

REGIONAL CREATIVITY FACTORS. TOWARDS NEW DIMENSIONS OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

Problems related to creativity gain importance among people and institutions indirectly or directly involved in the processes of regional development dynamics. Among those interested in the discussed problems the following can be listed: local authorities, entrepreneurs, scientists, non-governmental organizations, artists or culture animators. The presented study analyses problems referring to the selected factors influencing regional creativity. It should be emphasized that regional creativity, in this case, is understood as human activity, creative behaviours, or innovative ideas of regional space users. The subject literature analysis and review were the research methods applied by the author. The introduction outlines theoretical aspects of creativity and regional development. The major part of the study takes the form of a summary and characteristics of regional creativity factors, among which the following can be listed: creative class development, regional identity level, the development of creative sectors, effective place marketing, culture-based creativity, human talents, tolerance level, innovation, the level of entrepreneurship, public administration quality or the implementation of regional development strategy. Moreover, creativity is pointed to as one of the leading paths responsible for an innovative approach to regional development.

Key words: creativity, regional development, culture, innovation, identity

JEL Code: O 10, R 00, R 11

Introduction

In the post economic crisis reality it is worth considering the extent to which the existing theories, referring to socio-economic regional development, have proved correct over the time. In the new reality, following the rule of looking into the future, new methods, concepts and theories are investigated, which could ensure that the discussed development proves more stable and

predictable (Hadjimichalis & Hudson, 2014). Technological advancement (with particular emphasis on social communication areas), social transformations, globalization processes and also individualized approach towards consumer behaviours, result in the fact that the existing factors, influencing regional growth, lose their impact and become less powerful. The leading determinant takes the form of a human factor, i.e. the quality of human capital which, based on the new perspective, is understood as the creative capital. The fundamental difference between the classically approached human capital and the creative capital is manifested in the level of innovation, talent and open-mindedness towards new solutions.

The support for regional creativity, i.e. the creativity in regions resulting from active participation of regional space users, can enhance the processes of regional development. Moreover, it allows developing natural competitive advantages derived from referring socio-economic activity to modern growth factors. The purpose of this article is to present and characterize the selected factors of regional creativity.

1 Theoretical aspects of creativity and regional development

Providing the definition of development in regional or local scale, owing to the complexity of this phenomenon and the proliferation of diverse impact exerting determinants, is relatively complicated and escapes unequivocal phrasing. An approach is offered following which lasting and sustainable regional growth depends on both long-term interdependence and integrity in the areas of economic, social and natural subsystems, manifested by the particular way of using and managing a given geographic space.

The concept of regional development can also be understood as changes in regional productivity measured e.g. by the size of population, employment rate, income earned and value-added production. Increasing productivity is possible by means of implementing advanced management strategies and investing in modern technologies. In terms of management processes, in particular, the human factor is of crucial significance. Regional growth also depends on social development approached as the level of health care, prosperity, environment quality or social creativity. In other words, regional growth means socio-economic development occurring in a given region.

The problems of regional development are used in the presentation of multivariate qualitative and quantitative changes in the regional territorial cross-section of the country. The in-

depth identification of regional development remains a complex process. In both theoretical and practical perspective regional growth is most frequently identified with an increased relative importance of a particular region in the countrywide system, higher management efficiency (optimization of the conditions for economic entities functioning), improved living standards of its residents and the elimination of interregional diversification (interregional cohesion processes).

The dynamics of regional development depends on the efficiency of socio-economic processes implementation and the resources available in a region, resulting in its sustainable development. Furthermore, the discussed development should be manifested by achieving the desirable effects, from the perspective of all regional space users, with particular emphasis on its residents, entrepreneurs or tourists. The long-term effect of regional growth should take the form of continuously upgraded living standards experienced by the regional community (Stimson et al., 2006; Raszkowski, 2014). The life quality concept should be understood not only as the level of earned income, the availability of services, sport and cultural goods, but also the opportunities for living and being professionally fulfilled in an open, friendly for all environments, sustainable, abundant in attractions, characterized by a strong brand and a positive image, place.

It has been adopted that creativity supports processes enhancing new solutions, ideas, development paths based on an original, rich in inventiveness way of thinking, which constitutes a unifying agent connecting the world of science, entrepreneurship and art, which acts as an incentive for socio-economic growth and opens it for new developmental opportunities and horizons in response to the dynamic transformations occurring in the surrounding reality. In the process of implementing creative solutions, both products and services are enriched and gain a distinctive emotional charge, which allows making them more competitive.

The 3T concept (Florida, 2012) remains one of the more interesting theories, referring to creativity, in the context of regional growth. One of its primary assumptions is referring to human creativity as the major source of the above-mentioned development. Having taken a simplified assumption, regions (cities, countries), which aspire to become creative and in consequence experience more dynamic development, which strive to remain competitive and attractive on both domestic and international markets, should concentrate on modern technologies, innovations, education and community development in the spirit of respect for difference and tolerance of otherness. Following the assumptions of the discussed conception, creativity, contrary to the

classical productivity factors, remains an inexhaustible, renewable resource, subject to ongoing improvement. Each member of any community can be regarded as a potentially creative individual, and therefore developmental processes may not be reserved for the selected social groups. Moreover, it has been adopted that ultimately human knowledge, skills or aspirations turn a particular location into an attractive place and establish its cultural, market, social and political potential.

Regional creativity, observed as the manifestation of all human potentials, has a positive impact on regional growth by developing the sense of self-confidence and high self-esteem, by improving an overall quality level of cognitive processes, facilitating both planning and organization skills, as well as better flow of information and development ideas. Furthermore, the educational achievements of regional community are enriched and demonstrated, the recognition and role of art in regional development is more extensive, the feeling of social identity and unity becomes intensified, the number of socially excluded individuals is reduced, higher tolerance for cultural differences is observed, along with regional cohesion level increase. Regional creativity has positive impact on the level of social activity and the awareness of the existing development opportunities, which have to be taken advantage of, the general perception of developmental problems is better, opportunistic attitudes become reduced and the resistance towards changes is minimized, hence the level of poverty in a region decreases along with its labour market becoming more flexible (Flew, 2012).

2 The characteristics of selected factors responsible for regional creativity

Regional creativity issues are gaining importance among people and organizations responsible either directly or indirectly for the processes enhancing regional development dynamics. Among those interested in the discussed problems the following can be listed e.g.: local authorities, entrepreneurs, research workers, experts in different areas, nongovernmental organizations, artists, culture animators. It results from the increased regional development possibilities in the years to come and is associated with e.g. the availability of the European Union funds or the implementation of numerous space development strategies.

The presented regional creativity factors contribute to higher level of creativity among the users of regional space and hence provide incentives for taking a more effective advantage of the occurring developmental perspectives.

Tab. 1: The list of regional creativity factors

Factor	Characteristics
The development of creative class	<p>The term creative class originates from the USA, where it was recognized as one of the major driving forces stimulating economic growth. It was adopted that the creative class covers about 30% of the country workforce. Workers were divided into a super-creative core (science, engineering, education, computer programming, research and development, art, designing, media) and creative professionals (law, finance, business). The creative class, based on the data provided by the International Labour Organization is measured as the percentage of people working in particular sectors, whose professional activity requires creativity in solving problems at work on a daily basis, against the total workforce number. Among occupational sectors requiring creative skills the following were listed e.g.: mathematics, information technology, architecture, engineering and technical sciences, life sciences, nature and social sciences, education, trainings, librarianship, art, designing, entertainment, sport, media and also professionals working in management, business and finance, law, sales management and health care. People working in the above listed professions are, to a great extent, responsible for and actively participate in the processes of regional development, they decide about the creation of modern developmental visions. Increasing the percentage of population included in the creative class is translated into the occurrence of regional development stimulating processes.</p>
Regional identity level	<p>For the purposes of the hereby study a simplification can be adopted that regional identity represents the sense of identification with a particular fragment of space which is observed as part of oneself. The relative determinant of regional identity takes the form of an emotional bond with a given place, the surrounding landscape, natural environment, community residing in this area, material and spiritual culture outcomes and the broadly understood cultural heritage. Regional identity, along with its attachment to a given place and an emotional baggage acting as an incentive for taking further action, for the activities aimed at the improvement of socio-economic situation, remains the crucial phenomenon exerting impact on regional development. High level of regional identity sets human potential free, strengthens emotional ties,</p>

	increases the probability of undertaking development oriented actions.
The development of creative sectors	<p>Creative sectors emerged at the borderline of science and culture establishing the background for the development of creative economy. Therefore, their growth is based on the outcomes of art and science constituting the source of creativity and innovation oriented processes occurring in regional space. The diffusion and combining art, technology and business are fundamental for the development of modern regional economy, within which the creative sectors represent one of the core components. It has been assumed that the above-mentioned sectors, along with the specified culture area, are represented by the most innovative enterprise, which at the same time offer the largest growth potential. Apart from the most frequently listed creative sectors (advertising, architecture, art and antiques, publishing, film industry, fashion designing, music industry, radio TV) having impact on regional growth, the list is extended by the activities involving museums, theatre and opera, performing arts, tourism, computer games and software, industrial and art designing services, handicrafts.</p>
Effective place marketing	<p>Place marketing refers to designing a given area in the way which meets the expectations of its target markets. The success is determined by the satisfaction of stakeholders from the functioning in their living space. From such perspective marketing itself can be defined as a management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and meeting expectations of regional space users and rendering services in a way which allows achieving the goals set by a given entity. Place marketing remains the reaction to the existing demand for transferring and adopting traditional sales and management concepts, dedicated to market consumer products in the private sector, into the public sector. Creativity remains an indispensable element of effective actions and projects in the sphere of place marketing.</p>
Culture-based creativity	<p>The representatives of business, education and public authorities are beginning to perceive culture from the perspective of an important economic growth factor. Culture-based creativity facilitates generating economic and social values and, at the same time, stimulates economic growth. The increasing importance of culture in regional development is confirmed by the data illustrating the increasing expenditure incurred by households on the products of culture. Culture-based creativity supports enterprises in creating barriers for entering the regional market impeding</p>

	regional competitors and followers, by strengthening the unique and exceptional nature of the offered products and services.
Human talents	Any talents originating from regional communities are desirable and simultaneously constitute the component of creative capital. There is no clear definition of a talent or its measuring method. Talent is referred to as the set of outstanding, single-direction or multi-direction skills presented by individuals. Looking at the problem from another angle, talent shall refer to a person featuring high developmental potential and outstanding professional competencies. It is assumed that the condition to be met for a talent to develop is an interaction between the particular outstanding skills. The simplest measurement of talents ingrained in a community, as a component of human capital, is based on the level of education measured by the number of people who continue education at higher levels after graduating from a secondary school. The data for research and analyses, in the cross-section of territorial units, can be obtained from the database of the World Development Indicators provided by the World Bank.
Social tolerance level	Social tolerance is presented as an essential component of creative processes. It is present in the vast majority of theories referring to creativity. The level of tolerance is most often analysed based on the percentage of population who evaluate their place of residence as friendly for certain minorities. The problem of tolerance itself, in a global and diversified world, seems vital and founded in the context of regional creativity. It, however, has to be emphasized that in the opinion of some researchers far too much significance is attributed to this issue thus depreciating the developmental opportunities of the areas characterized by historically and culturally established conservative worldviews.
Innovation level	In terms of regional creativity the level of innovation is most often studied by analysing the expenditure on R&D as GDP percentage, the number of professional researchers involved in R&D activities per 1 million of inhabitants. Professional researchers are defined here as the individuals involved in the process of creating new knowledge, products, processes, methods and systems, and also managing projects related to these processes. Moreover, the number of granted patents against the number of inhabitants is also taken into consideration. In some cases an assumption is adopted that patents granted in the USA determine the level of global innovation and their protection. It should be noted that it

	remains just one of many presentations addressing to the problem of defining the innovation level.
Entrepreneurship development	Entrepreneurship is related to creativity in a specific way. Creativity in business is observed as an approach to life and work in a new perspective opening new possibilities. In terms of regional entrepreneurship analysis the simplest indicator can be applied, i.e. the number of registered economic entities against 10 thous. of working-age population. It, however, does not reflect the entire complexity of the discussed process. Attention should be paid to the gradual improvement of prosperity among regional businesses, increased level of confidence in local authorities and business environment, establishing adequate climate for the development of both entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial attitudes.
Public administration quality	The functioning of public administration determines, to a great extent, the level of regional creativity. From the perspective of regional development enhancement the quality of public administration should be manifested by a swifter reaction to the occurring expectations of the local community, by upgrading the level of provided services, by more effective implementation of tasks evoking lower social acceptance, or by carrying out developmental strategies more efficiently. Furthermore, the level of professional management should be improved through an ongoing cooperation with other territorial units and local community representatives.
The implementation of regional development strategy	The successful implementation of regional development strategy largely depends on the support offered to local authorities, who carry the primary responsibility for activities related to regional development, by all users of regional space. At this point social creativity and involvement turn out exceptionally valuable components. A specific partnership is initiated for the purposes of a strategy implementation, which should be perceived as a guideline for development.

Source: author's compilation based on (Blair & Carroll, 2009; Cabrita & Cabrita, 2010; Florida et al., 2011; Florida, 2014; Kotler et al., 1999; Marrocu & Paci, 2013; Mellander et al., 2012; Piergiovanni et al., 2012; Pollice, 2013; Raszkowski, 2011)

The presented list of regional creativity factors does not represent the finite and comprehensive approach to the discussed problem. Among other determinants of regional development, based on or related to creativity, the following should be mentioned: flexibility, adjustment to changes occurring in closer and more distant environment in terms of social

conditions, economic activity and spatial planning, as well as the willingness to overcome political, language, cultural and physical barriers. Socio-cultural environment featuring openness towards diversity, otherness and tolerance oriented atmosphere are also of crucial importance.

Conclusions

Based on the presented characteristics and the conducted analyses one can attempt to put forward the selected conclusions and recommendations regarding regional creativity factors with reference to the processes of socio-economic development in regional space.

Creativity should be perceived as the tool for maintaining high competitive position and developing permanent competitive advantages against other territorial units. The awareness of potential benefits and methods facilitating their achievement remains the stimulating agent for taking due actions. The above-mentioned competitive advantages are based on using culture potential, supporting advancement in creative sectors, promoting social attitudes based on tolerance and openness, providing incentives for innovative investments, establishing educational and R&D conditions which enhance the development of human talents.

Regional development should be based on taking advantage of new forms of economic operations resulting from creative processes. It is influenced by meeting numerous premises which include the environment favourable for new experiences, experiments, universal composition of the existing authorities and competencies, relatively easily accessible resources for funding education, entrepreneurship and cultural life. Interpersonal contacts, both formal and informal, should trigger creativity, the organizations functioning in a region should be characterized by a flexible approach towards developmental problems and original, nonstandard solutions.

Among the highly advisable attitudes and activities to be undertaken there is a need for promoting imagination, ingenuity, support for talents at schools, public administration, commercial companies and in everyday life of any community. Furthermore, the examples of successful actions, good practices resulting from combining creativity, culture and art should be highlighted along with the presentation of innovative products and services resulting from such relations.

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