

Creative Cities – Innovative Sites and Attractive Places

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ABSTRACT

Modern economies are denoted as knowledge-based and innovation driven economies in which cities are assumed to play a central role in enhancing innovation performance and regional competitiveness. A striking aspect of the knowledge economy is that economic activity and growth seem to become more spatially concentrated and increasingly city-based. Knowledge-intensive and creative industries are typically clustered in cities, and particularly larger cities seem to have specific innovation advantages based on a combination of localisation and urbanisation advantages, and a favourable business and people climate.

Cities are looked upon as information entities with high knowledge spill-over intensity in which interactive learning processes are facilitated by proximity and face-to-face contact, and where economic and social diversity are assumed to promote the production of new and innovative ideas and products. The paper discusses theoretical approaches and concepts related to knowledge economy, creative cities, innovation and attractiveness of urban areas with a special focus on localisation of knowledge-intensive and creative industries and the significance of quality of local places for new economic city-based activities.

The paper will draw on economic geography and sociology as well as urban and city planning theories, where the emphasis will be on the urban structures' ability to facilitate proximity and face-to-face contacts.

The paper will follow a two-level approach and focus on both the city-level and inner-city level. It will use register data to give an overview of industrial localisation, and draw on empirical evidence from present studies as well as relevant documents such as the Master Plan and the Regional Development Plan for Oslo in order to substantiate the questions of:

- why cities are regarded as centres of idea creation and transmission of knowledge;
- why cities seem to grow and contribute to economic performance particularly when producing new ideas;
- why some cities and places within cities attract, retain and develop human capital and creative capabilities better than others.

Key Words: creative cities, innovation, attractiveness