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BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES IN ROMANIAClara Volintiru^{1*} and Dumitru Miron²¹⁾²⁾ Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Romania**Please cite this article as:**Volintiru, C., Miron, D., 2015. Business Environment and Creative Industries in Romania, *Amfiteatru Economic*, 17(38), pp. 358-369**Abstract**

This article explores the current situation of creative industries in Romania, a field still insufficiently investigated where entrepreneurship is increasingly present. In this sense, it addresses two research objectives. Taking as reference the relevant academic literature, and based on the analysis of an original data-set regarding the composition and structure of creative industries in Bucharest, the article proposes a conceptual framework adapted to the context of Romania for the study of the structural mechanisms that tie the economic model and the development of those economic activities labeled as creative. Our findings suggest that the development tendencies of various creative specialisations have a massive growth potential in the future, impacting deeply the Romanian business environment and entrepreneurial perspectives. The paper furthers the understanding of the role and characteristics of creative activities in the economy and creates the premises for comparative research projects in the future.

Keywords: creative industries, entrepreneurship**JEL Classification:** M21, O10, O30, O35**Introduction**

By integrating normative elements of the academic literature as well as public policy stances, this paper aims to address the topic of creative industries along two lines. Firstly, it advances our collective empirical knowledge of the structure of creative economic specialisations in Romania. In this sense, the following sections will address the composition of creative industries along the lines of a series of economic indicators: turnover, total number of companies, number of employees, and the level of competitiveness on the market.

Secondly, this paper develops a theoretical analysis reference framework for creative industries, effectively assembling a taxonomy that is specific to the Romanian business environment. Thus, we support the necessity of a contextual approach to the analysis of such emerging economic fields of activity. By accounting for the country specific environment, we can develop a much better comprehension of the profound implications and challenges that entrepreneurs in such creative sectors will or might encounter.

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The article is divided into four sections. The first part will deal with conceptual issues and integration of creative industries in the national, as well as international economy. The second part will outline the methodological framework, and will propose a categorization for creative industries in Romania, taking into account the specificities of the business environment in this national market. The third section analyses and interprets primary data related to the Romanian creative sectors, taking the city of Bucharest as a representative case study for the entrepreneurial structure of creative industries in this country. This research projects uses such indicators as the level of turnover, the number of companies with creative specialisations, the total and average number of employees, as well as the Herfindhal-Hirschman index for evaluating the competitive structure of these fields of economic specialisation. Finally, this article will discuss the multiplier effects that creative industries can generate, as well as their response to relevant public policies.

1. Structure and functions of creative industries

When looking at the topic of creative industries and their role in the contemporary business environment, it is important to analyse their definition and composition. According to Davies and Sigthorsson (2013) economic activities included in the creative industries meet three characteristics: require an input of *human creativity*; are vehicles for *symbolic messages-carriers of meaning beyond economic utility*; contain potential *intellectual property rights*.

The Department for Culture, Media and Sports (DCMS) is a UK institutions with an international power of reference in the field of creative industries. The DCMS has identified, in 1998, 13 categories of economic activities falling within the creative industry: architecture; performance arts; arts and antique markets; design; designer fashion; film, video and photography; computer games; crafts; music; advertising; television and radio; software and IT solutions.

These distinctions reflect the structure of the British economy. Although the DCMS categories are often used as a benchmark to define the composition creative industries, this paper argues that it is necessary to develop a taxonomy of economic activities related to the creative industries that is specific to the business environment of each country. As we will further detail, in the methodological section of this paper, the contextualisation of the reference framework is an important step forward towards a relevant evaluation of the dynamic of the economic activity in these sectors.

The United Nations report on creative industries (2010: 7) distinguishes between **upstream** creative activities, such as visual arts, and **downstream** creative activities, which are closer to the market, having immediate commercial applications, being transferable and presenting potential for achieving economies of scale. Examples of such latter activities include advertising, publishing or media. Going further along the lines of this distinction proposed by UNDP report (2010) we can see cultural activities as a less commercial subcategory of creative industries.

Continuing the analysis of creative activities along the economic dimension of these sectors invites their association with economic growth models. As such, from the aforementioned categories, most creative industries offer products and services with a high added value level. With regards to this particular aspect, the relevant existent studies on the topic of creative industries develop various approaches to the quantification of the value of these

sectors in the national economy in which they perform (Howkins 2007, Potts and Cunningham 2008, Flew and Cunningham 2010, Crook and De Propis 2011, Flew 2012/2013).

One of the most simple methods to evaluate the economic value of creative industries within the business environment of a given region is to measure their share to a common economic indicator (Potts și Cunningham 2008:3). In the following sections of this article, we use this method to assess the share of creative industries within the business environment in Bucharest, by looking at such economic indicators as aggregate turnover, or the total number of companies in a given field of creative specialisation. All the chosen indicators are both useful and specific tools of assessing the size and range of such sectors in the business environment of the chosen case study.

Beyond the problems related to evaluating the size of this type of economic activity, we are still left with the problem of evaluating the impact that they can have on the economic environment, and society as a whole. In other words, with creative industries, as with other economic activities, it is important to evaluate and multiplier effects that they can produce. In this sense, the literature highlights common aspects of innovation and knowledge-based economic growth (Crook and De Propis 2011, Davies and Sigthorsson 2013, UNDP 2008/2010/2013).

Along this line of thinking, although research and development (R&D) and innovations are components that stimulate the economic potential of any specialisation, they also contribute in a fundamental manner to the added value produced by creative industries. Such sectors as tourism are also side beneficiaries of many of the cultural activities comprised in this industrial category (Davies și Sigthorsson 2013). Various studies bring into question the welfare effects of creative industries, in broad terms, supporting the idea that creative activities contribute to the development of new economic growth models and sustainable economic development. They are thus optimally placed to take advantage of the contemporary international integration processes (Potts and Cunningham 2008, Flew and Cunningham 2010, Flew 2012/2013).

2. Methodological Approach and Normative References

This paper is based on original analysis of primary data on economic activity in the Romanian capital, in the year 2013. Thus, assessing both the areas of specialization within companies registered in Bucharest, based on their NACE codes, as well as the market structure and dynamics. The latter approach helps us assess the market share of each field of specialisation of the creative industries, through such indicators as the average number of employees and company turnover. The raw data is extracted and processed by authors from the database of the Ministry of Finance, based on the submitted balance sheets of the Romanian companies in 2013. This database contains 130,872 private companies operating in the municipality of Bucharest, and the analysis of this primary evidence takes into account the entire available sample.

The research is based on descriptive statistics and is structured as process tracing analysis of current and future trends in the creative industries, which are likely to have a significant impact on the business environment. Data interpretation is based on a comparative perspective provided by the relevant literature, and official documents of national and international institutions. The Romanian economic environment is analysed as a part of the

broader European context, in which the transfer and free flows of knowledge, and human capital contribute to further the development of some of the activities in the Romanian creative industries.

Beyond the general elements of conceptualisation of such creative industries—as described by various international institutions (i.e. UNDP, DCMS), as well as provided by the academic literature, the present article aims at providing a new normative setting, which is specific to the Romanian business environments. Thus, Table 1 presents the various economic specialisations that meet both the creative and cultural components, as well as commercial potential on the market. This taxonomy is an original proposition for benchmarking the field of creative industries in Romania, meant to assist in future enquiries on this topic, in the specific business environment of the Romanian market.

Table 1: Areas of Specialisation (NACE) of the Romanian Creative Industries

No.	Creative Industries Areas of Specialisation	NACE Code(s)
1	Architecture	7111
2	Art and Culture	9001, 9002, 9003
3	Crafts	1391, 1393, 1420, 1431, 1439, 1511, 1512, 1520
4	Design	7410
5	Media	1820, 5911, 5912, 5914, 5914, 5819, 5920, 6010, 020, 7420
6	Advertising	7311, 7312, 7320
7	Software, Web, and IT Solutions	5821, 5829, 6201, 6209, 6311, 6312, 6391, 6399
8	Sports and Entertainment	9311, 9312, 9313, 9319, 9321, 9329
9	Printing, Publishing, Translation and Interpretation	1811, 1812, 1813, 1814, 5811, 5812, 5813, 5814, 5819, 7430

Source: compiled by the authors

Through this conceptual classification of various specific activities of creative industries, we obtain nine general categories. The typology proposed by the authors is thus a perfectable proposition, engaged with the contextual realities of this case study. The definition of these nine categories is based on a thorough analysis of the specificities of each field, as well as on the congruence between the technological process of production, and the commercial delivery of the good or services to the customers. As it can be seen in the NACE column in Table 1, our taxonomy goes beyond traditional boundaries of demarcation between the primary, secondary, and tertiary sectors. It equally moves beyond simple differentiations based on the degree of utilisation of advanced technologies or knowledge intensive processes.

3. Case study: creative industries in Bucharest

This case study of the capital city is representative not only for Romania, but also for the broader South East European area (CEE), given the concentration and predominance of creative industries with commercial application (*downstream activities*) that we encounter in

this big urban areas. The municipality of Bucharest is equally representative on the basis of its market diversification, as well as the concentration of high skill labour force with relevant specialisations (e.g. Universities). Furthermore, the active companies in Bucharest are part of a more developed region than the rest of the country, creating a much greater dynamic of economic multiplication effects. In this sense, it is here that we can better observe the development tendencies of many of the niche sectors comprised in the category of creative industries.

In the reference year 2013, 130,872 private companies were active in Bucharest. They accumulate a total turnover of 384 mld. RON, which means approximately 82 billion. €. In this context, one can evaluate the economic trends of creative specialties as an area of dynamic and widespread economic activity. In a similar manner to that of previous years, and accounting for the national economic specificities, most of the economic agents in Bucharest specialise in market based activities. However, it can not be neglected the increasing trend of specialisation in activities with higher added value. For the first time in more than two decades, the number of newly established SMEs in Romania in the field of creative industries came second to the commercial specialisations, but surpassed the number of companies specialised in construction—the second most popular category of economic activity in Romania. The objectives of sustainable growth for the Romanian economy should support those areas of production making use of a high level of technology, as well as knowledge intensive services.

According to Eurostat classifications, most creative industries are found in the tertiary sector of knowledge intensive services: architecture (NACE code 71), advertising (NACE code 73), production and distribution of cinema, video, audio (59/60 NACE code), information technology (NACE code 62/63), publishing (NACE code 58) and arts, entertainment, recreation (NACE code 90/91/92/93). Table 1 classification made by the authors for the context of the Romanian business environment keeps these guidelines, but regroups some subdomains based on technological specialization and commercial use. For example, a software editing activities (NACE code 5829) fall under the category of creative activity in IT- "Software, Web and IT Solutions".

The number of companies specialised in creative industries, that are registered in Bucharest is 16,398, which is about 12.5% of all enterprises in this city. In terms of total turnover, creative industries reached about 19 billion RON in 2013. Compared to the total turnover in the same year, the contribution of the creative industries value is less than numeric, representing 10.3% of all companies in this city. The percentages related to the number of companies and total turnover reflect the emerging position of the creative sector, which is not consolidated yet, but it is neither negligible, when reported to the Bucharest business environment as a whole.

When analysing the situation of creative sectors through such indicators as the Total Number of Companies (see Figure 1), the Total Turnover (see Figure 2), or the Total and Average Number of Employees (see Figure 3), this paper aims at describing both the present role of creative industries, and the commercial potential of each of the specific creative activities. Thus, both in terms of number of firms and turnover, Romanian creative industries are dominated by those sectors with immediate commercial application (downstream activities), such as media activities: cinema, tv, radio, or advertising. This trend reflects the overall distribution of cultural and commercial activities within the creative industries sector. This reflects the overall distribution of cultural and commercial

activities within the creative industries sector. However, the two subsectors should be seen as complementary, mutually reinforcing, resulting multiplier effects both within creative industries and in relation with other economic sectors.

According to the number of companies active in the creative industries (see Figure 1), we can observe that most businesses operate in the field of advertising – 4,194 companies, or Software, Web, and IT Solutions – 4,167. Both areas have a high degree of rapid commercialization. The attractiveness of these specializations, both for entrepreneurs and employees is high. At a distance, we find other categories of companies, as: Printing, Publishing, Translations and Interpretations – 2,216 companies, Media – 1,818 companies, and Architecture – 1,577 companies.

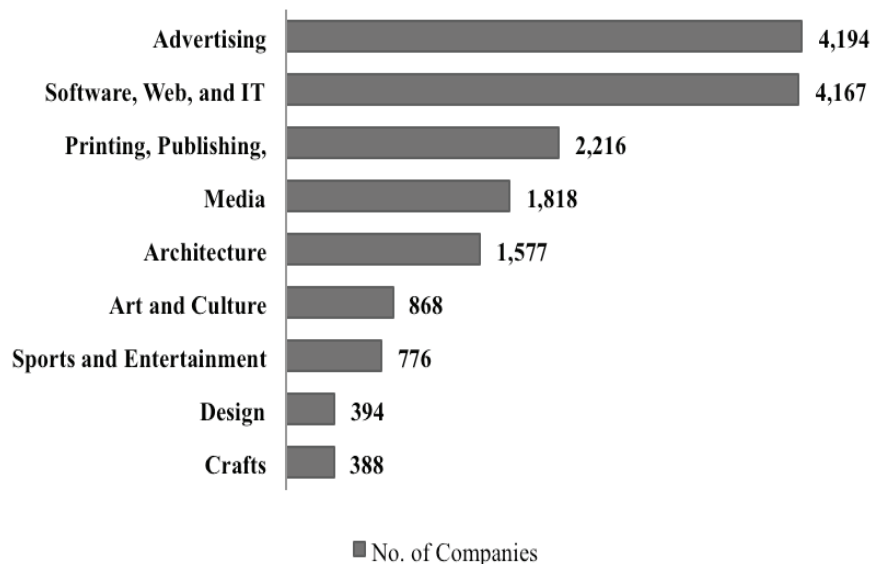


Figure 1: Number of companies in Bucharest, by field of creative specialisation (2013)

Source: compiled by the authors based on data from the Ministry of Finance

Even if they are less numerous, this latter category of specialisations represent more consolidated fields from the point of view of their years of activity and experience in the market place. If the emergence of new advertising and IT companies is a trait of the last decade, the main companies in the field of media, architecture, or publishing have a lifespan that is closer to two decades. Thus, the lower numbers of companies on these markets can also be seen as a element of the process of consolidation of these industries, in the Romanian and regional market, over the past years.

The predominantly cultural activities, such as art and culture, or crafts, are the less numerous in our sample. This situation reflects their weak commercial potential. In the case of crafts the commercialisation is desired by the producers, as well as the consumers, but the nature of these activities is incompatible with economies of scale, and as such, the profits of these activities will remain limited. In contrast, the profits from art and culture might achieve much higher levels, but the commercialisation of such activities is not always

sought after by their producers or suppliers. Still, while the profit margins of predominantly cultural activities are generally low, the penetration potential of this market is also low, with existent and established actors having a powerful grasp on their market share.

The aggregate turnover figures reflect more accurately aspects of consolidation and stability of creative industries economic agents, in their national business environment. Thus, we look at turnover levels for each domaine of specialisation, to complement the perspective on the evolution and potential of these sectors (see Figure 2). Subsequently, we find more institutionalised fields of creative activity, such as Media or Printing, Publishing, Translation and Interpreting. These two categories reach, in 2013, an aggregate turnover value of 6.11 billion RON, and respectively, 5.65 billion RON. The overall level of the aggregate turnover of these fields of specialisation is bigger than the case of all the other creative specialisations, in Romania.

In contrast, as we can see in Figure 1, these two categories of creative activities do not engage as many economic agents as some of the others. Thus, we can assert that these are market areas that have achieved a certain degree of maturisation, following a succession of entrepreneurial cycles, and reaching a more stable state of existence, as an overall market segment. With a less dispersed offer, the existing agents on these markets have a better chance to perform and develop, according to economic and trade models. Art and other cultural activities also register an aggregate turnover of almost 3 billion RON, but this is mostly driven by performance arts, such as concerts. In support of this, the multiplication of international music festivals, over the past years has been sourced in the area of creative industries, and has contributed significantly to rising the level of touristic activities in the capital city of Bucharest.

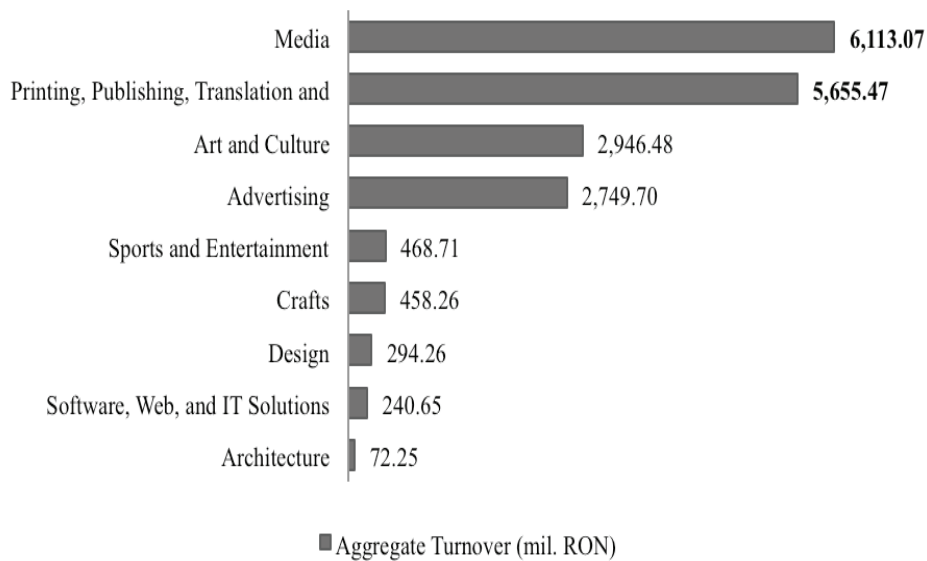


Figure 2: Turnover of active companies in Bucharest, by field of creative specialisation, 2013

Source: compiled by the authors based on data from the Ministry of Finance

Emerging economic activities that are in the process of developing on the Romanian market, such as Design and IT Solutions, currently aggregate a much lower turnover, by comparison to other creative industries, 294 million RON, and respectively 240 millions RON. The large number of companies specializing in creative activities applied to Software, Web and IT solutions (see Figure 1) suggests that this sector has grown in size and, through the challenge of the coming years, has to increase the profitability of its activities, and their added value. In contrast, the field of design includes a small number of companies and a total turnover relatively low compared with other branches of creative industries in Romania. Compared to international dynamics of creative industries, this field exhibits the greatest contrast, suggesting a high growth potential, still untapped in the context of the contemporary Romanian business environment.

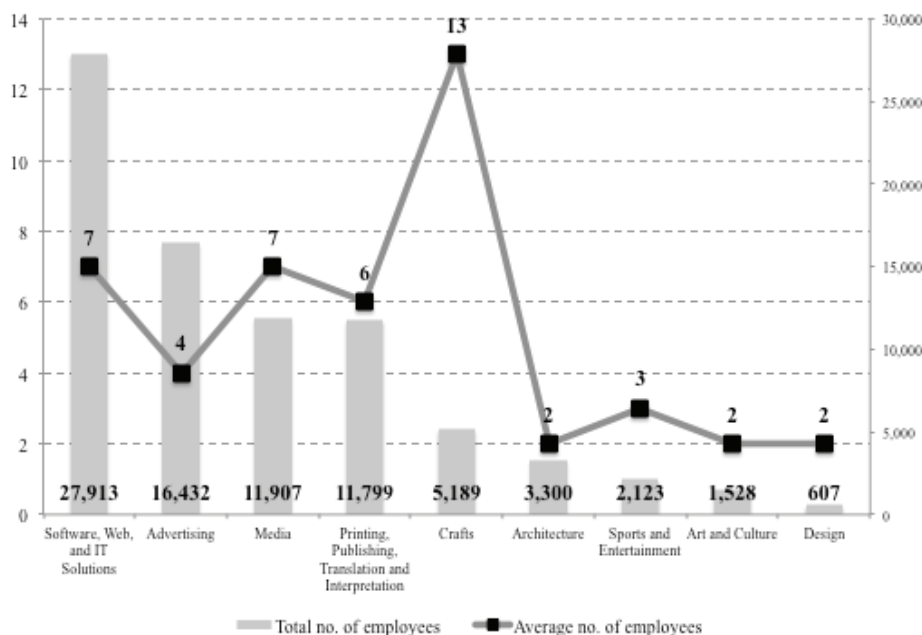


Figure 3: Number of employees in companies in Bucharest, by field of creative specialisation, 2013

Source: compiled by the authors based on data from the Ministry of Finance

To properly evaluate the impact that creative industries can have on the entire spectrum of economic activities, it is important to evaluate the human resource related to these companies. Thus, we find in Figure 3, the total number of employees in each creative branch, as well as the average number of employees per company active on each sector of specialisation. The comparison of the aggregate labor absorption and the average numbers is a useful tool to better understand different business models within each field.

The Crafts category records a total number of employees that is relatively small compared to other creative fields: 5,189 employees. Given that this area also has the smallest number of companies at the level of 2013, we find the highest average of all company employees in

the creative industries: 13. In contrast, most creative specialties seem to consist predominantly of micro-enterprises judging by the average number of employees in each area. In these terms, the Romanian creative industries take the appearance of a developing market. Still, the higher average number of employees in those areas that were also dominant according to previous indicators (see Fig. 1 and Fig. 2) shows that certain creative industries are much better established in this business environment, having a greater capacity to trigger economic multiplication effects.

Concentration in each economic sector is a good indicator of medium and long term sustainability. Companies that manage to survive in a competitive environment on the domestic market have greater potential to survive and develop, and to expand into other markets. Moreover, the competitive dynamics of an economic sector, or its level of concentration, is a good indicator of the attractiveness of that market for newcomers. To assess the level of concentration in the field of creative industries, we have calculated the Herfindhal-Hirschmann Index (HHI)¹ for each of the areas outlined in Table 1.

Table 2: Level of concentration of the creative industries in Bucharest , 2013

FIELDS OF CREATIVE SPECIALISATION	HHI
Advertising	0.009
Software, Web, and IT solutions	0.014
Architecture	0.016
Design	0.022
Typography, Publishing, Translations and Interpretations	0.024
Art and Culture	0.030
Sports and Entertainment	0.051
Crafts	0.067
Media	0.086

Source: compiled by the authors based on data from the Ministry of Finance

As can be seen in Table 2, the widest participation of economic agents can be found in advertising, in Software, Web and IT, and Architecture. These three areas of HHI values are less than 0.01, which we classify as very competitive. The remaining areas of activity of the Romanian creative industries are also dispersed or non-concentrated, with values ranging from 0.022 to 0.086 for Design and Media activities. HHI indicator results reflect both atomization, but also the concurential environment of these sectors. Given the

¹ The Herfindhal-Hirschman Index (HHI) was calculated based on the following formula: $\sum_{i=1}^n s_i^2$, where s_i is the market share of each company that is active on a specific creative market. The market share is calculated based on the following formula: $\frac{CAS_i}{CA_t}$, where CAS_i is a company's turnover, while CA_t is the creative sector's aggregate turnover.

relatively recent development of these activities, especially in such areas as Advertising or Design, we can state that competitive trends in Romania suggest the high potential for growth and development of these activities.

4. Implications for the Romanian business environment and public policies

Comunian et al (2010) explains the tight connection between the performance of creative industries and their geographic concentration. In this respect, the need for public policies meant to assist the establishment and the development of such companies has to be stressed. Beyond regulation, the effort of public institutions to support such emerging economic sectors must start off by properly identifying and evaluating the specific potential of all the creative businesses. At this moment in Romania there is no clear evidence of the dynamic of creative sectors, at the national level.

By using the methodology of the present research, the specificities and comparative advantage of each region can be better assessed. Arguments supporting a contextual approach to the regulation and development of creative industries, also claim the need to account for regional specificity when designing public policies. As noted in this analysis, the predominance of specialization in advertising and media are driven by the urban environment within which they exist, and from which our data was collected. In contrast, crafts might have a much higher occurrence in rural setting, than was represented in this analysis.

Sizing and mapping creative specialization of a country is important in terms of public policies, but also in terms of efficient trading on the international market. One of the major global trends of creative industries across the globe is to approach increasingly the general commercial dynamics of any other economic sector. This is exemplified in the notable tendency of certain states to become specialised exporters of creative products, while others become major markets of consumers. In general, countries with higher income from primary resources constitute the drivers of the demand for cultural products on the world market (e.g. Qatar, United Arab Emirates).

One of the biggest risks to the international trade of products and services from creative industries is to protect their identity and ownership. If in the case of activities with more pronounced commercial application, such as advertising, international law protects and maintains copyright provisions, for activities with more pronounced cultural dimensions, such as artistic and cultural products, national regulations are extremely important in protecting them. Therefore, for these latter sectors, new challenges for entrepreneurs emerge, in order to protect and represent their interests in the global economy, in which they operate. Moreover, in terms of public policies relevant to creative activities, it is important to consider the positive synergies that they involve around other areas such as tourism. A dynamic and rich cultural environment is an attractive tourist destination (Davies and Sigthorsson 2013). This explains the rising levels of cultural imports in the international market place, today.

As mentioned at the beginning of this paper, business development in the creative industries achieve various sizes profile: higher added value products, competitiveness in international markets, sustainable economic development based on innovation and knowledge. However, beyond the many positive multiplier effects that creative industries can bring to the economy, the direction of development depends to a large extent is the

institutional approach to them. In other words, the type of policy that addresses creative entrepreneurs specializing encourage certain types of results (see Table 3).

Table 3: Connections between public Policies and economic growth models for creative industries

Public policies for creative industries	Contributions of creative industries
State aid	Welfare
Common/standard industrial policies	Concurrential and competitive market
Development policies	Economic growth
Innovation stimulation policies	Innovation

Source: adapted by the authors after Potts and Cunningham (2008)

Therefore, as emphasized by Potts and Cunningham’s (2008), the way the public policies try to structure and support creative sectors defines the relationship between these and business and social environment in which they exist. For the case study developed in this work, we can not yet identify dedicated or targeted public policies for the creatives industries specifically. However, each of the areas of creative specialization in Romania benefit from various instruments of support: from generally targeted public policies, to state aid schemes, and financing and support mechanisms in the field of creative innovation in IT specializations. Fields better consolidated, such as architecture, advertising and media, are generally governed by common industrial policy or development strategies, which is reflected in the competitive structure of these markets (see Table 2).

Concluding Remarks

This article has assessed the extent and economic development potential of the creative industries in Romania, based on the case of Bucharest.

The analysis and interpretation of data shows that there are differences between the creative industries, as prescribed in the academic literature. The upstream activities—with a more pronounced cultural or artistic nature, do not perform commercially as well as downstream activities, such as advertising. Moreover, empirical analysis shows a level of consolidation amongst different industries that have developed over several decades in Romania, such as the architecture specialisations, and those relating to new technologies and commercial niches, such as IT, which suffer a much higher level of entrepreneurial atomisation.

From a theoretical perspective, this paper aimed at developing a context-specific conceptual framework for the analysis of the creative industries, thus creating the prerequisites for related research projects on this subject, in the future.

The authors stress that public policies favouring the development of creative industries should be addapted to the regional and sectoral specificities, which in turn call for deepening the understanding of the differences between urban and rural areas, between regions and sectors, as well as of the different effects that certain public policies can have in the context of a particular business environment.

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