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**Publication date**

2010

**Document Version**

Final published version

[Link to publication](#)

**Citation for published version (APA):**

Bontje, M., & Pethe, H. (2010). *The evaluation of creative knowledge policies in the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area: how to enhance the city's competitiveness*. (ACRE Report; No. 10.1). AISSR-Universiteit van Amsterdam.  
<http://acre.socsci.uva.nl/results/documents/wp10.1amsterdam-FINAL.pdf>

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**The evaluation of creative knowledge policies in the  
Amsterdam Metropolitan Area**

**How to enhance the city's competitiveness**

ISBN 978-94-90312-25-1

Printed in the Netherlands by Xerox Service Center, Amsterdam

Edition: 2010

Cartography lay-out and cover: Puikang Chan, AISSR, University of Amsterdam

All publications in this series are published on the ACRE-website  
<http://acre.socsci.uva.nl> and most are available on paper at:

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# **The evaluation of creative knowledge policies in the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area**

## **How to enhance the city's competitiveness**

### **ACRE report 10.1**

Marco Bontje  
Heike Pethe



Accommodating Creative Knowledge – Competitiveness of European Metropolitan  
Regions within the Enlarged Union

Amsterdam 2010  
AISSR, University of Amsterdam



## ACRE

ACRE is an acronym of the international research project ‘Accommodating Creative Knowledge – Competitiveness of European Metropolitan Regions within the Enlarged Union’.

The project is funded under the Priority 7 ‘Citizens and Governance in a Knowledge-based Society’ within the Sixth Framework Programme of the European Union (contract no 028270).

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The report explores and investigates the creative knowledge policies in the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area (AMA) and confronts the existing programmes with the outcomes of three previous studies of the ACRE-project.

These studies had investigated the location factors of creative knowledge workers, managers and transnational migrants. They took account of the ideas of Richard Florida, who proposed that ‘soft factors’ become increasingly important for the attraction of creative knowledge workers and compared them with the influence of ‘hard factors’ in the AMA. The judgment of creative knowledge workers showed that hard factors are still more relevant to motivate creative knowledge workers to take a job in the AMA. The labour market and agglomeration economies are the most important pull factors, whereas the housing market is the most serious push factor. Contrary to Florida’s description, the studies also underlined that creative knowledge workers are less hyper-mobile than assumed. Asked about their motivation to work and live in a particular metropolitan region in Europe, creative knowledge workers do not refer to a set of location factors, but to their personal biography and their personal network in the specific region. The majority has settled in the AMA for longer than 5 years.

The report gives a detailed account of various policies in the AMA which are related to the creative knowledge sectors and describes their scope by local, regional and national scale in the Netherlands. The institutional structure and governance arrangements are explored in a second step. Traditionally, the national and local levels are most important for policy making in the Netherlands, whereas the institutionalised regional level (provinces) is relatively weak. However, in recent years regional collaboration structures at city-regional level, partly institutionalised and partly on a voluntary basis, have emerged. The AMA is a good example of such a city-regional collaboration on a voluntary basis. The ‘polder-model’, consisting of a constant negotiation process between various stakeholders in the Netherlands, is an effective procedure for decision making in the country. The negotiation process for the creative knowledge policy seems to fit in this tradition of policy-making in the AMA and in the Netherlands quite well. In contrast to Florida’s efforts to interest local policy makers in the concept of the creative class which is mirrored by the pivotal importance of local stakeholders and business representatives in planning processes in the US, the national level is more relevant for policy making in the Netherlands.

Tracing the evolution of this policy field back through time, it appears that innovation- and creativity-based policy approaches are relatively new in the policy arena, since the Netherlands has focused on low wage policy for a long time.

Creative knowledge policy has been established at all government levels. The national level, which provides the bulk of funding to the municipalities, sets the policy framework in the Netherlands and coordinates the policy with the local level. The influence of the national level is strong, in the economic realm in particular. The recent yellow card which was handed over

to the creative industries by the national government shows how difficult it still is to find suitable governance structures between national government and the stakeholders in the creative knowledge industries. The implementation of the economic policy lines is still weak. The established initiatives executing the economic policy are mostly founded at the city-regional level. As said, the contribution of municipalities at the regional level of the AMA is voluntary. I.e., the economic initiatives are neither paid by all municipalities in the region nor is there a stable institutional arrangement for lobbying economic creative knowledge policy at the regional level.

The regional and local funding is allocated by the ability to hand in successful applications rather than by need. Although previous ACRE-reports brought the importance of economic policy to the fore, there is still a danger that economic-oriented creative knowledge policy might drop from the first places of the priority list of Dutch policy making due to its weak institutional embeddedness. With local (March 2010) and national (June 2010) elections, this year may become a crucial year to keep or strengthen the position of creative and knowledge-intensive industries on the city-regional and national policy agendas.

At the local level, the situation is similar. Although the administration of Amsterdam is in favour of supporting creative knowledge policy and has developed various policy lines (coordination of spatial, economic, social and cultural department), the executing policy makers tend to be hesitant to use additional financial means or they tend to instrumentalise creative industries for other aims such as reducing crime and violence in the red light district of Amsterdam or improving the image of Amsterdam for attracting affluent tourists.

Spatial programmes gain more attention than economic measures at the local level. The largest policy programme, *Broedplaatsen*, does not mainly address economic goals, but is more focussed on the spatial redevelopment of Amsterdam and providing sufficient affordable workspace for artists and creative start-ups.

Apart from the spatial redevelopment of Amsterdam, creative knowledge policy at the local level comprises economic, but also various other policy aims such as stimulating social cohesion, diversity and participation. At the national level, these matters have not gained similar attention as in Britain where the Social Exclusion Unit made use of creative instruments to foster social cohesion in marginalised neighbourhoods or in Germany where the programme *Soziale Stadt* used creativity to upgrade deprived neighbourhoods. An implementation of social aims has not yet been coordinated at the national level. Given the fact, that the Netherlands has been gradually reducing the number of social housing units in metropolitan areas since the end of the 1990s and it has identified several neighbourhoods with social challenges, the future importance of this policy line is evident.

## 1.1 Creative knowledge policy in the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area

Richard Florida's concept of a 'creative class' enhancing the economic potential of metropolitan areas has received a warm welcome in many countries. Many municipalities in the Netherlands have recently developed a creative city policy, which draws attention to the economic relevance of creative activities and the importance of urban amenities in many town halls for the first time. The ACRE-research aimed to test Florida's ideas. In the three previous ACRE-studies, the importance of the new soft factors was compared with the influence of hard factors in the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area (AMA). The results are interesting for policy makers. In contrast to Florida's theory, hard factors, in particular the labour market, motivate creative knowledge workers to move to the AMA, whereas soft factors only have a minor influence on the attractiveness of the AMA. The housing market, however, is considered as the most important push factor, probably forming the highest barrier for incoming talent. Interestingly, Amsterdam still appears to be a winner in the international competition. Compared to the other 12 cities that the ACRE research project investigated with the same sets of questions, creative knowledge workers in Amsterdam consider the influence of soft factors on their evaluation of the cities the highest. However, compared to the importance of hard factors, the influence of soft factors is still rather limited, even in Amsterdam.

Florida's ideas are - less visibly - related to the notion of mobility. The concept 'creative class' aims to attract creative knowledge workers from outside and identifies various variables which are pivotal for this endeavour. The ACRE-research, however, could also show that the portrayal of hyper-mobile creative knowledge workers does not represent the current reality in Europe. Asked about their motivation to work and live in a particular metropolitan region in Europe, creative knowledge workers tend not to refer to a set of location factors, but to their personal biography and their personal network in the specific region. The life worlds of creative knowledge workers appear to be less independent from traditional connections to family members and friends than portrayed in Florida's account and in many other descriptions conceiving creative individuals as autonomous, independent outsiders (cf. Hall 1999, 17ff).

To put it in a nutshell, serious tensions appear to exist between the concepts that have been very successful to inspire policy makers to adapt their municipalities to the current creative knowledge society on the one hand, and the empirical result of the ACRE-research on the other. Therefore, we want to investigate the current policies and strategies which circulate in the political and public realm in the AMA and compare them with the empirical results. Needless to say that the existing concepts are not only inspired by a single idea such as Florida's, but that they are also the outcome of current and past political struggles and concepts. The concepts might mirror a larger variety of approaches. Therefore, we want to

analyse the current policy documents and the visions of the local and national governments in the AMA and in the Netherlands on the creative knowledge policy. In addition, we interviewed six key players in the AMA on their conception of the current evolution of the creative knowledge policy in the AMA.

In chapter 2 we introduce the theoretical approach in the ACRE-project and explain our research strategy for this study. Chapter 3 describes briefly the current economic situation in the AMA and the findings of the past studies. In a longer part, we portray the existing policy strategies which exist at the various scales in the Netherlands. The following chapter explains the institutional structure and gives an analysis of the involved stakeholders at the different government levels. Before we introduce our conclusions in chapter 6, we compare the existing policy approaches and policy lines with the results of the ACRE-research project. Which issues are addressed in the current policies and where do we need to adapt or expand existing policies and how can we explain the differences between the existing policy lines and our results?

We want to thank the interviewed experts for their time and collaboration in this project and hope that this study can contribute to the further improvement and expansion of the creative knowledge policy in the AMA.

## 2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY<sup>1</sup>

The conceptual and theoretical framework underlying the ACRE programme has been presented extensively in the WP1 report (Musterd et al., 2007). It is based on a critical review of literature on the role of creativity and knowledge in present and future economic development and the conditions for a successful development as a ‘creative knowledge region’. This review of literature, which has also pointed at gaps in knowledge, has framed the analysis of each case study in the following WPs, and has been refined over the course of the work.

A number of key questions have been raised in relation with this conceptual and analytical framework. They are addressed throughout this report and will in particular guide the analysis of policies and strategies, which includes the analysis of policy documents and interviews with stakeholders.

Key questions to be taken into consideration in the analysis of policies and strategies include:

- What is the role of creativity, innovation and knowledge in the metropolitan economic development strategies and visions in each case study?
- To what extent do local and regional governments in the case study regions want to build on existing regional strengths, and to what extent do they look for new strengths with regard to economic specialisations?
- What are the different types of policy approach adopted in different cities (e.g. promoting cultural quarters/infrastructures in the physical sense; or promoting creative industries in their industrial sector sense)?
- What is the role of ‘soft’ location factors in metropolitan economic development strategies when compared to the more traditional, ‘hard’ location factors?
- Do the metropolitan economic development strategies specifically address the conditions for attracting an international skilled labour force?
- Which regional geographic and administrative scale is the most relevant for regional competitiveness when aiming for ‘creative knowledge regions’? Should there be a focus on core city development or on the metropolitan regional level?
- To what extent can we speak of an integrated regional strategy, and on what geographic and administrative scale level?
- To what extent are the economic development strategies and visions embedded in broader urban development strategies and visions? Are economic development policies connected to regional spatial development policies, housing market policies and/or policies to attract and cater for the desired ‘talent pool’?

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<sup>1</sup> This section has been written by the ACRE Toulouse team (Hélène Martin-Brelot, Elisabeth Peyroux, Denis Eckert, University of Toulouse), with help from the Leipzig team (Bastian Lange, Leibniz Institute of Regional Geography). The section is common to all ACRE reports within Work Package 10.

- How and to what extent do existing policies and strategies take into consideration issues of social cohesion and social integration?

The answers to these questions are informed by the refinement of the ACRE theoretical framework.

## 2.1 Refinement of ACRE theoretical framework

The WP1 report has acknowledged that many authors have come to the conclusion that 'creativity plays an outstanding role in urban and regional development' and recognised '*the increasing coming together and co-mingling of technological innovation, cultural creativity and governance as the driving force of urban development in the 21st century*' (Musterd et al., 2007: 6). In relation to urban competitiveness theories, at least two important interrelated ideas – mostly supported by Richard Florida – have been explored. The first one suggests that policies should concentrate on their attractiveness towards individuals rather than towards companies. As a consequence, cities should strive to improve urban atmosphere – e.g. increase openness, tolerance – and pay much less attention to hard classical location factors.

The ACRE analytical framework has been refined over the course of the work. In light of the ACRE empirical results, we are now able to revisit Florida's thesis on the mobility of people composing the 'creative class' and on the drivers that lie behind their decision to live in a city (2.1.1). Statements about the difference between hard and soft factors, creative and knowledge workers and above all the relatively trivial expectations of the respondents are used as first elements to fulfil the debate about urban competitiveness and policies (2.1.2).

### 2.1.1 Revisiting Florida's thesis on the mobility of the creative class and the role of 'soft factors'

One objective of the ACRE programme was to test Richard Florida's hypothesis on the mobility of highly skilled creative knowledge workers. According to the author of the '*Rise of the creative class*' (2002), these people would be increasingly attracted by places combining high levels of technology, talent and tolerance. In other words, the classical 'hard' location factors would lose importance compared to the increasingly prized 'soft' location factors. The latter relate to the global atmosphere of the city such as the openness, the cultural and ethnic diversity.

Each of the three surveys conducted from 2007 to 2009 among the target groups of employees, managers and transnational migrants aimed at answering the following questions:

- What are the main drivers behind their decision to locate in the city where they currently live?
- What is the relative weight of hard and soft location factors in their decision-making process?

It appeared quickly that reasons related to what we called the '**personal trajectory**' and reasons linked to classical factors such as **employment** or studies opportunities were highly

significant to explain the surveyed people's choice to settle at a particular place. Soft factors seemed to weakly influence their decision.

By compiling the results of the first quantitative survey conducted among employees in the 13 participant cities, we indeed found out that 55 per cent of the respondents were born in the city or metropolitan region where they currently live. The place where higher education has been achieved seems to play an even more important role in their location choice, as 63.6 per cent of the sampled employees obtained their highest degree locally, ie. in the city or metropolitan region where they now reside.

Taking into account this 'personal trajectory factor' – measured by the places of birth and studies of the surveyed – allowed us to give more insight to the issue of the attractiveness of a city. We could indeed differentiate the people who already had an anterior link with the city and those who had none. Considered as 'creative migrants', the latter only represent 25 per cent of the sample. For them as for the rest of the sample, **the job-related hard factors play the most dominant role in the selection of a place of residence.**

**Soft factors** only play a very marginal role to attract creative knowledge workers to a city, as only nine per cent of the people coming from outside the region cite this type of reason in a first position. They seem however important to retain them on the long term. Indeed soft factors tend to have more importance if respondents are living in the city for more than one year. As an opposite the role of hard factors is continuously decreasing with the time spent in the city. This result implies that hard factors work more as a reason for mobility (why coming), whereas soft factors are more the reason to stay (why not leaving the city).

Qualitative surveys among managers and employers in creative and knowledge industries confirmed the major role of hard factors, especially the availability of a skilled labour pool, which is often correlated to the presence of higher education institutions in the region. Access to clients and supporting services is also crucial and depends on the size of the city as well as on an efficient transport system. Entrepreneurs also insisted on the quality of the working environment and their professional networks for succeeding in their business.

The presence of universities and higher education institutions constitutes the major attraction factor for transnational migrants. Employment opportunities come up as an important reason to settle in the city. The drivers behind the decision to stay also relate to personal links (friends, family). We could also notice the relative importance of a strong image of the city as centre of creativity (Milan, Barcelona) or centre of technology (Toulouse, Helsinki).

These first outcomes thus do not confirm Florida's hypothesis of a highly mobile 'creative class'. On the contrary, the highly skilled creative and knowledge workers surveyed within the ACRE programme tend to have a rather sedentary way of life. And, whenever they move, their mobility is rather driven by classical hard factor, most of the time related to employment. Our results rather confirm those of Storper and Scott (2009: 161): *'most migrants – unless they enjoy a private income or are able to capitalize on some purely personal talent that can be practiced anywhere – are unlikely to be able to significant numbers from one location to another unless relevant employment opportunities are actually or potentially available.'*

### 2.1.2 *Some elements for the debate on urban competitiveness*

According to our results, the size of the city, the quantity and quality of transport infrastructures, and above all the studies and job opportunities act as a significant driver behind the decision to settle in a certain region. The respondents are also heavily tied to their native and family environment or to the place where they have studied and built their social networks. On the other hand, soft factors are clearly not influential to directly attract creative and knowledge individuals - employees, entrepreneurs and transnational migrants - in a city. However this does not mean that they have no importance at all for the surveyed, especially to retain them on the long term. Several observations related to the 'quality of life' can be drawn from the empirical results and put into relation with current debates on urban competitiveness.

- **Evaluating hard and soft factors...**

First attempts of comparison between the 13 cities show a strong heterogeneity of the results, which can be explained by the differences of local conditions. In general, dissatisfactions are clearly expressed on what refers to material aspects of the city such as dwelling, transports, cleanliness of the streets etc. This can be put into relation with the crucial issue of the development pathway of each city, which is one of the dimensions to be taken into account for a typology. Conditions for success seem different in cities with a strong or a discontinued path. We could indeed notice a lower satisfaction with facilities and urban infrastructures in general among people living in ex-socialist cities of Sofia, Riga, Budapest and Poznan. But the situation also differs according to the level of infrastructure and the position of the city as a national or regional capital. The size of the city also has to be thoroughly considered in the way that it might offer more potential personal relations. Along this line, the presence of strong universities well integrated into the city's life appears to play a major role as pre-condition to the formation of further social networks. Let's also mention that a positive evaluation on one or several aspects of the city's environment does not necessary mean that the surveyed are not worried about the evolution of the city. In Munich for instance, the transport system and a large number of urban facilities and services are judged as very efficient but the surveyed tend to be pessimistic on the city's future in general.

Soft factors seem to be much more difficult to evaluate than hard factors. Here it is important to distinguish between different types of soft factors. On the one hand there are conditions about which policies cannot do anything, which relates to the natural assets of the city such as its location in a favourable natural environment or the sunny climate it enjoys or not. On the other hand, there are factors like openness and tolerance that can be more or less easily promoted or improved on the long term by the mean of political decision.

- **No specific expectations of the 'creative class'?**

The fact that the respondents' concerns do not differ much from those of the rest of the population is one important statement that we can draw from the empirical results. This contradicts again Florida's statements on supposed specific needs of a specific 'creative class'. For instance, worries about the availability of jobs and affordable housing are prominent in most of the surveyed cities. Concerns about the efficiency of the urban transport

system and the related issues of traffic congestion and air pollution, but also safety issues are important for a large part of the respondents. Moreover the above underlined role of soft factors as *retention* factors tends to confirm that policies should not only focus on the attractiveness of the city for a ‘creative class’ coming from outside, but should also be oriented towards inhabitants who already live and work in the city.

This leads to consider the complex issue of urban governance and the integration of various, often contradictory objectives such as the need to increase competitiveness, tackle social exclusion and preserve environmental resources. The risks associated with policies focusing on economic excellence relate to the growth of social and spatial disparities within urban areas. This is one of the critiques made to Florida’s theory (Malanga, 2004; Peck, 2005; Scott, 2006). The elitism associated with the concept of ‘creative class’ also tends to live down the debate about social polarisation associated with economic restructuring. For instance, Thanki and Jefferys (2007) describe the informalised labour market of the media industries in London and show how the need for personal contacts to find work and the precariousness of the workforce have reinforced the dominance of the industry by a white middle-class elite.

- **The issue of scale**

The ‘competitiveness-cohesion’ binary, which is at the heart of the current debates about governance, has been scrutinised in a recent book in relation with a European research project running between 2004 and 2007 (COST Action A26). The authors insist on the rescaling process that has gone hand in hand with globalisation – characterised by open markets, removal of barriers for trade, investments and migration of labour. Cities have become ‘key territory for current capitalism’ and ‘place competition has become a key driver of spatial and urban policy’. At the same time, cities and regions are forced to redefine their objectives, their means, their institutions and their positions as socio-political units (Ache et al. 2008:7).

The new meanings of the local and regional systems have been pointed out in a context of globalisation and it has been concluded that this should not be regarded as separated from global processes (Musterd et al., 2007). The analysis highlights the need to take into account the city, the city-region and the wider regional scale, both in geographic and in political-administrative terms, as well as the need to consider ‘*smaller areas (sometimes neighbourhoods with specific characteristics) which either do or do not fit the requirements of residents and firms and thus demonstrate dynamic economic transformation or fail to do so*’ (Ibid: 30).

The new importance of cities and regions in the global economy and the re-scaling process it entails let the neighbourhood appear as a new object of attention. One of our results relates to the idea that if soft factors do not influence people’s choice to settle in a particular city, they might determine why they choose a certain district within an urban area (Martin-Brelot et al., 2010). This idea could at last be put into relation with the differences we found between creative and knowledge workers. The first ones seem to be more demanding in terms of cultural offer and social environment and the second ones more sensitive to hard factors. This probably has implications for policy makers who wish to favour a certain type of industries or individuals. Particularly in terms of scale, interventions in neighbourhoods might be more adapted to the needs of creative people, whereas strategies at the metropolitan and / or

regional level rather suit a strategy targeting the development of knowledge intensive activities.

On the basis of the outcomes of this analysis and the surveys that have been carried out in the previous Work Packages, as well as on the basis of the synthesis reports which have been written, current policies and strategies will be confronted with actual dynamics in the regions involved. Attention will be paid in particular to the institutional dimension and the role of organisations (governments, trade associations, large companies, universities, citizen movements etc.) and the mode of governance in a comparative perspective.

## **2.2 Governance approaches and methodology**

The purpose of this sub-section is not to review in detail the different governance approaches and methods but to highlight key issues regarding comparative studies and identify a common ground for a comparative analysis of case studies.

The nature and scope of this research phase should be taken into consideration: it primarily involves a policy documents analysis, a study of governance arrangements in the field of economic development as well as interviews of stakeholders. The research mainly relies on existing knowledge and expertise of the topic under consideration and on previous research conducted by the researchers on every case study.

### *2.2.1 The diversity of governance concepts and theoretical approaches*

Over the past decades a number of theories and approaches have been developed within what has been referred to as a shift of paradigm from government to governance. Prominent urban governance approaches include the American 'growth-machine' and 'urban regime' theories (and the related notion of 'urban growth coalitions') (Stone, 1993; Stone, 1989; Elkin, 1987; Stoker, 1995). Those approaches rely on the notion of 'policy networks' which is based on the (contentious) assumption that political processes are not controlled by state actors alone and that governing increasingly depends on the interaction of public and private actors (Davies, 2002). Policy network analysis has been described as "*attempts to explain policy development by examining networks of actors concerned with a given policy problem, across the public and private sectors and throughout different levels of governance*" (Mikkelsen, 2006: 17-18). Whilst all analyses use the network as unit of analysis, several approaches have been developed (ibid.). The term 'policy network' can also be understood as "*a generic label that embraces different forms of relations between state actors and private actors*" (Kriesi et al., 2006: 341).

### *2.2.2 Governance in creative and knowledge industries*

Despite their very different production conditions and marketing structures, the cultural and creative industries display characteristic features that are reflected in specific forms of governance. Micro-companies and/or project-based structures with a large portion of freelancers dominate. Some sub-areas are heavily dependent on state funds (theatres, parts of

the film industry). As a whole, the cultural economy is a high-risk area with extreme fluctuations in market success. Besides, creative industries lack organisational basis and industry associations that could serve as negotiation partners. In these particular conditions, traditional ‘top-down’ governance approaches seem hardly adequate. Establishing leadership in structurally unstable situations require a more flexible, less hierarchical approach. Attention should be paid to intermediaries such as ‘culturepreneurs’ (Lange, 2007) or ‘creativity brokers’ (Bilton and Leary, 2002) that can mediate between agencies and creative industries.

The knowledge industries are far more institutionalised and rely on growth coalitions that often associate public agencies, big businesses and industry associations. Furthermore, long established policies and structures are critical (Hall, 2004). These sectors are less flexible, characterised by a strong inertia. Emerging spin-off companies and spillover effects are far from exceptional. The importance of educational assets in a given city for the progressive development of knowledge-intensive industries make them more dependent on the support of public structures; top-down governance approaches are much more frequent (and might be more relevant) in that area than in that of the creative and cultural industries.

### 2.2.3 *The difficulty of conducting comparative studies*

The comparative study of policies and strategies raises a number of theoretical and methodological issues that have been summarised as follows within the context of a study of two German and two U.S. cities<sup>2</sup>: “*an over-dominance of deductive approaches, the lack of explicit methodological guidelines and the less than rigorous application of what has become a multitude of overlapping theoretical concepts*” (Gissendanner, 2003:3).

Whereas it is acknowledged that deductive studies make a valuable contribution to theory building, it is also pointed out that the use of different concepts for qualitative descriptions inhibits case comparisons. In addition prominent urban governance approaches such as the ‘growth-machine’ and ‘urban regime’ theories in particular are said to provide few explicit methodological guidelines and the authors that applied them do not usually specify the methodology they use, which also makes the comparison difficult<sup>3</sup>. Finally, the concepts used by the researchers may differ from the one originally defined in the source texts (ibid.).

According to some scholars the dominant urban governance approaches present some shortcomings as well. The urban regime theory has been criticised in a number of aspects: its focus on political management and arrangements of internal governance coalitions and its failure to move beyond ‘middle-level abstractions’; its tendency to overlook the role of higher level governments; a rigid and static conceptualisation of the division of labour between state and the market and the subsequent underestimation of the potential role played by the local state and community-based organisation in capital accumulation; as well as a narrow vision of the private sector that does not take into consideration small businesses as increasingly vital actors in the post-industrial era (Imbroscio, 1998; Gissendanner, 2003). Other criticisms of

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<sup>2</sup> This study aimed at analysing the different ways in which cities responded to de-industrialisation and at exploring why some would respond in a relatively more strategic fashion.

<sup>3</sup> In addition to the fact that these theories are based on the U.S experience and context and do not necessarily fit the European ones.

the urban regime theory underline the fact that it does not take into consideration the discursive dimension of partnerships and the power relationships (this is particularly relevant in urban regeneration policies, see Atkinson, 1999). The 'growth machine' approach has been criticised for its emphasis on the business communities and land use decision-making. Scholars also argue that the efficacy of local political structures and formal politics is not adequately considered and that the connections between the local state and the national state are neglected (Fox Gotham, 2000). Both approaches have been criticised for their underestimation of local political conflicts.

The relevance of approaches in term of 'policy networks' in the context of European cities has also been critically explored (see Davies for an analysis of the inadequacy of the term 'governing by networks' to describe the politics of urban regeneration in the UK). The debates revolve around the role and influence of public actors, in particular the national state, in sub-national affairs. The relative prevalence and power of 'autonomous governing networks' in different political systems is also put into question (Davies, 2002).

Following these shortcomings some authors have called for a more inductive approach that requires qualitative methods "*that better uncover structural details of governance networks in ways that are less dependent on particular general concepts or on a logic of data selection that is independent from particular cases. Case study data must also be presented in ways that ease comparison*" (Gissendanner, 2003:6).

We propose to adopt such an inductive approach in order to describe and analyse simple structural aspects of networks through a set of common questions.

#### 2.2.4 *Defining a common ground for comparative work*

Again, we have chosen to present a set of common questions to be answered in every case study rather than a single theoretical approach (see Appendix: Elements to address the types of interactions between stakeholders). A broad definition of 'policy network' is proposed (see the same appendix). This set of common questions builds on various analyses of networks that have been developed to analyse European policies (Kriesi et al., 2006; Peterson and Bomberg, 1999; Peterson, 2003; Rhodes, 1990, 1997).

The aim of this analysis is to identify and describe networks structures and functioning, including:

- The stakeholders involved in the definition and implementation of economic development policy, including identifying who is the most influential
- The nature of their interactions
- How and to what extent the structure and functioning of coalitions and networks "*may explain policy choice, democraticness, strategicness, openness to new policy ideas, effectiveness, and so on*" (Gissendanner, 2003:15).

### *2.2.5 Methodological approach in the case study Amsterdam Metropolitan Area*

As in the earlier ACRE reports on the Amsterdam city-region, the case study area described in this report is the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area (AMA). The AMA consists of 36 municipalities, of which Amsterdam is the core city. The area has about 2 million inhabitants and about 1 million jobs; roughly one third of its inhabitants and 40 per cent of its jobs are concentrated in the core city of Amsterdam. Even though the region is becoming increasingly polycentric, the concentration of inhabitants and economic activities in Amsterdam goes along with a dominant political influence of that city. The local policies of Amsterdam have significant influence on regional developments as well, and to the extent that policies are being developed at the city-regional level, Amsterdam usually takes the initiative.

In the following chapters, we will analyse the policies, strategies and institutional arrangements at the national, regional and local policy levels with relevance for the development of creative and knowledge-intensive industries in the AMA. Chapter 3 presents an inventory of the most relevant policies, strategies and initiatives at national, regional and local level. Chapter 4 is an analysis of the institutional and governance arrangements and the most important players in stimulating and facilitating creative knowledge industries in the region. We have based our analysis on our findings in the earlier ACRE work packages; the results of earlier policy evaluations by other Dutch researchers or the policy-makers themselves; an inventory of the most relevant strategic policy documents regarding creative and/or knowledge-intensive industries and/or more general policies for economic development and innovation; and interviews with policy makers and policy advisors that are or have been involved in policies for creative and/or knowledge-intensive industries in the AMA region. We have applied the methodological approach outlined above in this chapter for all ACRE teams as much as possible in order to make our analysis in the AMA region as comparable as possible with the other 12 ACRE case studies. Cross-referencing of our preliminary findings with our colleagues from Barcelona and Munich has also contributed to this.



### **3 ANALYSIS OF CONTEXT, POLICIES AND STRATEGIES IN THE AMA**

#### **3.1 Characteristics of the city-regional economy of the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area**

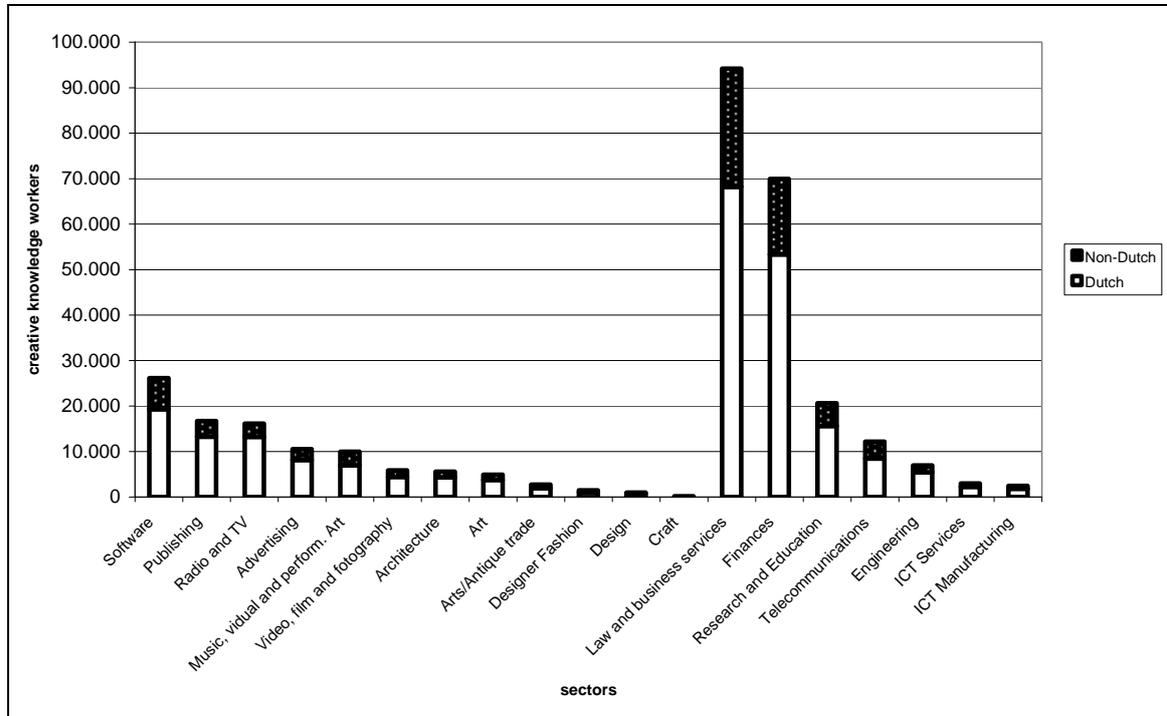
Amsterdam has been the economic motor of the Netherlands since the so-called Golden Age in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Due to the colonial trade, it became and stayed the financial centre of the country. As one of the wealthiest cities of the Netherlands, it hosted important artists and philosophers such as Rembrandt and Spinoza at the time and it has maintained its strong cultural profile ever since. In contrast to many centrally organised countries in Europe, however, the urban system of the Netherlands was structured polycentrically and cities developed a specialised economic profile. Whereas Rotterdam established a strong industrial profile, the impact of industrial revolution on the cities and communities in the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area (AMA) was rather modest in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Up to the 1980s, Amsterdam had an economically weak position (Mak 2006, p. 195; Terhorst and Van de Ven, 2003, p. 95). This has changed dramatically since the mid-1980s, when the lack of a strong manufacturing heritage proved to be a blessing in disguise in retrospect: having been specialised as a centre of trade, commerce, culture and knowledge for several centuries already, Amsterdam offered a good foundation to build a creative knowledge economy on.

The metropolitan region is now characterised by a strong service profile: 85 per cent of the regional employment and even 92 per cent of all jobs in the city of Amsterdam is in the service sector (Bontje & Sleutjes, 2007). Amsterdam still hosts the largest numbers of creative enterprises and employment in the Netherlands: 24 per cent of the companies of the creative knowledge industries are situated in the capital. The city still has strong regional importance, because it comprises 55 per cent of the city-regional employment (data source: LISA, own calculations). In terms of employment the importance of the inner city has become less dominant in general since new sub-centres have emerged along the A10 ring road at the city edge. However, in the creative knowledge industries the majority of workplaces are found in or close to the inner city. In these sectors, city-edge and suburban locations of the AMA slowly gain importance and their share constantly grows, but compared to other sectors the creative knowledge industries is more often located in the city of Amsterdam than the average company.

The knowledge sector comprises three fourths of employment in the creative knowledge industries in the AMA which is led by law and consultancy (72,939 persons in 2005) and finance (54,828 persons in 2005) (Bontje & Sleutjes, 2007) (figure 3.1). Important sectors in the creative industries are software, film and video and advertising. The general development of the global economy is often mirrored in the AMA. The negative effects of the dot-com 'bubble' and the economic downturn after the turn of the millennium caused a decline in the creative knowledge industries as well. An additional problem is that one of the most

important knowledge sectors – the financial sector - has been losing employment in the last decade, because important financial activities have been relocated to other European financial centres (Engelen, 2009).

**Figure 3.1 - Creative knowledge workers by sector and ethnicity in the AMA 2005**



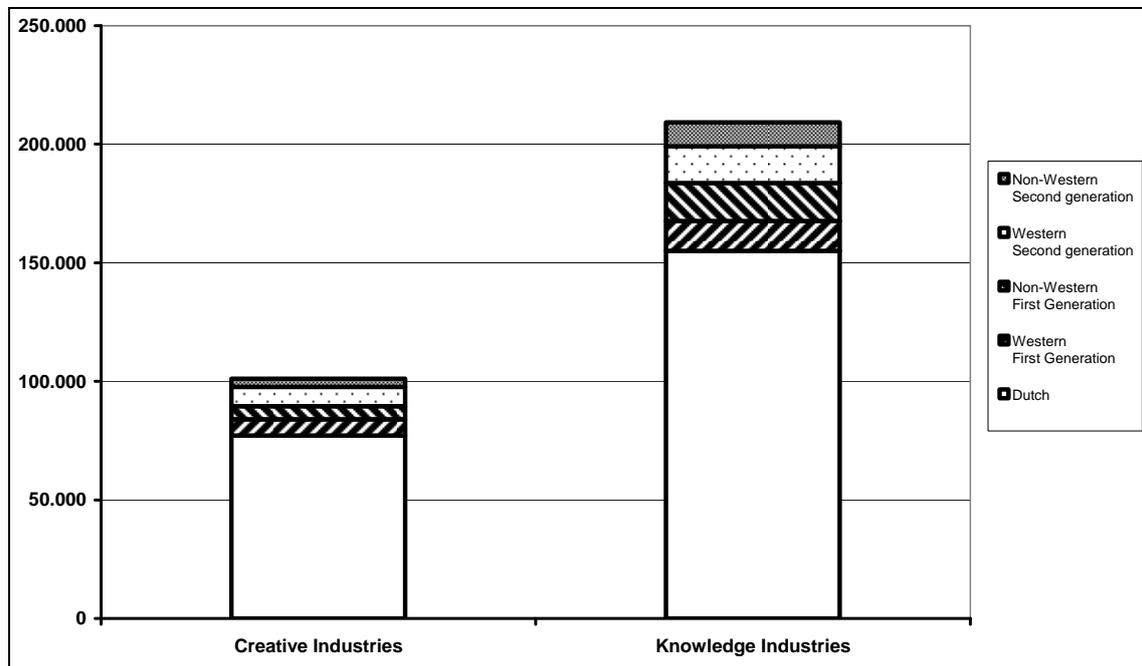
Source: CBS

A quarter of the creative knowledge jobs in Amsterdam are executed by non-Dutch citizens. Although immigration is an important element in the AMA, the majority of those are second generation immigrants of Western or non-Western origin. Only 13.4 per cent of the jobs are managed by first generation immigrants (figure 3.2). The share of first generation immigrants is slightly higher for the non-Western immigrants (7.1 per cent non-Western first generation: 6.3 per cent first generation Western immigrants) and they work more often in the knowledge industries than in the creative industries (13.5 per cent knowledge industries: 13.2 per cent creative industries). Their contribution is the highest in absolute figures in the law and consultancy (12.766 jobs) and financial sector (8.887 jobs), but in relative terms their share is the highest in designer fashion (21.7 per cent) and telecommunications (18.0 per cent) (data source: SBB banen - CBS, own calculations).

Due to the financial crisis, the loss of employment is accelerating. In the first six months of 2009, the financial sector lost 6 per cent of its employees (Dienst Onderzoek en Statistiek Amsterdam 2009, p. 130 and 161). The creative industries are still less affected by the recent economic downturn, as demonstrated by the on-going gradual job growth in recent years (van der Groep et al. 2008). However, as could be expected, first worrying signals about a dramatic reduction of assignments and threatening job loss are already being heard in popular media. When the employment figures of early 2010 will become available it is very likely that they will show decline in the creative industries as well. Especially sectors like advertising, architecture and publishing that are sensitive to economic up- and downturns will probably be

affected by the crisis. Overall, however, the crisis impact on the creative industries will probably be less notable than in the knowledge industries and in particular banking, and the creative industries may be among the first sectors to return to growth.

**Figure 3.2 - Jobs in the creative knowledge industries by immigrant generation**



Source: CBS

A quarter of the creative knowledge jobs in Amsterdam are executed by non-Dutch citizens. Although immigration is an important element in the AMA, the majority of those are second generation immigrants of Western non-Western origin. Only 13.4 per cent of the jobs are managed by first generation immigrants (Figure 3.2).

### 3.2 Evaluation of the location factors by target groups

The basis for the evaluation of the current policy in the AMA results from three research projects we conducted between 2007 and 2009. We tested the importance of hard and soft factors in three different surveys during the project and analysed the judgment of the AMA by creative knowledge workers (Bontje et al., 2008), managers (Bontje et al., 2008), and transnational migrants (Bontje et al., 2009). Has the importance of location factors in a creative knowledge economy really changed as the work of Florida (2002) indicates? We wanted to know if soft factors gained a larger importance. If not, what are the drivers for each group to settle in the AMA?

The answers we received in the AMA show that hard factors are still of major importance, but that the personal trajectories and networks, which had hardly been conceived as serious location factors before by economists and other scholars, play a crucial role. The role of soft factors, however, is secondary, although the creative knowledge workers favour these conditions in the AMA more than in other city-regions. If we look at the three most important

drivers, we can identify two hard factors. The accessibility of jobs was seen as one of the most important location factors by the interviewed native and international creative knowledge workers. Also the managers agree that the diversity of the offered labour force is an important reason to settle in the AMA, although they are also confronted with shortages in some sectors. Another important point is the housing market, which is seen as a large concern by the interviewed groups. Particularly middle income groups find it hard to access affordable accommodation.

In addition, our research revealed that personal trajectories and personal networks are crucial drivers for the economic development in European city-regions. The embeddedness of individuals in a local and regional environment and personal networks with persons in the region were stated as one of the most important reasons to look for a job or to open a business in a particular city-region. This finding is also confirmed by recent research about the mobility of the creative class. Swedish scientists confirm that the members of the creative class are less mobile than often assumed. They conclude that “*regional policy may need to focus more on how to retain people with competences rather than focusing on how to attract them*” (Hansen and Niedomysl 2009, p. 202). We suggest that an informed policy should be aware of both options nurturing regional talent, but also take the internationalisation of the economy into account. Due to the internationalisation of the economy and the forecasted greying and shrinkage of the population of most European countries, including the Netherlands, the immigration of knowledge migrants will continue to grow, although the quantitative importance of international migrants should not be overstated. The international orientation of universities and attraction of international students can be seen as a feasible means to attract young talents to the AMA, since a larger group of workers stated that they stayed after their graduation in the Netherlands.

### 3.3 Analysis of economic strategies and policies in the Netherlands

Before zooming in on our case-study region, we have to pay some attention to its national policy context, addressing long-term economic strategies and policies of the Netherlands that have a direct impact on the AMA. From our analysis in this and the following section it will become clear that in the Netherlands, the national government has an important role in economic policy-making in general and in developing a strategic agenda for the creative knowledge industries in particular.

**Figure 3.3 - Levels of government, governmental institutions and city-regional collaborations involved in creative knowledge policies in the AMA**

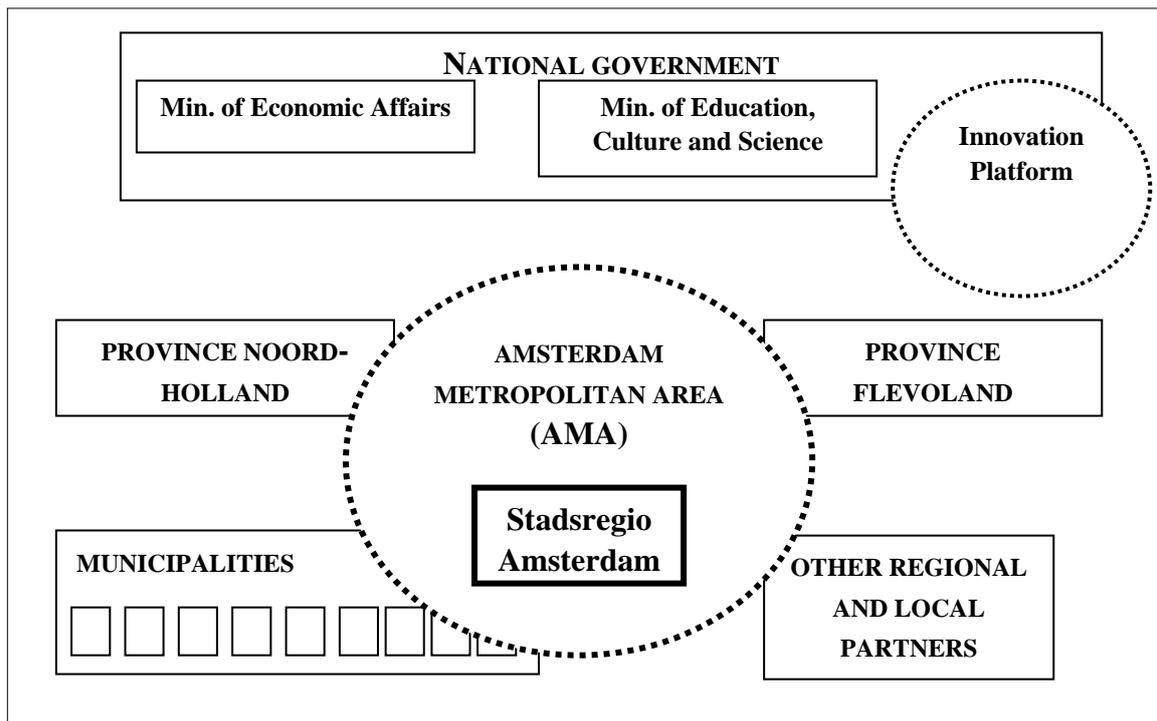


Figure 3.3 gives a schematic impression of the levels of government and regional institutions and collaborations involved in policies for the creative knowledge industries for the AMA. The Dutch national government provides the national policy framework. The Ministry of Economic Affairs is generally leading in this, but collaborates closely with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and occasionally also with other ministries. In addition to the direct involvement of these ministries, a National Innovation Platform has been established in 2003 in which representatives of national government, innovative firms and higher education institutes discuss possible measures to stimulate innovation in the Dutch economy. At the regional level, the provinces of Noord-Holland and Flevoland are involved since the AMA lies within their boundaries. However, the provincial tasks and responsibilities in economic policies are only limited and in practice, it is mainly a national and a local affair. At the local level we find the municipalities, while at the city-regional level of the AMA also several other local and regional semi-governmental and non-governmental organisations are involved. The AMA itself is a collaboration between 36 municipalities, including the city of Amsterdam that usually takes the lead in regional development initiatives. This collaboration is mainly based

on voluntary agreements and participation; the AMA is not a formalised city-regional body. However, since the AMA includes the functional economic region of Amsterdam, the AMA municipalities already had tight functional links which made regional collaboration at this scale level a logical choice. Confusingly, inside the AMA boundaries, there is a formal regional organisation called 'Stadsregio Amsterdam', but this only includes 16 municipalities. Keeping a long story short, the Stadsregio is the regional entity officially recognised and funded by the national government, while the AMA is the voluntary and informal collaboration network of municipalities and other relevant local and regional organisations like the regional Chamber of Commerce (see Haran 2010 for a detailed account of emergence and functioning of regional governance in the AMA region).

### 3.3.1 *National economic policies and strategies in the Netherlands with relevance to the AMA*

In the Dutch political system, the national and the local level have traditionally been most influential. The regional level is much less influential: the provinces (as the regional governments in the Netherlands are called) are rather the regional representatives and executors of national policies and only have limited room for their own policy agenda. Recently, however, several Dutch city-regions have set up regional governance frameworks, partly thanks to national government incentives and partly deriving from local initiatives. The AMA is an example of a city-region in which regional governance becomes increasingly influential. We will turn to the local and city-regional level of the AMA in section 3.4. First, we will focus on national-level policies and strategies related to international competitiveness in general, programmes for creative and knowledge-intensive industries, and the interrelation between these two policy fields.

As in most other advanced capitalist countries, international competitiveness has become a policy priority for the Netherlands. The AMA is generally seen as the country's most advanced and competitive region, so it is no surprise that several national competitiveness programmes and strategies include projects and measures targeting the AMA. The economic development programme *Pieken in de Delta* ('Peaks in the Delta'), for example, features a programme for the North of the Randstad region. The Randstad is the part of the Netherlands where the country's 4 largest cities and their city-regions are located. The area includes about 40 per cent of the Dutch inhabitants and almost half of its jobs. Within the Randstad, the northern half of the region is the economically most advanced and most competitive part. This 'Randstad North' covers the AMA and the adjacent city-regions of Utrecht and Amersfoort. The *Pieken in de Delta* programme (Ministerie EZ, 2004) presents further development and expansion of 'international services' as the most promising economic perspective for the North of the Randstad. The diversity of sectors within this rather broad array of service activities is seen as an asset and should be maintained. Space scarcity is presented as one of the main challenges of the region; and an effort should be made to make economic activities even more knowledge-intensive than they are already. The *Zuidas* (South Axis) at the southern edge of Amsterdam is singled out as the only location in the Netherlands with the potential to become an international top location. In addition, the *Pieken in de Delta* programme also emphasises the importance of 'mainports', a typically Dutch-English policy

**Table 3.1 - National policies, strategies and initiatives with relevance for the creative knowledge industries in the AMA**

Leading institution		Type	Aims and objectives	Means	Resources
Ministry of Economic Affairs	Pieken in de Delta- Programme Randstad North	PG / CFP	Improving competitiveness; stimulating international services; mainports as business gateways; highlighted sectors: creative industries, life sciences, logistics and trade, tourism and conferences, knowledge transfer, knowledge-intensive business services	Calls for proposals for creative and knowledge-intensive industries	Project subsidies and loans: yearly tender rounds, € 17 million for Randstad North 2009 tender
Ministries of Economic Affairs and Education, Art and Science	Brief Cultuur en Economie: Ons Creatieve Vermogen (2005)	PL	Strengthening economic potential of culture and creativity	Creative Challenge Call	Project subsidies (tender)
Ministries of Economic Affairs and Education, Art and Science	Brief Cultuur en Economie: Waarde van Creatie (2009)	PL	Strategic agenda; improving intellectual property rights; stimulating research, education, entrepreneurship; increasing international orientation; improving access to capital; strengthening infrastructure	Networking events, facilitating measures, collaboration with third parties (other ministries, NWO, higher education, Chambers of Commerce etc.)	Project subsidies, microfinance
Innovatie platform		PAD / AD	Strengthening innovative power of Dutch economy; making the Netherlands a leading knowledge economy	Competitiveness agenda; knowledge investment agenda; defining 'key areas' and monitoring actions in them; branding; marketing and information campaigns; collaboration policy - science - education - business	IP does not have own financial resources; encouraging investments by government, business, and scientific and higher education institutions (separately or in networks)
Holland Financial Centre			Encourage competitiveness and openness and ensure lasting strength of Dutch financial sector	Consults, data gathering, advertising, networking initiatives, international seminars, higher education programme, centre for start-up firms	Yearly contribution of participants; occasionally additional subsidies or sponsorships; knowledge and manpower of participants
Ministry of Housing, Planning and Environment	Randstad 2040	SP	Strengthening international top functions; improving international connections; improving intraregional connectivity; optimal use of inner city space; 'scaling up' Almere towards 5th city of Netherlands	Long-term strategic planning perspective (structuurvisie – 'structural vision?'); part of the 'Randstad Urgent' projects (see below)	Government investments (national – regional – local), public-private partnerships
Ministry of Transport and Water	Randstad Urgent	PG	Programme to improve competitiveness and connectivity of Randstad	22 economic, spatial development and transport projects; 5 of these projects in AMA region	Government investments (national – regional – local), public-private partnerships

PG = programme; CFP = call for proposals; SP = strategic plan; PL = policy letter; PAD = policy agenda development; AD = advice

Source: Own presentation

jargon term meaning the most important transport gateways of the Netherlands. Schiphol Airport, the airport of the AMA and the largest in the Netherlands, is one of these 'mainports'. Schiphol is not only a very important transport hub, but also generates about 60,000 jobs at its own premises and probably many more jobs in its wider surroundings. The Dutch national government wants to enable Schiphol to grow further at its current location, but also has to take environmental concerns and liveability (noise, pollution) into account. The *Pieken in de Delta* programme highlighted the creative industries as one of the most promising economic sectors, and the Northern Randstad as the leading region within the Netherlands for this sector. Other 'peaks' highlighted in the Northern Randstad are life sciences, innovative logistics and trade, tourism and conferences, knowledge transfer and knowledge-intensive business services (Programmacommissie Noordvleugel, 2009). The *Pieken in de Delta* programme included yearly calls for project funding since 2006. Several projects in the AMA have been funded out of this programme; we will discuss some of them in section 3.2.2.

Next to this policy programme to improve competitiveness, a second national policy programme with direct relevance for the creative knowledge economy in the AMA is the programme for the creative industries. The Dutch Ministries of Economic Affairs and Education, Culture and Science published a joint policy paper aimed at 'strengthening the economic potential of culture and creativity in 2005 (Ministeries EZ en OCW, 2005). This paper, titled *Ons creatieve vermogen* ('Our creative potential'), stressed the growing economic importance of the creative industries and the 'indirect economic effects' of excellent cultural facilities, which might make the Netherlands more attractive for tourists but also for the 'creative class'. This policy paper signalled the start of a national policy programme for the creative industries. An important part of that programme was the 'Creative Challenge Call'. Local and regional governments, public-private partnerships and coalitions were invited to submit their projects to become eligible for national subsidies. Several parties in the AMA submitted proposals, resulting in several successful applications. In 2009, a follow-up policy paper was published, again a joint-venture of the Ministries of Economic Affairs and Education, Culture and Science, titled *Waarde van creatie* ('Value of creation') (Ministeries EZ en OCW, 2009). In this policy letter, describing the national programme for 2009-2013, 6 lines of action are announced:

1. Drawing up a strategic agenda with and for the creative industries;
2. Improving knowledge about and use of intellectual property rights;
3. Stimulating research, education and entrepreneurship;
4. Increasing international orientation, improving access to and positioning in foreign markets;
5. Improving access to capital;
6. Strengthening digital and physical infrastructure.

The two ministries want to involve representatives of the creative industries more actively in this policy agenda than in the earlier programme of 2005-2008.

The creative industries are also seen as one of the most promising sectors by the Innovation Platform, founded in 2003. The Innovation Platform is another initiative of the Dutch government to increase international competitiveness. It was started because the government felt that the Netherlands was 'lagging behind'. Innovation was seen as one of the most

important engines of economic growth and competitiveness. The Innovation Platform was inspired by the earlier example of such an organisation in Finland. It is led by the Dutch Prime Minister and its members include the ministers of Economic Affairs and Education, Culture and Science, business representatives and representatives from higher education and research institutes. The Social Economic Council (SER), the Dutch negotiation institution of employers' organisations, labour unions and the national government, is also involved. The Innovation Platform is mainly an agenda-setting institution, encouraging all parties involved to invest in an innovative economy. Meanwhile a 'competitiveness agenda' and a 'knowledge investment agenda' have been produced, next to several advisory reports on specific topics related to innovation and competitiveness. Progress on the targets set in those agendas is monitored yearly. Moreover, 6 'key areas' have been defined with which the Netherlands can distinguish itself from foreign competitors: chemical industries; flowers and food; high-tech systems and materials; pensions and social insurances; water; and creative industries. These key areas were selected based on criteria like entrepreneurial and societal ambitions, organising capacity, generation of high-value knowledge and technology and international competitiveness. For each key area an innovation programme was developed. In the most recent evaluation of progress of the key areas (Voortgangscommissie Sleutelgebieden, 2009), the creative industries received a 'yellow card' from the 'progress committee key areas' on behalf of the Innovation Platform. The committee judged that the creative industries had not sufficiently been able to organise themselves since the start of the key area programme in 2004. Self-organisation has rather taken place in sub-sectors as well as in regions within the Netherlands, rather than for the entire creative industries on the national level. While giving this warning that self-organisation should be improved, the committee also acknowledges the highly varied nature of sub-sectors within the creative industries, which may mean that the level of self-organisation the Innovation Platform would like to see may in fact be impossible to realise.

The creative industries responded to this challenge, though, and started working on a national innovation programme for the creative industries. At the moment of writing this report, this programme was still in the making, but it is planned to start the programme (probably lasting for 4 years) in September 2010. Apart from addressing the issue of self-organisation, the innovation programme also wants to improve access to capital, collaboration and cross-overs between companies from different creative sub-sectors, education in creative entrepreneurship, and creative research and development. The working group preparing this innovation programme includes representatives from the creative industries, the cities of Amsterdam and Eindhoven, and key players in creative networks like Waag Society, Federation Dutch Creative Industries and Kennisland. A website and several meetings are offered to reach broad support from the Dutch creative industries and other parties involved in increasing international competitiveness of this sector.

Two other policy initiatives with relevance to the creative knowledge economy in the AMA should also be mentioned. First, relevant to the knowledge-intensive sectors and especially finance, Holland Financial Centre (HFC) has been established to strengthen the Dutch financial sector. HFC defines its mission as *"to develop initiatives to help ensure the Dutch financial sector to remain strong, open and able to compete internationally"* (<http://www.hollandfinancialcentre.com>). This is a joint venture of amongst others banks, insurance companies, traders, pension funds, law firms and national, regional and local

governments. HFC's activities include consulting the Dutch financial sector to identify problems and seek solutions for them, collecting and publishing data on the Dutch financial sector, advertising the Dutch financial sector internationally, and above all the encouragement to join forces within the sector. Since HFC is still relatively new (it was founded in 2008), it is not possible to judge its contribution to the competitiveness of the Dutch financial sector yet.

Finally, the Dutch national government has a rich tradition of active involvement in spatial development. The Randstad region, as mentioned before the area where the 4 largest Dutch cities and their city-regions are concentrated, has always played a leading role in Dutch national spatial planning strategies. Most recently, the spatial development vision Randstad 2040 has been published (Ministerie VROM, 2008). In an interactive planning process in which about 15,000 Dutch citizens participated (including online surveys and discussion meetings), the Dutch Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment tested and elaborated its spatial development vision on the Randstad area. The eventual outcome is a strategic document for the medium-term development of the Randstad. The vision is based on 4 leading principles, two of which have direct relevance for the economic development and competitiveness of the AMA region: 'make stronger what is already strong internationally' and 'strong sustainable cities and regional accessibility'. These two principles are translated in five concrete policy choices: strengthening and making better use of international top functions; improving international connections; improving intraregional connectivity at the scale level of the Northern and Southern Randstad (AMA is part of the Northern Randstad); optimal use and climate-proof design of inner-city space for living, working and service provision through transformation, restructuring and intensifying the built-up area; and the 'scaling up' of Almere to become the fifth largest city in the Netherlands. The Randstad 2040 spatial development agenda is part of a comprehensive national government programme called 'Randstad Urgent', a programme of 22 economic, spatial development and transport planning projects to improve the international competitiveness and connectivity of the area. This programme is co-ordinated by the Ministry of Transport.

### **3.4 Recent economic policies and strategies at the city-regional level**

Our case-study region, Amsterdam Metropolitan Area (AMA), includes 38 municipalities with about 2 million inhabitants. The core city of the area is Amsterdam, the largest city of the Netherlands with currently about 750,000 inhabitants. The city-region has become increasingly polycentric in recent decades; important sub-centres are Haarlem, Haarlemmermeer (the municipality where Schiphol Airport is located), Almere, Zaanstad and Hilversum. In the following, the most important policies and strategies for economic development and competitiveness are presented, highlighting mostly those policies and programmes targeting the creative knowledge economy. Next to the 38 municipalities of the city-region, regularly meeting and collaborating on a voluntary basis in the AMA partnership, important actors in these policies and strategies are the Provinces of Noord Holland and Flevoland, the regional Chambers of Commerce, Schiphol Airport (a private company, but with national, regional and local governments as shareholders), Stadsregio Amsterdam (a regional organisation including 16 of the 38 AMA municipalities), and various regional institutions founded to enhance the development of the creative and knowledge-intensive

**Table3.2 - Regional policies, strategies and initiatives with relevance for the creative knowledge industries at the AMA level**

Leading institution		Type	Aims and objectives	Means	Resources
Stadsregio Amsterdam	OPERA: Development Plan Region Amsterdam	PAD	Optimising use of regional economic profile; maintaining broad diverse economy; increasing regional economic coherence; spatially balanced economic development	Agenda-setting; encouraging local and national governments to take actions	Government investments (national and local), public-private partnerships
Chamber of Commerce Amsterdam	Going for Gold	PAD	Strengthen competitiveness of AMA; stimulating development of 5 key sectors and spatial economic foundations, one of which is 'knowledge, innovation, culture and tourism'	Agenda-setting; encouraging public-private coalitions and joint ventures	Government investments (national and local), public-private partnerships
AMA	Creative Metropolis	PG	Strengthen creative industries in 'creative axis': cities of Amsterdam, Haarlem, Hilversum and Zaanstad	Regional creative development company (see CCAA); academy of excellence; transforming former industrial space into creative space; taskforce to make better use of creative potential of youth	Government investments (national and local); applying for national subsidies (Pieken in de Delta, Creative Challenge Call)
Chambers of Commerce	Regional Innovation Strategy	SP	Coherent 'framing' of on-going and new innovation-enhancing initiatives in AMA	16 actions to improve level of innovation in AMA (partly on-going local and regional actions, partly newly added actions)	Government investments (mainly local and in AMA collaborations)
AIM	Creative Cities Amsterdam Area (CCAA)	PJ	Increasing coherence in creative industries; services to creative companies; promoting AMA as creative region	Web portal, research reports, meetings and events, trade missions, promotional publications	Funding from Pieken in de Delta programme (50%), 7 cities, 3 provinces and 2 Chambers of Commerce (together other 50%)
AMA	Economic Development Agenda 2010-2014	PAD	AMA should belong to the expected 5 or 6 city-regions in Europe fit for global competition	Prioritising 8 clusters, 4 of which are creative industries, ICT, financial and business services and life sciences; encouraging clustering and networking; improving education; marketing and promotion	Government investments (national, regional and local) and public-private partnerships
Governance Forum Schiphol ( <i>Bestuursforum Schiphol</i> )	Spatial Economic Vision Schiphol Region	SP	Integrating airport development in metropolitan development	6 leading concepts, amongst others innovation, intertwining of functions, and selectivity (right company at right location), should function as guide for actions	Government investments (national, regional and local) and public-private partnerships

PG = programme; SP = strategic plan; PAD = policy agenda development; ORG = organisation, PJ = project

Source: Own presentation

industries like Amsterdam Innovation Motor (AIM) and one of its projects, Creative Cities Amsterdam Area (CCAA). AIM has been founded as a regional innovation organisation in 2006, initiated and supported by the AMA region, the University of Amsterdam (UvA), the Free University (VU) and 4 banks. It can be compared to organisations like Culminatium in Helsinki or Brainport in the Eindhoven region. The prioritised sectors of AIM programmes and projects are creative industries, ICT, sustainability and life sciences.

At the start of the ACRE project we have already made an inventory of relevant policies and strategies at the regional level (Bontje & Sleutjes, 2007). Most of these policies and strategies have meanwhile reached the end of their planned duration or will soon be updated. Since most reconsiderations and updates of city-regional policies and strategies are rather building on the results of the policies and strategies between 2005 and 2010 than radically breaking with them, we will offer a short recap of these recent city-regional policies and strategies here.

The two most influential regional economy strategy documents at the general level of economic development and competitiveness were the Economic Development Plan Amsterdam Region (*Ontwikkelingsplan Economie Regio Amsterdam*), produced by the Stadsregio Amsterdam, and the regional economic development strategy 'Going for Gold' (*Gaan voor Goud*) of the Chamber of Commerce Amsterdam-Amstelland. The Economic Development Plan Amsterdam Region (hereafter referred to with its Dutch acronym OPERA) included four structural targets: optimising the use of the regional economy's specific profile; maintaining the broad and diversified economic base; increasing regional economic coherence; and a spatially balanced regional economic development. Since eventually most policy decisions on economic development are taken either at the national or at the local municipal level, these quite abstract targets were not translated in direct policy actions; instead the document had an agenda-setting nature, trying to encourage the municipalities in the Stadsregio, and partly also in the wider area of the AMA, to take action. Amongst others, the OPERA plan calls for further growth of Schiphol Airport and Amsterdam seaport; measures to improve and diversify the economic structure of relatively weak sub-regions like the Zaan area and IJmond; improving spatial conditions for the regional knowledge and innovation structure; and a regional office location policy (ROA, 2004).

In 'Going for Gold', the Chamber of Commerce Amsterdam-Amstelland presents a partly similar regional economic development agenda. While this Chamber of Commerce, which only represents a part of the AMA, took the lead in this document, it collaborated closely with several Chambers of Commerce of adjacent regions and asked input from business NGOs and labour unions. Therefore 'Going for Gold' could be seen as a reflection of city-regional consensus within the AMA at the time of writing the document (Kamer van Koophandel Amsterdam-Amstelland, 2004). The main rationale for the document is to strengthen international competitiveness of the AMA. Five key economic sectors and spatial economic foundations contributing to this ambition were highlighted: 'logistics and manufacturing'; 'business and trade'; 'knowledge, innovation, culture and tourism'; 'space and infrastructure'; and 'labour market, residential and living environment'. 'Going for Gold' described the required policy actions and governance structures to realise this competitiveness ambition in terms of a regional enterprise. It mentioned four public-private 'coalitions for economic development' for improving the AMA's international profile as a hub of trade, logistics, culture and tourism, and innovation. Two 'joint ventures for spatial development' were added

to this, to improve connectivity of the region's two main economic development corridors: Haarlemmermeer-Amsterdam-Almere on the one hand, and North Sea Canal-Schiphol-Aalsmeer on the other.

Next to these general economic development and competitiveness agendas, the frequent conferences of the 38 municipalities and relevant regional actors of the AMA have also led to more specific programmes targeting the economic sectors we are analysing in the ACRE project: the Creative Metropolis programme and the Regional Innovation Strategy. The Creative Metropolis programme (Stuurgroep Creatieve As, 2005) identified a 'creative axis' in the AMA, including the cities Amsterdam, Haarlem, Hilversum and Zaanstad. The programme's main aim was to strengthen the creative industries in these four cities. Among the prioritised actions proposed in this programme was the founding of a Creative Development Company. Eventually this resulted in the founding of Creative Cities Amsterdam Area (CCAA), in which next to the four cities already mentioned three more cities participated: Almere, Amersfoort and Utrecht. On behalf of these cities, AIM is leading this project together with TFI, based in Utrecht. Three other prioritised actions were also part of the programme, but their results so far are less clear: using industrial complexes as testing grounds for spontaneous creative transformation; founding an 'Academy of Excellence'; and a taskforce to make better use of the creative potential of young people, especially aiming at ethnic minority youth. The Regional Innovation Strategy (Kamers van Koophandel, 2008) partly overlapped with this Creative Metropolis programme, since it included ICT and creative industries as one of the clusters targeted. The other prioritised clusters were trade and logistics, life sciences, and sustainability. These were (and still are) also the clusters targeted by the Amsterdam Innovation Motor (AIM, see section 3.3.3). Next to these clusters, that were to be stimulated and facilitated throughout the AMA, several sub-regional niches were also identified like geomatics (Flevoland), the food sector (Zaanstad) and a marine logistics and knowledge cluster (IJmond). Part of the Regional Innovation Strategy was a coherent framing of on-going innovation initiatives at local and city-regional level, to which new actions were added. This resulted in a total of 16 actions to improve the level of innovation in the AMA: actions to enhance the generic innovation climate, actions targeting the four clusters mentioned, and action to improve co-operation and synergy in the AMA.

Initiatives like the Creative Metropolis programme and the Regional Innovation Strategy have enhanced the political and business awareness of the potentials of creativity and innovation for economic development in the AMA and brought a host of local and sub-regional initiatives closer together in a coherent regional framework for action. Local and regional institutions resulting from and/or contributing to the regional creative and innovation programmes have also contributed to attracting large sums of national subsidy and incentive funds to the AMA. Several organisations and companies within AMA have been successful in applying for funds from the *Pieken in de Delta* programme and the Creative Challenge Call. Examples of successful applications to the Creative Challenge Call (CCC) include:

- The Creative Company Conference, a high-profile conference about creative entrepreneurship. The first edition was partly funded with CCC money; the conference continued as a yearly commercial event;

- CreaKring Flevoland, connecting creative and ICT companies with schools and knowledge institutions in projects like learning-working companies and company visit by teachers and students of high schools and vocational schools;
- Creative Learning Lab, a foundation encouraging creative use of modern media in education. This is an initiative of Waag Society, an Amsterdam-based organisation developing creative technology for societal innovation;
- Joystick Cinema, a project bringing together film producers, game producers and distributors to explore the possible synergy between film and game production.

Examples of successful applications to *Pieken in de Delta* include:

- PICNIC, the yearly event showcasing and discussing the international state of the art in ICT and cross-media industries. This conference even managed to successfully apply twice: in the 2006 and the 2007 subsidy tender;
- Another project of Waag Society: MediaGilde, an incubator for innovative new media companies and a networking organisation in the media sector;
- Amsterdam Living Lab, a project of AIM, financed from the 'Amsterdam Topstad' budget and funds from the national 'Pieken in de Delta' programme and Stadsregio Amsterdam. This is test bed for collaborative projects between small creative companies, large applied technology companies and knowledge institutions. Partners include Waag Society, UvA and Novay;
- CCAA, a project started in 2007 to stimulate and facilitate the development of the creative industries in Amsterdam, Almere, Amersfoort, Haarlem, Hilversum, Utrecht and Zaanstad;
- MICE Meets Metropolis, professionalising and promoting the Northern Randstad as an attractive environment for 'business tourism': meetings, inventions, conventions and exhibitions;
- BioPort Europe, offering business services to Indian life science companies that want to enter the European market. The Amsterdam biomedical cluster is presented to potential Indian investors as the gateway to the European life sciences market;
- Green Light Financial District, started in 2009 to restructure the Dutch financial industries, focusing specifically on Amsterdam as the country's prime financial centre. This project of Holland Financial Centre (see section 3.3.1) wants to stimulate cross-fertilisation of academic research and business practice and encourage the development of emerging niche markets like retirement management and sustainable finance.

The results of the first phase of CCAA (2007-2009), which can be considered as 'the spider in the web' of most creative industries initiatives in the AMA in recent years, have recently been evaluated (CCAA, 2009). In this first phase, CCAA has undertaken several actions at three fronts: establishing more coherence in the creative industries in the Northern Randstad, amongst others by offering a physical and digital 'one-stop-shop' for creative industries information; service provision to starting, growing and foreign companies; and promoting the creative industries of the region nationally and internationally. The results so far include a web portal with about 11,000 unique visitors each month and offering access to an international network of about 22,000 creatives; several research reports; (co-) organising about 60 meetings and events; a newsletter with meanwhile 1,600 subscribers; and several

promotional brochures and magazines. As part of the international promotion task, CCAA was also involved in trade missions to Hong Kong, Shanghai, Leipzig, Cologne and Cannes. In retrospect CCAA sees itself as a complex project, because so many parties with different expectations were involved, but also because the creative industries remain a highly diversified sector. Three graduates from the Master Strategic Urban Studies conclude in their master thesis that CCAA is the most logical node to create unexpected links and open new markets. They judge the low threshold of CCAA as an important asset, especially for starting and small companies (Cramers et al., 2009). It is no surprise, then, that the partners involved in CCAA decided to develop plans for a 'next level' follow-up initiative. Almost all partners involved in CCAA phase 1 have joined the application for prolongation of the project to be subsidised by *Pieken in de Delta* once more. The only remarkable change in the consortium is that Almere has decided to leave CCAA, while Alkmaar (a city which is actually beyond the 'borders' of the Northern Randstad area) has decided to join for this new phase. The project proposal 'Next Level in Business' aims to strengthen the organisational capacity of the creative industries (reacting to the 'yellow card' of the Dutch Innovation Platform; see section 3.3.1), and to stimulate the growth of companies with amongst others export stimulation and cross-sectoral collaboration (CCAA, 2009). The application was successful, which means CCAA can continue at least until the end of 2011.

### **3.5 Recent local economic policies**

#### *3.5.1 Recent local economic policies and strategies in Amsterdam*

The creative and knowledge-intensive economy has only recently become the explicit target of local economic policies in Amsterdam. Of course there have already been policy programmes for segments of the creative and knowledge-intensive industries for decades, as well as general economic development policies, but only in the last decade these quite fragmented policies integrated into a coherent programme. It is also in the last decade, and especially in the last 5 years, that international competitiveness has become a local policy priority in Amsterdam. The political fragmentation before was probably mostly related to the cross-disciplinary nature of economic sectors like creative industries and knowledge-intensive industries. The emergence of the creative industries as a growth sector in particular initially led to problems of political 'ownership': it was claimed by cultural, economic and spatial planning departments without clarity about which department would take the lead for a comprehensive policy programme. This changed when the red-green coalition (PvdA and Groen Links) took over municipal power in 2006 and started working on ambitious programmes like *Amsterdam Topstad*. In connection to this and reacting to national government programmes like *Pieken in de Delta*, several new local and regional offices and networks were founded like AIM, CCAA and (already before 2006) Kenniskring Amsterdam, which also worked towards comprehensive policy agendas for the creative and knowledge-intensive industries in relation to the goal of increasing local and regional competitiveness. In the process the borders between local and regional policies have increasingly become blurred.

**Table 3.3 - Local policies, strategies and initiatives with relevance for the creative knowledge industries in the city of Amsterdam**

Leading institution		Type	Aims and objectives	Means	Resources
City of Amsterdam, Dept. Economic Affairs	<i>Amsterdam Topstad</i>	PG	Increasing competitiveness of Amsterdam; Amsterdam back in top-5 of European business locations	a.o. new higher education institutions; opening Expat Centre; start-up CCAA; 'red light fashion' project; Amsterdam Living Labs project	Between 2006-2010: € 50 million; mostly local government money, but partly also from national government and private partners
AIM	AIM	ORG	Founded to stimulate innovation, collaboration and new entrepreneurship; focusing at clusters ICT / new media, creative industries, life sciences and sustainability	Networking initiatives; acquisitions / attracting investments; promotion and marketing; initiatives to improve business climate	Local government investments; applications for national subsidies; attraction of private sector investments
City of Amsterdam, Dept. Societal Development*	Programme Creative Industries	PG	Better links between CI and education; using cultural diversity for CI; stimulating entrepreneurship; continuous innovation; offering space for growth of CI; promoting Amsterdam as 'creative top city'	a.o. Art Factories Programme (see below); networking organisations and initiatives like CCAA; promotion and marketing	Local government investments; applications for national subsidies; public-private partnerships
Project Management Bureau City of Amsterdam	Art Factories Programme ( <i>Broedplaatsen</i> )	PG	Finding and offering affordable workspace for artists and creative start-ups; encouraging projects with added value to neighbourhood and city	Finding and acquiring vacant buildings; assisting in management plans; information provision	Local government subsidies and investments, partly earned back through rents and leasehold
City of Amsterdam, Department of Spatial Planning	Spatial development vision Amsterdam 2040	SP	Amsterdam as 'core city of internationally competitive, sustainable European metropolis'	Still to be worked out in working plans per decade: 2010-2020, 2020-2030, 2030-2040	Local, regional and national government investments; public-private partnerships
City of Amsterdam and Stadsdeel Centrum (District City Centre)	Project 1012	PJ	Reducing size and concentration of 'criminogenic' activities in historic city centre; making area more attractive for visitors and tourists	Buying out owners of 'criminogenic' activities; encouraging functional mix (a.o. attracting creative industries); investing in public space	Local government investments

PG = programme; PJ = project; ORG = organisation; SP = strategic plan

\* coordinating department; programme in collaboration with City Departments of Economic Affairs and Spatial Planning and the Programme Management Bureau.

Source: Own presentation

*Amsterdam Topstad*, for example, may mainly focus on the city of Amsterdam, but has city-regional implications too and is constantly co-ordinated with regional economic programmes. *Amsterdam Topstad* (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2006) aims to increase the international competitiveness of Amsterdam, but to reach this goal the city of Amsterdam needs the AMA region. This is also expressed in the continuously increasing number of local and regional partners in the AMA, and partly even beyond the AMA, that became involved in the programme. It continued and intensified policy lines that had already been initiated with

Amsterdam's economic policy programme in 2002-2006, HERMEZ (EZ, 2002; see Bontje and Sleutjes 2007). The point of departure of *Amsterdam Topstad* was to bring Amsterdam back in the top 5 of European business locations. The top 5 ambition initially was mainly based on the highly influential European Cities Monitor of Cushman and Wakefield. Amsterdam had occupied the 5<sup>th</sup> rank in this monitor for about 15 years, but had been surpassed by Barcelona and dropped to 6<sup>th</sup> place. After the *Topstad* programme was launched, the monitoring of its ambitions was broadened to a 'basket' of rankings and indicators for competitiveness. Next to the European Cities Monitor (assessment of business climate by managers of multinational companies), monitoring of Amsterdam's competitiveness included the European Regional Prospects (expected regional economic growth), Mercer's Quality of Living survey, and a monitor of Buck Consultants on new locations of international companies. The weighted aggregate indicator resulting from this indeed placed Amsterdam back at nr. 5 in Europe in 2009. Policy priorities expressed in the *Topstad* programme were improving service delivery to entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial conditions; increasing the innovative power of the city (innovation and knowledge infrastructure); making Amsterdam more visitor-friendly for business and leisure tourists; improving internal and international connectivity of city and city-region; and improving the offer of small- and large-scale business locations. Sectors that were expected to contribute to the top-5 ambition were top education, life sciences, ICT / new media, creative industries, sustainability, and financial services. Not coincidentally, four of these sectors (life sciences, ICT / new media, creative industries and sustainability) were, and still are, also the four prioritised sectors that Amsterdam Innovation Motor (AIM) has targeted since its founding. Between 2006 and 2010, almost 50 million euro has been invested in the policy priorities of the *Topstad* programme. The largest shares of this amount were spent on events (9.4 million), life sciences (6.5 million), top education (6.2 million), city marketing (4.3 million), creative industries (4.1 million) and expats (4 million). 'Top education' involved the opening of what policy-makers called 'Harvard on the Amstel': amongst others Amsterdam University College and Duisenberg School of Finance. The large sum for expats included the opening of the Expats Centre in 2008, while part of the creative industries budget was connected to the start-up of CCAA in 2007 and the 'red light fashion' project in the old inner city (more on this later). In ICT / new media, the largest project was Amsterdam Living Labs, trying to encourage the use of Amsterdam as test bed for ICT innovations (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2009).

Though strongly intertwined with the *Topstad* programme, AIM deserves separate attention in this report as well. AIM was founded to stimulate innovation, collaboration and new entrepreneurship. Most of its projects take place in the city of Amsterdam, but its scope is regional: the AMA and sometimes beyond. It started as a project of Kenniskring Amsterdam (Knowledge Circle Amsterdam), a networking organisation bringing together policy-makers

and representatives of higher education and business. AIM became an independent organisation in 2006. AIM starts up and encourages initiatives aimed at networking, attracting investments, promotion and improvement of the business climate for innovative business in city and region in general, and the four sectors ICT / new media, creative industries, life sciences and sustainability in particular. It also monitors progress in these four sectors. The initiatives started up by AIM should eventually be realised by its circle of 'initiators': the cities of Amsterdam and Almere, the province of Noord-Holland, Stadsregio Amsterdam, the Amsterdam Chamber of Commerce, University of Amsterdam, Free University, and the banks ABN-AMRO/Fortis, ING and Rabobank. AIM eventually aims to create independent project and networking organisations in the clusters; a first successful example of such a project is CCAA for the creative industries.

Next to and partly intertwined with *Topstad*, a second important strategic programme in recent years was the Programme Creative Industries 2007-2010 (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2007). In this programme the Amsterdam city departments responsible for cultural, economic and spatial planning policy joined forces with the city's Programme Management Bureau for a comprehensive creative industries policy, led by Amsterdam's alderwoman of art and culture. Six programme lines were the 'red thread' of the programme:

1. Better links between creative industries and education;
2. Using cultural diversity for broadening and expanding the creative industries;
3. Stimulating (starting and growing) creative entrepreneurs;
4. Continuous innovation by linking creative industries with other sectors, linking new media, ICT and culture, and better links within the city-region;
5. Offering sufficient space for growth of the creative industries;
6. Promoting Amsterdam as 'creative top city'.

At the start of the programme, AIM was asked to play a central role in the realisation. The CCAA project was set up for this purpose.

Within this overarching programme, several project and programme organisations operate, of which the Bureau Broedplaatsen should be mentioned in particular. When the Programme Creative Industries was started, the policy for *Broedplaatsen* ('Art Factories') that already existed since 1999 became incorporated in a comprehensive creative industries policy. The *Broedplaatsen* policy started as a project in 1999 in response to a call for affordable workspace from the artists and alternative groups that had occupied 'free spaces' in the city. These 'free spaces' increasingly disappeared under pressure of urban redevelopment of former harbour and industrial areas. The City of Amsterdam wanted to offer an alternative and launched the *Broedplaatsen* project. Soon afterwards some of the former 'free spaces' became part of the *Broedplaatsen* programme and many other empty buildings were claimed for the same function. Initially these spaces were mainly rented to starting artists, but after some years, the programme's target group was extended to also include starting creative companies. The project was successful and became more institutionalised in the form of a programming bureau: Bureau Broedplaatsen. While the programme's target group is

meanwhile defined as ‘the basis segment of the creative industries’, the programme’s aims have been broadened too. We will discuss the most recent revision of the programme in section 3.5.2.

### 3.5.2 *Recent local economic policies and strategies in other AMA centres*

The AMA city-region is a polycentric region, in which Amsterdam clearly stands out as the largest and leading centre, but several medium-sized cities can also be found. Amsterdam claims the largest share of both creative and knowledge-intensive industries, but the regional sub-centres Almere, Haarlem, Haarlemmermeer, Hilversum and Zaanstad add to the regional strength in the creative knowledge economy. Haarlem, Hilversum and Zaanstad do so mostly for the creative industries, while Haarlemmermeer and Almere rather attract knowledge-intensive industries, mostly ICT, but also some creative business services (iMMovator & Hogeschool INHolland, 2006; Van der Groep et al., 2008).

Of these regional sub-centres, Hilversum stands out as the national media centre of the Netherlands. All publicly funded broadcasters as well as most commercial stations and most production facilities are based in Hilversum, though increasingly Amsterdam is also used as studio location for live programmes. Since the 1990s a division of labour with Amsterdam has emerged in which Hilversum is the main concentration of large media companies and Amsterdam is home to most small suppliers, freelancers and self-employed in the Dutch media sector. Hilversum remains the national ‘spider in the web’ of the media sector, though, and has strengthened this position in recent years by becoming the logical location of the iconic Centre of Vision and Sound, an exhibition space and archive of Dutch media history, as well as the location of the cross-media network iMMovator. This is an expertise centre and networking organisation for the cross media sector, a term referring to an increasingly integrating sector of audiovisual media, printed media, web-based and mobile media is meant. It is operating at the scale of the Northern Randstad, but considering Hilversum as its ‘crystallisation point’. Of course, ‘multimedia city’ is one of the economic ‘spearheads’ of Hilversum’s current economic long-term vision, in which the multi- or cross media sector is seen as the prime motor of innovation for city and region (Gemeente Hilversum, 2007).

Almere has grown from 0 to almost 200,000 inhabitants in only 33 years and is planning to continue growing towards about 350,000 inhabitants. This population growth goes along with a continuous growth of employment opportunities, retail, leisure and other functions one would expect in a large city. Even though job growth in recent years has been quite impressive, Almere still is an unbalanced city offering too little employment and career opportunities to its inhabitants. The city wants to change this and it is no surprise that creative and knowledge-intensive industries are among the activities Almere wants to stimulate and attract. So far, Almere was more successful in attracting knowledge-intensive industries, in particular ICT production and logistics, than in attracting creative industries. However, Almere’s creative industries are growing too and the city government offers several spaces to accommodate them. This includes inner-city *broedplaats* locations like ‘De Voetnoot’ and a larger-scale multi-company complex: Brandboxx. Brandboxx is a purchase, exposition and information centre for Dutch fashion retailers. Creative business services, fashion and design can already be found in Almere, along with several crossover activities between media and

ICT. To encourage further growth and networking of the creative industries in Almere and adjacent municipalities, 7 creative entrepreneurs have started the meeting and co-operation platform Flowland. This platform has meanwhile established collaboration links with the province of Flevoland through the provincial development agency. Another Almere-based project aimed at the creative industries is the Creative Campus. A large vacant manufacturing building of about 50,000 m<sup>2</sup> is being transformed to become a 'creative hotspot'. The complex is already in use for events and meetings related to creativity and innovation, but the project developer also aims for permanent location of creative companies.

Haarlem has a long tradition in printed media, but in its more recent development of creative and knowledge-intensive industries, it clearly stands in the shadow of the large city next door, Amsterdam. Still, Haarlem has a significant creative sector. An important development of the last decade is the Lichtfabriek, a former energy supply factory which is now used for cultural events like theatre, fashion shows, dance parties, workshops and TV and film recordings. Haarlem invested in its cultural infrastructure and 2008 was even declared 'year of culture'. Like Amsterdam, Almere and Zaanstad, Haarlem meanwhile also has several *broedplaatsen* for starting artists and creative entrepreneurs. The local branch of polytechnic INHolland offers a bachelor in media and entertainment management. A worrying sign, though, is that employment in the creative industries has not grown between 1996 and 2007, while it has grown fast in most other cities of the Northern Randstad. After a fast growth until 2001, an almost as fast drop back to the 1996 figures followed between 2001 and 2007 (Van der Groep et al., 2008).

Finally, Zaanstad tries to profile itself as the affordable creative alternative to Amsterdam. The city has a centuries-long manufacturing tradition, especially in food production. Meanwhile most of these companies have left the city and many manufacturing buildings, including several monumental ones, are available for new functions. Moreover, the Hembrug area, a former military complex, is available for redevelopment as well. So far, the creative industries are still a small sector compared to the other cities in the AMA, but the sector has grown faster than the local economy as a whole since 2005 (Van der Groep et al., 2008). Zaanstad clearly was a 'latecomer', since in most other Dutch cities the creative industries already started growing fast in the late 1990s. The Hembrug area and some of the former factories along the river Zaan have already attracted fashion and furniture designers and art galleries. Still, there will be a long way to go before the huge Hembrug area will be a lively creative environment, and while Amsterdam may have the problem of 'too much creatives, too little space', Zaanstad has the opposite problem so far.

### 3.6 Current developments in economic policies, strategies and debates in the AMA

This report will be published at an unfortunate moment to describe the ‘state of the art’ in local policies in the AMA. As mentioned before, local municipal elections will take place in all Dutch municipalities in early March 2010. The timing of our report does not enable us to take the possible political impact of these elections on board. In addition, the full impact of the global economic crisis on the creative and knowledge-intensive industries is not clear yet either as indicated before. Future local policies, especially in Amsterdam, may take a quite different direction of these sectors would appear to be less crisis-resistant as expected.

Without the ambition of offering an exhaustive overview of the most recent policy development, we will now discuss what we consider the most important recent and on-going policy developments, mainly focusing on the AMA regional scale on the one hand, and local developments in AMA’s core city Amsterdam on the other.

In December 2009, the Economic Agenda Amsterdam Metropolitan Area 2010-2014 was published (PRES, 2009). This agenda was produced by the Platform Regional Economic Structure (PRES) of AMA, the informal working group of aldermen of economic affairs of the six largest AMA cities, representatives of Stadsregio Amsterdam and the provinces of Noord-Holland and Flevoland, and the chair of the Chamber of Commerce Amsterdam. Its title ‘Global Business Gateway’ makes clear that the AMA mainly defines itself as an international business and trade node. Apparently the region has found a new ‘guru’ for its competitiveness policy: the Indian professor in corporate strategies C.K. Prahalad. In the Economic Vision of the AMA he is referred to because of his expectation that in Europe, eventually only 5 or 6 city-regions will be able to compete globally, while the other city-regions will probably only have a regional function. The group of 5 to 6 city-regions fit for global competition should in his view have a ‘magic mix’ of a hub function in global flows of goods and money; a diverse economic basis; a strong knowledge infrastructure and creativity; access to substantial market potential; integral connectivity; a rich cultural history and attractive environment; and a culture of openness and dynamism. Naturally, the AMA wants to be part of this European elite of city-regions. Creative and knowledge-intensive industries play a prominent role in this ambition. The whole creative industries sector, as well as the knowledge-intensive sectors ICT, financial and business services and life sciences, are among the 8 clusters that the AMA wants to prioritise. The ambitions for these sectors are mostly expressed in ranking scores: the AMA should either climb in various rankings connected to these 8 sectors or become European or global leader in emerging niche markets. The many actions proposed in the Economic Vision (partly varying per cluster, partly similar in several clusters) include the improvement of cluster organisations and network governance; encouraging exchange of knowledge and skills within and between clusters; plans for new and improved education programmes at vocational, polytechnic and university levels; and further intensification of international marketing and promotion. Specifically for the creative industries, a remarkable proposal is to expand the activities of Bureau Broedplaatsen beyond the municipality of Amsterdam to the rest of the AMA region. Also, not explicitly named in the Economic Agenda but fitting perfectly with the educational plans, we should mention that Amsterdam applied for a *Pieken in de Delta* subsidy for an international top school for

designers, THINK. This school should have about 200 students within the next 4 years. The requested budget is 8 million Euros of which the national government should contribute 50 per cent and the city of Amsterdam and the province of Noord-Holland the other 50 per cent. At the time of writing this report, we do not know yet if this application has been successful.

The Economic Agenda 2010-2014 appears only shortly after another spatial-economic vision with regional relevance: the Spatial Economic Vision Schiphol Region 2009-2030 (Bestuursforum Schiphol, 2009). This vision is produced in the *Bestuursforum Schiphol* in which the Province of Noord-Holland, the municipalities of Amsterdam and Haarlemmermeer, Schiphol Group and Schiphol Area Development Company meet to discuss a joint development strategy. This vision concerns much more than airport development: while Schiphol's development strategy was focusing on its 'mainport' role before, it is now seen as an integral element of a broader metropolitan strategy. The 6 leading concepts of the Spatial Economic Vision express this clearly: innovation (economically but also spatially and in education); sustainability; polycentric network; transformation of housing and business areas; intertwining of living, working and service functions (including a better integration of Schiphol in its regional context); and selectivity: the right companies at the right location. Though Schiphol Airport clearly takes centre stage in this vision, there is considerable overlap in spatial and economic development targets with the Economic Vision of the AMA on the one hand, and Amsterdam's spatial development vision (see below) on the other.

In 2008 and 2009, the strategic spatial development vision Amsterdam 2040 was prepared by the Amsterdam Department of Spatial Planning (DRO). Reflecting an interactive approach to spatial planning which is currently very fashionable in the Netherlands DRO has sought active feedback from as many parties involved in the spatial future of the city as possible. This included a series of online surveys in which interested citizens could indicate their preferences, a series of meetings with stakeholders, and a student design competition. Moreover, the Amsterdam planners of course also put their city in a city-regional perspective and exchanged thoughts with the other municipalities of the AMA about the preferred city-regional development. Part 1 of the 'draft structure vision' (*Ontwerp Structuurvisie*), consisting of the spatial development vision resulting from this process was accepted by the mayor and aldermen of Amsterdam in October 2009. Next steps in the process are to prepare working programmes for the next 3 decades: until 2020, 2020-2030 and 2030-2040. The draft vision titled 'Amsterdam 2040: economically strong and sustainable' (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2010) presents Amsterdam's ambition to continue its development as 'core city of an internationally competitive, sustainable, European metropolis'. Relevant strategic choices for our research topic are the aim to expand the city's central area ('rolling out the centre' in the planners' jargon); intensifying waterfront development along the IJ river; and further internationalisation of the southern city edge (Schiphol, Zuidas and Southeast). Linking these ambitions to the economic sectors we are studying, the IJ river waterfront offers potential for the creative industries, while the southern city edge will probably become even more attractive for knowledge-intensive industries than it already is. The plans to expand the city centre, furthermore, may mean that small-scale creative industries companies will be encouraged to spread across a larger part of the city than they occupy until now. Areas like the post-war housing estates in Amsterdam-West are mentioned as possible future creative environments. Moving across the city boundaries into the wider AMA, the spatial

development ambitions also include the harbour area, the Schiphol region and Almere. Almere is planned to become the fifth largest city of the Netherlands, and together with Amsterdam it has already been working on a ‘double city’ concept with new transport links across the IJ Lake for several years.

One of the most important actors in creating and redeveloping space for creative industries in Amsterdam is the Bureau Broedplaatsen. The programme for *broedplaatsen* (‘art factories’) has recently been updated. In the programme for 2008-2012 (Bureau Broedplaatsen, 2008), two target groups are defined: professional artists and ‘*broedplaats* groups’. The latter should organise themselves in a foundation or association with non-commercial goals. These groups can consist of artists and creative, cultural and/or crafts companies. The programme 2008-2012 also presents a list of committed partners like the city of Amsterdam, city district governments, housing corporations, urban restructuring organisations, networks of creatives and investors, illustrating the broad support that the *broedplaatsen* have meanwhile established. All of these partners have been asked to define a concrete commitment to the programme, either financially, or by making real estate available, or with organisational or political support. The city of Zaanstad is also mentioned in this list, so it is likely that the activities of Bureau Broedplaatsen will soon cross the municipal borders of Amsterdam. This connects to one of the targets of the 2008-2012 programme: to realise at least one *broedplaats* a year in municipalities close to Amsterdam. The other targets are to add about 100-150 spaces or 10,000 m<sup>2</sup> a year; long-term sustainability of *broedplaatsen* by means of long tenure contracts or leasehold with the target group organisation responsible for the *broedplaats*; and identifying at least 5 buildings a year for ateliers or workspaces in Amsterdam. All this should contribute to the programme’s overarching goal: realising and maintaining adequate accommodation for artists and ‘*broedplaats* groups’ in and around Amsterdam. These two groups together are seen as the ‘basis segment of the creative industries’, a group generally looking (based on the *broedplaatsen* experience so far) for old, ‘rough’ buildings that can accommodate a variety of uses. Often this ‘basis segment’ settles for temporary accommodation with an uncertain or only short-term future perspective, in order to keep the rent affordable. Bureau Broedplaatsen offers spaces to this group with a maximum rent of 55 € per m<sup>2</sup> per year. Increasingly ‘target group organisations’ are involved in the process of transforming vacant buildings into attractive locations for professional artists and cultural, creative and/or crafts companies. A new praxis was the establishment of the so-called “creative hotspots” which was also supported by the Topstad-programme (2007-2010). Usually the users of the Broedplaatsen programmes are or were artists or creative entrepreneurs themselves. In the hot spot programme, commercial creative entrepreneurs were attracted to archive a larger collaboration between artists and commercial players (Duintje CS, Volkskrantgebouw). A second aim was to support the business capabilities of young talent (Garage Notweg, M-Lab).

The role of Bureau Broedplaatsen is rather in sharing expertise, giving advice, mediating between demand and supply, and developing the programme’s long-term strategy. Moreover, Bureau Broedplaatsen administers the municipal fund for *broedplaatsen*, from which it can give a maximum subsidy of 250 € per m<sup>2</sup> as a lump sum at the start of the *broedplaats* realisation, when a space can stay a *broedplaats* for at least 10 years (a shorter period means a lower subsidy). According to the head of Bureau Broedplaatsen Jaap Schoufour, Amsterdam

has spent about 60 euro per head of its population in the *broedplaatsen* programme in the last decade. Probably the most important reasons why this amount could be so high are its funding out of spatial development policy budgets and the development concepts of the *broedplaatsen* that often include mechanisms to earn back a significant part of the initial investments. Many other cities developing comparable programmes choose to fund such programmes out of budgets and motives related to arts and cultural policies, often implying they have to work with a much lower budget.

Broedplaatsen will offer new funding opportunities in new collaboration with Triodosbank in summer 2010. The new fund comprises 4 million €. The municipality enables the fund by providing caution money of 1 million €. Broedplaatsen groups can apply for loans to renovate and buy property which they would not get under market conditions due to lack of securities.

A programme with a less direct, but important indirect impact on the creative industries, and possibly also the knowledge-intensive industries, is the Project 1012. The name of the project refers to the postal code 1012, the area including the oldest part of Amsterdam's city centre. This project aims to reduce the size and concentration of what the policy-makers call 'criminogenic and economic low-value branches' in the 1012 postal code area. 'Criminogenic' branches are economic activities of which links with criminal organisations have been proven or are at least suspected. Examples include coffeeshops, prostitution, smartshops, gambling joints, souvenir shops, money exchange offices and occasionally bars, restaurants and hotels. These legal (or in the case of coffeeshops tolerated) activities often are cover ups or money laundering activities for organised crime. In addition and related to this, the 1012 area is known as an unsafe and polluted area, a concentration area of drug addicts and drug-related crime, and a concentration of businesses with low value added. The policy-makers of the city of Amsterdam and the city district Centrum want to make the area safer and more attractive for residents and visitors. They want to make the 1012 area 'the heart of Amsterdam, living room and shop window' (translated from Gemeente Amsterdam & Stadsdeel Centrum, 2008 p. 13). Within this overall makeover of the area, the Red Light District on the one hand and the Red Carpet on the other are the areas most targeted. The Red Carpet is the attempt to turn Damrak and Rokin into a more representative and inviting entrance to the inner city. Retail, bars and restaurants on this route should be upgraded and public space will be made more attractive. In the Red Light District, the dominance of prostitution and sex shops should be reduced and a more functional mix is encouraged. The most eye-catching element of this redevelopment so far was the project 'Red Light Fashion'. The city of Amsterdam closed some of the rooms where prostitutes offered their services because the owner of the rooms was suspected of criminal contacts. The city bought up these spaces and rented these temporarily to fashion designers. In this way the creative industries became involved in the city's efforts to transform the Red Light District. More in general, small creative and possibly also knowledge-intensive companies are considered to fit very well in the city's plans to upgrade the area.

Amsterdam clearly is a very ambitious city and increasingly it succeeds in involving the rest of the AMA region in its strive for international competitiveness. However, there are still some considerable obstacles to overcome before these ambitions could possibly be realised. One of these obstacles may be the capacity to realise complex large-scale strategic projects in Amsterdam. In recent years Amsterdam has faced serious problems in the completion of a

number of eye-catching projects that are crucial to the future of the city. The most notorious example is the North-South metro line, which is continuously being postponed and becoming more expensive. Recently the decision-making process about this metro line has been evaluated and the results were dramatic. In retrospect, the city government even had to admit that the decision to build the line should not have been taken, would the city leaders have known then what they know now. The 'point of no return' has already been passed though, so the construction of the metro line will be continued. In the same category, though far less costly (but probably equally damaging to the city's international reputation) are the renovation of the Rijksmuseum, featuring one of the world's most prominent collections of Dutch masters from the Golden Age, and the renovation and expansion of the Stedelijk Museum of contemporary art. Last but definitely not least we should mention the problematic Zuidas project, Amsterdam's attempt to build a world-class business district at the southern city edge. Of course, many projects have been or will be completed without problems in and around the city as well. To name but a few successful complex projects of the 1990s and 2000s: the transformation of the Eastern Harbour Area into an attractive mixed residential and working area, attracting many international visitors because of its remarkable architecture and urban design; the redevelopment of former industrial and harbour sites like Westergasfabriek and NDSM, now popular cultural venues and successful creative industries locations; the Amsterdam branch of the Hermitage museum; the renovation and/or expansion of several music and theatre venues like Stadsschouwburg, Concertgebouw, Paradiso and the Melkweg; and the new shopping, sports and entertainment centre Arena Boulevard in Amsterdam Southeast. Moreover, projects currently in progress like redevelopments of the northern and southern banks of the IJ river and the large-scale residential extension IJburg are running as planned and will become valuable additions to the city. Still the problematic projects mentioned before give sufficient cause for concern. More in general we may ask the question if Amsterdam is not 'punching above its weight' in its increasing eagerness to belong to the world's most important centres. Finally, looking at the 1012 project in particular, a risk involved in all the plans to make the city more competitive and more attractive for visitors and investors is that Amsterdam may lose a part of its unique character and become a city like many others.



## **4 ANALYSIS OF INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS IN THE AMA**

Before we discuss the institutional structure and governance arrangement concerning the creative knowledge policy in the AMA, the governance structure in the Netherlands should be described in general to gain a better understanding of the situation.

The Netherlands are known for the polder-model which describes a decentralised governance structure with constant negotiation between the stakeholders. It often includes the local and the national level, the regional level is of minor importance (see 3.3.1). The polder-model originates from the fact that the Dutch society was split into four major groups (liberals, socialists, Protestants and Catholics) (Lijphart 1968) and none of these groups had enough power to make political decisions without consultations with other stakeholders. The power of the Dutch political system is to bring different stakeholders together and to negotiate political compromises which are based on the agreement of many parties. The long continuing growth of the Dutch economy after a long period of economic crisis in the 1980s is based on the successful negotiations between employers' and employees' representatives which got later known as 'polder-model' (Visser and Hemerijck, 1997). Time-consuming procedures for negotiation might be seen as a weakness in other countries in which decisions are centrally made and few political parties exists. In the Netherlands, it is considered as a strength to achieve political agreements, although the number of stakeholders and political parties is large. The stakeholders are usually distributed between the local and national level.

The national level is very important for many policy fields in the Netherlands. Whereas municipalities generate their income at the local level in the US and rely on the taxes of the residents and companies which settle in their territories, a large share of income of Dutch municipalities derives from the national level which redistributes the revenues (2010 budget in Amsterdam 25.6 per cent<sup>1</sup>). In other words, the zealot of many US cities to please their voters and business representatives is less present in Dutch cities. The municipalities in the US are more independent from the influence of powerful local business coalitions, but they are more accountable to national government in the Netherlands.

In addition, the municipality of Amsterdam is in the favourable position that it is able to rely on local income from leasehold (2010 budget in Amsterdam 5.2 per cent, see footnote 4). In periods of economic upturn, this source of revenue generates an additional income for the city, whereas in periods of economic downturn the generated revenue drops which makes the city more vulnerable to economic cycles. Since 60 per cent of the Amsterdam territory belongs to the municipality, it has much more power to influence the spatial development and the land-use compared to other cities. Due to the strong influence of the social democratic

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<sup>1</sup> Data source: [www.os.amsterdam.nl](http://www.os.amsterdam.nl) accessed 9<sup>th</sup> February 2010

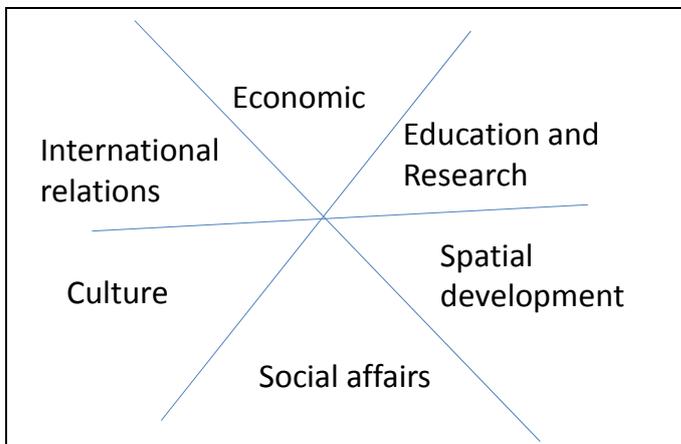
party and the strong presence of working class communities in Amsterdam, the dominant form of tenure is social housing in Amsterdam (49 per cent). The stock is mostly owned by semi-public companies which are still accountable to decision at the national and local level. In other words, government decisions at the local and national level influence the spatial development in Amsterdam much stronger than in other European municipalities.

In section 3.1, we had already mentioned that Amsterdam region is the most important creative knowledge region of the Netherlands. This is not only true for private business, but also for the public sector. Many culturally related institutions which address the whole country are situated in Amsterdam. In addition, the majority of broadcasting companies which are active in the Netherlands have settled in Hilversum in the AMA. Therefore, the linkage between national and local policy is much closer for Amsterdam region than for other Dutch municipalities in the Netherlands.

*Creativity and culture and the evolution of policies*

Compared to other policy fields, creative knowledge policy is a cross-sectional undertaking. The departments tend to have their own rationales supporting the creative knowledge industries and the creative knowledge workers. Each field also has an individual development path which has a long trace of evolutions in some fields, whereas in other fields the topic is struggling for acceptance.

**Figure 4.1 - Creative knowledge policy and involved fields**



Understanding the role of the stakeholders is also related to understanding the evolution of the creative knowledge policy in each field, since the motivations to support the actors in the fields derive often from different motivations and sometimes are even controversial.

The generation of knowledge and creativity have the longest tradition in the realm of education and research and also in the cultural departments, whereas in the economic and spatial field the topic is still young and even not yet institutionalised as the other fields.

The function of culture was to represent the powerful for a long time in European history. Dukes, political governors and powerful individuals or families like the Medici used culture to underline their wealth and influence (Encyclopaedia Britannia). Later on, culture was also used to form national identity by founding national academies, museums and universities with

a strong system of evaluation which determined the accepted aesthetic value of given creative products. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the market also gained influence. The success of the impressionists for instance was mainly achieved by the market success, since the academies considered the style hardly as acceptable. Since the market success of many cultural products is still low and only 4 per cent of the living artists generate their income from selling creative products to the free market, the influence of the market is still relatively low. Public funding and the publicly financed institutions like theatres, art schools, but also cultural foundations still have a stronger influence on the development and rationales of cultural policy than the market. All levels of government in the Netherlands (local, provincial and national) spend nearly 5 billion € per year on cultural activities (CBS, 2008). Compared with 115 million \$ which are spent by the National Endowment for the Arts in the US, the budget is very high given the size of the country. The rationales for supporting culture have also been shifting.

In the 1950s, the support of culture and creativity was mainly discussed in terms of providing a suitable infrastructure for the supply of high culture. Culture should express the aesthetic position of the existing social elites (Bianchini and Parkinson 1993, 9).

In the 1970s, an important motivation to finance cultural institutions was to enable all residents to access cultural services and products. Now, the importance of culture for social departments is not very visible, but in the 1970s, social urban movements demanded the establishment of art centres which were directed to increase the number of participants in the cultural field and allow a new self-expression of often socially marginalised identities such as women and gay art groups, the acceptance of new popular forms of culture such as photography and film and the articulation of culture by immigrant minorities (Bianchini, 1989; Bianchini and Parkinson, 1993, 9; McGuigan, 1996; Peck, 2010).

In the 1980s, the discourse about culture and creativity became much more economically led. Even the representation of cultural identity of places is now intertwined with economic aims. Culture is used to create a favourable image of the represented places. During the 1980s, the support of culture has become important for spatial departments, because the presence of cultural institutions was seen as an asset in the (inter)national competition of culture and an important indirect location factor for the local economy. Culture-led urban developments were discussed more in terms of attractiveness of cities than in terms of cultural or aesthetic functions or less in terms of participation of new groups of society in the cultural production. A similar evolution of the field can be observed in the field of education and research in which the distribution and expression of (national) identities were a more important aim than profitability. Compared to other OECD countries, the co-operation between private businesses and higher education is small, whereas the public sector is a regular client of advice from higher education and research institutions (OECD, 2006).

The importance of creativity and culture for the economic realm is relatively new, however. As said before, from the 1980s on planners and politicians considered the support of culture and creativity mainly as an indirect asset. This has been changed due to publications in the academic realm (Hall 1999; Scott 2000; Florida 2002) which underlined the importance of knowledge and creative activities for the economic development and the rise of the employment in the creative knowledge sectors in the last decades. In addition to that, one should note that the Netherlands is traditionally oriented towards a low wage policy which puts less emphasis on the rise of productivity, but on a high participation rate of the available

labour force (OECD 2006, p. 32). Since the first Balkenende government emphasised the importance of the rise of productivity in an advanced first world economy in 2003 (e.g. by installing the innovation platform), the ability to innovate, to generate knowledge and to apply knowledge and creativity for productivity gains has received more attention in the public realm.

Finally, the support of international migration of creative knowledge workers is also a new policy field in Western Europe. Due to the economic crisis in the 1970s, the immigration of labour was stopped. Supporting international business relations focused on the attraction of branches of transnational companies and improving the conditions for international trade and logistics. The Netherlands was one of the pioneering countries which offered tax cuts in the 1990s for highly skilled immigrants. Since right-wing parties gained influence at the beginning of the new millennium, the immigration from non-Western and non-industrialised countries was also reduced and it also reduced the inflow of highly skilled migrants<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, this policy field of the creative knowledge economy is also relatively new.

In conclusion, the motivations to support culture and creativity were more diverse in previous periods. Although rationales which are related to diversity, participation, democratisation and popular culture have been accepted parts of cultural plans of many communities since the 1970s, the importance of creativity for social development appears to play only a marginal role in the public discourse now. Compared to the economic discourse and economic development programmes of municipalities, the discourse and the number of initiatives in the social realm are rather marginal.

## **4.1 Identification of key stakeholders in economic development**

### *4.1.1 Identification of key stakeholders in economic development at national level*

The Ministry of Economic Affairs is the most important organisation which sets the programme and the policy in the creative knowledge sector (see figure 4.4). It proposed the national economic development programme 'Pieken in de Delta' and established the so-called 'Innovation Platform'. This organisation elaborated a 'competitive agenda' and a 'knowledge investment agenda' in a joint consulting between the ministries, business organisations, higher education and research institutions, employers' organisation and unions. The ministry is also responsible for two calls which support local governments and other organisations to apply for funding for local and regional projects. The Ministry of Economic Affairs (EZ) also introduced two policy papers in collaboration with the ministry of education and culture (OCW). The first letter (Ons creatieve vermogen) initiated a call (Creative Challenge Call) which provided a budget of 3 million € for 39 successful applicants in the country. As described in 3.3.2, the successful applicants in the AMA were mainly collaborative projects between different municipalities (AIM and CCAA), or education and companies (CreaKring),

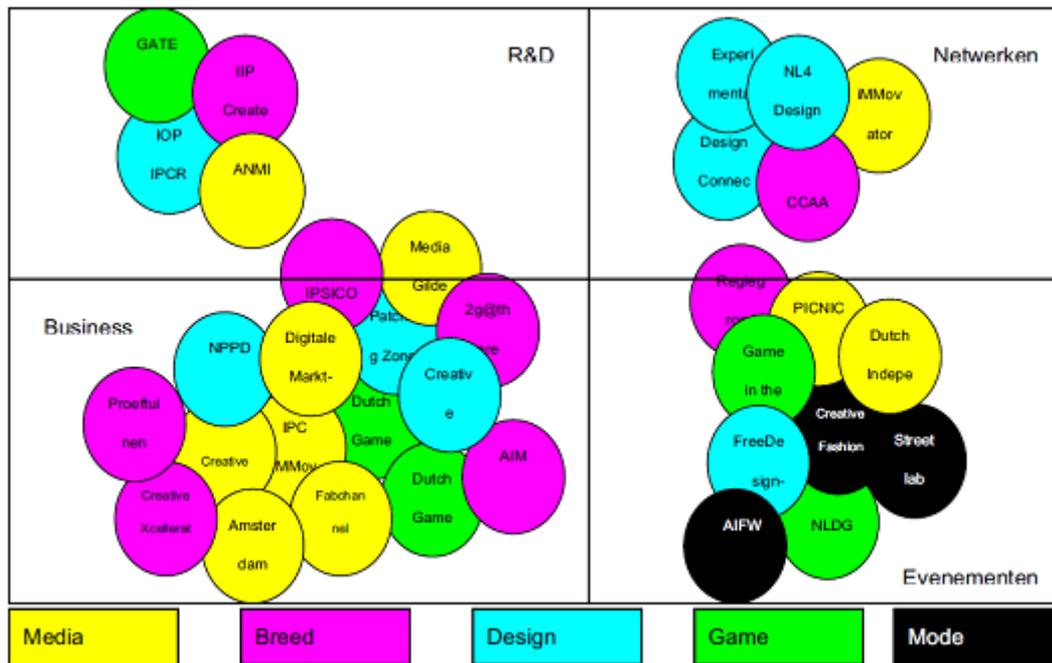
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<sup>2</sup> Any immigrant from non-industrial country needed to provide certified birth and marriage certificates and pass a Dutch language test. Although knowledge migrants and their spouse were excluded from the language test, the other measures reduced the inflow of knowledge workers from third countries.

NGO's and self-employed (MediaGilde) or different sectors (games and media, JoyStick). In the second policy letter (Waarde van creatie), the ministry asked the creative industries to elaborate an innovation programme for the creative sectors. It had problems in identifying suitable partners for the bargaining process and articulated this disappointment by distributing a yellow card to the creative industries. The development of the programme is supported and coordinated by an external organisation SenterNovem which is financed by the ministry. Thus, the ministry of economics took account of the fact that the joint board of the innovation platform had identified the creative economy as one of the key sectors for the future success of the Dutch economy. The proposed, but not yet passed programme is also the result of a collaboration between many stakeholders (non-government organisations, several universities, municipalities, branch organisations). The budget of 25 million € will also be jointly generated by the ministry, research organisations and business representatives, although the ministry of economy and education take the lead.

A large variety of initiatives is funded by public institutions. Figure 4.2 show the nature of the initiatives (research and development, network, business initiative or event) by sectors. Two points come to the fore. Firstly, the number of business initiatives is larger than any other means. Secondly, not all sectors which are part of the creative industries are equally funded. The advertising and fashion industry participates less often in those programs, whereas ICT and media are considered more often.

**Figure 4.2 - Funded initiatives in the Netherlands**



R&D = research and development; Netwerken = networks; Business = business-related initiatives; Evenementen = events.

Media = media; Breed = all sectors; Design = design; Game = game; Mode = fashion.

Source: Ministrie EZ (2009, p. 48)

To sum up, the Ministry of Economic Affairs took the lead to develop most of the programme and provide the budget for the calls, but the programmes were negotiated in collaboration with many, changing parties. The budget was also financed by complimentary parties such as other ministries, research organisations and participating parties. Since only a minor part from the spent money derived from private business and different public bodies such as municipalities, research institutions and municipalities accounted for the bulk of budget, public institutions finance improvement programmes for the creative knowledge sectors.

#### *4.1.2 Identification of key stakeholders in economic development at regional level*

In the AMA, there is no formal structure for regional co-operation, because the formal institutionalisation of a regional government was rejected by the electorate in 1995. After the poll, regional co-operation is voluntary and it is only possible, if the participating parties are equally convinced that the regional co-operation is beneficial to them. As described in chapter 3, several regional organisations were funded in the last decade (Stadregio, Noordvleugel, AMA, PRES) and the chambers of commerce also developed a regional plan. Recently the 'Platform Regional Economic Structure' was established which introduced a new regional economic agenda in December 2009.

The AMA is the most important regional organisation in relation to the creative industries. Overall, three initiatives are relevant: Firstly, the Amsterdam Innovation Motor (AIM) is financed by several municipalities and it was also able to gain national funding. It is directed towards several sectors of the creative knowledge industries such as life science, ICT and also the creative industries. Secondly, the CCAA was established as a project of AIM which is directed towards the creative industries. It is also financed by a contribution of the participating municipalities and national revenues which originate from the Pieken in de Delta call. Thirdly, the Chambers of Commerce in the region developed a regional strategy for regional co-operation. The strategy of the Chambers is to underline the importance of regional co-operation to the policy makers. The plan is based on common consulting of the Chambers of Commerce and no additional budget is involved.

Since the participation is voluntary, not every municipality is participating in the co-operation, although their economic structure might be strongly related to the creative economy. The participating municipalities collaborate in order to increase their international visibility and to support the international activities of the businesses, to access national funding for projects and to share the expenses for the consulting agency for the creative companies (CCAA).

In addition to these economic initiatives, spatial visions were developed at the regional level. Firstly, the municipalities of the AMA developed the Economic Development Agenda 2010-2014 which give a spatial vision of regional economic development. This is a common version of all municipalities of the AMA. A second spatial vision is presented by the operators of Schiphol airport and the municipalities Amsterdam and Haarlemmermeer, but it only presents the view of a selected, small group of actors. Both spatial regional plans address a broader range of industries, apart from creative knowledge industries sectors.

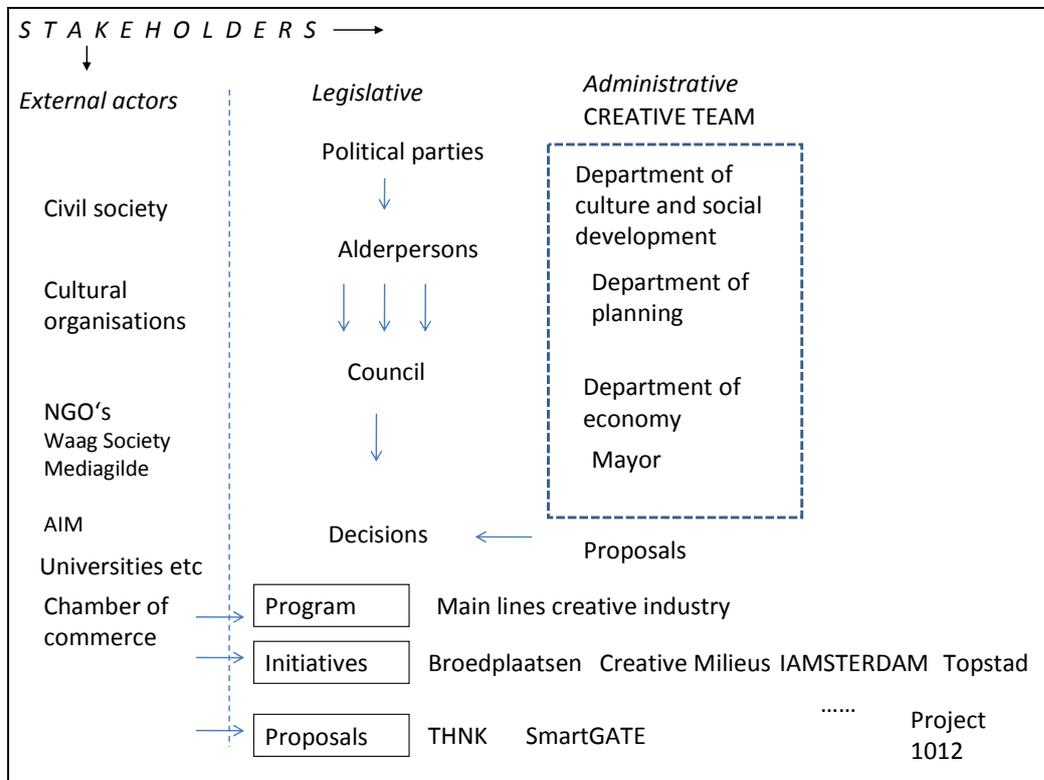
To sum up, the regional level is important for the creative knowledge sectors in the economic realm, but less relevant for other policy fields such as addressing culture and social participation.

4.1.3 Identification of key stakeholders in economic development at local level

At the local level, the key stakeholders are shown in figure 4.3. The most important unit is the creative team which comprises several civil servants in different municipal departments of the city of Amsterdam. The chair of the group rotates between the participating parties which come from the department of culture and social development, the department of planning and the department of economy. At the moment, the team is chaired by the department of culture and social development. The data monitoring is conducted by the statistical office of the city.

The initiative to establish a creative city policy was taken from within the city administration and the department of planning took the lead in the beginning. Planners in the Netherlands had been engaged in adapting urban space for present needs for a longer time. Since the end of the 1980s, the cultural infrastructure was slowly upgraded to reverse the flight of the better-off that had left the city in the suburbanisation process in the 1960s and 1970s (Terhorst and van de Ven 1995; 2003). Peter Hall’s book ‘Cities in Civilization’ had been an inspiration to foster an urban structure which supports innovation (Hemel 2002) and creativity for future economic development. Richard Florida was invited to present his ideas in Amsterdam in 2003.

Figure 4.3 - Local stakeholders, programmes and initiatives



Source: Own elaboration

The political representatives recognised the need to develop a creative city policy, after the new council was installed in 2006. The new alderpersons accepted the importance of the creative policy. Although both alderpersons were related to particular fields of creative policy such as city marketing (alderwoman for culture and social development) and the initiative red light design<sup>3</sup> (alderman for economy), the most important political negotiations at the regional level or national level were made by the mayor in Amsterdam who is not elected. The council of aldermen, however, passed a programme for the creative industries for following 4 years. The programme mainly combines existing projects, and the proposed budget mainly derives from the budget of existing programs. Although the situation of the creative industries was positively evaluated after two years, no additional budget was provided. As a result, the creative city policy in Amsterdam is mainly created as an umbrella term for existing programs. Economic-oriented initiatives such as CCAA were newly established. The programme included several cross-sectional collaborations which link creativity to education, social inclusion and diversity spatial development and to other industrial sectors. Apart from this program, the new council maintains several initiatives which also related to the creative city policy. Two initiatives are related to city marketing for tourists (IAMSTERDAM) and business and to international marketing and the improvement of Amsterdam's position in international city ranking (TOPSTAD). Another two initiatives are related to the spatial development of the city. The project 'Creative Milieus' identifies urban spaces which are suitable for the creative industries or as residential places for creative knowledge workers and then slowly transformed according to the needs of the creative knowledge workers or creative companies. The planning department cooperates with the housing corporations and the different boroughs in the city and was able to expand the activities of the creative industries to a larger number of boroughs outside the inner city. The activities are organised within the planning department.

The oldest initiative broedplaatsen - deriving from the 1990s - aims to provide temporary space for creative entrepreneurs, companies and artists. Large parts of former industrial area at the shore of the IJ was squatted and used by artists and creative entrepreneurs, but the city wanted to redevelop the areas at the IJ shore and build offices and housing on the abandoned sites. As a compromise, the artists and creative activists moved away after it was agreed that the broedplaatsen agency would provide the temporary work space for the creative community. Due to the financial crisis and the decline of public expenditure and the increase of empty office space in Amsterdam, the available budget for the broedplaatsen programme might be reduced. Instead of developing new building for temporary use, the project might shift to consulting and also try to attract craft workers to complement the creative value chain.

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<sup>3</sup> Due to the high rate of criminality in the red light district in Amsterdam, the aldermen of economy decided to reduce the number of prostitutes and brothels by 40 per cent. The semi-public housing co operations bought a larger number of properties from a retiring pimp and turned them with the financial support of the city council into showroom for talented, young designers from the Netherlands, since the land-use does not allow other forms of temporary economic use. This activity is embedded in a broader agenda to attract another sociodemographic stratum for tourism into Amsterdam. Due to the attractiveness of the red light district and coffee shops in Amsterdam, the majority of travellers used to be backpackers who spend a low daily budget in the city. The city developed infrastructure for the upper strata of tourists such as a terminal for cruising ships and attracted the precious exhibitions of St. Petersburg Hermitage museum in order to profit from the larger daily spending power of wealthy tourists. See also section 3.3.5

The broedplaatsen programme was supported by the city council with 42 million € and it is considered the most successful initiative in relation to the creative city policy. In contrast to most of the other initiatives, this project was the outcome of negotiating between grass-roots activists and the city. The civil society, however, hardly played a leading role in most other programmes related to the creative policy in Amsterdam.

Several initiatives that are created by the former urban activists cooperate strongly with the city departments and are also co-financed by national funding bodies. These are the Waag Society, Mediagilde, and the organisers of the PICNIC conference. The aim of the initiatives is to provide ICT facilities to young starters or young adults and give them access to cutting edge technical equipment. So they are able to connect education and learning facilities with cultural, creative and social aims. They participate in the local, regional and national activities, and the development of the new national innovation programme and provide a forum to discuss the creative policy programme of different political parties for the next period of the local council.

Another organisation which was active to develop a suitable service infrastructure for the creative industries was the Chamber of Commerce Amsterdam. It contributed to developing several regional economic programmes and also participated in the creation of the programme for the creative industries. It cooperates with other municipalities and Chambers of Commerce at the regional level. Their attention is mainly directed towards the need of small and medium-sized companies. Since the CCAA took over the consulting activities for the creative industries, the Chamber of Commerce focuses on giving advice about export activities and international corporations.

Another group of actors are several higher education institutions. Apart from developing new courses and curricula for creative knowledge workers, the universities, academies and polytechnics and vocational schools are also consult policy makers by conducting research and evaluating the programs. ACRE is a good example of such policy-relevant research.

Several cities such as Almere, Haarlem and Hilversum developed their individual creative city policy combining the different policy fields in an individual fashion and relating it to their position in the regional division of labour. The activities often include the private or public redevelopment of former industrial areas, the adaptation of the local housing stock for the needs of creative knowledge workers, and the attraction of private or public education facilities. The municipal activities are often supplemented by private initiatives.

In addition, several branch organisations and cultural associations of different sectors are situated in Amsterdam. They are regularly consulted about the future development, but they rarely set off the development of the programmes. Rather branch organisations and business representatives take the lead in organising major conferences or participate in open calls to gain funding from national or local bodies. One example is Creative Company Conference which was organised by the business community and also financially supported by local, regional and national government.

Lange et al. (2008; 2009) explain that the fragmented structure of the creative industries challenges the participation rate. This is often a hurdle for the development of a suitable policy. The creative industries comprise an array of different sectors, and the majority of small and medium-sized businesses that hardly have the resources and expertise in the political negotiations. We would like to point to the fact that the aims of the different creative actors are very diverse as we tried to show in part 4.1. At the local level, the diversity is the

largest. Apart from economic issues, social issues, participation, education, aesthetic questions, spatial development, international relations are also addressed by the creative city policy. All fields have a different history and often actors have very different motivations. Therefore, it is not surprising that the existing programmes mirror this diversity and actors have difficulties developing a more elaborated programme which transcends the common umbrella approach.

## **4.2 Types of interactions between stakeholders**

### *4.2.1 Types of interaction at the national level*

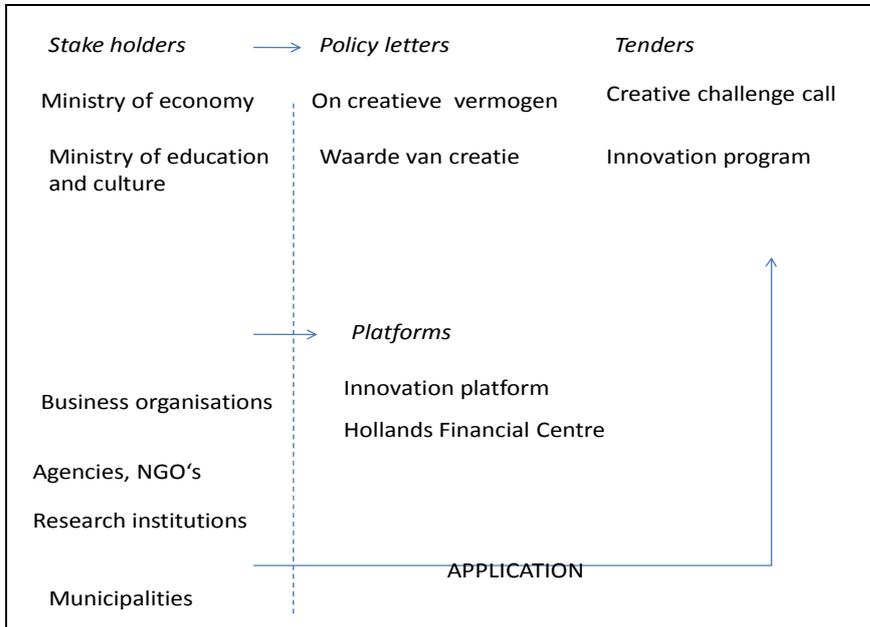
The Netherland is known by its cooperative style of governance. Political negotiations are based on shared agreements and resources between political, administrative, union and business representatives (or other relevant stakeholders). Thus it is not surprising that the interactions of the stakeholder in relation to the creative knowledge policy can be characterised in a similar way, although the content of what is described as creative knowledge policy has been shifting in the last decades and policy makers have more difficulties in identifying powerful and stable business representatives due to the diversity in size and activities of the creative knowledge policy.

At the national level, Ministry of Economic Affairs is the central node of all policy networks, since it coordinates and finances all parts of the national policy in co-operation with various other actors. Thereby, the ministry acts not as a single, powerful, dominant institution, but it depends on the resources and the agreement of other stakeholders. As we described, the national government formalised the creative knowledge policy by using several political instruments such as policy letters, calls, research contracts and economic programs. The implementation of the instruments is mostly the result of informal negotiations between the relevant stakeholders which comprise a variety of organisations and are aimed to share expertise, financial resources and to legitimise the policy in a shared agreement. The policy letters, calls, research agreements and economic programs, however, have a formal character.

Although the participating parties try to mirror all political stakeholders, their membership is fluent, permeable and varies over time and in relation to the content. Of course, the participation rate is also related to the different policy instruments. The number of the involved stakeholders is the largest in the period of negotiation. The competitive, national and temporary calls bring also a large diversity of actors together (public and private, cross-sector and various local governments). The participating parties that signed in for policy programme are less diverse. Also the research programmes which are financed by the national government involve a smaller number of actors directly and are mostly deducted by public research or higher education institutions. The policy letters, however, are most commonly the result of the co-operation of two ministries. Although the strategy of the national government is to bring different stakeholder together, the nature of the stakeholders does not vary strongly. Usually, business representatives, representatives of employed workers, initiatives, NGO's, higher education institutions and local representatives are brought together. The

policy networks are not very stable. One reason might be the low degree of organisation of the creative industries, but the open, permeable and cooperative strategy of the governance in the Netherlands also privileges changing coalitions.

**Figure 4.4 - Stakeholders at national level**



The bulk of financial resources are given by the ministry, but it is often co financed by other public institutions like science foundations and municipalities. Often private resources are requested for co financing so that the financial burden is shared by private actors too.

The mode of interaction is quite stable. As said before, formal and informal policy instruments vary depending on the different stages of elaboration of the measure and on the policy instruments used. Most commonly, formal agreements are made between actors. Private-public-partnerships are used, but less common. Most of the financial resources derive from public institutions, but legitimacy, expertise and to smaller extent money are also contributed by various parties of actors.

Compared with other levels of governance, the national and the local policy level are the most stable in relation to the creative knowledge policy.

#### 4.2.2 Types of interaction at the regional level

At the regional level, the instability is the highest, since the funding of the organisation is mostly temporary and the organisations or boards are often based on temporary agreements. Since many regional organisations are the results of successful applications, there is no stability in terms of actors, and policy at the regional level, although the number of regional plans and visions is high and the regional level was identified as the most meaningful to tackle the problem of the creative knowledge economy. In contrast to the national level, there is no leading party or any node in the regional network to coordinate the regional efforts. The most common form of interaction is formal, since the co-operation and delivery of services is based on formal, but temporary agreements, and it is based on formal contracts between

different parties which are made to achieve certain temporary goals. Most of the actors such as branch organisations, NGO's or science foundations are active at the national level, whereas many other actors such as universities or municipalities are confined to local responsibilities. Hardly any organisation, however, is organised at the regional level. To sum up, the regional level is comparatively weak, although most economic programmes and executive service organisation can be found at this level.

#### *4.2.3 Types of interaction at the local level*

The municipality of Amsterdam is the node in the local policy network which influences the outcome of the creative knowledge policy in Amsterdam. In particular a team of civil servants who belong to different municipal departments develops the creative knowledge policy in Amsterdam. Since the chair of the team changes every year, the power is not concentrated at a single individual of a single institution. It is rather an expertise-led co-operation that also consults other actors outside the administration. The creative team is counterbalanced by the elected aldermen who need to be consulted to pass policy documents and the budget. Since the attitude towards the creative knowledge industries has changed during the last elective periods and it is closely related to the personal opinion of the alderpersons, the creative knowledge policy is constantly negotiated between the elected representative and the administrative level.

At the local level the number of the different stakeholders and the heterogeneity is the largest. Firstly, different initiatives which are financed by the municipality are also integrated into the decision making progress. Since the time frame of the initiative often varies between one elective period (Topstad-program) and several elective periods (Iamsterdam, Broedplaatsen), their power, expertise and financial resources vary. Secondly, various other public institutions participate in the decision making process such as universities, the Chamber of Commerce Amsterdam, various culture and creative-oriented public institutions. Thirdly, the activities of civil society and business organisations are also important for the outcome of the creative knowledge policy at the local level. For instance, the initiative broedplaatsen was the result of negotiations between squatting creatives and the municipality. Several NGO's which are rooted in the civil society such as the Waag Society, MediaGilde, Pakhuis De Zwijger provide platforms to discuss the future of the creative knowledge policy with political representatives. They organise joint conferences with the financial support of the municipality such as PICNIC or Creative Company Conference and often participate in joint applications for funding from the national level. Although some of the organisation in the cultural realm are stable reference points for the creative knowledge policy in Amsterdam (e.g. Waag Society and Premesla foundation), the membership of those grassroots and business organisations tend to be more fluent depending on the particular context and the political goals.

The interdependence of the different actors is even larger at the local level, since business and public interests need to be balanced with political goals. The diversity of topic is also much larger than at other levels, since economic, social, educational, spatial, cultural and international issues are negotiated. As described in part 4.1, the evolution of all topics varies individually and sometimes the stakeholders of different interests compete.

Cultural policy has been defined as a social and aesthetic endeavour for a long time and it has established institutions which agree on a cultural plan and the distribution of the budget between public, semi-public and private actors.

Spatial questions which are related to the creative knowledge policy became a stable element in the political realm in the 1980s. The planning department and housing corporations are powerful public or semi-public actors which negotiate the policy with an array of private actors or civil society.

Economic goals, however, which are related to culture and creativity, are still rather new in the evolution of the political agenda. The mode of interaction and the positions of the different stakeholders depend on the policy instruments.

Public discussions, networking and informal consultations are an established element in the political realm, when business related topics are negotiated. Apart from the Chamber of Commerce, business representatives are less present at the local level compared to the regional or national level. For instance, business-related elements in the Amsterdam programme for the creative industries are mainly provided by publicly funded projects such as CCAA at the regional level, whereas the draft for the new innovation programme at the national level also demanded a financial contribution of the private sector and forms such as private-public partnerships are more common at the national level. Whereas public actors tend to cooperate with each other at the local level, private actors try to bargain for financial and spatial resources at the local level.

### **4.3 Conclusion: Institutional structure and governance arrangements**

The type of interactions between the stakeholders of the creative knowledge policy is typical for the negotiation of political processes in the Netherlands. The local and the national level form the most important scales. Each government level cooperates and negotiates with a large variety of organisations. The policy is not determined by single, powerful and stable actors, but various competences are shared between the actors. At the national level, more economic related issues are negotiated, whereas the diversity of topics is much larger at the local level. The bulk of financial resources also originate from the government at the national level, whereas local governments tend to keep the financial resources at a low level. It integrates existing programmes for the creative policy rather than generating new costs for their budget.



## **5 CRITICAL EVALUATION OF STRATEGIES AND POLICIES**

### **5.1 Debates and public controversies surrounding current policies and strategies**

#### *5.1.1 Debates and controversies about strategies in creative knowledge policy in the Netherlands*

In the Netherlands, the discourse over creative knowledge industries originated in a discussion over spatial development and the urban future. Due to the strong planned suburbanisation process in the 1960s and 1970, cities were confronted with an array of agglomeration problems. The companies and middle and upper class residents were moving out of the cities and the process left cities with an unattractive economic structure and an unbalanced structure of residents. Since the 1980s, spatial planning strategies aimed to re-establish cities as growth poles (Terhorst and van de Veen 2003, p. 96). Policy makers became interested in strategies which would generate more income in urban areas and also attract the better-off to cities. Two strands of action were identified:

Firstly, the reduction of the large share of social housing from 60 per cent to 40 per cent and secondly, to re-establish urban areas as economic growth machine with a large diversity of sectors suitable for a future service economy. On the other hand, the public opinion in Amsterdam and the Netherlands was not always in favour for these measures. Amsterdam has a long social democratic tradition which supported social justice and the expansion of the welfare state. Profitability was not considered as the most important goal for urban development. Instead community development was considered as a crucial element (Terhorst and van de Ven, 2003, p. 93). Concepts which can reconcile both goals attracted attention. Therefore, the ideas which were proposed by Florida (2002) and Hall (1999) which interrelated social development with economic development appeared to be very attractive for policy makers. Housing corporations which rented out their stock to a very diverse group of residents were interested in showing that diversity and tolerance is also related to a positive economic development as Richard Florida explained. At the same time, they were also interested in reducing the share of social housing and turning it into more profitable free-market units. Here, they identified the creative class as suitable clients.

Secondly, the Dutch economy had been very successful with a low wage policy. The Dutch welfare state provided social benefits through cheap housing and the redistribution of income which enables Dutch employers to pay lower wages than the neighbouring countries and be profitable and compatible at the same time. Instead of raising the productivity, the economy could expand by increasing the participation rate in the labour market. At beginning of the millennium, the new conservative cabinet identified this strategy as problematic in a first world service-oriented economy. It changed to a strategy which drew attention to the

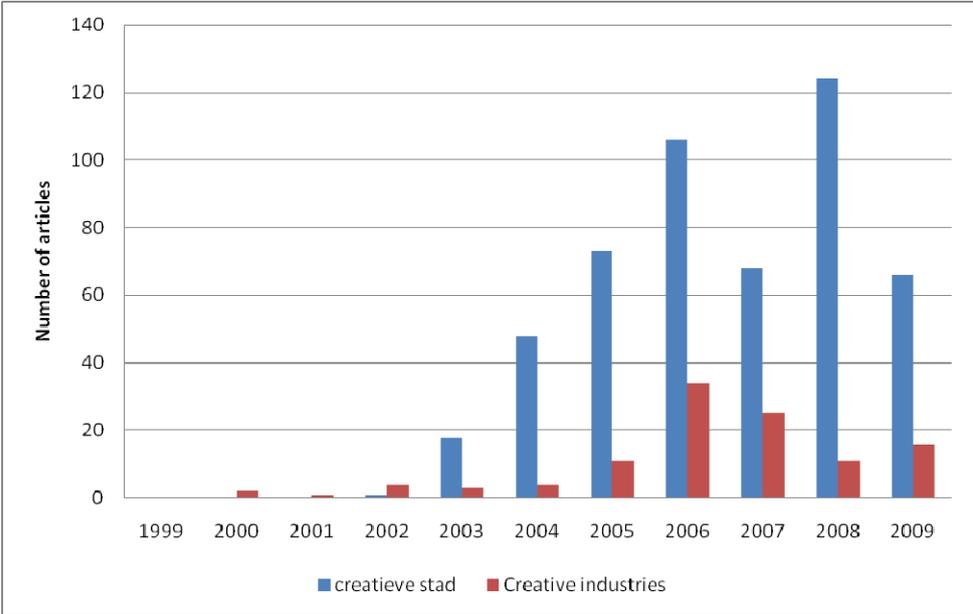
implementation of innovation and creativity in economic processes. Here again, Florida's and Hall's ideas were an inspiration to achieve this new goals and new economic programmes were passed by the parliament.

Although the administrative level is convinced how important creative city policy was for Amsterdam and that the attraction of creative knowledge workers was crucial for the economic development of the city, the instant reaction by the public and also by politicians was negative. Journalists called their proposal 'elitist' and the aldermen and the powerful social democratic party were equally reluctant to establish a creative city policy (Wiegman, 2004).

Due to the long social democratic tradition in Amsterdam politics, social justice and access to cultural facilities were considered as more suitable for the development of the city than an economic oriented agenda which wanted to bring back creative knowledge workers to inner city locations and support entrepreneurs.

An analysis of Dutch newspapers between 1999 and October 2009 shows (figure 5.1) that the use of the terms 'creative city policy' and 'creative economy' is strongly related to the policy programmes in the Netherlands. After the publication of the policy letters and the Creative Challenge Call in 2005, the public discussion gained momentum. Figure 5.1 also shows that creative city policy attracted more attention than the term creative industries which confirms that policies which address the spatial development are more widely discussed and spatial programmes are more widely proliferated in Dutch municipalities than economic programmes and initiatives.

**Figure 5.1 - Articles in major Dutch national newspapers mentioning 'creative city policy' and 'creative industries' in the Netherlands**



Data source: LexisNexis-Data base

In other words, the spatial dimension appeared to be more important than economic questions. A shift in the attention is also clearly visible. Looking at the number of published articles, the creative 'hype' is changing. Creative city policy received less attention in the press in the last two years, whereas in the economic sphere creative activities continue to be object of public attention, although on a lower level.

As we described in the previous chapters, the development of an economic policy is not without drawbacks. The creative sector was identified as one of the key sectors by the stakeholders of the Innovation Platform that consulted the national government on the matter. Whereas other key sectors already passed a program, the programme for the creative industries is delayed. The second policy letter was also published with a delay. The responsible commission blamed the creative industries for not providing a suitable organisation for common negotiations and handed over a yellow card symbolically. In other words, the diverse structure of the creative industries still confronts policy makers with problems. The conventional strategies of bargaining and negotiation are not as easy to proceed as in other sectors, since a suitable procedure of negotiating needs to be developed for this sector. It is not surprising that the interviewed stakeholders reported to have difficulties to trace the current policy and to follow the publication of calls and programs, because they are often delayed or published on short term notice and they fear that the creative knowledge policy will be stopped abruptly. Since the development of economic-oriented policies on creativity is a rather new topic and it depends on the support of single policy makers, it is feared that creative policy is a temporary hype which might disappear from the political agenda after each election.

Looking at the list of stakeholders of the draft of the innovation programme and the funded initiative in the Netherlands, it also becomes clear that some of the most relevant sectors are not participating in the program. Although the advertising industry is one of the largest sectors within the creative industries and some of the largest fashion labels such as G-Star and Mexx opened their European headquarters in the Netherlands, they do not participate in the program. Lange et al. (2009) describe the difficulties to find a suitable governance structure for the small and medium-sized companies in the creative industries for other countries, too. This should not conceal the fact that large transnational companies are active in several creative sectors, too (cf. Hesmondhalgh 2007). These stakeholders have not strongly articulated their goals yet as we look at the national policy proposals. At the local level, business agencies such as Amsterdam in Business or the Advertisement Boulevard which aimed to attract major advertisement companies to the Amsterdam region address major companies explicitly.

In many policy documents (Gemeente Amsterdam 2007; Werkgroep Creatieve Industrie 2010), cross-fertilisation and cross-sector co-operations are identified as one of the most important goals. The interviewed policy makers report, however, that cross-sector co-operations turned out to be difficult to achieve, because they are not central to the interest of either sector. The implementation of creativity in non-creative sectors turned out to be a difficult goal for an economic program. Creative industries are mostly young companies with a low level of political organisation. Programmes which put the emphasis on cross-sector engagements might run the danger that the core interests and the core business could be

neglected. This problem might be even more relevant, if we consider the wide array of meanings and aims, culture-oriented policies wanted to address in the past (see Figure 4.1).

Looking at the policy documents, it becomes also clear that the involved budgets are rarely high which are provided for the creative industries. In the case of the Amsterdam programme for the creative industries, no additional budget was involved. The budget merely comprises revenues and initiatives which had been allocated to creative activities before and passed the political decision process. Although the monitoring of the activities of the creative sectors shows that the sectors are growing and they perform better than the overall economy, decision makers in Amsterdam tend not to provide additional means. The programme is rather an umbrella for existing initiatives. Critics claim that this interpretation of creative policy runs the danger that the term 'creativity' is used for improving public relations of single political actors, but it is not useful for elaborating a strong and stable political programme which improves the position of the creative industries in the long run.

Comparing national and local policy programmes it can be shown that the policy goals at the local level are more diverse than at the national level. Social development and the improvement of education are articulated at the local level. These policy goals are strongly related to traditional aims in cultural departments. The access to culture and the enhancement of social cohesion have been common aims in cultural planning departments since the 1970s. On the one hand, the integration of these policy goals appears to be a reconciliation of economically-led strategies with traditional rationales of cultural departments. On the other hand, it also indicates that the use of creativity in the current political discourse is mainly oriented towards profitability, although it might be also used for other goals such as social justice, social cohesion and articulation of individual identities in an increasingly diverse society. At the moment, the use of creativity for enhancing social cohesion and democratic participation in the civil society is not stated as a policy line at the national level, however. The evolution of culture-led policy and the diversity of political motivations to support cultural and creative activities by public means can be traced back at the local level the best. Although large urban redevelopment programmes were passed by the national parliament and an array of marginalised neighbourhoods with special need was identified in those national programmes, the use of creativity is rarely mentioned in these national programmes. In Britain and Germany, similar redevelopment programmes such as 'Soziale Stadt' (Böhme et al. 2002) or 'local cultural strategies' which were proposed by the Social Exclusion Unit (Evans 2001, p. 266) aimed to integrate cultural activities for the social spatial development in marginalised neighbourhoods.

### *5.1.2 Debates and controversies described by the interviewed experts*

The interviews were conducted in January 2010. We asked experts about their opinion on the policy for the creative knowledge industries (see appendix). The experts were in charge at the local and regional level in the AMA. Two experts were also delegated to design the policy at the national level. Describing current policies, they also explained the chances and drawbacks in developing a policy in the AMA and in the Netherlands.

In general, the experts explained that the agglomeration economies in the AMA provide an array of chances for the creative knowledge policy. The economic structure in the AMA is diverse. The regional economy comprises a large variety of sectors. Different stages of the production process can be found so that the economic structure enables a network of supply and customer relations. Through the specialisation of activities, the AMA is suitable as a testing environment for new products and services. Workforce with different skill levels is available. The experts do not only mention quantitative points of evaluation, but they also draw the attention to qualitative points. Due to the high concentration of companies and persons, students and starters can easily find role models and represent successful business models in the creative industries.

The spatial structure of the AMA was seen as a second advantage for the development of the creative industries. Qualitative and quantitative characteristics were mentioned. The quality and the diversity of the geography in which creative workers find their suitable environment with amenities, a diverse and multifunctional cityscape was considered to be an advantage. The interviewed persons also pointed out that the available office space increased and the rent level dropped in the last years, so that the availability of working space was improved. A variety of different initiatives exist in the AMA to improve the quantitative and qualitative supply of office and residential space in the AMA. Due to the lower price level and better business opportunities in the AMA, the interviewees observed a larger inflow of companies from competing places like London. The redevelopment of old industrial sites in suburban centres was also named as well as the *broedplaatsen* programme which provides creative starters with office space.

Different educational institutions which offer courses for different levels of education are situated in the AMA. These institutions are pivotal for the attraction of national and international talent and the supply of the regional economy with labour.

Several social resources were also identified in the AMA which not only improve the social cohesion between the residents in the region, but also serve as assets for the creative industries. The use of creativity for social development, crowd-sourcing, social design, the interaction between business-oriented creative companies and cultural producers that give mainstream and sub-cultural identities a voice and change the quality of the environment with their activities were seen as examples for the reconstruction of a more socially led agenda.

Finally, technical infrastructure in the ICT sector and the level of (social) security were considered as additional resources.

Reviewing the problems in the AMA, the interviews brought also several interesting aspects to the fore. It is not surprising that the housing market was also seen as a problem and that development of talent via education and immigration was seen as one of the important tasks in the next decade. The small size of the Dutch economy and the need to search for external markets and suppliers was often mentioned. Finally the reduction of regulations was seen as an additional opportunity to improve the situation of the creative industries, because the designation of land use often excludes other activities in certain areas or forbids mixed-use such as the combination of living and working.

Interestingly, the majority of problems which the interviewed experts mentioned are not problems with location factors (hard or soft), but were related to business organisation and management in the creative knowledge industries, the implementation of innovation and creativity into production and service processes and challenges in the development of a policy for a fragmented, diverse and small scale sector. The difficult access to financial resources for creative businesses, the lack of expertise in relation to marketing and business development were considered to be more relevant difficulties than the presence or absence of single location factors. The interviewed persons also reported that the role of the governments in relation to creative actors and the need for intervention or deregulation is vividly discussed in the political arena. In other words, the interviewed experts agree about the importance of the single location factors such as the labour market in the AMA, but the implementation and prioritisation of political instruments is much more contested than the influence of certain location factors.

## **5.2 Confrontation with the result of the ACRE-research**

We described the most important strategies in chapter 3 and discussed the role of the stakeholders in chapter 4 and the public debate in the previous part. In this part, we want to go back to the results of the ACRE research in Amsterdam and compare the outcomes with the current policies.

The ACRE-research brought three pivotal points to the fore (see section 3.2).

- Firstly, the labour market is an important motivation to come to the AMA. Soft factors like quality of life or diversity of the residential population are considered less relevant by creative knowledge workers.
- Secondly, the housing market is an important push-factor in the AMA. In particular, middle incomes which are typical for creative workers and starters in the creative industries find it difficult to find suitable housing.
- Thirdly, personal networks and personal trajectories are important to stay and work in the AMA.

In the following part, we want to confront the current policy strategies with these results.

Richard Florida described creative city policy mostly in terms of local engagement. He designated the mayors and councillors to be responsible for the execution of a creative city policy. As described before, in the US local governments are more responsible for economic issues, because they depend on the income from local taxes of companies and residents. In Europe, however, economic strategies of the welfare states are more commonly elaborated at the national level and the local policy is integrated in a wider regional or national strategy. In the case of the creative knowledge policy in the Netherlands economic elements are visible at all spatial scales. Economic strategies are one of the most important elements in the creative knowledge policy in the Netherlands. Economic strategies for the creative knowledge policy, however, are mainly elaborated at the national level and executed at the regional level. The funding for those programmes is typically allocated through calls. Co-operations of different local actors can apply for financial resources in a national competition. Most of the economic programmes like AIM and CCAA operate in this form. In other words, one of the most important policy fields is organised on a short term basis at places which are not determined by need, but by their ability to formulate successful applications. An additional difficulty for policy makers appears to be the diversity and the small scale of most of its actors. Although the economic field is identified as one of the most important issues for the creative knowledge policy, there is no institutionalised national structure and established branch organisation or governmental organisation which guarantees continuous stakeholdership for the creative industries. Depending on the political constellation and the acceptance of the creative knowledge economy by the public, the topic can be removed from the political agenda.

The situation of the housing market has been discussed by policy makers in the AMA for a long time. In 1997, the 'Nota Ruimte and Grotestedenbeleid' aimed to reduce the share of social housing in the Netherlands from 60 per cent to 40 per cent in 2010. The spatial planning department and the housing corporations analysed the stock in Amsterdam and reduced the share of social housing to 49 per cent. The stock of the free rental market which is available to middle income newcomers in Amsterdam was increased to 25 per cent in 2009 (data source: O+S 2010). Short stay rental contracts with a rental period of less than six month are still illegal in Amsterdam, although a quota of 1350 units gained a license for short term rental. The Planning department also identified neighbourhoods in Amsterdam which appear to be suitable for the taste of the creative class (Baaren, 2006; Gadet, 2006; Van Zanen & Gadet, 2006). The rationale behind this policy was to increase the social mix of the neighbourhoods and to achieve a greater heterogeneity of the residents in urban neighbourhoods. It was hoped that this new form of heterogeneity would enable residents of different strata to profit from each other's presence and to increase social justice in the city. The results of those initiatives, however, rather indicate the opposite. Firstly, marginalised, poor and ethnic mixed neighbourhoods are rather avoided by incoming transnational migrants. Secondly, this policy is rarely able to improve the life chances of the local residents, since different groups of residents rarely interact or the working opportunities, the retail infrastructure and the social infrastructure is not able to improve the situation for the marginalised residents significantly (Lees, 2008; Musterd & Andersson, 2005; Uitermark 2003; Uitermark et al., 2007). The hope that the inflow of the creative class to cities would also lead to better living opportunities through mixing different classes turned out to be problematic. Neighbouring countries like Great Britain and Germany tried to improve social cohesion and civil participation through creativity. Although various initiatives are organised

at the local level in Amsterdam such as Pal West, the use of creativity for improving the situation in marginalised areas is not established at the national level in the Netherlands.

Finally, the ACRE-results underlined the importance of local networks and personal embeddedness. The creative knowledge worker is less mobile than proposed by Florida and others. In other words, the attraction of outside talent appears to be less important for a successful creative knowledge economy than the nurturing of local talent. The improvement of the attractiveness of local universities appears to be a similar important instrument as the support of local networks and the enhancement of social cohesion.

The creative knowledge policy has various elements which aim at the international scale. This includes the inflow of international talent, the establishment of international top schools for creative talent, the increase of international trade. The support of local talent, however, it is not explicitly mentioned in the programme and it is more difficult to organise. Although there are many network organisations in Amsterdam, the financial support for conferences, network meetings and other forms of meetings is less accepted than large investments in international infrastructure. Figure 4.2 shows that the number of funded networks is much smaller in the Netherlands than business initiatives or events. In the political discourse, creativity is seen as an instrument to raise productivity and economic value. As pointed out before, creativity could also be used to create common experiences, express individual identities, to enhance social cohesion and to interact socially. In the creative knowledge policy, this strand of motive has not yet gained attention.

## 6 CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This study analysed the existing policy strategies in the AMA and the Netherlands and compared them with the results of the previous ACRE studies.

On the basis of the statistical data and the surveys undertaken as well as on the basis of the three synthesis reports current policies and strategies were confronted with the actual dynamics in the region.

The previous studies of the ACRE research identified three factors: the labour market, the housing market as push factor and the importance of personal trajectories. The latter refers to Florida's notion of hyper-mobility. Asked about their motivation to work and live in a particular metropolitan region in Europe, creative knowledge workers tend not to refer to a set of location factors, but to their personal biography and their personal network in the specific region.

In the AMA, existing political concepts often involve the labour market, the improvement of agglomeration economies, and to a smaller extent the housing market. Compared to the results of the ACRE-research, the political emphasis is stronger in regard to the spatial development and the improvement of the technical infrastructure which had not been mentioned by the creative knowledge workers and managers as a central point. The strong emphasis on the spatial policy and infrastructure can be explained by the evolution of the policy field in the Netherlands and also by the methodology used in our research. Since the AMA has a very effective international transport system and is one of the most important European nodes in the global internet network, it is not surprising that the surveyed persons did not address this location factor in detail. Economic and spatial policies are often interrelated in the Netherlands. Economic policy and also housing policy is introduced in terms of spatial policy which explains the stronger spatial orientation in the policy documents. As we explained in chapter 5, creative city policy was introduced in the Netherlands as spatial policy and latter re-oriented toward economic issues. Nevertheless, the strong orientation towards urban creative milieus or the support of temporary work space for creative entrepreneurs appears to be the result of political negotiations in Amsterdam rather than an underlined need of creative knowledge workers.

In relation to the economic programmes in the Netherlands, we identified a structural weakness of this policy field. Florida conceives creative city policy as local endeavour due to the different governmental structure in the US. In the Netherlands, the economic policy for the creative industries is mainly developed at the national scale, but it is executed at the regional scale. The expenditure is often shared between the national and local (provincial) level. Since the regional level of government consists of voluntary co-operations between selected municipalities and most of the financial resources are allocated to temporary associations of individual actors through successful applications in national tenders, there is the danger that this policy field stays unstable and the resources are rather allocated by the ability to access financial resources than by need. This problem is virulent in particular,

because the creative industries comprises young small and medium-sized companies which either lack resources or expertise to bargain in the political field.

If we analyse the evolution of policies oriented toward creativity and innovation, it becomes clear

- firstly that the implementation of economic approaches in culture-oriented policy approaches is rather new and policy makers still need to convince their peers to take action in this field.
- Secondly, the economic policy in the Netherland was re-oriented in 2003 towards the increase of productivity by using innovation and creativity. Compared to other countries, the OECD observed that the application of scientific knowledge from public research institutions in private businesses is less common than in other countries (OECD 2006, p. 103ff), because the national research institutions were mainly oriented to consult the public sectors.
- Thirdly, our interviewees also report that the implementation of creativity and innovation in existing business processes is often considered as a supplementary activity which is not essential for the production process. Similarly, professional creative products and services have a weak position in the production chain and they can be easily substituted or removed from the production chain.

The ACRE-results brought the importance of personal trajectories and the need to address the local talent to the fore. In the AMA, various programmes address the international realm. The support of exporting enterprises through trade missions and fairs, and the establishment of an expat-centre which reduces the application time for incoming knowledge migrants are examples of this strategy.

The policy makers, however, report that instruments such as networking which address local collaborations are less accepted in the city administrations.

If we consider the evolution of culture-oriented policy, culture was often used as an instrument to address social cohesion and to enhance participation. The policy of municipal art departments and the development of cultural plans were motivated in terms of expression of place or group identity or to generate social interaction between residents. Although the 1970s might be considered as the heyday of community-oriented approaches, the notion of community development is still present in cultural departments. At the moment, however, these goals are not articulated by creativity policies. In particular, at the national level creativity policy is strongly oriented towards economic policy and profitability. In the local programmes on creative industries, elements which address social cohesion and social justice are present, but often confined to single projects. Interviewed experts, however, state that the current discourse about creativity and urban development increasingly demands to re-address social aspects. Recently, the Business Panel on future EU innovation policy stated: *“Innovation has been a central EU priority over the last decade. But the priority has been investing in knowledge rather than utilising it rapidly and powerfully for societal benefit and development...Current European innovation policy fails to:*

- *Leverage the power of networks and social innovation*
- *Implement community level actions orchestrated around major societal challenges*
- *Invest ambitiously and strategically in the future*

- *Open up innovation to the creativity of a broad range of people and ideas*
- *Anticipate the new institutions and processes that will drive future innovation.*”(Business Panel on future EU innovation policy 2009, p. 3).

Urban competitiveness is currently defined in economic terms, but the position of metropolitan regions also depends on their ability to tackle social challenges such as the future labour market and educational participation of young adults, social exclusion due to age, youth or cultural diversity or the aging population in Europe.



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**List of interviewees**

Richard Hoving, Chamber of Commerce

Martijn Arnoldus, Kennisland

Joke van Antwerpen, Amsterdamse Innovatie Motor

Edwin Oskam, Dienst Economische Zaken Amsterdam

Gerard Jansen, Kennisland Almere

Lucas Hendricks, External Advisor Topstad