


Turning Cultural and Creative Challenges into Local Development Opportunities



Andreea Claudia Serban , Huseyin Uzunboylu, Gheorghe-Alexandru Stativa, and Ana-Maria Bocaneala

Abstract Under the challenges of globalization, sustainability, digitalization, and other fast changes required by unexpected situations, the need for more sustainable and resilient cities increases. Creative and cultural opportunities in many sectors can be translated into local development by exploiting the potential and openness of many cities and regions around the world and particularly in European Union. This paper focuses on the Cultural and Creative Index as a useful tool to compare cities' performance and to identify recommendations for increasing the capability of cultural and creative favorable context to support local development. It is important to link academic knowledge to sustainable local development by summarizing the key findings of our research. Exploiting the holistic view of the Cultural and Creative Cities Index, we identified three dimensions that need to be considered and explored to make possible the objectives of the EU: building cohesive societies through culture and education and creating a more inclusive Union, supporting innovation, creativity, and sustainable jobs and growth. The three dimensions refer to employment, tourism, and environmental protection. Based on these dimensions, we aim to provide a scheme for turning cultural-creative challenges into opportunities for local development.

Keywords Urban tourism · Cultural-creative cities · Local development

JEL Classifications Z10 · R11

A. C. Serban (✉)

Department of Economics and Economic Policies, Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Bucharest, Romania

e-mail: andreea.serban@economie.ase.ro

H. Uzunboylu

Higher Education Planning, Supervision, Accreditation and Coordination Board, Nicosia, North Cyprus, Turkey

G.-A. Stativa · A.-M. Bocaneala

Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Bucharest, Romania

1 Introduction

Urban tourism and creative tourism represent new branches of the tourist industry that can be turned into opportunities for local development (Milin et al., 2020). For this reason, these tourism branches can become a social and economic engine for local development. Even if the academicians have not provided a fully accepted definition, there are certain aspects such as interaction, authenticity, or active participation which characterize these new concepts (Karim et al., 2021; Richards, 2011). According to some researchers, creative tourism represents the possibility of developing creative potential by participating in the learning experiences that are the characteristics of the vacation destination (Richards and Raymond, 2000).

In the communication of the European Commission *A New European Agenda for Culture* (COMM, 2018), it is presented how the EU member states will be supported to exploit the potential of culture, stimulate the innovation process, and encourage links between communications to increase Europe's external relations and economic growth. *A New European Agenda for Culture* includes three strategic objectives: the social objective (using cultural diversity to increase welfare and social cohesion), the economic objective (enhancing economic growth and jobs by using innovation and cultural-based creativity in education), and the third is an objective related to increasing the international connections based on culture (increasing and consolidating international cultural relations).

On June 29, 2022, the European Commission published the *Work Plan for Culture 2019–2022* (COMM, 2022), which helps to design the collective strategy of the European Union member states to support the priorities and needs of the cultural and creative sectors. This plan emphasizes long-term priorities, such as the relationship between culture and sustainability, but also digital transformations. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, new opportunities and challenges have been identified, like the resilience and recovery of the cultural and creative sectors after the pandemic, as well as expanding access to culture and creativity for people with disabilities (Seilkhan et al., 2022). Considering these aspects, it is important to highlight that the tourism sector increases the awareness of aspects related both to cultural heritage and environmental protection (Oyarzo, 2020). Cultural heritage represents a transversal element in achieving certain objectives, such as raising awareness of common values, and promoting and protecting European cultural heritage as a common resource.

Under these circumstances, from an economic point of view, urban tourism and creative cities can be considered efficient tools within the strategies of economic development starting from the local level and continuing with the spillover effects at regional and national levels. Moreover, this type of tourism can be considered one of the main economic engines in the local economy, due to the growth of start-up and spin-off companies (Belmerabet, 2021; Dzupka & Sebova, 2016).

European Union developed a tool, the Creative Cities Monitor (COMM, 2017, 2019) useful to assess the local opportunities and compare cities with similar conditions. Providing an expanded analysis from 2017 (the first report) to 2019 (the second one), the EU developed a Cultural-Creative Cities Index (C3), which is the main tool

for reducing the gap between cities, as it provides the extensive necessary information for studying and comparing cities from the point of view of creative and cultural aspects.

To carry out our study, data from the last version of the Cultural and Creative Cities Index (C3) were used, which is a complementary tool of the Cultural and Creative Cities Monitor. This index presents synthetically the cultural and creative performance of the cities: the higher the value the city registers, the more it excels (Montalto et al., 2019).

Our objective starts from the common understanding, stressed also by OECD (OECD, 2008) that using composite indexes became a common practice as they represent a useful tool in policy analysis, strategies, and also in public communication. Under these circumstances, we aim to provide a scheme for turning cultural-creative challenges into opportunities for local development.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows: the next part presents a brief literature review of the main concept used in our paper (the cultural and creative sector, creative and urban tourism, and local development), then we will present the methodology and the results, and in the last section, we will design a scheme of our proposed generalization for turning challenges into opportunities at local level considering the creative and cultural aspects.

2 Literature Review

A. Local development

Local development is a dynamic process that requires the engagement and mobilization of all economic and social actors for the well-being of the citizens of a well-defined territory.

Local development relies on the ability to create and maintain complementary relationships of various kinds (productive complementarities, complementarities between supply and demand, and demand complementarities) (Gaffard, 2005). The existence of these complementarities of demand/supply is an important factor in maintaining interregional balances and, consequently, in local development. Local development cannot exist without good management of local authorities or the existence of a political desire. This approach requires a holistic integration of economic, social, cultural, and political components. Local development involves local dynamism dependent not so much on the structures as on the actors (Violier, 1999).

The local development is based on the social and economic appropriation of territory and on the collective identity that helps to create it. The community of interest through its actors often takes the form of a collective will to carry out local development projects (Kahn, 2010). There are not exclusively economic development projects, but economic prosperity is their objective. In the sphere of tourism, the relationships that are developed between the actors themselves on the one hand,

and between the actors and the region characteristics on the other, are based on economic interests. The dynamics of tourism are based on several characteristics, a patchwork of situations involving all forms of tourism and all the actors. Thus, local development implies the interconnection of actors and the implementation of a sustainable development strategy (Karim et al., 2018). The culture is involved in every step of the implementation of a local development project. The sense of the cultural dimension can be improved by accepting that not only cultural industries and regional cultures are important, but also local development has a strong cultural dimension.

Local development involves channeling the resources mobilized (traditions, heritage, language, etc.) and orienting them with priority toward a specific development objective (industrial sector, tourism, cooperation, etc.). In this context, each territory/city needs to be led to carry out a preliminary diagnosis of public policies, to better understand its profile (strengths and weaknesses), identify its opportunities, and establish a demographic profile of the population (young/old, sedentary/mobile, skilled/unskilled), a profile in terms of economic indicators (e.g., GDP, unemployment). The local development of cities can be defined as the result of a permanent dialogue between economy and culture.

In this volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA) times of crisis, the local development appears to be a desperate effort of the most responsible part of the “survivors” to stop this fall and, if possible, to go back up the road (Gontcharoff, 2002).

B. Creative and urban tourism

Creative tourism facilitates development by making the most of what is local, promoting the Creative Economy, and by not limiting culture to the act of consuming products (Carlos A. Máximo Pimenta, 2020). Creative tourism can be a tool to promote local development, highlighting the role of creativity of a community in generating income, and obtaining benefits from local resources, both tangible and intangible. This type of tourism tends to contrast with more conventional/traditional tourism, both in terms of the role of local stakeholders and of the tourist experience, which explains its potential as a promoter of local development. Creative tourism creates direct links with tangible and intangible cultural factors by engaging and involving local development agents—public and private—in the development and implementation of cultural policies that attract creative tourists.

Creative tourism allows the involvement of other forms of organizational policy that favor consumer-oriented practices focused on community, sustainability, cooperation, trust, security, exchange, tradition, a sense of belonging, co-participation, sharing, and co-creation. The relationship between creative tourism and economic development implies a commitment to creating a different social, cultural, environmental, and local organizational framework.

The urban environment is a complex and multifunctional space, the place of its social dynamics and phenomena (Balazs & Zoltan, 2021; Tehdit, 2021). The inclusion of tourist activity in these spaces has increased this complexity by integrating new actors: the tourists. The urban space has become one of the favorite spaces for tourists.

The phenomenon of urban tourism has developed in Europe along with increased mobility and, in particular, the emergence of low-cost flights. Increased mobility has contributed to the awareness of the attractiveness of Europe's major cities. Until the crisis of the nineteenth century, city breaks (short breaks) were the symbol of urban tourism consumption. The higher accessibility of tourism has contributed to changing the morphology of cities, which have become leisure areas in search of attractiveness. Thus, the boundaries between tourism and leisure seem to be increasingly permeable, and the inhabitant seeking a break from everyday life is engaging now in practices similar to the tourist practices of a foreign tourist. However, due to the multitude of tourist and leisure offers and the multifunctionality of their spaces, metropolises are places for endogenous tourism and a change in the local landscape. The city has become a real strategic place, a place of decision-making, a place where wealth and power are concentrated; with shifting borders and growing attractiveness because currently, we are watching an urbanization phenomenon on a global scale (Coquet, 2021).

Cultural and creative industries contribute positively to the prosperity and economic well-being of states. These industries support social components regarding the development of local communities. Cultural and creative industries have a significant impact on job creation and export revenues, as they generate income. Moreover, these industries stimulate innovation and the supply of ideas through various business connections (OECD, 2020).

The development of tourism activity represents an incredible challenge for the major metropolises: it creates jobs, generates consumption and foreign exchange in the host area and territory, showcasing the city's dynamism on the national and international scene.

3 Methodology

The Cultural and Creative Cities Monitor (C3) provides a detailed and comprehensive source of information on different types of cultural cities of cultural and creative relevance. It is also an efficient instrument for mapping creative tourism (Mareque, 2021). Furthermore, the C3 Monitor provides a transparent measurement framework that can establish different relationships between variables that can be of great interest to researchers, policymakers, creative workers, investors, creative travelers, and entrepreneurs, who can find insightful details about city improvement, new business initiatives, and opportunities.

We used data from Eurostat (2022), Official Statistics of the European Union, and the Cultural and Creative Cities Monitor, 2019 edition (Coin, 2019). The C3 Index is a composite indicator, it is a set of twenty-nine indicators, nine dimensions, and three sub-indices that represent the main aspects of the cities' cultural, social, and economic vitality: "Cultural Vibrancy" (40%), "Creative Economy" (40%), and "Enabling Environment" (20%). This indicator measures cultural and creative performance in 190 cities in 30 European countries: EU countries, Norway, the UK, and

Table 1 C3 index components

C3 Index	D1 cultural vibrancy	D1.1 Cultural venues and facilities
		D1.2 Cultural participation and attractiveness
	D2 Creative economy	D2.1 Creative and knowledge-based jobs
		D2.2 Intellectual property and innovation
		D2.3 New jobs in creative sectors
	D3 Enabling environment	D3.1 Human capital and education
		D3.2 Openness, tolerance, and trust
		D3.3 Local and international connections
		D3.4 Quality of governance

Source Authors' own based on the cultural and creative cities monitor: 2019 edition

Switzerland. This index is developed by the internal research center of the European Commission, the European Commission's Competence Centre on Composite Indicators and Scoreboards (CC-COIN). A weighted average of the scores of the three sub-indices provides the overall measure of the city's cultural and creative performance: the higher the score, the higher the city's performance. Table 1 describes the theoretical component of the C3 indicator.

We narrowed the analysis of creative and cultural cities to the extra-large (XXL) group (in terms of a number of inhabitants) as included and defined in the Cultural and Creative Cities Monitor (more than 1 million inhabitants). To achieve our objective, we have evaluated local development using the GDP per capita, our own calculation using data from Eurostat (GDP at current market prices in million euro and average annual population in thousands of persons).

In line with our objective, we used a multilevel approach. We have analyzed the cities in XXL in terms of local development and the C3 index, to identify the cities with the best and low performance, to identify factors of good results, and to recognize the challenges for cultural and creative sectors that could endanger the local development, to find a way to turn them into opportunities.

4 Results and Discussions

The C3 indicators rank cities according to the demographic level in 5 groups considering the number of inhabitants. In our study, we focus on the classification of cities included in the XXL cluster and in particular on the analysis of Bucharest.

The XXL cluster is included 20 cities, 18 from the EU (Paris, München, Milano, Berlin, Wien, Budapest, Prague, Barcelona, Hamburg, Madrid, Warsaw, Köln, Roma, Lyon, Bruxelles, Bucharest, Rotterdam, and Sofia) and 2 from UK (Birmingham and London). Figure 1 presents the C3 index of the EU cities from XXL and GDP/capita. The median value for the C3 index for the whole group is 24.12 and for GDP/capita

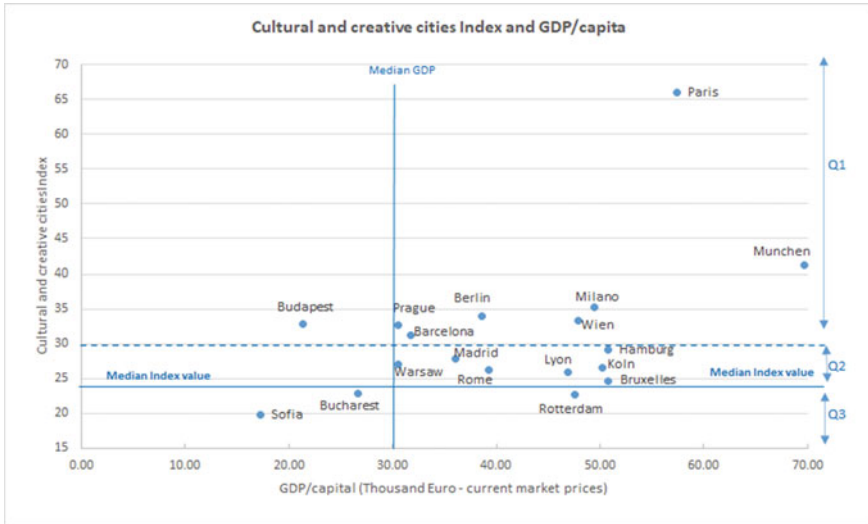


Fig. 1 Cultural and creative cities Index and GDP/capita in XXL cities cluste. *Source* Authors’ own based on the cultural and creative cities monitor: 2019 edition

is 30 thousand euro/capita according to the monitor (for all 190 cities). We have used these values to position the EU XXL cities to easily identify good practices model for cities with low performance both in terms of GDP and Cultural and Creative Index.

From the group of 18 cities, Paris ranked 1st in terms of C3 index value (66) and München ranked 1st in terms of GDP value (69.70 thousand Euro/capita). Both have good performances in linking local development and cultural and creative industries. Moreover, 83% of the cities in cluster EU XXL cluster (15 cities) have values higher than the median for the C3 index. The 3 cities with values below the median are Bucharest, Sofia, and Rotterdam. Bucharest and Sofia have also low performance in terms of GDP/capita which means that there is a high need of finding opportunities in cultural and creative sectors to support local development.

It is interesting to analyze the cities in the first quartile in terms of the C3 index, having GDP/capita above the median value. For Berlin, for example, the high value of the C3 index (the 4th) is supported by the high value of the dimension D3.3. Local and international connections indicator (the 2nd place after Paris). This dimension refers to connections via air, rail, and road links, and it is considered decisive for cultural and creative sectors through its capacity to enable the flows of investments, tourists, and ideas (COMM, 2019). Berlin’s transport infrastructure is very complex, providing a diverse range of inter and intra-urban mobility. The Berlin highest values are recorded for dimension C1.2. Cultural participation and attractiveness. This dimension refers to the capacity of the cities to attract audiences to participate in their cultural life (not only local but also national or international). Cultural participation is the most significant outcome of the city’s engagement in promoting culture and encouraging

creativity. Berlin is a popular location for international film productions, and also the city is known for its festivals, diverse architecture, and contemporary arts.

The cities with low economic performance in terms of GDP per capita below the median value of the 190 cities group are from Eastern EU: Sofia, Budapest, and Bucharest. They need to value better the opportunities in all domains, including cultural and creative sectors, to create jobs, and use knowledge and innovation potential.

Figure 2 presents the Cultural Vibrancy domain for all 20 cities in the XXL cluster. The cities that can be found in the 3rd quartile C3 index value are Bucharest (20th place for cultural venues and facilities and 19th place for cultural participation), Rotterdam (19th place for cultural venues and facilities and 6th place for cultural participation), Sofia (18th place in cultural venues and facilities and 20th place in cultural participation) and from the UK—Birmingham (place 17th in cultural venues and facilities and cultural participation). On the opposite side, the cities that are in the 1st quartile index value are Paris (1st place in cultural venues and facilities), München, London, Milano, Berlin, Vienna, Budapest, Prague, and Barcelona. These cities are also very well ranked in the C3 index hierarchy. Lower performances compared to the other cities from the first quartile has Budapest, both in terms of cultural facilities and participation.

Figure 3 shows the Creative Economy subcomponent/domain. Paris has the highest value of the index for this domain, being ranked first in dimension D2.1. Creative and knowledge-based jobs and the second in D2.2. Intellectual property and innovation and D2.3. New jobs in creative sectors. The cities in the 3rd quartile of the C3 index have also low performance in Creative Economy, mostly in D2.2. Intellectual property and innovation (where Bucharest has the lowest performance in

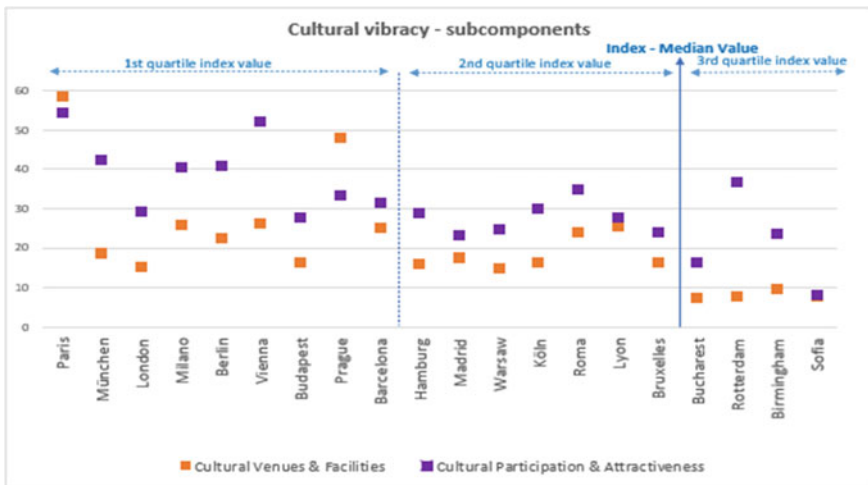


Fig. 2 Cultural vibrancy—subcomponents in XXL cluster. *Source* Authors’ own based on the cultural and creative cities monitor: 2019 edition

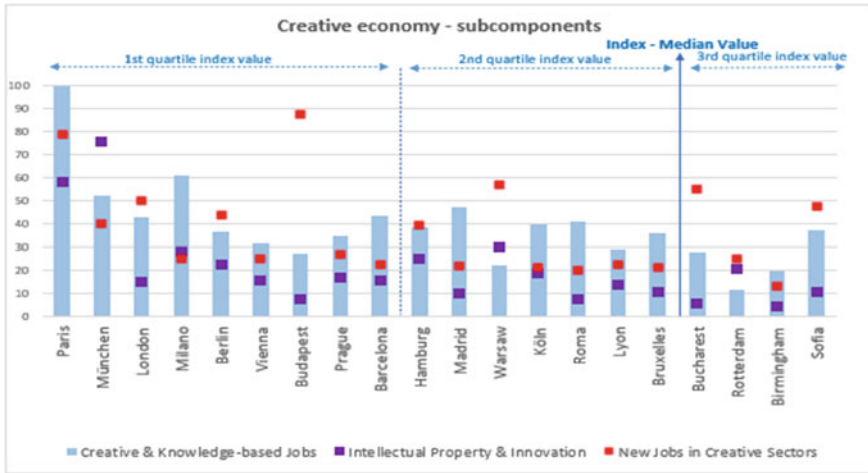


Fig. 3 Creative economy—subcomponents in XXL cities cluster. *Source* Authors’ own based on the cultural and creative cities monitor: 2019 edition

EU XXL cities). The innovation potential is highly connected with economic growth and economic development at all levels: national, regional, and local. In supporting this statement, we use the Budapest example, a city with very low performance in terms of intellectual property and innovation, the second low in the EU XXL cities. Even though it has an overall high C3 index, the economic performance is low (GDP/capita). Moreover, all the 3 cities with economic performances below the median value of the group (190 cities): Budapest, Bucharest, and Sofia have good ranking positions in terms of the new jobs in creative sectors, but these jobs are not requiring highly qualified workers, innovation, knowledge, enrollment on the trajectory of digital transformation and as result, their potential to contribute to local development is reduced.

Figure 4 shows the Enabling Environment subcomponent. For the cities ranked in the 3rd quartile of the C3 index, we found low performances in dimensions D3.1. Human capital and education and for D3.3. Local and international connections. The dimension D3.1. refers to higher education system quality in terms of university ranking and number of graduates in art, humanities, and ICT sector. These aspects can build a strong capacity of the cities or countries to have short but also long-term economic development potential which is why improvements are needed at this stage to ensure the resilience, flexibility, and resources for future economic development.

Further, we will discuss the strengths and weaknesses of Bucharest, the only Romanian city from the XXL cluster. In Romania, 5 cities are part of the Cultural-Creative Cities Monitor: Bucharest XXL cluster, Cluj-Napoca, Iasi and Timisoara—L cluster, and Sibiu and Baia Mare—M cluster). We chose Bucharest as it is close to the median value both for the C3 index and for GDP/capita, and based on linking its performances to the well-ranked cities we can identify a strategic path

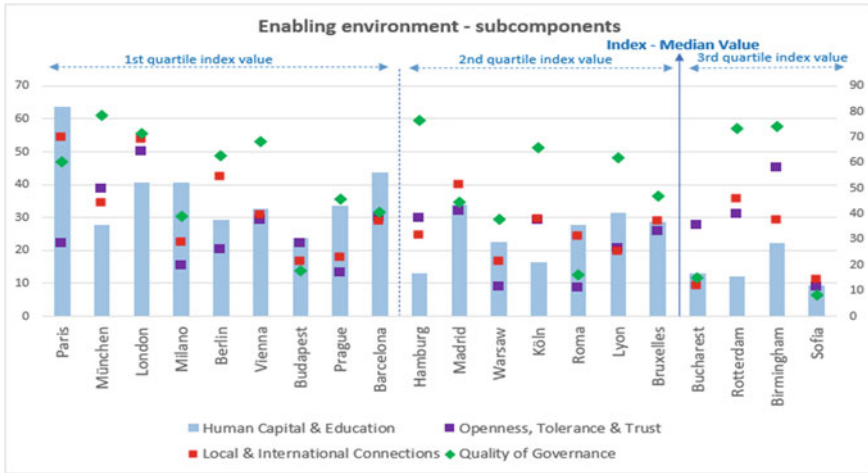


Fig. 4 Enabling environment—subcomponents in XXL cities cluster. *Source* Authors’ own based on the cultural and creative cities monitor: 2019 edition

for turning cultural and creative challenges/facts into opportunities for local development. Bucharest is the capital of Romania as well as its cultural, industrial, and financial center. Economically, it is the most prosperous Romanian city.

The city’s cultural strategy was adopted in August 2016. It covers the period 2016–2026. It has six long-term objectives: embodying culture for sustainable urban development, ensuring access for the participation of all to culture, establishing Bucharest as an attractive cultural capital, bringing culture to the entrepreneurship from the margins to the center, communicating Bucharest as a connective city, and increasing the capacity of the cultural sector (European Capital of Culture 2021 in Romania Final Selection Report, 2016).

Bucharest ranks 16th (within the group of 18 EU XXL cities or 17th within the group of 20 cities) in the Creative and Cultural Cities Monitor Index hierarchy with an index of 22.8. The maximum value of the C3 index is 66 (Paris) and the average value is 31.07. As Fig. 1 shows, Bucharest has values below the median both for the C3 index and for the GDP/capita.

The three major facets of the cultural, social, and economic vitality of cities related to indicator C3 are Cultural Vibrancy (D1) which measures a city’s cultural “pulse” in terms of cultural infrastructure and cultural participation; Creative Economy (D2) which captures how the cultural and creative sectors contribute to a city’s employment, job creation and innovation capacity; Enabling Environment (D3) identifies tangible and intangible assets that help cities attract creative talent and foster cultural engagement (COMM, 2019).

As Fig. 5 shows, the value for the D1 (Cultural Vibrancy) is 11.9 (the 17th position in EU XXL cities), while the highest value is 56.5 (Paris). For both components of this facet, D1.1. cultural venues and facilities and D1.2. cultural participation and

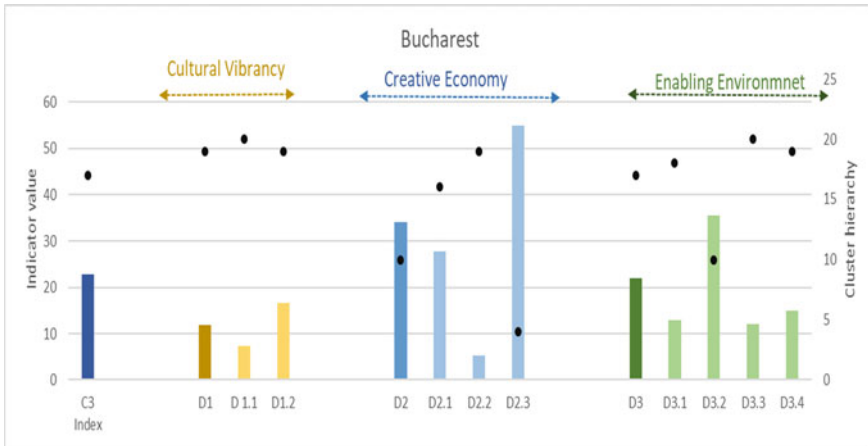


Fig. 5 Bucharest—the C3 index, by components. *Source* Authors’ own based on the cultural and creative cities monitor: 2019 edition

attractiveness, Bucharest has low performance. It needs improvements to increase the attractiveness of cultural sites and to make better use of the facilities and venues.

In the Creativity Economy (D2 domain), Bucharest has a net advantage for the dimension D2.3. new jobs in creative sectors. This could turn into an opportunity if it will be successfully exploited with a performant education system, effective innovation applications, digital transformation of the economy, etc. Dimension 2.3. is a proxy of how well a city can translate creative and innovative ideas into new jobs? This is measured in terms of jobs in newly created enterprises in the creative and knowledge-intensive sectors, as listed in Dimension 2.1.

For dimension D3 Enabling Environment, the value is 22, Bucharest ranking 15th of 18 cities. Improvements are urgently needed in the dimensions Dimension 3.1. human capital and education (3rd lower performance), Dimension 3.3. local and international connections measure (lowest performance), and D 3.4. quality of governance (2nd lower performance). Education and quality of national/international transportation infrastructure accessibility are very important for increasing the local development potential, attracting investors, and tourists, and for developing innovation potential (Mekhael & Karamah, 2018; Oyarzo, 2020).

5 Conclusion

Under the challenges of globalization, sustainability, digitalization, and other fast change required by unexpected situations, the need for more sustainable and resilient cities increases. Creative and cultural opportunities in many sectors can be translated into local development by exploiting the potential and openness of many cities and regions around the world and particularly in the European Union.

Our paper focuses on the Cultural and Creative Index as a useful tool to compare the cities’ performance and to identify recommendations for increasing the capability of cultural and creative favorable context to support local development. It is important to link academic knowledge to sustainable local development by summarizing the key findings of our research.

We should highlight the resources needed and used by the creative and cultural sectors, including human capital, cultural venues, and innovation to add value and contribute to local development. The local development is not new but a constantly expanding challenge to focus, use, and reinterpret the new opportunities. Exploiting the holistic view of the Cultural and Creative Cities Index, and based on learning and knowledge, we identified three dimensions that need to be considered and explored to make possible the objectives stated by the *New European Agenda for Culture* and the *EU Work Plan for Culture 2019–2022*: building cohesive societies through culture and education and creating a more inclusive Union, supporting innovation, creativity, and sustainable jobs and growth.

Based on our analysis, we consider that cultural and creative sector can contribute to cohesion and increased local development, through three dimensions: employment, tourism, and environment protection (Fig. 6). We focused on exploiting human and natural resources, considering the objective of a more sustainable environment.

We considered employment as the first component of our proposed generalization for turning cultural-creative challenges into local development opportunities. *Employment* refers to skills, education, and innovation. The current need for digital transformation in the information and communication technologies (ICT) society should be supported by education and adequate skills delivery. The number of graduates in the ICT sectors is of high importance in supporting a more resilient and inclusive society. Increasing the number of foreign graduates, other included in the C3 index, is also a very important aspect that contributes not only to more cultural



Fig. 6 Proposed generalization for turning cultural-creative challenges into local development opportunities. *Source* Authors’ own contribution

cities but also to the rebalance of the demographic aging. Innovation is another critical aspect of local development as it supports activities in higher competitiveness and value-added sectors. Under new current and needed skills, employment can be used as a virtuous circle of local development. Our analysis showed that cities with low economic performance, in terms of GDP/capita, had low performance in innovation and also in human capital, and education.

The second component of our proposed scheme, also closely linked to creative and cultural opportunities, is **tourism**. Our analysis showed that cities with low economic performances in terms of GDP/capita had also low performances in terms of cultural venues and facilities and also in local or international connections. Cultural tourism is a new and increasing branch of the tourism sector, but it needs a strategy for a more flexible and generalized approach. Under these circumstances, we consider that enabling the tourism sector by supporting cultural venues and facilities should be on the authority's agenda in the future. Low performance under these issues does not mean that there are no opportunities, but these are not exploited to create value through adequate infrastructure (accessibility by road, rail, and flights) and highly touristic attractiveness.

The third component of our scheme is the **environment**. This component cannot be excluded from any development strategy. Sustainability is the cornerstone for future societies, and it should be targeted in all development models. Through education, innovation, and knowledge, sustainable local development will successfully contribute to the future cohesion of our societies. Exploiting cultural venues and facilities by the tourism sector could interact with the environment by increasing pollution (transportation, more trashes on the environment, consumers of scarce resources) and strain on resources (e.g., electricity, water, etc.). The second and third components of our scheme are closely linked, as tourism could increase the awareness of the environment and cultural heritage issues.

The limitation of our research was related to data availability of more variables that can be used to analyze the local development (e.g., unemployment by educational attainment, value added by economic sectors at the city level, etc.). We overpassed this limitation, by highly exploiting the components of the C3 index (it comprises 29 indicators).

Authors' Contributions Andreea Claudia Serban and Huseyin Uzunboylyu carried out the abstract, the objectives of the paper, and the Conclusions, and they designed the figures. Alexandru Gherghe Stativa and Ana Maria Bocaneala carried out the Introduction, the Literature Review, and the Methodology sections. All authors contributed to the Results and Discussion section. Andreea Serban participated in the design and coordination of the manuscript and helped to draft it. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

References

- Balazs L. & Zoltan P. (2021). Review of economic growth patterns and regional disparities in Central and Eastern European countries. *International Journal of Current Innovations in Interdisciplinary Scientific Studies*, 5(2), 13–27. <https://un-pub.eu/ojs/index.php/IJ-CISS/article/view/5682>.
- Belmerabet, F. (2021). Thematic implications and representativeness in Wuthering Heights (1848): Dialect as a social reality. *International Journal of New Trends in Social Sciences*, 5(1), 16–27. <https://doi.org/10.18844/ijntss.v5i1.5499>.
- Carlos A. & Máximo Pimenta, J. C. (2020). Creative tourism and regional development: a survey of the 27th aprd congress sustainable management of the sea for sustainable regional development, (pp. 163). <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877042812054663>.
- Coin (2019). Cultural and creative cities monitor data. The European commission's competence centre on composite indicators and scoreboards (CC-COIN). <https://composite-indicators.jrc.ec.europa.eu/cultural-creative-cities-monitor/performance-map>.
- COMM (2017). The cultural and creative cities monitor, 2017 ed. European Commission, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. <https://www.ecsite.eu/sites/default/files/kj0217787enn.pdf>
- COMM (2018). A new european agenda for culture. European Commision, SWD (2018) 167 final, Brussels, 22.5.2018. https://culture.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2020-08/swd-2018-167-new-european-agenda-for-culture_en.pdf
- COMM (2019). The cultural and creative cities monitor, 2019 Edn. European Commission, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2019. https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/bitstream/JRC117336/citiesmonitor_2019.pdf.
- COMM (2022). Work plan for culture 2019–2022. *Official Journal of the European Union*, C 460/12. [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-ontent/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52018XG1221\(01\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-ontent/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52018XG1221(01))
- Coquet, R. (2021). Le tourisme urbain, l'inscription de l'habitant, dans la dynamique touristique de proximité. Retrieved from <https://dante.univtlse2.fr/access/files/original/359693b8c88265866b589300c21fb1a93283df86.pdf>
- Dzupka, P., & Sebova, M. (2016). Local economic impact of the WHITE night festival in Kosice. *E+M Ekonomie a Management*, 19(2), 132. <https://search.proquest.com/openview/038d0b59877ceff3151f8e4d41c149a5/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=39163>
- EUROSTAT (2022). The statistical office of the European Union. <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/main/data/database>
- Gaffard, J. L. (2005). Développement local et globalisation. revue de l'OFCE, (pp.17–44).
- Gontcharoff, G. (2002). Développement local: petite généalogie. Territoires.
- Kahn, R. (2010). La dimension culturelle du développement territorial. *Revue d'économie régionale et urbaine*, 2010, 625. <https://tinyurl.com/5fkdh264>
- Karim, B., Seksembaevich, M. M., Suyuberdieva, A., Maulenberdieva, G., Kudaibergenova, M., Baybolat, L., & Ibrayeva, K. (2021). Painting education of Kazakh mythology. *Cypriot Journal of Educational Sciences*, 16(4), 1956–1975. <https://doi.org/10.18844/cjes.v16i4.6064>
- Karim, S., Sandu, N., & Gide, E. (2018). The economic benefits of Cloud-based e-commerce in Indian service SMBs. *Global Journal of Information Technology: Emerging Technologies*, 8(2), 75–85. <https://doi.org/10.18844/gjit.v8i2.3529>
- Mekhael, E., & Karameh, J. (2018). Measuring grade 10 students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes of sustainable development. *International Journal of Learning and Teaching*, 10(3), 269–291. <https://doi.org/10.18844/ijlt.v10i3.1032>
- Mercedes Mareque, E. d.-D. (2021). Exploring creative tourism based on the cultural and creative. *Sustainability*. <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/13/9/5145/htm>
- Milin, I.A., Merce, I., Iancu, T., Pet, E., & Tigan, E. (2020). Tourism contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Gross Value Added (GVA). *Global Journal of Business, Economics, and Management: Current Issues*, 10(3), 176–182. <https://doi.org/10.18844/gjbem.v10i3.4686>

- Montalto, V., Moura, C. J. T., Langedijk, S., & Saisana, M. (2019). Culture counts: An empirical approach to measure the cultural and creative vitality of European cities. *Cities*, 89, 167–185. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0264275118303640>
- OECD (2008). Handbook on constructing composite indicators, methodology and user guide. Paris: OECD Publications. <https://www.oecd.org/sdd/42495745.pdf>
- OECD (2020). Culture shock: COVID-19 and the cultural and creative sectors. Paris: OECD Publications. Available online https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/view/?ref=135_135961-nenh9f2w7a&title=Culture-shock-COVID-19-and-the-cultural-and-creativesectors&_ga=2.120109835.2059683614.1626271791-1169709466.1626271791
- Oyarzo, F. (2020). The cultural improvement theory and the social sciences' intellectual crisis. *New Trends and Issues Proceedings on Humanities and Social Sciences*, 7(3), 01–12. <https://doi.org/10.18844/prosoc.v7i3.5226>
- Richards, G. (2011). Creativity and tourism: The state of the art. *Ann. Tour. Res.* (pp. 1225–1253).
- Richards, G., & Raymond, C. (2000). *Creative Tourism. ATLAS News*, 2000(23), 16–20.
- Seilkhan, A., Abdrassulova, Z., Erkaebaeva, M., Soltan, R., Makhambetov, M., & Ydyrys, A. (2022). Problems of distance education in Kazakhstan during the COVID-19 pandemic. *World Journal on Educational Technology: Current Issues*, 14(2), 380–389. <https://doi.org/10.18844/wjet.v14i2.6913>
- Tehdit, H. (2021). Investigation of the cognitive, psychomotor, and social-emotional progress in primary schools by directors' ideas. *International Journal of Innovative Research in Education*, 8(1), 12–26. <https://doi.org/10.18844/ijire.v8i1.5537>
- Violier, P. (1999). Le Pays entre institution et développement local.