

- *Creative industries – Richard Florida – Local economic development – Cluster*

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## **Learning from the Past? Why ‘Creative Industries’ can hardly be Created by Local/Regional Government Policies**

*Aus der Vergangenheit lernen? Warum ‚Kreative Branchen‘ kaum durch lokale/regionale Politiken kreiert werden können*

With 1 Figure and 1 Table

US regional economist *Richard Florida* has developed simple, but very popular ideas to foster regional economic growth: attracting and halting members of the so-called ‘creative class’ by steering the focus of local government development policies for culture, tolerance (towards ethnic and other kinds of minorities) and knowledge. Members of the creative class, characterised by indicators of talent, technology and tolerance, should feel at home in the cities – the result of which would be that creatives either stay in the city where they already lived before or move to those cities which possess the named characteristics. The larger the number of creative people in a city, the better the economic performance of the city. Why that? Because, as *Florida* postulates, creative people produce economic value added for the region where they live as they more often (than non-creative people) start successful firms and more often engage in high-growth sectors of the economy. Furthermore they are assumed – as an aggregate – to be able to attract existent firms: ‘jobs follow (creative) people’ instead of ‘people follow jobs’ to cite an old, but – thanks to *Florida* – still modern debate among economists. As *Florida* in his own empirical studies focuses on U.S. metropolitan areas only, there is a need to close the significant research gap in terms of empirical evidence outside the U.S., given the great popularity of his ideas among policy-makers outside the U.S. In the paper five of *Florida’s* main hypotheses are discussed in an explorative approach based upon the available literature. None of these hypotheses receive sufficient support. Consequently, it will hardly be possible to create creative industries by developing related government policies. Comparing government policies in favour of creative industries with government policies of former eras (when, e.g., clusters or high-tech regions belonged to the targets of such policies) there is not much empirical evidence that policy-makers are able or even willing to learn from previous experiences – and failures.

## 1. Introduction

Euphoria about creative industries can be felt throughout economic and cultural policy: National, regional and local governments think that by supporting creative people, creative industries and even creative clusters they can revive national, regional and local economies (cf. DCMS 2009, Arge 2009). They do this even though many important theoretical problems relating to the concept of the ‘creative class’ upon which their approach is based have not been resolved and empirical findings are either lacking or even point in the opposite direction (cf. Hansen and Niedomysl 2009, Martin-Brelot et al. 2009). Similar to the situation with the cluster concept, policy is rushing ahead of scientific findings: Florida’s ‘creative class’ concept, particularly his conclusions for economic policy, has attracted much criticism within the scientific community, but this has not damaged its popularity among local policy-makers (cf. Peck 2005).

Florida (2004) defines the so-called ‘creative class’ with the help of occupation-based regional aggregates, i.e., growth rate of patents per inhabitant (technology), share of inhabitants with bachelor degrees (talent), and a mix of melting pot, integration, boho and gay index (tolerance). He breaks his ‘creative class’ down into the super-creative core (scientists, higher education), creative professionals (education, management, healthcare) and bohemians (artists). As a result he assigns about 30 % of the workforce in U.S. metropolitan areas to the ‘creative class’. Florida’s central idea (2002a,b, 2004, 2005a,b) assumes that when selecting a location, companies in knowledge-intensive sectors in particular are attracted by the presence of certain groups of professions, the members of the ‘creative class’ defined above. According to this hypothesis, companies and therefore jobs follow the existing labour. This has, according to Florida, a direct and positive influence on the economic prosperity of a region: The more creative people live in a region,

the stronger the regional economic growth. In principle, every region has the chance to reposition itself in the competition of regions, for “the creative age is a wide-open game. No single country or region has a lock on it” (Florida 2004: xxiii).

The aim of this paper is to develop arguments supporting the proposition that creative regions can seldom be created by explicit government policies. Politicians could potentially learn from the previous two mantras of local/regional economic policy, which is why they are briefly outlined here. The goal cannot be to subject creative economic policies to an evaluation according to efficiency and effectiveness criteria – which would certainly be necessary after a few years. The mantra is still too young for that; but this paper does include references to an ex-ante assessment.

The concern of this paper is not solely academic. In times of highly indebted public budgets, careful consideration should be given to how and with what expectations taxpayers’ money should be spent – and scientific analyses can be of assistance in this. This is not changed by the fact that creative-economy support policies, compared to the instruments of the earlier mantras of local economic development policies, are comparatively cheap (Peck 2005).

This paper does not relate explicitly or exclusively to the German scene, particularly as empirical research on creative-economy support policies in Germany still is very much in its infancy. At the same time, however, there is a certain concentration on German regions and cities, as these are the areas the author knows best. Many features of creative-economy support policies are at least similar in Western European countries since Florida developed his concept and marketed it virtually perfectly.

This paper demonstrates that important theoretical assumptions of Florida’s concept of

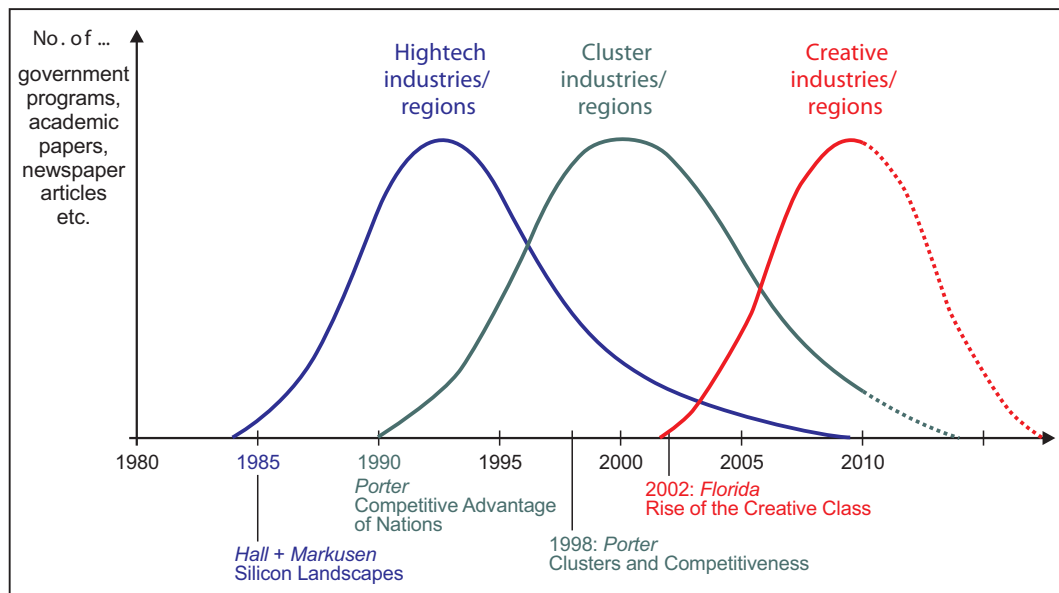


Fig. 1 Three mantras of local/regional economic development policies since the 1980s  
 Drei Mantras lokaler/regionaler Wirtschaftspolitik seit den 1980er Jahren

the three Ts are at least empirically contested (mobility of creative people, causal nexus between creative sector and economic prosperity, openness of the target groups to policy programmes), hence the warning against backing the same horse in an all too one-sided, uncritical and homogenous fashion in all places – and therefore repeating the mistakes of the past. The same applies as with earlier mantras: Government policy cannot achieve these ambitious economic goals (at least not everywhere), the inflationary use of the same concept in too many (and therefore also many unsuitable) places generates unfavourable image effects for the (in some places undoubtedly sensible) concept and in places where the goal (in this case, the goal of establishing a significant creative sector) is achieved, this rarely has anything to do with explicit government policies aimed at doing so.

Three mantras of local/regional economic development policy over the past three decades

can be identified and are presented in *Figure 1* in ideal-typical and stylised form. A more or less congruent sequence of the support of high-tech industries since the beginning of the 80s, of public support of sectoral-regional clusters a decade later and the current focus on creative industries can be demonstrated using indices such as the number of scientific journal articles, publications in general, public-policy programmes and government subsidies. There are certainly chronological overlaps: The Dortmund Technology Park, for example, celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2010 and made an essential contribution to the development of a truly high-tech economy in the middle of an old-industrialised region. Cluster policies are most definitely not out of fashion in 2010 either. There are also overlaps in terms of conceptual content: In some places business incubators are instruments of cluster policies and clusters are being considered for creative industries, too ('creative clusters'). By the same token, the

Item	Mantra of local economic development policy		
	High-tech regions, high-tech industries	Regional-sectoral cluster	Creative industries, creative regions
<b>National and regional framework condition (economic, political)</b>	Decrease of relocation potential, focus on knowledge-intensive products, innovation orientation	Increasing interregional and interfirm competition (global level)	Social turn in economics: Increasing relevance of non-economic determinants of economic development, cuts in public budgets
<b>Aims and motivations of policy actors</b>	Support of SMEs and of new innovative firms, endogenous regional development	Support of firms located in cluster industries, focus on specific industries (not necessarily high-tech industries)	Support of creative people, SMEs, new firms, combination of urban development policies and economic development
<b>Instruments of local economic development policies (selection)</b>	Business incubators, programmes to support innovative SMEs, technology transfer support programmes	Network support programmes, 'cluster platforms', cluster contests at the federal level	Project support, loans, new firm foundation, local music scenes, contests, subsidies for experts, support for selected focus industries
<b>Actors of local economic development policies</b>	Public development agencies and mayors, partly in PPP schemes	Public development agencies, often in co-operation with private firms	Culture managers, only partially local economic development agencies
<b>Spatial levels of policy intervention (supranational, national, regional, local)</b>	Mainly local/regional, at the beginning also supranational and national	Mainly regional, sometimes national and supranational	Mainly local, but national impact as well (UK!)
<b>Role models (regions) and multipliers/accelerators (selection)</b>	Silicon Valley, Sophia Antipolis, Cambridge Science Park; <i>Peter Hall, Ann Markusen</i>	Baden-Württemberg, Silicon Valley; <i>Michael Porter</i>	Silicon Valley, Austin, Seattle and many others; <i>Richard Florida</i>
<b>Theoretical foundation</b>	Flexible production and specialisation, industrial districts, industrial development paths, innovative milieu, long wave theory	<i>Porter's diamond</i> : firm strategy, factor conditions, related/supporting industries, demand conditions	Agglomeration theory, social network theory
<b>Basic theoretical assumptions</b>	Synergy effects of spatial agglomeration of new technology-based firms, spatial immobility of high-tech firms and start-ups	Spatial proximity within cluster leads to increase of productivity, of innovative capacity and of new firm foundation	Spatial mobility of creative people, their preference of tolerant cities; gays more creative than others; creative people a condition for regional economic growth
<b>Empirical validity of these assumptions</b>	Given at places with necessary conditions	Valid in several clusters, but not every cluster generates positive effects only	Still a research gap: few interregional comparable empirical studies
<b>Causal nexus: policy instruments and empirical evidence?</b>	No: most high-tech regions emerged without explicit policy support	Loose only: most cluster policies have not (yet) generated clusters	To be researched: most government policies are too young

*Tab. 1* Characteristics of three most recent mantras of local/regional economic development policies (Source: Sternberg 2011: 225f., modified) / *Merkmale der drei jüngsten Mantras lokaler/regionaler Wirtschaftspolitik (Quelle: verändert nach Sternberg 2011: 225 f.)*

attention of economic policy has clearly shifted away from high-tech regions and clusters towards creative-economy support policies.

This paper is structured as follows. The next chapter develops a framework that makes it possible to analyse the current and previous two mantras of local/regional economic development policies. The question of the extent to which political players can exert an influence is central to the considerations. Chapters three and four deal with high-tech regions (with business incubators as the most popular instrument) and sectoral-regional clusters. The analysis concept developed in chapter two is applied here. The central aim is to explain briefly the foundations of the creation of the mantras themselves, the creation of the high-tech regions and clusters, and any causalities between the two phenomena. Chapter five investigates the emerging mantra of creative industries. Differences between and parallels with the two previous mantras as well as any learning effects among politicians are also addressed. Based on these findings, chapter six develops arguments against the ability of government policies to create creative industries/creative regions. The conclusions present hypotheses on the ability of local economic politicians to learn and identify potential areas for future research.

## 2. Methodological Approach

This paper uses existing theoretical, empirical and political literature on creative industries and political support of them and tries to draw conclusions regarding the ability of creative industries to be created (by government policies). It is

primarily explorative in nature, i.e., it is not based on the author's own primary data, for example on the effectiveness and efficiency of government policies to support the creative economy. This kind of data cannot be used from an outside source, either, as creative economy policies – not only in Germany – are too young to be able to be subjected to ex-post evaluation, particularly with sufficient empirical evidence. Therefore, a different course has to be taken. Analysis criteria are developed and used for this paper which makes it possible to describe and evaluate the three most recent mantras of local economic development policy with regard to the question at hand. This analysis framework consists of 11 items that are described in the following and used in the subsequent three chapters and supplemented with empirical findings (see *Tab. 1*).

The economic and political framework conditions at the time of the development of the new mantra are among the important determinants that influence the mantra itself and the regional development. Completely different local economic development policies are developed under national and regional economic conditions marked by unemployment, demographic change and tight public funding than in regions with an abundance of well-paid jobs, a (relative) lack of highly qualified labour, a growing population (based upon a surplus both of births and inward migration) and public budgets that are not (highly) indebted. These – admittedly exaggerated – extremes may be symbolised in Germany by some districts in the Ruhr area or in East Germany on the one hand and by the Greater Munich region on the other. These framework conditions influence both the nature (and the impact) of any local economic devel-

opment policies and the respective regional economic growth in general.

The goals and motives of local economic policy actors are linked in part to the aforementioned aspect. Policy-makers' actions are driven by political-economical considerations; they want to be (re-)elected and therefore have to generate support for their actions among voters and within their own party. They can make use of these goals with various instruments (see below). The ability of local/regional economic politicians to act is influenced to a considerable extent by budget-related framework conditions. In times of tight public funding, low-cost instruments are more popular with all groups (parties, other politicians, voters) than very cost-intensive instruments.

At the instrument level, local economic policy in principle has the entire range of sectoral policy instruments at its disposal (cf. for example the overview given by *Stimson et al.* 2002, *Pike et al.* 2006). The instruments differ particularly in terms of the intensity of their intervention and their goals, but also in terms of their costs, their periods of application and their target groups (companies vs. private, large companies vs. small vs. start-ups, knowledge-intensive vs. others).

In principle, all those involved in economic policy and the organisations they represent (ministries, offices etc.) may potentially be considered actors in local economic development policy. In most cases, these actors are from the public sector, part of the public-private partnership strategy, but more recently also in cooperation with private or commercial actors. The relevance of private/commercial commitments within local economic development policies can have a considerable impact on their success, although the evaluation of that success by commercial actors and publicly financed economic politicians may differ.

The aforementioned actors of public creative economic policy can act on four principal spatial scales: the supra-national level (e.g. of the EU), the national level (federal government), the regional level (federal state or larger metropolitan areas) and the local level (counties/districts). The creative-economy policies each pursue similar goals and in some cases make use of similar instruments, but at the same time are rarely coordinated beyond the scope of the spatial scales. If the role of government policy in the emergence of creative industries in certain urban areas is to be evaluated, the multi-level problem has always to be resolved, or at least documented (for parallels to cluster policies see *Sternberg et al.* 2010).

Experience of new economic policy strategies in many countries has shown that the impetus in terms of content often comes from abroad. Foreign (regional) role models and/or forward thinkers were and still are often used to develop strategies more or less adapted to the local situation. When these role models or their multipliers/accelerators come from a country whose economic development long served as the role model to beat all others – such as the United States – this makes it considerably easier to boost acceptance in one's own country, which is important to the economic politicians responsible.

This argumentation can also be applied to the theoretical foundations underlying the new mantra. A good local economic development strategy has a solid theoretical foundation – just as a good theory must always stand up to practical implementation. The intensity and nature of the relationship between policy and the related theories are an important aspect of analysis, and the speed of diffusion of a new instrument in the scientific world and in the world of practitioners in particular may be relevant (see *Kiese's* (2008) 'mind the gap' argument).

Central assumptions regarding the economic impact may be derived (ex-ante) from the

theoretical foundations of the economic development policies and from the empirical evidence of this theory. For example, spatial proximity plays an important role in all three of the mantras dealt with here and the related theories, as do other dimensions of proximity to a certain extent (*Boschma* 2005).

The empirical validity of these assumptions, derived from ex-post assessments of the relevant theories and the government policies based upon them, is the litmus test, but this test is not easy to perform, methodologically speaking. A key question for the subject of this paper is whether the postulated causal nexus between a (successful) political instrument and regional economic prosperity can be demonstrated empirically. This is where several of the aforementioned steps of analysis come together. To answer the question of whether creative-economy policy has contributed in any given region to the creation of a creative industry of a significant scale and with a certain sustainability, it is precisely this causal nexus that has to be analysed. An illustrative example: The Dortmund Technology Park is without doubt the most successful example of a technology park in Germany – but this has not made the entire Dortmund region a high-tech region on an international scale; on the other hand, the no. 1 high-tech region in Germany, the Munich region, also has a business incubator/technology park that has not been without success, but which has at best only marginally contributed to the success of this high-tech region (see *Sternberg* and *Tamásy* 1999 on the reasons behind the success of this region).

### 3. High-Tech Regions as the Mantra of the 1980s – 1990s

Around the beginning of the 1980s local economic development policy in several western industrialised countries changed radically. Due to the drastically falling potential for firm

relocation (both on a global and on a national scale), the mobility-oriented regional policy aimed at the acquisition of branch plants, which had dominated by then, became less important. The rise of innovation-oriented regional policy (*Ewers* and *Wettmann* 1980) began, according to which regional policy in an industrialised country such as Germany could also concentrate on its comparative advantages: orientation towards human capital with the goal of offering innovative, high-tech products and services on the global market. (Regional) policy has to develop corresponding infrastructures and policy programmes to support this goal. Another paradigm shift within the economy also had to be taken into consideration: away from focusing on large firms and their branch plants, and towards small and medium-sized enterprises, in particular new firms (start-ups) (the key, at the latest since *David Birch's* thesis in 1987, was 'small is beautiful'). The assumption at the time was that start-ups, which are always young and mostly small, as well as SMEs in general, had a great number of potential advantages in the innovation process compared with incumbent firms (flexibility, openness to innovation), but enjoyed explicit support from government policies due to other comparative disadvantages (financing, power) in combination with market failure.

Silicon Valley in northern California was (and still is) *the* regional role model of a high-tech region. Hordes of policy-makers from all countries and of all political colours descended to learn how a high-tech region could be created. It was assumed virtually without question that the economic success of this formerly agricultural region was (at least in part) a result of policy. The titles of relevant scientific publications supported these politicians in their actions (cf. for example *Miller* and *Côté* 1987). Other scholars emphasised on the other hand that Silicon Valley was not the result of an explicit economic or technology policy (*Sturgeon* 2000, *Sternberg* 1998). Nor did the Stanford Industrial

Park – established in 1951 and neither the first nor the most successful science park in the United States – contribute to the rise of Silicon Valley; rather did it benefit from the rise of the region which was already under way. Nevertheless, policy played a role in Silicon Valley, not as an explicit local economic development policy aimed at promoting the region, but as an unintended effect of national technology and military policies of the Department of Defense (DoD) and NASA (Sternberg 1996). Their massive R&D investments in California and their R&D labs at research-intensive universities, particularly in the Bay Area, were decisive factors in the genesis of Silicon Valley, its universities and its new firms. But of course that was not an explicit goal of NASA and the DoD. That goal was to safeguard technological progress and national security.

Largely untroubled by these findings, in many countries business incubators and technology parks became *the* instrument with which high-tech regions could supposedly be created. The launch of the Berliner Innovations- und Gründerzentrum (BIG; Berlin Business Incubator) in Berlin in 1983 was followed by numerous other projects within a few years, supported by programmes of the federal government (only for a short time), federal states and local governments. Sternberg et al. (1996) documented 120 facilities in the first Germany-wide assessment of business incubators; the ADT (Arbeitsgemeinschaft Deutscher Technologiezentren – association of German technology centres) alone currently counts at least 158 ‘innovation centres’ among its members while about 300 ‘innovation centres’ in the broadest sense exist in Germany (Baranowski et al. 2010). Business incubators are in no way limited to high-tech regions; they are particularly common in rural and formerly industrial regions (such as North Rhine-Westphalia) where local economic politicians liked to join in the race to become the most dynamic city and sometimes awakened totally unrealistic expectations. Business incu-

bators are an ideal instrument of this era that fitted with the role model of the high-tech region: focus on young technology-based firms, spatial concentration of start-ups, clear local ties, focus on SMEs, endogenous potential (most of the founders of new firms come from the same region and stay there even after they have outgrown and left the business incubator). The logic was simple: A business incubator helps many start-ups to survive and grow, and these start-ups then collectively create an economically prosperous high-tech region. After almost 20 years of scientific research on business incubators, the empirical reality of course now looks different (e.g., Aerts et al. 2007, Tamasy 2007, Sternberg et al. 1996, Schwartz and Gothner 2009). There are few economically successful business incubators that have become self-supporting and therefore independent of public funding. In Germany, Dortmund is doubtless one such positive – but far from representative – example. Even in cases where the business incubators are successful according to their own (often unverifiable) criteria, they have not created a German Silicon Valley – which never was a realistic expectation, but, however, one which some local politicians cherished. Two notes should be added. First, business incubators may have been the most popular instrument of the regional/local economic development policy of this mantra aimed at creating high-tech regions, but they were not the only instrument. Programmes such as the federal EXIST programme to support start-ups from universities, or ‘Science City Ulm’ had very similar intentions. Second, it should not go unmentioned that business incubators still exist to this day (even if only a few are now being newly established) and many of them have shown a longevity not expected by many critics at their birth. Nevertheless, this instrument, the associated paradigm and the associated hopes for a high-tech region – are consigned to the past as the framework conditions as well as the scientific debate have changed.



#### 4. Clusters as *the Mantra of the 1990s* until the Middle of this Decade

Regional-sectoral clusters are clearly inseparably linked with the name of *Michael Porter*. Two decades ago (1990) he stressed in his bestseller 'The competitive advantage of nations', which did not focus on the regional but on the national level, that the interdependent relationship between factor conditions, demand conditions, related/supporting industries and firm strategies and national competition explains the global competitiveness of national industries. Later *Porter* (1998) changed the perspective from national to regional, arguing that regional-sectoral clusters increase the competitiveness of the related regions and the firms located there. Since then the cluster concept has been extremely popular among policy-makers and practitioners thinking about the promotion of innovative capabilities and economic growth. Defined by *Porter* himself (1998: 197f.) as "geographic concentrations of interconnected companies, specialised suppliers, service providers, firms in related industries, and associated institutions (for example, universities, standards agencies, and trade associations) in particular fields that compete but also cooperate", clusters are widely regarded as a panacea for national, regional and local competitiveness. Starting with its conceptual fuzziness, the cluster concept also received a fair share of academic criticism (see, for example, *Martin and Sunley* 2003). However, academic dissatisfaction has yet failed to undermine the widespread enthusiasm of consultants, politicians and economic development practitioners for clusters, although many interpret *Porter's* cluster idea in very simplified terms – a further parallel with the previous mantra.

With the continuing popularity of cluster promotion, it is often overlooked that the most shining cases of successful spatial concentrations of industry emerged and grew without

explicit government intention (*Bresnahan and Gambardella* 2004, *Braunerhjelm and Feldman* 2006). Of over 800 clusters identified worldwide in the Harvard Business School's Cluster Meta Study, only one emerged through a public initiative (*van der Linde* 2005, see *Sternberg et al.* 2004 for a similar argument). Therefore, it is now widely accepted that governments can only create favourable conditions for the emergence of clusters and facilitate their growth and restructuring once they have emerged (see also *Fornahl et al.* 2010). Such cluster policies can be defined as 'efforts of government to develop and support clusters in a particular region' (*Hospers and Beugelsdijk* 2002: 382). Their high degree of public agency sets them apart from business-led cluster initiatives in which cluster firms assume centre stage, while government and/or the research community only play a supportive role (cf. *Sölvell et al.* 2003).

For cluster policies, structural and institutional differences between nations and regions still imply that a one-size-fits-all cluster policy is hardly feasible, the same as for other local development strategies (see *Bristow* 2005, *Tödtling and Trippel* 2005). Furthermore, cumulative and path-dependent learning-by-doing in policy and practice contribute to persisting variety not only in the interpretation and application of the cluster concept, but also in the rationales and goals of cluster policies. Cluster policies emerged at the interfaces of formerly isolated policies, especially science and technology policy, industrial policy and regional policy which converged into an amalgam like regionalised innovation policy (see *Sternberg et al.* 2011, for a comparison of U.S. and German cluster policies). While cluster policies are clearly helpful by integrating previously separate fields of policy and increasing a region's organising capacity by overcoming intraregional competition to create multi-stakeholder alliances, there is a strong need for independent evaluation of cluster

policy processes and their impact. The very first results of an econometric and innovation-oriented evaluation of Bavaria's cluster offensive show that the likelihood of becoming an innovator in the target industries, together with access to external know-how, cooperation with public scientific institutes, and the availability of suitable R&D personnel increased for firms in the cluster while R&D expenditures decreased significantly for firms in target industries (see *Falck et al. 2010*).

### **5. Creative Economy as *the new Mantra* – Parallels with, and Differences from, Previous Mantras, Learning Effects among Politicians?**

Creative industries and policies to support them are without doubt *the new mantra* of local economic development policy – not only in Germany. There are parallels with the previous mantra: The driving force who markets his idea and himself perfectly comes from the United States, was already a respected scientist, albeit only within his field, the scientific community is discussing his idea intensively and mostly critically, and policy is using the concept faster and less critically than would be in line with academic debate. The concept of the 'creative class' provides development policy with solutions that are supposedly simple to communicate, easy to implement and 'need not be especially costly' (*Peck 2005: 749*).

*Florida's* main idea (2002a,b, 2004, 2005a,b), shortly described in the introductory chapter of this paper, is based on his "3 T's", i.e. technology, talent and tolerance, and on occupation-orientated regional aggregates divided into scientists, higher education, education, management, healthcare, artists. Many European academics criticise the all too generous and random definition of the creative sector, e. g. *Pratt* (2005: 33): "It would be difficult to identify a non-creative industry". When aggregating the

creative people to a creative region (characterised by an above-average share of creative individuals or industries) several methodological issues arise: thresholds between creative and non-creative regions, absolute vs. relative measures, aggregation issues (individual vs. industry vs. regional creativity). A clear operationalisation of the creative sector/industries is needed, however, otherwise the whole concept would be limited to pure marketing and assertion. Still, the 'creative economy' is extremely heterogenous, a very fuzzy concept (*Pratt 2005, Markusen 2006*). To date the definitions of what a creative industry is vary enormously, even within a country. In Germany, the Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs defines creative industries at the national level as companies that are primarily profit-oriented, concerned with the creation, production, distribution and/or media dissemination of cultural/creative goods and services. Accordingly, the cultural and creative economic sector encompasses eleven core industries or sub-markets: music industry, book market, art market, film industry, broadcasting industry, performing arts market, design industry, architecture market, the press, advertising industry and software/games industry (cf. *BMWi 2009: 3*). The delimitation of the 'creative class', particularly the delimitation between the competing conceptual cultural vs. economic perspective and between cultural industries and creative industries (cf. *Uricchio 2004*), and the sometimes fuzzy conceptualisation of government policies remain problems for empirical research, however.

Not all of *Florida's* hypotheses are really new. The idea that talent (human capital) and technology (knowledge-intensive industries) are important to regional growth has never been disputed, at the latest since the advent of the first mantra of high-tech industries. *Glaeser* (1994) showed that a strong urban concentration of qualified labour exerts considerable positive effects on regional growth – which in turn pro-

notes the (intra- and interregional) exchange of knowledge between highly qualified people (Storper and Venables 2004). Works by Jacobs (1969), for example, or the Lund School on the selection of domicile by highly qualified people (Andersson 1985; later Törnqvist 2005) demonstrated early that this called not only for agglomeration economies but also for cultural ('soft') location factors and a certain diversity and urbanity. The new aspect of Florida's concept of the 3 Ts is predominantly based on a broader definition of the 'creative class' that goes beyond the traditional concept of human capital and emphasises the decisive role of creativity (and not simply formal qualifications) in regional growth. According to Florida's theses, spatially very mobile creative people migrate to those regions and cities with low barriers to entry and where the environment is tolerant, i.e., open to minorities. Knowledge-intensive companies for their part locate in places preferred by creative people (i.e. 'jobs follow people'). The resulting question about the effects creative people have on regional economic growth has so far not been adequately answered, neither empirically nor theoretically (cf. Section 6 for more detail). In addition to the mobility of creative people, the central assumptions in Florida's concept of the 'creative class' also include the growth-supporting effect of the 'creative class', the rise in the quality of life and comfort in urban quarters as a result of the inward migration of bohemians (Florida and Mellander 2010), which largely ignores negative aspects such as gentrification,

To date there are scarcely any scientific, empirically based assessments of the effects of the numerous efforts of national, regional and in particular local governments to create or promote creative industries (cf., however, Ebert and Gnad 2006 on the Ruhr Area). This is understandable, taking into account the mostly young age of these activities. However, the very limited number of policy evaluation studies reveals disappointing results (Jayne 2005). Florida offers supposed-

ly simple solutions for local development policies: "I like to tell city leaders that finding ways to help support a local music scene can be [...] far more effective than building a downtown mall" (-Florida 2004: 229). Thus: the creativity 'script' for policy-makers is simple, cheap and not very controversial (among policy-makers).

Along with some support (for example, Marlet and Van Woerkens 2007, Rutten and Gelissen 2008), Florida has mostly received criticism from the scientific community for his hypotheses. This is another parallel with the triumph of Porter's cluster idea among local politicians. This criticism relates in particular to the robustness of the theory (Glaeser 2004, Storper and Scott 2009), the empirical validity (for example, Hansen and Niedomysl 2009) and its implementation and implementability in local creative-economy policy (cf., for example Peck 2005, Jayne 2005, Galloway and Dunlop 2007).

## 6. Arguments Against the Ability of Creative-Economy Policies to Create 'Creative Regions'

The first two mantras show various parallels with the current mantra, for example the lack of clear, operationalised definitions, a certain kind of arbitrariness in the definition of the central terms, an overlapping in terms of industries and regions, and the relevance of SMEs and entrepreneurship. Two of these parallels are particularly relevant to this paper and have so far only been discussed for creative-economy policies at a very elementary level. First, empirical research shows that the existence of either a high-tech region or a regional-sectoral cluster does not automatically mean regional economic growth. Conversely, high-growth regions do not have to be high-tech regions or have regional-sectoral clusters. Second, the existence of corresponding explicit economic policies to support high-tech regions or clusters is neither a necessary condition nor a sufficient condition for the emergence and

growth of a high-tech region and a cluster. Accordingly, the following questions, which are to be answered empirically, are raised both for creative economies and related economic policies: Can a region prosper economically without having (a disproportionately high number of) creative industries and creative people? And: can a creative-economy policy create creative industries and creative regions, or are the corresponding policies even a precondition for their emergence and growth?

This section answers these questions in conjunction with the discussion of five hypotheses that can be derived either explicitly or implicitly from *Florida's* publications. Three of these hypotheses are indirectly related to government policies (they relate to the effects of creative industries that government policy would like to achieve) and the remaining two are directly linked. I shall begin with the first three hypotheses.

*Hypothesis 1: Creative people are more spatially mobile than other gainfully employed people and prefer regions with strengths in the areas of technology, talent and tolerance.*

According to the 'creative class' concept, creative people are particularly interregionally mobile and have high and very specific requirements of a location (e.g. great importance of amenities in the target region), as *Lee et al.* (2004) show for selected U.S. regions. There are, however, no empirical findings on these processes as a comparative approach for German regions or most regions outside the United States. There are a few more recent empirical studies of the spatial mobility of highly qualified people who, as we are aware, have a considerable overlap with creative people, but also differ significantly from the bohemians. A careful résumé of these papers shows that technology and talent have a certain significance as pull factors in the migration of highly qualified

people, though tolerance does not (cf. *Moeller et al.* 2009). *Haisch and Klöpper* (2007) do show for Basel that creative people prefer to live in local areas with low taxation rates and high levels of tolerance. However, they obviously did not move into these areas because of specific locational characteristics (like high levels of tolerance). Creative people influence the locational factors rather than responding to existing locational characteristics (for example by inward migration). As *Martin-Brelot et al.* (2009) show, at least for Europe, *Florida's* hypothesis overestimates both the spatial mobility of the 'creative class' and the role of soft factors while 'personal trajectories' are completely disregarded. *Hansen and Niedomysl* (2009), employing Swedish survey and register data, were not able to find empirical support for *Florida's* theoretical arguments about the mobility of the 'creative class': migration rates of the 'creative class' are almost the same as for other groups. Migration of the 'creative class' takes place just after finishing university and its locational choice is determined by job availabilities but not by place characteristics like a high proportion of gays or a high level of tolerance among the local population. On the basis of surveys among the artist scene in Minneapolis/St. Paul, *Markusen* (2006: 1938) also doubts the significance of locational factors: "I have suggested that the attractiveness of certain cities for artists is not the result of atomistic responses to amenities but, rather, is shaped by investment decisions that cities, states and funders make in artistic space and organisations". Finally, *Scott* (2010) emphasises that migrations of highly qualified people (he uses data for engineers) are mainly based upon job opportunities and that amenities are totally irrelevant – except for retired engineers or engineers that are close to retirement for whom warm winters were a relevant migration determinant.

It is obviously not sufficient to simply use socio-economic data aggregated at the regional

level to address the problem fully. The problem of the causes of the migration of creative people requires further-reaching empirical research and, in parts, other methods that make it possible to determine the geographical and social trajectories of creative people and the dynamic dimension. Social network analysis (cf. *Beckert* 2005; *Degenne* and *Forsé* 2004) and the analysis of transnational communities and new kinds of cosmopolitanism (*Tarrius* 2000) represent potential methodological alternatives. So far, it has not been possible to confirm the aforementioned hypothesis unambiguously.

*Hypothesis 2: The specific spatial mobility of creative people has positive economic effects on the migrants' target regions ('jobs follow people' rather than 'people follow jobs')*

Migrations of highly qualified knowledge carriers, both inward and outward, influence the development potential within a region by controlling work as a factor of production both quantitatively and qualitatively. Conversely, however, successful knowledge-based regional development can also influence the attraction of highly qualified labour and therefore act as a stimulant of migration. This very old debate of 'jobs follow people' versus 'people follow jobs' is currently enjoying a revival as a result of *Florida's* postulation of the 'creative class' (*Florida* 2002a,b, 2004, 2005a, *Steinnes* 1982 and most recently *Storper* and *Scott* 2009, *Hoogstra* et al. 2005, *Hansen* and *Niedomysl* 2009). (At least) two aspects give rise to doubts about the validity of the hypothesis that creative people (and the regions they migrate to) act as pull factors for companies that relocate there for that reason and therefore bring jobs to the region. First, bohemians and artists, i.e., the proportion of creative people who are not counted among the highly qualified, would differ from the rest of the 'creative class' in such characteristics, besides many others, as the motives for their

migration, the frequency of their migration and the consequences of their migration. They migrate less frequently, less frequently for economic reasons, and with less significant economic consequences for the target region than is the case with highly qualified people. Second, doubts remain about the causality. Silicon Valley in California – high-tech region, sectoral-regional cluster and creative region in one – is evidence of this. During the genesis of this economic region in the 1950s the human capital developed endogenously. Regional growth at this time was not the result of a local environment characterised by tolerance or creativity, or that was particularly highly educated, but of the growth of a small number of rapidly growing high-tech firms. Their growth and the increasing employment opportunities together with classical agglomeration economies were the main reasons for the attraction of qualified labour in the following phases (cf. *Storper* and *Scott* 2009).

*Hypothesis 3: A greater proportion of creative people in a region (than in other regions) increases its prosperity and growth*

This hypothesis, which is central to *Florida's* concept (*Florida* et al. 2008), uses statistical correlations between technology, talent and tolerance to conclude there is a causal relationship between creative economies and economic prosperity. This is a question that primarily has to be answered empirically – and unfortunately there is still a significant research gap here, even though a few empirical studies have been published recently which attempt to provide evidence for the relationship between the creative sector and regional economic growth for non-U.S. regions. The results for European regions are mixed. *Marlet* and *van Woerkens* (2007) demonstrated for cities in the Netherlands that urban economic growth could be explained much better with the 'creative class' than with human capital (measured by formal

qualification). They therefore contradict criticism of *Florida*, leveled in particular by *Glaeser* (2005), that it is human capital and highly qualified people, but not creative people as a whole, who determine the economic added value. According to *Mellander* and *Florida* themselves (2007), in the case of Sweden, the 'creative class' proves to be a stronger factor in explaining regional growth than mere human capital or the level of qualification. The spatial distribution of talents also correlates with the universities, with the tolerance (i.e., in this instance openness to minorities), and with the diversity of the urban services on offer. But the statistical correlation varies depending on whether the subjects are researchers, artists or engineers. A new thesis on the growth of French agglomerations in the 1990s (*Chantelot* 2009) appears to confirm the decisive role of the 'creative class' and the correlation between open, tolerant and diversified urban environments and the spatial concentration of creative people. The few empirical studies on the subject carried out recently in Europe confirm *Florida's* assumptions in part, but not in full (*Rutten* and *Gelissen* 2008, *Clifton* 2008, *Bontje* and *Musterd* 2009, *Lorenz* and *Lundvall* 2011, *Boschma* and *Fritsch* 2009, *Fritsch* and *Stützer* 2009). In addition, they limit themselves to the analysis of regional aggregates (without performing surveys among creative people themselves) or they only encompass very few regions that are not representative for the entire country in question, such as the ACRE project (cf. [www.acre.socsci.uva.nl](http://www.acre.socsci.uva.nl)). Additional case studies of individual regions and groups of creative people are also mostly lacking, but would be useful in view of the regionally specific nature of the problem.

*Florida's* 'bohème' hypothesis, which refers to the economic impulse function of so-called 'bobos', was first only demonstrated for the two cities of Las Vegas and Sarasota. His most recent empirical evidence for the increase in

the standard of living due to the high proportion of bohemians is also based solely on U.S. metropolises (*Florida* and *Mellander* 2010). A test carried out for 242 U.S. metropolitan regions showed a strong positive correlation between the proportion of the population with university degrees and the urban economic growth rate between 1990 and 2000, but no unusually high presence of the super-creative core (*Glaeser* 2005). In addition, the causalities are unclear and interdependence is possible: Do creative people generate economic growth in metropolises or is it more likely that they are attracted by the dynamic and prosperous cities (caused by quite different processes)? There is much to suggest that several growth factors are working in parallel and systematically, but that the 'creative class' alone does not generate economic growth (see also *Donegan et al.* 2008, *Krätke* 2010).

New firms founded by creative people represent a particular subject. According to *Florida* (2005b), creative people stand out with above-average levels of entrepreneurial activity. This part of *Florida's* hypotheses is so far empirically untested for European or even German regions. Such a test would involve questioning the empirically and theoretically well-documented regional embeddedness of the locational inertia of entrepreneurs (*Stam* 2007), i.e., an innovative look at so-called exogenous start-ups and founders for which the current place of residence/work differs from the original location of the start-up. As long as empirical research does not confirm *Florida's* postulation of greater spatial mobility and disproportionately high levels of entrepreneurial activity, comprehensive creative-economy policies focusing on start-ups launched by creative people ('creative start-up clusters') should not be founded on this postulation alone. But there is unambiguous empirical evidence from entrepreneurship research that the number and quality of new firms launched by creative people,

many of whom are also classed as highly qualified people according to formal criteria, are positively influenced by a creative, and mostly by an urban, environment. A knowledge-intensive region with large quantities of highly qualified labour has a particularly high level of potential for spin-out start-ups (i.e., with companies as incubators) and for spin-off start-ups (with public research and educational institutions as incubators). So the creation of knowledge-intensive start-ups by creative people can at least partially be explained by economic and other characteristics of the entrepreneur's home region (Sternberg 2009). Interregional and international comparative empirical analyses based on GEM data show that, in most countries, due to specific agglomeration advantages some very large metropolitan regions in particular have higher proportions of knowledge-intensive start-ups than the remainder of the country in question (cf. Acs et al. 2011).

Finally, there is the important question of the potential of the 'creative class': It has to be big enough in purely quantitative terms to be able to trigger significant growth effects at the regional level at all. This depends directly on the definition of the 'creative class': By *Florida's* definition (2004), it encompasses 30 % of the gainfully employed people in the metropolitan areas he analysed. By contrast, creative-economy reports on European countries or cities that have a more realistic and understandable classification of creative industries and occupations come to far smaller proportions of under 10 % (cf., for example, Deutscher Bundestag, 2007, BMWi 2009, Arge 2009 for the situation in Austria, or Departure 2009 for that in Vienna). *Fritsch and Stützer* (2007) also calculate a proportion of just 10 % for Germany overall using *Florida's* terminology. An industry that accounts for single-digit proportions of the regional economy in terms of employment, gross value added or taxes can only justify limited economic expectations.

*Hypothesis 4: A creative-economy policy that applies the Floridian 'prescription' will set the aforementioned mechanisms in motion (causal nexus between policy and creative-economy effect)*

For government's creative policy measures to be successful they need to fulfill some necessary conditions. To mention just some of them:

- Knowing the target group(s) and its/their locational preferences,
- Availability of ex-ante empirical studies on feasibility and creative potential of the region (originality and genuineness),
- Having the right locational characteristics at the right time (given the postulated volatility of creative people's locational preferences!),
- Having enough time, patience and resources to establish a long-term strategy,
- And finally: the target groups must be significant in size and receptive to government policies (see next hypothesis).

In acknowledgement of the fact that there is insufficient space here to look in detail at these necessary conditions, it appears plausible that not one of them is (currently) fulfilled. Initial, necessarily very preliminary, findings for Germany indicate, too, that there are both creative regions with explicit and publicly visible government policies and those without these initiatives (at least before the emergence of the creative sector): Hamburg is an example of the former (cf. Hansestadt Hamburg 2009) and Offenbach for the latter (cf. *Sailer and Papenheim* 2007).

If none of the necessary conditions for the effectiveness of government creative policies is fulfilled, maybe there are sufficient ones? But: There are none – as for previous mantras!

None of the necessary conditions is a sufficient condition. In addition – as could not be expected otherwise with this young policy instrument – the effectiveness and efficiency of the current creativity policy instruments are totally unknown and their supply-orientation is doubtful (who knows what a creative person prefers?). There is some empirical evidence of the spatial distribution of creative people; *Fritsch and Stützer* (2009), for example, show the strong regional disparity in the distribution of creative people in Germany, but such interregional mapping of entire countries is still lacking for creative-economy policies although there are many creative- and/or cultural-economy reports at national, regional and local level. Even if creativity policies are successful, they may destroy the conditions for original cultural production by displacing artists and performers through upgrading and increasing property values in planned creative clusters (*Kong* 2000). In consequence, a policy-maker can try and may succeed (i.e., a creative sector has emerged), but a causal nexus between policy action and this emergence has not yet been proven. Local conditions are too specific and creative industries are too heterogeneous, thus a ‘one-creative-script-fits-all’ strategy would be ineffective (*Gibson and Klocker* 2004, *Pratt* 2005).

Additionally, another side-effect of a ‘successful’ government policy must not be ignored: Focusing on creativity is not an appropriate government strategy for the majority of regions/region types: there would be few winners, but many losers, especially in rural regions (*Mossig* 2011, *Scott* 2006). Increasing interregional economic disparities would be the result of ‘successful’ government support policies – the same as for the two previous mantras.

Added to this are a range of tangible weaknesses in previous creative-economy policies; here, too, there are partial parallels with previous mantras. The policy activities of some supra-local

government agencies ignore the very region-specific conditions of creativity. A patchy strategic fit between national, regional and local government can not be overseen (*Jayne* 2005) and several attempts suffer from a “lack of theoretical clarity in policy definitions of the creative industries” (*Galloway and Dunlop* 2007: 28).

So it only remains to learn from the two previous mantras: Did policies help or were they even decisive to create a high-tech region or generate a cluster? The answer to both questions is an emphatic ‘no’ (see also *Tab. 1*). There is little evidence that this should be different for the instruments of creative-economy policy, as important necessary conditions for an impact of such policies are not fulfilled and sufficient conditions do not exist. To date, therefore, the principle of hope reigns in most cities with government programmes to support creative people: The incentives of a local creative-economy policy according to the Floridian prescription are expected to stop creative people in the region from migrating away and to motivate creative people in other regions to migrate to the region.

*Hypothesis 5: Endogenous and exogenous creative people react actively and positively to the incentives of creative-economy policies*

Here, too, a certain degree of skepticism is called for, although there has only been very rudimentary empirical evidence to date. While the intellectual elite (like lawyers or some academics), i.e., the human capital part of the creative sector, can be assumed to display a certain openness to the incentives of creative economic policies, bohemians and artists tend to be less easy to reach by state-driven measures. In contrast to pure measures of cultural policy, economically motivated instruments of a creative-economy policy can at best expect to be met with ignorance. In some cases, however, conscious rejection is the consequence, as is



well-documented in connection with the struggle surrounding the Gängeviertel area of Hamburg (cf. [www.buback.de/nion](http://www.buback.de/nion)), particularly when there is a threat of gentrification and endogenous creative people are to be addressed. *Markusen's* (2006, 1938) pessimistic conclusions, based upon the Minneapolis/St. Paul artist scene is probably not unrealistic for other regions as well: "If certain occupational groups are both footloose and important catalysts in development, policy-makers need to know the specifics: which groups, where do they live, what are the criteria by which they make their locational choices, what kinds of employers are drawn in their wake, who are their competitors? How do the key groups organise themselves as an occupational or interest group; what are their issues; and where are the policy entry points in this process? Even when policy-makers have sound research that enables them to understand their own talent targets, how do they know to which facility investments, infrastructure, programs, city planning techniques, and cultural policies they should devote scarce resources in order to achieve growth, revitalisation, and equity goals?"

One last fundamental reservation should not go unmentioned: Creativity can never be ordered, neither by government; "the production of authentic neighbourhood cultures through deliberate public-policy interventions is a daunting if not infeasible task" (*Peck* 2005: 749f.).

### 7. Conclusions – Can Politicians (and Regional Economists) Learn from the Past?

This paper has shown that the causal nexus between explicit creative-economy policies and economic prosperity is not particularly probable from a theoretical conceptual perspective. There cannot yet be any empirical evidence as most of these measures are still too young, and any economic effects, if indeed

there are any, could only be measured in the future. An initial summary must therefore be that those responsible for creative-economy policy should do everything to avoid awakening overly optimistic expectations regarding the economic effects. A second summary is directed at considerations of plausibility that are based on experience with the previous two mantras of local economic development policy. A one-size-fits-all strategy, i.e., policies that benefit high-tech regions or clusters, or creative industries in general in every region, is definitely doomed to failure and should be avoided in times of extremely tight public funding – which is what finances these policies. The demand should be: More creativity for creative-economy policy (makers)! In addition, findings to date, including this paper, have shown that creative-economy policies tend not to be suited to place-branding with clear economic political goals, for which *Lange* and *Stöber* (2008) correctly concede a certain uncontrollability of places and communication regarding the place.

It is now known that local politicians act under the influence of a rather subject-specific logic. If they want to be (re-)elected they have to develop outwardly visible activities that

- plausibly appear to serve the local economy (i.e., create/safeguard jobs),
- take effect quickly (at least in theory),
- cost little, and
- have positive economic consequences that should be as directly associable as possible with them as a person (and if possible with the relevant party and government responsible).

In the case of the last aspect, it is only the ex-ante perspective that counts (i.e., upon adoption of the programme): It does not matter to the policy-

makers whether, years after implementation, the programme was actually a success (when the policy-maker originally responsible is usually no longer in office), but whether or not it sounds *promising* at the time the political decision is taken. Policy-makers primarily want to be elected; whether their programmes later turn out to be correct is not a decisive factor in their calculations.

Local politicians' decisions are strongly path-dependent: They have gained experience from earlier mantras and learnt from them. If a new programme is developed which is based on supposedly successful role models from abroad, they award funds for it and win elections. In that respect, lessons have been learnt. These lessons remain largely unlearned, however, with respect to the ex-post evaluation of the effectiveness of these government policies – which can only be measured in the medium and long term. In this case local economic policy-makers, at least as a herd, do not learn. They are far too attached to their own parochial and competitive thinking – and the associated political rationalities – that appears to assure their (re-)election. But there may be individual politicians (often with their own practical experience as entrepreneurs) who have the stamina, the necessary charisma and the political influence in the right places to apply the instrument long enough and, as a result, possibly even to reap the fruits of the seeds they sow.

The role of science in this process is interesting, too. Scientists' behavior also follows a different logic in terms of their reputations. Some 'only' want to make a name for themselves, in which case an actual or apparent new concept that fits the current *zeitgeist* is ideal. This concept, particularly when it is disputed in the scientific community, also generates innumerable papers which subject it to empirical testing. The many citations increase the fame of the concept's inventor further. This mechanism can be observed exceptionally clearly in the cases of both *Michael Porter* and *Richard Florida*. The ma-

jority of scientists however will prefer the role of the vehement critic of the new concept (a particularly popular stance in the social sciences), who will view the concept, which is very popular in public policy, partly due to its simplicity, and will criticise it in the form of publications precisely because of its simplifying statements. This always also entails an attack on the now famous protagonist of the concept – which in turn generates attention (and citations!) for the critic. Policy-makers are not aware of this purely academic debate, nor would they be interested in it. They are only interested in the now famous scientist who invented and marketed the concept: He is the key witness to a successful concept (particularly when the protagonist himself and his case studies are from the United States) which can now be implemented in the local policy-maker's local area.

This paper has, of course, several limitations, and some of them create areas for further research. Up to now the empirical evidence on policy impacts as well as the behaviour of creative people is still rather weak. The state of knowledge makes it difficult to formulate viable policy approaches (*Scott* 2006). Most of *Florida's* U.S. lessons are not comparable to European regions; the same holds true for some of his policy recommendations. In-depth empirical, interregionally comparable and representative studies are needed considering the locational preferences of members of the 'creative class' and their receptiveness to government programmes. Furthermore, some of the various implicit and explicit causalities of the 'creative class' concept are still unproven (as for clusters and high-tech regions). The demand for empirical validation is therefore large, as this approach is already more popular in the practice of municipal and regional economic support than in science, where it still lacks much before it may be considered a well-founded theory (*Scott* 2006). There is a danger, therefore, that practice is faster than research and may therefore, under

certain circumstances, implement an approach which has not yet been shown to be feasible in theory and for which the empirical evidence does not yet exist. Hence, *Hospers et al.*'s (2009: 285) conclusions on cluster and cluster policies do fit almost 100 % this paper's résumé on creative industries and the respective creative industry support policies: "[...] cluster policy [...] is a risky venture, especially when it is tried to copy the success of regional 'best practices'. Therefore, we advice policy-makers to move away from the Silicon Valley model and to modestly start from a place-specific approach of 'Regional Realism'".

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- Summary: Learning from the Past? Why 'Creative Industries' can hardly be Created by Local/Regional Government Policies*
- Supporting the creative economy is *the* new mantra of local and regional economic policy, and not just in Germany. With conscious or subconscious reference to *Richard Florida's* theses on the 'creative class' hopes are being raised everywhere that sufficient support for creative industries would lead to a dynamic economic development of cities and regions, at least

in the medium term. This paper emphasises how little relation these expectations bear to reality and intends to warn local policy-makers against the lemming-like pursuit of a supposedly successful and universally applicable strategy. There is a danger that history will repeat itself here. Something similar happened in recent decades with the concepts of 'high-tech regions' and 'clusters'. This paper explains that creative regions can hardly be planned by policy, and why that is the case. Some of the central arguments are the postulated, but barely empirically demonstrated causal nexus between a significant creative sector and economic prosperity, the often lacking acceptance among the so-called 'bohemians' of policies designed to support creative industries, and the (too) low spatial mobility of the members of that 'class'.

*Zusammenfassung: Aus der Vergangenheit lernen? Warum 'Kreative Branchen' kaum durch lokale/regionale Politiken kreiert werden können*

Die Förderung der Kreativwirtschaft ist *das* neue Mantra der lokalen/regionalen Wirtschaftspolitik, nicht nur in Deutschland. Mit bewusstem oder unbewusstem Bezug zu *Richard Floridas* Thesen der 'creative class' werden allerorten Hoffnungen geweckt, bei hinreichender Förderung der Kreativwirtschaft stelle sich wenigstens mittelfristig eine dynamische wirtschaftliche Entwicklung von Stadt und Region ein. Der Beitrag betont den mangelnden Realitätsgehalt solcher Erwartungen und möchte lokale Wirtschaftsförderer davor warnen, wie die Lemminge einer vermeintlich erfolgreichen und überall anwendbaren Strategie zu folgen. Hier droht sich Geschichte zu wiederholen: Ähnliches passierte in den letzten Jahrzehnten mit den Konzepten 'High-tech-Region' und 'Cluster'. Im Beitrag wird erläutert, dass und warum kreative Regionen nicht politisch geplant werden können. Zu den zentralen Argumenten zählt der postulierte, aber empirisch kaum belegte Kausalnexus zwischen einer signifikanten Kreativwirtschaft und ökonomischer Prosperität, die oft fehlende Akzeptanz von Kreativwirtschaftspolitiken unter den so genannten 'Bohemians' sowie die (zu) geringe räumliche Mobilität der Kreativen.

*Résumé: Des leçons du passé? Pourquoi « l'économie créative » ne peut guère créée par des politiques locales/régionales*

L'essor d'une économie créative est considéré d'être le nouveau mantra de la politique locale d'économie, non seulement en Allemagne. En rapport conscient ou inconscient avec les thèses de l'économiste *Richard Florida* traitant la 'classe créative', des nouveaux espoirs sont suscités partout que si l'on faisait progresser cette économie créative, à moyen terme un développement dynamique de l'économie des territoires métropolitains et des communes pourrait être attendu. Le texte expose l'irréalité de ces prévisions et appelle aux acteurs de développement économique de ne pas suivre une stratégie soi-disant prospère et applicable partout. A ce point on aperçoit donc qu'il existe le risque d'une récurrence de l'histoire. Prenons les cas des concepts 'région de haute technologie' et 'cluster'; quant à ces concepts, presque les mêmes problèmes sont apparus durant les dernières décennies. Le texte explique pourquoi il n'est pas possible de calculer des régions créatives d'une manière politique et l'auteur donne quelques arguments essentiels: Premièrement, la causalité postulée entre une économie créative signifiante et la prospérité économique n'était pas prouvée empiriquement. De plus, il n'existait qu'un consentement faible entre les soi-disant « bohémiens » d'une politique locale d'économie creative et enfin la mobilité de la classe créative semble d'être insignifiante.

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