaster MDR, has not lived up to its initial promise so far, but could be seen as a revitalisation of Leipzig's rich tradition as a media centre (Bathelt, 2002). Meanwhile, private initiatives of artists and creative entrepreneurs like the *Spinnerei* project in an old spinning mill reflects a bottom-up start of 'creative industries' after all. Artists representing the 'New Leipzig School' have meanwhile become export successes across the globe, but with a limited home market and scarcity of investors at home, it remains very difficult to make Leipzig's creative industries internationally competitive (Lange et al., 2007).

Finally, according to the Birmingham experts we interviewed, the city has been relatively slow to discover the potential of creative industries. Birmingham has a rather long tradition as a regional centre of governance and commercial services and the city is still known for its specialised light-engineering industry, which continues to play an important role. The city has, however, put a

lot of effort in changing its so-called 'concrete' image and managed to spectacularly and successfully transform the central city shopping area and pedestrian routes (Brown et al., 2007; Kennedy, 2004). Projects like these have, according to local expert interviews, contributed to a gradual reappraisal of Birmingham by its own citizens and politicians, but also by people elsewhere in the UK.

5. What should be the focus of creative knowledge policy? The view of local experts

Unsurprisingly, all local experts we interviewed agreed that knowledge has become a key resource for economic development and competitiveness. Education was regarded as the most important element of urban and economic development strategies for the coming decades. As expected, many stressed the importance of excellent higher education and research institutes, but focused their attention even more on the crucial role of basic education. Opinions were more divided on stimulating creativity and facilitating the creative class as additional key resources tightly interwoven with knowledge. For some of those who were already convinced of the importance of creativity and the 'creative class', it was still a question whether local and regional policies should influence the attraction and development of persons belonging to the 'creative class'. Key informants in Birmingham and Manchester seemed to have passed that stage of doubt, which may be related to the active role that the UK national and local governments are playing in the development of particularly the creative industries. As indicated before, the Manchester city and regional government has developed an extensive policy programme encouraging creative and knowledge-intensive industries and institutions, while expressing that their belief in soft conditions is most alive, as the following quotation illustrates:

"Creativity and innovation, the Florida thesis, absolutely underpins what we are doing" (policy-maker, Manchester Digital Development Agency)

Birmingham was regarded to be a bit less active, yet the opinion of key actors in Birmingham also revealed an awareness of the value of similar conditions, as expressed by one of the policy-makers:

"The creative industries should play their part in urban development and regeneration. They should provide a funky kind of quality to the city." (policy-maker, Economic Development Unit, Birmingham)

In Manchester and to a lesser extent in Birmingham, the general stance inside and outside the government offices appeared quite optimistic towards the potential and promise of the creative knowledge economy. In Amsterdam we found that the various departments involved in some form of creative knowledge policy had very different views of the desirability of a comprehensive programme and the direction it should take (see Bontje and Crok, 2006 for a more detailed discussion). In Barcelona, similar doubts were expressed. Some policy-makers presented creativity and knowledge as the natural core of economic development strategies:

"Barcelona had a strong answer to the challenges and needs of the industrial revolution. Now it should have an equally strong answer to the challenges and needs of the knowledge society. (...) Creativity, innovation and knowledge is our bid for the future." (co-ordinator Strategic Metropolitan Plan, Barcelona)

But other experts outside the government offices wondered if creativity and knowledge were really stimulated by Barcelona's urban

and economic development strategies, or if the trendy concepts were rather (mis)used as mere promotional vehicles:

"The future strategy of Barcelona is mainly aimed at and based on city image. There is too much image and too little content." (consultant, Barcelona)

In Helsinki, some local experts turned Florida's 'magic formula' around and returned to the more traditional ways of developing and encouraging local and regional economies. There we noticed some modesty among the local policy-makers about the competitiveness of their city at a European or global level. Most of the local experts we interviewed in Helsinki did not believe that Helsinki could ever become a cosmopolitan city because of its peripheral location, so it would not attract creative talent as much as more centrally located European cities. A local policy-maker put it this way:

"Can creativity be a success in Florida's sense? Not for Helsinki, because the city is not able to attract people like for example Amsterdam is. Helsinki is too far from other important centres. Instead, we should try to get the companies here!" (policy-maker, Business Development unit, Helsinki)

A more general stance expressed in several interviews in each of the seven case studies was that creative and knowledge-intensive companies and people, though without doubt important, could not be the only ingredients of a city-regional economic development strategy. Frequently, concerns were expressed about the expected disappearance of industrial production and traditional craft-based companies. In addition, many local experts also pointed at the traditional set of factors for company location, and touched upon the other theories we dealt with before while referring to agglomeration economies, attractive living environment, accessibility and connectivity, land and real estate prices, availability of business and consumer services, local and national taxes. In some cases such a 'classic' set of attractiveness and competitiveness factors was also connected to high hopes for rather traditional industries, like the automotive industry in Leipzig and Munich and the harbour complexes in Amsterdam, Barcelona and Helsinki.

Finally, a very specific case among the seven case study regions is Leipzig. Creative ideas and products might emerge there because of Leipzig's position as a prime meeting place of East- and West-Germans. Even though German reunification is already two decades ago, its effects are still felt, especially in a symbolic place like Leipzig where the 'peaceful revolution' overthrowing the socialist GDR regime (1989) started. The reunification continues to influence urban development, amongst others through the work of 'pioneers' migrating from West to East directly after reunification, as the following interview segment illustrates:

"Is Leipzig a creative and innovative city? That is hard to answer. It is related to who comes to Leipzig. The East-West aspect is underestimated. Not Berlin, but Leipzig is the East-West lab! The West Germans coming to Leipzig were really interested and the mixture was relatively unproblematic and productive." (chief editor cultural magazine, Leipzig)

6. Economic policy dilemmas: specialisation, diversity, or specialised diversity?

In economic-geographic literature (for example Jacobs, 1969; Phelps and Ozawa, 2003; Van der Werff and Kloosterman, 2006), it has frequently been suggested that the choice between a specialised and a diversified economy depends strongly on the scale of the city or region. Large cities often manage to be very innovative

over longer periods of time because of their broad, diversified economic base. These cities are most often also well-connected to the global economy through various business, traffic and digital networks. Medium-sized and small cities often will not reach such an advanced level of agglomeration and connectivity. Therefore they might want to focus more on specialisation in one or a few strongly developed local sectors.

The Helsinki policy-makers bring this line of thought into political practice. In most of our interviews in Helsinki, which is a medium-sized city when seen from a European perspective, the city was portrayed as a peripheral place within a rather 'exotic' economic and cultural context (Finland). Some local experts expressed the hope that Helsinki might soon appear to be much less peripheral because of the rapidly growing Russian economy right next door, but still, their main orientation was towards the EU and North America. The following quote from the director of the city's research and statistics department summarises the general estimation of Helsinki policy-makers of the competitive chances of their city:

"It is impossible to compete with 'mass', we have to develop something special! Helsinki should develop 'units of excellence' (...). The government should be more willing to take risks." (research director, Urban Facts, Helsinki)

This modesty in Helsinki may be realistic, but considering the popularity of Helsinki and Finland as 'examples to follow' among policy-makers from other European cities it is also a bit surprising. It makes one wonder why so many cities and countries have recently made study trips to Helsinki to study the 'Finnish miracle'. The Helsinki key-informants showed their awareness of the very recent nature of the Finnish economic upsurge (after a deep crisis as short ago as the early 1990s) and the potential vulnerability of their economy, dominated by the ICT cluster around Nokia, and this clearly explains their reserve.

The other cities appeared much less modest in their competitiveness ambitions. Especially experts from Barcelona, Munich, Amsterdam and Manchester expressed their cities' aspirations of being or becoming at least a prominent member of the world city network and maybe even a global city. Birmingham and Leipzig formulate their ambitions mainly at the national level, but have international ambitions too. Moreover, Manchester and Birmingham are also both trying to be the UK's 'second city' and therefore compete with each other fiercely, especially for multinational headquarters, international events, cultural facilities and knowledge institutions. However, this striving for high-level international competitiveness may also lead to conflicts of interests in the economic strategies. In Manchester, for example, a policy-maker warns for a too high extent of copycat behaviour, which might harm the specific character of her city and maybe even make it less instead of more competitive:

"Manchester will not become average. But we have to be aware not to get carried away too much with becoming a global city. If we do that, we would become average after all and not be distinct anymore." (policy-maker, Creative Industries Development Service, Manchester)

Amsterdam and Munich possess the most diversified economies among our case studies. It is not surprising to also find the main advocates for diversification instead of specialisation in these cities. Both Amsterdam and Munich show strengths in many segments of the economy (Kovács et al., 2007). The flip side of that coin is that there are no economic sectors in which Amsterdam and Munich are leading at the European level, let alone the global level.⁴ As illus-

trated in the opinion of local policy-makers in both cities, the general opinion is that it is better to have an economy in which a crisis in one particular sector can be compensated for by other better performing sectors:

"The strength of Amsterdam is the diversity of its economy. In the future, we should not choose, but search for new combinations, for example at the crossroads of life sciences and ICT." (policy-maker, Economic Affairs, Amsterdam)

"The strength is the diversity of actors. Munich is leading nationally, and partly also European and globally, in the sectors biotechnology, medicine, aerospace, media, electronics, ICT and mechanical engineering, especially in the car industry. Munich has everything!" (Department of Labour and Economic Development, Munich)

For cities that used to be (over-) specialised in directions that have fallen out of demand or have been replaced to low-wage countries, it is probably tough to build up a similar type of economy. Therefore, even if these cities also would probably be better advised to aim for economic diversity, to prevent a potential repetition of their earlier crises, many of them will probably choose the faster track towards success: specialisation in emerging economic sectors. The Leipzig attempt to specialise in a limited number of clusters is a case in point, just like Manchester's attempts to put city and city-region 'on the map' as 'knowledge capital' and hub of creativity. The choice between specialisation and diversification of course depends a lot on what is prioritised more: short-term success or long-term sustainability. Finally, it must be said that diversification is not without shortcomings. Especially in the Munich interviews, several respondents argued that performing well in many different economic activities can easily lead to inactivity of local and regional policy and business. The sense of urgency to react to shifting economic paradigms is usually much higher in cities facing crisis than in cities with a seemingly healthy economy. The ideal case might be 'specialised diversity': a broad economic base covering the entire range of economic sectors, or at least most of it, combined with a limited number of highly competitive specialised niches that make the city-region stand out in international competition. Specialisation may result in much affluence in the short run, while diversity may be the 'insurance' when the economy in the specialised sector collapses. Few cities or city-regions will manage to accomplish and maintain such a model in the long run.

7. Creative knowledge strategies; at what scale?

The 'scale question' has been addressed in more detail in various publications (Arnoldus, 2004; Kloosterman, 2004; Bontje and Musterd, 2006). One of the questions is whether cities or regions could and should try to create specific living and working areas and public spaces to meet the supposed demands of the 'creative class'? A more specified question is whether these creative milieus can only be found in (inner) cities or also in suburbs or sub-centres at the city edge and beyond? An even further refined question is whether specific 'bohemian'-types of milieus are required? This question is raised since there is some support for the argument that bohemian residents – which include artists, musicians, and other '(cultural) creative people' – would have specific lifestyles and therefore would require particular residential and employment environments for their activities in creative industries (see for example Zukin, 1998; Florida, 2002; Lloyd, 2004; Landry, 2006; Musterd and Deurloo, 2006).

We start with the 'bohemian'-milieus. Almost all our case studies have their 'bohemia's' and places that might turn into additional bohemia's. In the interviews and also partly known from literature, these bohemia's were usually easily identified, with some areas

⁴ Exceptions to this rule may be the back insurance sector in which Munich is specialised as well as patent registration in Munich in connection to the headquarters of the European Patent Office.

being in further and more commercial and gentrified states of development than others:

- Amsterdam: various locations in the 19th century ring around the inner city, and parts of former harbour and shipyard areas (Karsten, 2003; Wagenaar, 2003; Arnoldus, 2004);
- Barcelona: Raval and parts of Eixample, particularly the former village of Gracia (Pareja Eastaway et al., 2007; Miles, 2004);
- Birmingham: the Jewellery Quarter and the Custard Factory area (Kennedy, 2004; Brown et al., 2007);
- Helsinki: Kallio, Kamppi, and the Cable Factory (Inkinen and Vaattovaara, 2007; Hietala, 2008);
- Leipzig: the former industrial centre of Plagwitz, especially the former spinning factory (*Spinnerei*), and the neighbourhood of Connewitz (Lange et al., 2007; Bontje and Musterd, 2008);
- Manchester: Castlefields and the Northern Quarter (Brown et al., 2000; Peck and Ward, 2002; Allen, 2007).

Munich was the only city without such 'bohemian' places. Around 1900, Schwabing played a comparable role as the hotspot for artists (Hafner et al., 2007; Castells and Hall, 1994), but meanwhile it has become a 'bourgeois' neighbourhood. The only parts of the city with potential to become hotspots for artists and creative entrepreneurs are the former army barracks at the city edge. An artists' colony has settled at the Domagk site, a complex left by the German army in 1993. Since then, it has been transformed into the largest artist colony of Munich. In 2007, an estimated 350 artists were working in the complex.

We already touched upon the question whether such 'bohemian' places could and should be planned and whether they are really a condition for economic development. Expert opinions are divided on this theme, not only between the case study cities, but even within them, as is illustrated with the following quotes, including two contrasting ones from Helsinki:

"The city centre has become popular again. No one lived here ten years ago. Landmarks like Urbis make people very proud. And the regeneration and reviving of areas like the Northern Quarter, the 'little bohemia' where we moved four years ago." (director of advertising company, Manchester)

"The city should support the development of areas in transformation: former industrial buildings and areas, 'cheap' and 'dirty' places." (department director, art and design university Helsinki)

"The city atmosphere is important for business, but in Finland, companies are also located in the middle of forests! This is funny and it is why I am sceptical about the importance of local atmosphere. (...) I have doubts about the theory of Florida; we have a very traditional culture and live on our way." (geography professor, University of Helsinki)

"Not all creative workers have a cosmopolitan lifestyle" (innovation think tank, Amsterdam)

Amsterdam is trying to maintain non-commercial 'bohemian' sites with the 'broedplaatsen' (incubator-areas) programme, but these sites are much more restricted in their development than the former anarchistic squatter and non-commercial artist colonies ('vrijplaatsen' – free spaces). The latter have largely been pushed out of the city because of redevelopment plans, nuisance to neighbours or the governments' desire to increase control over its territory (Arnoldus, 2004). Regulations and laws for fire prevention, safety and noise often frustrate the attractiveness of the *broedplaatsen*. Moreover, the most successful projects are seriously 'threatened' by commercialisation. Especially the former NDSM shipyard, the 'flagship' of the

'broedplaatsen' programme, is rapidly transforming into a hub of commercial creativity dominated by established large media companies (MTV, EyeWorks, IDTV, VNU) which leave only minor spaces for small-scale experimental artist workplaces and creative start-ups the place was initially intended for.

This transformation of a former bohemian milieu towards an established creative industries milieu offers an illustration of the diversity of the 'creative class', some of them being rather strong and affluent, while others are less powerful and poorer. In recent empirical studies of employment concentrations and residential locations of those who are employed in creative industries in the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area, it appeared that there is a wide variety of milieus in which we can find employees in creative industries as well as a wide variety in their residential orientation; and that the variety is associated with the economic sector they are working in, with the firm's size and with residential histories of the employees, as well as with soft and hard conditions of those locations (Musterd, 2002; Lukey and Van der Steenhoven, 2004; Musterd and Deurloo, 2006). The wide variety covers the entire metropolitan area, with specific spatial niches depending on the factors mentioned. Not only in Amsterdam, but also in Helsinki, Munich and Manchester, existing and potential clusters of creative industries certainly do not only pop up in city centres or the oldest city extension areas close to the inner city (see also Bontje and Sleutjes, 2007; Hafner et al., 2007; Inkinen and Vaattovaara, 2007). Traditional location factors like accessibility, land prices and space to expand still play a major role alongside the 'quality of life' and 'quality of place' factors. Unfortunately in most of our case studies, data did not allow us to explore the geographic scale of clustering of creative companies, as well as the geographic scale of concentration of the categories of 'creatives', in more detail. In further explorations and analyses not only the usually available data on the municipal level are important, but also those at neighbourhood and city-regional level, since all three scales seem to play a role in the concentrations we are looking at.

8. Tensions between 'commercial' and 'non-commercial' activities

It is, however, not only important to think about the conditions that are relevant to attract creative industries and to contribute to 'creative fields', there should also be attention for the effects of the 'rise of the creative class'. Within the wide-ranging socio-cultural dimension of urban and regional development strategies, the tensions between 'commercial' and 'non-commercial' activities were seen as particularly problematic by many of the experts interviewed. Amsterdam has developed a policy providing relatively cheap working spaces for starting artists and creative entrepreneurs. This developed in response to a lobby of artists and (former) squatters who feared the loss of unplanned and unregulated spaces in Amsterdam as a result of the upgrading of inner city and former harbour and industrial sites. Our interviewees reported that Manchester is taking a similar action with their Creative Industries Development Service. In Munich, Birmingham, Barcelona and Helsinki, the problem is recognised too, but not specifically targeted through policy. Leipzig is the only city we investigated where there is still plenty of space left for low-budget artistic and creative initiatives. This is due to high vacancy rates that developed after 1989 (Lange et al., 2007; Bontje, 2004).

Another frequently mentioned tension, which is an effect of the development of creative and knowledge-intensive industries, regards the housing market. In successful creative knowledge cities, affordable housing is just as much under pressure as affordable workspace. Munich is probably the most extreme case, but Amsterdam, Helsinki and increasingly also Manchester and Bir-

mingham also have housing markets that are very difficult to access for people with low budgets, including students, starting artists and creative entrepreneurs (Kovács et al., 2007). Especially the inner cities seem to develop as residential enclaves for more affluent urban oriented households. Once more, Leipzig is the clear exception to this rule. But also in Leipzig, people with well-paid, high-qualified jobs are increasingly claiming the most attractive parts of the inner city.

9. Social consequences of creative knowledge city strategies

Another potential consequence of support to creative knowledge strategies can be found in the social domain. The growing importance of higher education and a policy of facilitating specific talents for people's career perspectives could easily result in a growing polarisation between the higher and the lower educated and/or between the creative haves and have-nots. This polarisation point is frequently addressed in the more critical literature that says that the 'creative class' clearly is dominated by employment in high-skilled and high-end jobs, but that, simultaneously, there are lower-skilled and lower-end jobs as well (Peck, 2005; Scott, 2006; Rantisi et al., 2006).

Florida tends to react upon the critique that he neglects the polarisation issue with the mantra: 'Every single human being is creative' (e.g. Florida and Tinagli, 2004, p. 11). This is probably true if you have a very broad definition of creativity and talent. But some people are definitely more gifted with talent than others, and not every kind of talent is equally welcome and useful. The question whether the creative knowledge city will be exclusive or inclusive returned frequently in the local expert interviews. Although the limited number of interviews per city-region does not allow us to come to very robust conclusions, there is an interesting divide between those who express a more optimistic view and those who express a more pessimistic view. The optimistic view is expressed by believers in the future chances that the creative knowledge economy offers for broad layers of the current and future working population. They believe that the growing demand for creative concepts and ideas offers a chance in particular for those groups that so far had troubles to meet the demands of other segments of the knowledge economy and will offer opportunities to avoid polarisation. This seems to be the dominant view coming out of the Amsterdam interviews.

However, in contexts, such as those of Birmingham and Barcelona, a more pessimistic view could be registered. The experts interviewed there argue that when money is tight and choices have to be made, economic competitiveness will prevail at the cost of social policies.

We should consider, however, that these different views may be influenced by macro-level conditions. Looking at the level and development (between 1995 and 2005) of social inequality in the countries involved, we may register that the UK has the highest level of inequality, and inequality is still rising; Spain has a rather high level of inequality but slightly declining; and The Netherlands has a relatively low level of inequality and declining (Eurostat, 2009).

10. Conclusions and research prospects

The urban and regional economic development strategies geared towards the 'creative knowledge city and region' in seven European case-study areas show many similarities. This is to be expected considering that cities and regions are constantly watching each other and often start from the same assumptions, inspiration sources, and marketing strategies. The differences that appear are nuanced: for example more or less stressing ICT (Helsinki, Barcelona), technology (Munich), knowledge (Manchester), or creativity

(Manchester, Amsterdam). Some cities seem to have specific policy programmes in an advanced stage (Barcelona, Manchester), while others are working on such a programme and only have rather unconnected actions so far (Amsterdam, Helsinki, Munich), and some are lagging behind somewhat (Birmingham, Leipzig).

The potential for generalisations from our case studies is limited. On the basis of our sample of expert interviews we state that former industrial cities like Manchester, Barcelona and Leipzig feel more sense of urgency to transform their economic structure and image than the traditional service, cultural and trade centres of Amsterdam, Munich and Helsinki. Birmingham is positioned somewhere in-between, which may be related to its hybrid industrial, trade and service centre history. In the theoretical debate it is argued that successful creative knowledge cities more often build on a tradition of centuries than start from scratch; this might partly explain the relatively passive role of the Amsterdam, Munich and Helsinki policy-makers so far. Compared to the pro-active strategies of Barcelona, Manchester and Leipzig, their approach is much less driven by the conviction that 'something needs to change'.

Theoretical, political, economic and societal dilemmas connected to the emergence of the creative knowledge economy have been discussed in the preceding sections. To us there seems potential in the application of the wider concept of 'creative field', as used by Scott (2006) and suitable to include various theoretical perspectives, in which 'classic' location theory, insights related to the importance of agglomeration economies, the power of clustering, the role of networks, and the push through path dependency can be combined with theories that stress the importance of so-called soft conditions, including urban amenities and local atmospheres. We presented some ideas about when and under what conditions new economic development may occur. This offers a start for a promising new research agenda.

We also paid attention to the effects of (policies towards) the development of creative and knowledge-intensive industries. Whatever strategy cities and their regions might come up with, policy-makers will have to accept that a creative knowledge city development may go hand in hand with social tensions and social polarisation. The ideas of Richard Florida are certainly interesting for policy-makers, creative entrepreneurs and academics; they should, however, not be seen as a 'magic formula' which will 'save our cities', but just be regarded as a future scenario that deserves further critical analysis and debate.

References

- AIM, 2009. AIM09. Amsterdamse Innovatie Motor, Amsterdam.
- Allen, C., 2007. Of urban entrepreneurs or 24-hour party people? City-centre living in Manchester, England. *Environment and Planning A* 39 (6), 666–683.
- Arnoldus, M., 2004. A discovery of creative talent in the margins of urban development. *Built Environment* 30 (3), 204–212.
- Barnes, K., Waitt, G., Gill, N., Gibson, G., 2007. Community and nostalgia in urban revitalisation: a critique of urban village and creative class strategies as remedies for social 'problems'. *Australian Geographer* 37 (3), 335–354.
- Bathelt, H., 2002. The re-emergence of a media-industry cluster in Leipzig. *European Planning Studies* 10, 583–611.
- Bayerisches Staatsministerium für Wirtschaft, Infrastruktur, Verkehr und Technologie, 2008. Cluster-Offensive Bayern. Im Netzwerk zum Erfolg. Munich: Bayerisches Staatsministerium für Wirtschaft, Infrastruktur, Verkehr und Technologie.
- Berry, C.R., Glaeser, E.L., 2005. The divergence of human capital levels across cities. *Papers in Regional Science* 84 (3), 407–444.
- Bontje, M., 2004. Facing the challenge of the shrinking city in East Germany: the case of Leipzig. *Geojournal* 61 (1), 13–21.
- Bontje, M., Crok, S., 2006. Amsterdam: a creative knowledge city? The debate on the economic future of Amsterdam and its region. In: Deben, L., Bontje, M. (Eds.), *Creativity and Diversity, Key Challenges to the 21st-Century City*. Het Spinhuis, Amsterdam, pp. 144–161.
- Bontje, M., Musterd, S., 2005. What kind of a place do the creative knowledge workers live in? In: Franke, S., Verhagen, E. (Eds.), *Creativity and the City. How the Creative Economy is Changing the City*. NAi Publishers, Rotterdam, pp. 166–175.

- Bontje, M., Musterd, S., 2006. Accommodating creative knowledge: Amsterdam in a European perspective. In: Paper Presented at the AAG Annual Conference, Chicago, 7–11 March 2006.
- Bontje, M., Musterd, S., 2008. The multi-layered city: the value of old urban profiles. *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* 99 (92), 248–255.
- Bontje, M., Pareja, M., 2007. Attracting creative knowledge: strategies towards competitiveness in Amsterdam and Barcelona. In: Paper Presented at the ENHR 2007 Conference, Rotterdam, 25–28 June 2007.
- Bontje, M., Sleutjes, B., 2007. Amsterdam: History Meets Modernity.. AMIDSt, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam. ACRE Report 2.1.
- Brown, A., O'Connor, J., Cohen, S., 2000. Local music policies within a global music industry: cultural quarters in Manchester and Sheffield. *Geoforum* 31, 437–451.
- Brown, J., Chapain, C., Murie, A., Barber, A., Gibney, J., Lutz, J., 2007. From a City of a Thousand Trades to a City of a Thousand Ideas. Birmingham, West Midlands, UK. AMIDSt, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam. ACRE report 2.3.
- Bureau Broedplaatsen, 2008. Building the basis for a creative Amsterdam Metropolitan Area. Art factories programme 2008–2012. Gemeente Amsterdam, Bureau Broedplaatsen, Amsterdam.
- Castells, M., Hall, P., 1994. *Technopolis of the World. The Making of Twenty-first Century Industrial Complexes*. Routledge, London.
- Clark, T.N., Lloyd, R., Wong, K.K., Jain, P., 2002. Amenities drive urban growth. *Journal of Urban Affairs* 24, 493–515.
- Derudder, B., Taylor, P.J., Witlox, F., Catalano, G., 2003. Hierarchical tendencies and regional patterns in the world city network: a global analysis of 234 cities. *Regional Studies* 37 (9), 875–886.
- Eurostat, 2009. Gini coefficient of EU-27 Countries, 1996–2007. Available from: <http://nui.epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=ilc_di12&lang=en>.
- Florida, R., 2002. *The Rise of the Creative Class and How it's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life*. Basic Books, New York.
- Florida, R., 2005. *The Flight of the Creative Class. The New Global Competition for Talent*. Harper Business, New York.
- Florida, R., Tinagli, I., 2004. *Europe in the Creative Age*. Demos, London.
- Frenken, K., Boschma, R., 2007. A theoretical framework for evolutionary economic geography: industrial dynamics and urban growth as a branching process. *Journal of Economic Geography* 7 (5), 635–649.
- Garcia, B.C., 2004. Developing futures: a knowledge-based capital for Manchester. *Journal of Knowledge Management* 8 (5), 47–60.
- Gibson, C., Kong, L., 2005. Cultural economy: a critical review. *Progress in Human Geography* 29 (5), 541–561.
- Glaeser, E., 2005. Review of Richard Florida's 'The rise of the creative class'. *Regional Science and Urban Economics* 35, 593–596.
- Gottlieb, P.D., 1995. Residential amenities, firm location and economic development. *Urban Studies* 32 (9), 1413–1436.
- Grabher, G., 2002. Cool projects, boring institutions: Temporary collaboration. *Social Context. Regional Studies* 36 (3), 205–214.
- Grabher, G., 2004. Learning in projects, remembering in networks? Communitality, sociality, and connectivity in project ecologies. *European Urban and Regional Studies* 11 (2), 103–123.
- van der Groep, R., Oosteren, C., van Slot, J., 2008. *Ontwikkeling creatieve industrie in de Noordvleugel. Dienst Onderzoek en Statistiek*, Amsterdam.
- Hafner, S., Miosga, M., Sickermann, K., von Streit, A., 2007. *Knowledge and Creative Work in the Munich Region*. AMIDSt, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam. ACRE report 2.7.
- Hall, P., 1998. *Cities in Civilization*. Weidenfeld and Nicholson, London.
- Hall, P., 2004. Creativity, culture, knowledge and the city. *Built Environment* 30 (3), 256–258.
- Hietala, M., 2008. Helsinki: examples of urban creativity and innovativeness. In: Heßler, M., Zimmermann, C. (Eds.), *Creative Urban Milieus. Historical Perspectives on Culture, Economy and the City*. Campus, Frankfurt/New York, pp. 335–352.
- Hoyman, M., Farici, C., 2009. It takes a village: a test of the creative class, human capital, and social capital theories. *Urban Affairs Review* 44 (3), 311–333.
- Inkinen, T., Vaattovaara, M., 2007. *Technology and Knowledge-based Development. Helsinki Metropolitan Area as a Creative Region*. AMIDSt, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam. ACRE report 2.5.
- Jacobs, J., 1961. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. Random House, New York.
- Jacobs, J., 1969. *The Economy of Cities*. Random House, New York.
- Karsten, L., 2003. Family gentrifiers: challenging the city as a place of simultaneously making a career and to raise children. *Urban Studies* 40 (12), 2573–2584.
- Kennedy, L., 2004. *Remaking Birmingham. The Visual Culture of Urban Regeneration*. Routledge, London/New York.
- Kloosterman, R.C., Lambregts, B., 2001. Clustering of economic activities in polycentric urban regions: the case of the Randstad. *Urban Studies* 38 (4), 713–728.
- Kloosterman, R.C., 2004. Recent employment trends in the cultural industries in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht: a first exploration. *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* 95 (2), 243–252.
- Kovács, Z., Murie, A., Musterd, S., Gritsai, O., Pethe, H., 2007. Comparing Paths of Creative Knowledge Regions. AMIDSt, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam. ACRE Report 3.
- Landry, C., 2006. *The Art of City-making*. Earthscan, London.
- Lange, B., Burdack, J., Herfert, G., Thalmann, R., Manz, K., 2007. *Creative Leipzig? AMIDSt, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam. ACRE report 2.6*.
- Lange, B., Kalandides, A., Stober, B., Mieg, H.A., 2008. Berlin's creative industries: governing creativity? *Industry and Innovation* 15 (5), 531–548.
- Lloyd, R., 2004. The neighborhood in cultural production: material and symbolic resources in the New Bohemia. *City and Community* 3 (4), 343–372.
- Lukey, R., Van der Steenhoven, P., 2004. *Indicatoren Amsterdamse kennis-economie 2004*. Gemeente Amsterdam, Dienst Onderzoek en Statistiek, Amsterdam.
- Manchester City Council, 2005. *Manchester: Knowledge Capital*. Science City Programme. Manchester City Council, Manchester.
- Markusen, A., 2006. Urban development and the politics of a creative class: evidence from a study of artists. *Environment and Planning A* 38, 1921–1940.
- Markusen, A., Schrock, G., 2006. The distinctive city: divergent patterns in growth, hierarchy and specialisation. *Urban Studies* 43 (8), 1301–1323.
- Marshall, T. (Ed.), 2004. *Transforming Barcelona*. Routledge, London/New York.
- Martin, R., Simmie, J., 2008. Path dependence and local innovation systems in city-regions. *Innovation – Management Policy and Practice* 10 (2–3), 183–196.
- Miles, M., 2004. Drawn and quartered: El Raval and the Hausmannization of Barcelona. In: Bell, D., Jayne, M. (Eds.), *City of Quarters: Urban Villages in the Contemporary City*. Ashgate, Aldershot, pp. 37–55.
- Montgomery, J., 2007. *The New Wealth of Cities. City Dynamics and the Fifth Wave*. Ashgate, Aldershot/Burlington, VA.
- Musterd, S., 2002. *De Nieuwe Amsterdamse Kernvoorraad; Woonmilieus in de Creatieve Culturele Kennisstad*. Bestuursdienst, Amsterdam.
- Musterd, S., Ostendorf, W., 2004. Creative cultural knowledge cities: perspectives and planning strategies. *Built Environment* 30 (3), 189–193.
- Musterd, S., Deurloo, R., 2006. Amsterdam and the preconditions for a creative knowledge city. *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* 97 (1), 80–94.
- Musterd, S., Bontje, M., Chapain, C., Kovacs, Z., Murie, A., 2007. *Accommodating Creative Knowledge: A Literature Review from a European Perspective*. AMIDSt, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam. ACRE Report 1.
- Pareja Eastaway, M., Turmo Garuz, J., Pradel i Miguel, M., Garcia Ferrando, L., Simó Solsona, M., 2007. *The City of Marvels? Multiple Endeavours towards Competitiveness in Barcelona*. AMIDSt, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam. ACRE Report 2.2.
- Peck, J., 2005. Struggling with the creative class. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 29 (4), 740–770.
- Peck, J., Tickell, A., 2002. Neoliberalizing space. *Antipode* 34 (3), 380–404.
- Peck, J., Ward, K. (Eds.), 2002. *City of Revolution. Restructuring Manchester*. Manchester University Press, Manchester.
- Phelps, N.A., Ozawa, T., 2003. Contrasts in agglomeration: proto-industrial, industrial and post-industrial forms compared. *Progress in Human Geography* 27 (5), 583–604.
- Pierson, P., 2000. Increasing returns, path dependence and the study of politics. *American Political Science Review* 94 (2), 251–267.
- Porter, M., 1998. Clusters and the new economics of competition. *Harvard Business Review* 76 (6), 77–91.
- Pratt, A.C., 1997. The cultural industries production system: a case study of employment change in Britain, 1984–91. *Environment and Planning A* 29 (11), 1953–1974.
- Pratt, A.C., 2008. Creative cities: the cultural industries and the creative class. *Geografiska Annaler B* 90 (2), 107–117.
- Rantisi, N., Leslie, D., Christopherson, S., 2006. Placing the creative economy: scale, politics and the material. *Environment and Planning A* 38, 1789–1797.
- Robson, B., 2004. Culture and the city: a view from the 'Athens of the North'. *Built Environment* 30 (3), 246–255.
- Scott, A.J., 1997. The cultural economy of cities. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 21 (2), 327–339.
- Scott, A.J., 2004. Cultural products industries and urban economic development. Prospects for growth and market contestation in global context. *Urban Affairs Review* 39 (4), 461–490.
- Scott, A.J., 2006. Creative cities: conceptual issues and policy questions. *Journal of Urban Affairs* 28 (1), 1–17.
- Simmie, J., 2005. Innovation and space: a critical review of the literature. *Regional Studies* 39 (6), 789–804.
- Storper, M., 1992. The limits to globalization: technology districts and international trade. *Economic Geography* 68 (1), 60–93.
- Storper, M., Manville, M., 2006. Behaviour, preferences and cities: urban theory and urban resurgence. *Urban Studies* 43 (8), 1247–1274.
- Storper, M., Venables, A.J., 2004. Buzz: face-to-face contact and the urban economy. *Journal of Economic Geography* 4 (4), 351–370.
- Taylor, P., 2004. *World City Network: A Global Urban Analysis*. Routledge, London.
- Vanolo, A., 2008. The image of the creative city. Some reflections on urban branding in Turin. *Cities* 25 (6), 370–382.
- Wagenaar, M., 2003. *Bourgeois-bohème. Gentrification in de Oude Pijp in Amsterdam*. In: Cortie, C., Droogleevers Fortuijn, J., Wagenaar, M. (Eds.), *Stad en Land. Over bewoners en woonmilieus*. Aksant, Amsterdam, pp. 224–243.
- Walliser, A., 2004. A place in the world: Barcelona's quest to become a global knowledge city. *Built Environment* 30 (3), 213–224.
- van der Werff, M., Kloosterman, R.C., 2006. Draaien aan de knoppen van de innovatie. *City Journal* 2006 (3), 14–19.
- Wilson, D., Keil, R., 2008. The real creative class. *Social and Cultural Geography* 9 (8), 841–847.
- Yigitcanlar, T., O'Connor, K., Westerman, C., 2008. The making of knowledge cities: Melbourne's knowledge-based urban development experience. *Cities* 25 (1), 63–72.
- Zukin, S., 1995. *The Cultures of Cities*. Blackwell, Oxford.
- Zukin, S., 1998. Urban lifestyles: diversity and standardisation in spaces of consumption. *Urban Studies* 35 (5–6), 825–839.