

# The Czech Way of Addressing the Global Challenges Accompanied with Creative Industries

Peter Mičák

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## Abstract

The article aims to provide a clear picture of the Czech Republic's approach toward coping with the creative industries in the context of their numerous shortcomings and ambiguities. The theoretical framework of the article is divided into three primary parts, each dealing with a different set of problems. The first part deals with the problems arising from the scattered definition of the concept of creative industries along with potential linguistic problems arising from understanding the meaning of words *creative industries* in different cultures. The second part deals with the issue of the creation of various tools and methods for incorporating creative industries within national economies. The third part deals with the subject of creating public policies in the field of culture and the possible dilemmas associated with them. At the end of each section, space is dedicated to describing the Czech Republic's approach concerning dealing with these problems. Methodologically the article is built upon the secondary research of relevant research papers written by academics researching the field of creative industries and on the analysis of the statistical data provided by the Czech Statistical Office. Findings resulting from the article points to the increased long-term efforts of state officials to establish the concept of creative industries fully.

**Keywords:** Creative Industries, Cultural Industries, Creative Economy, Policy Making, Creativity

## Introduction

Today, creative industries are primarily celebrated as a vital driver of the modern economy. They are directly connected with innovations that are inherent to modern public life. They represent new values and aspirations, along with a new concept for future development (Kontrimiené, Melnikas, 2017). Over the last two decades, creative industries have dominated the political discourse of many advanced countries. Numerous governments have turned to the concept of creative industries with their economic strategies (Kong, 2014). Recently, it has also been possible to observe a considerably increased interest in them among many scholars (Jones, Svejenova, Pedersen, Townley, 2016).

During the last decades, the very notion of creative industries had undergone a turbulent transformation, from the original notion of the *cultural industry* with strongly negative connotation Adorno had given it in 1944 in his *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (Adorno, Bernstein, 1991) to their emergence when politicians became interested in them in 1997. In that year, at the request of Tony Blair's government, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport (DCMS) was created and was put in charge of mapping and measuring the creative industries in the United Kingdom (Gouvea, Vora, 2018). The growth of creative industries since the 1990s was a clear indication of a new desire among politicians who wanted to harness cultural production and transform it into a new economic agenda (Banks, O'Connor, 2009). Thus, creative industries have gradually become an essential part of the economies of many advanced countries (Kloudová, Chwaszcz, 2014).

Today the discourse has shifted from the initial effort of defining their place to the question of whether creative industries are the loci of innovation and employment in a modern knowledge-based economy. From the initial advocacy of cultural policies, we have moved to creation of pro-growth economic policies in many post-industrial economies at the level of cities, regions, or even entire states (Flew, Cunningham, 2010). In today's global and dynamic world, nations that do not satisfactorily address R&D and innovation are facing a threat of gradually falling behind the countries that do address these needs. Digitalization, convergence, and globalization pose additional challenges for these countries, which they will face significant difficulties without investing in R&D and innovation. These transitional economies could eventually fall into a phenomenon called the middle-income trap (Gouvea, Vora, 2018). Moreover, many countries will find themselves in some additional form of a disadvantage because of the linguistic constraints of their creative production in an international context (Jürisson, 2007).

This article aims to highlight the current state of the creative industries in the Czech Republic, which will be contrasted with identified global issues and ambiguities that accompany creative industries. Emphasis will be placed primarily on the Czech methods and approaches to addressing these problems concerning the predispositions mentioned above.

## **1. Creative Industries and their multiple definitions and linguistic constraints**

The agreement on a generally applicable universal and internationally accepted definition is particularly tricky because of the lack of consensus on which subsectors should be considered as an integral part of the creative industries. This ambiguity poses problems related to statistical data provision, which in many countries is solved based on local needs and thus the possibility of comparing individual countries between each other and over time is lost (Kong, 2014).

It will not be easy to establish a general definition if the very notion of creative industries is already perceived controversially. Replacing the original concept of the *cultural industries* with the term *creative industries*, which was a purely tactical manoeuvre of the British government, proved to be much more complicated later on (O'Connor, 2013). The linguistic transition was perceived by many involved as an effort for massification and commodification of artistic achievements based on individual creativity. Although the new concept has found popularity among politicians, it has encountered far less understanding by academics who have increasingly feared that there will be a significant shift from culture towards economic priorities and interests. They feared that the existing theoretical framework, emerging public policies and success indicators would be subjected to the logic and methods of economic analysis (Banks, O'Connor, 2009).

The notion of "*industry*" itself, which has a different meaning in many cultures has also proved to be problematic (Jürisson, 2007). Most European countries have had reservations about adopting the concept of creative industries, preferring the original concept of *cultural industries*. Some Scandinavian countries use the term *creative economy* or *knowledge-based economy* (Flew, Cunningham, 2010).

The United Kingdom's DCMS defined creative industries in their mapping document in 2001 as "*those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property*" (Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, 2001). However, the Czech Republic has decided to use the term *Creative and Cultural Sectors* instead of creative industries, in light of the problems mentioned above with the word *industry*. The officially valid definition in the Czech Republic is as follows: "*Cultural and Creative Sectors' activities are based on human creativity, skills, and talent. (...) They have the potential to create wealth and jobs, especially by exploiting the intellectual property. They include public, non-profit and market activities or products irrespective of the type and mode of financing of the entity implementing them. They add value to other economic sectors and can be a source of technological and non-technological innovation. Cultural and Creative Sectors have many other positive impacts on both society and individuals*" (Ministry of Culture Czech Republic, 2014).

The Czech definition thus originated primarily from the British definition and materials of the European Union. Following the example of the European Union, and with regard to the Czech cultural environment, the concept of *cultural and creative sectors* was chosen. The replacement of the term *industries* by the term *sectors* was based on the meaning and characteristics of the individual activities involved. Due to the Czech understanding of the term, some activities are difficult to identify with the word *industry* (for example, the operation of museums or libraries). However, both terms are commonly used by politicians (Žáková, Kraus, 2015).

## 2. The proliferation of tools to measure and help creative industries

Creative industries need to be seen through the social effects of economic transition, which is the result of globalisation because globalisation has not geographically hit their development in the same way. Some products have an assumption of massification, while others may not have it (Collins, Mahon, Murtagh, 2018). Moreover, Silvio (2018) adds that *creative industries*, the *creative economy*, and the *creative class* are not concepts and categories that could be defined by empirical research, but concepts that are designed and reconstructed through their deployment. Thus, he sees creativity as a concept that develops through dialogues between the participants of creative industries, the public, and the government.

The intense debate between academics and politicians has resulted in a large number of tools, models and indicators that have tried to assess creativity at a local, regional or national level (Castro-Higueras, de Aguilera-Moyano, 2018). In addition to the creation of many tools at a national level, many multinational organisations have also sought to develop new methodologies to address the problems of defining ambiguity or fragmented and unsystematic approaches to creative industries. Examples include European Commission, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and Nations Development Program (UNDP) (Cunningham 2009).

Despite the emergence of many instruments, however, the lack of statistical data to capture creative industries remains the most pressing issue in many countries. Over the last few years, the scope of analysis and the number of tools used has increased considerably. A visible effort to capture local social and economic determinants into the monitored indicators began to prevail, which contributed significantly to better local data. However, it is necessary to realise that the evaluation of creativity is a complex and never-ending process. Therefore, the monitored indicators must be evaluated continuously and updated according to the current developments in the monitored area (Castro-Higueras, de Aguilera-Moyano, 2018). In particular, support from the state, which is essential for socio-economic development in the area, is vital, especially in the emergence and early development. Advocacy for state support is evidence that the development of creative industries also affects the development of other sectors and increases the attractiveness of the area (Drab-Kurowska, 2017).

Representatives of the Czech Republic have long recognised the importance of creative industries and all the benefits that their strategic support causes. Therefore, since 2008, based on an administrative task, the Czech Statistical Office, in cooperation with the National Information and Counseling Center for Culture (NIPOS), has been compiling the Satellite Account of Culture, which was first published in 2011 for the year of 2009. This satellite

account is based on the recommendations of the European Statistical System Network on Culture (ESSnet Culture). Consequently, account data are prepared for eventual comparison with other member countries that have chosen to use the European Union's methodology based on ESSnet Culture and the Green Book (Žáková, Raabová, 2015).

The Satellite Account of Culture divides cultures into three separate sectors that combine microeconomic and macroeconomic indicators of the individual segments of these sectors collectively in one table. The first sector is the cultural sector, which includes cultural heritage, scenic arts, visual arts, cultural and artistic education, and arts crafts. The second sector is the cultural industry, which consists of film and video, music, radio, television, books and print, and video games. The third sector is the creative industries, where architecture, advertising, and design are included. Share of all sectors of Satellite Account of Culture on Czech GDP is presented in table 1.

**Table 1: Share of creative industries on GDP**

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Index 2017/2011 [%]
Share of Culture on Czech's GDP	1,21%	1,33%	1,34%	1,35%	1,36%	1,32%	1,35%	111,57%

Source: The results of the Satellite Account of Culture for years 2011-2017

As can be seen, the share of creative industries on the Czech gross domestic product is somewhat stagnant in the last years. The reasons for this trend will be interpreted in the discussion section of this paper. The key indicators of creative industries in the Czech Republic are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Key indicators of creative industries in Czechia**

Indicator	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Index 2017/2011[%]
Self-sustainability [%]	89,1%	84,9%	85,7%	89,4%	87,9%	88,6%	89,5%	100,4%
Number of employees	81 521	79 785	81 417	80 470	89 330	90 946	84 622	103,8%
Average monthly gross wage [CZK]	24 704	24 982	24 431	25 588	25 966	26 279	27 643	111,9%
Investments [mil CZK]	11 416	10 369	10 676	12 067	13 578	14 266	13 703	120,0%

Source: The results of the Satellite Account of Culture for years 2011-2017

The self-sufficiency indicator shows the degree to which individual legal entities within creative industries can cover their costs without subsidies from the public sector. This indicator has been practically stagnant. Overall, based on Table 2 data, it is possible to talk about the slight increase in the number of people employed in creative industries. A positive trend is visible in the increase in average monthly gross wage; however, the amount of wage was always lower than the national average gross wage during the whole analysed period. Another positive trend is a noticeable increase in investments made by individual legal entities, which rose by 20% during the analysed period. As Kloudová and Chwaszcz (2014) point out, creative industries can create a large number of new jobs, and this trend has been confirmed in the Czech Republic. The overall analysis of employment in creative industries for the year 2017 is presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: Analysis of employment in Creative Industries in the Czech Republic**

	<b>Jobs</b>	<b>% on total employment in CIs</b>
<b>Cultural sector</b>	<b>37 276</b>	<b>40,99%</b>
Cultural heritage	18 772	20,64%
Scenic arts	14 558	16,01%
Visual arts	1 996	2,19%
Cultural and artistic education	696	0,77%
Arts crafts	1 254	1,38%
<b>Cultural industries</b>	<b>22 248</b>	<b>24,46%</b>
Film and video	1 461	1,61%
Music	224	0,25%
Radio	1 929	2,12%
Television	3 974	4,37%
Books and print	14 221	15,64%
Video games	439	0,48%
<b>Creative industries</b>	<b>21 941</b>	<b>24,13%</b>
Architecture	7 166	7,88%
Advertising	13 929	15,32%
Design	846	0,93%
<b>Management and promotion of cultural activities</b>	<b>3 157</b>	<b>3,47%</b>

Source: The results of the Satellite Account of Culture for 2017

Table 3 shows a thorough analysis of employment in creative industries by its subsectors. To the total number of people employed in the creative industries, which is 84,622, it is necessary to add more than 11,400 volunteers who worked without the right for compensation (NIPOS, 2019). The creative industries accounted for 2,1% of total employment in the country. The largest employer is the cultural heritage subsector. The number of people working in this area is given by a large number of cultural heritage sites located in the Czech Republic, along with a well-developed network of museums, galleries etc. It is not surprising that books and print and scenic arts are other more prominent employers because these industries have a great tradition in the Czech Republic. A little surprising can be the low number of employees in the video game industry. Nevertheless, it is also possible to observe gradual development in this area, even though there is not yet a substantial effort by the government to strategically support this area (Záhora, Barák, Kopecký, 2015).

One of the global problems of creative industries is the lack of correlation between education and real employment. Employees in the creative industries are often dealing with uncertainty and are unable to rely entirely on their empirical experience (Hennekam, Bennet, 2017). Cultural and creative work has been considerably transformed from individual performance to “industrially” and “mass” produced goods. People working in creative industries are often trying to adapt to the contemporary business model of thinking. Nevertheless, in practice, we still encounter specific characteristics that often counteract usually valid assumptions in general economics or management theory (Purnomo, Kristiansen, 2018).

It is also imperative to mention the project of Mapping of Creative Industries, which was carried out by the Arts Institute (Institut umění), based on the task of the Ministry of Culture through the years 2011 to 2015. The result of this mapping was a document that defined and proposed a framework of creative industries in the Czech Republic; the document includes performance studies, strengths and weaknesses, trends and needs for all creative industries subsectors. Furthermore, the outputs were a certified methodology for mapping of creative industries and the so-called Cultural Calculator (KuKKal) in the form of an online application that allows the monitoring of the economic impacts of cultural organisations or events. The application then calculates based on the input information, the impact of the event on the visitors' expenses and then presents them in the form of impacts on the Czech Republic's overall production, gross domestic product, employee incomes, employment, and indirect tax collection.

### **3. The policy-making in Creative Industries**

As Skavronska (2017) suggests, one of the main disadvantages of creating policies in the creative industries is an obsession with creating something new, changing everything and, to some extent, ignoring one's history. A global model capturing creative industries would not

have reliable information value. Hence, it is necessary to look at the local context when creating new tools for measuring creative industries and policy-making (Porfirio, Carrilho, Mónico, 2016). Creative industries are a relevant part of today's economy, so it is crucial to gain a greater understanding of their internal processes and the foundations on which they are built, and only then to create public policies that work effectively (Castro-Higueras, de Aguilera-Moyano, 2018).

It is also important to discern that current public policies in western countries often force the participants in the creative industries to fight for resources to finance the cultural institutions they represent. Above all, there is a risk that large institutions will be much more successful in this fight than smaller ones, which are therefore endangered (Alexander, Bowler, 2014). This view only confirms the concerns of Kong (2014), who sees a tremendous threat from large multinational players, to which SMEs are losing their competitiveness.

Policy-making, in the case of creative industries, faces multiple threats. On the one hand, there is a risk of underestimation by politicians or, on the other hand, excessive over-valuation. In the first case, such policies result in the absence of an effort to move the economy and innovation forward. In the latter case, they often result in overshadowing the humanistic principles with economic agenda (Jürisson, 2007). In his work, O'Connor (2013) emphasizes that the original support for cultural industries was not just about economic growth; it has done much more to increase democracy, participation, and diversity. It is, therefore, necessary to approach policies relating to creative industries, critically and carefully. Cultural policies, in particular, are remaining easily influenceable by emotional manipulation or ideological pressure from interest groups or politicians (Jürisson, 2007).

The relevant active public policies or strategic documents of the Czech Republic currently do not use the concept of creative industries to a greater extent and, if so, only on a formal level. On the contrary, they focus primarily on sub-goals, while the need for innovation is often referred to as a statement; it is often mentioned without any substantive plan to achieve it. According to an analysis conducted by Marková (2015) in the aforementioned creative industries mapping project, an exception at a national level is the National Innovation Strategy (2012-2020), which talks about the need to develop creativity already during the education process, as creative people are the decisive factor of economic success. On the other hand, the National Strategy of International Competitiveness (2012-2020) perceives competitiveness as the country's export performance, it views culture and art itself as a complement to pro-export policy and not as a full-fledged tool for increasing the country's competitiveness. In general, policies and strategies at national or ministerial level will mention creative industries through their cultural heritage subsector. It is here where politicians see the most significant untapped potential and the possibilities for its further development.



#### 4. Discussion

Cunningham (2009) points out that many emerging creative industries, which are developing very dynamically, just cannot fit into an existing statistical methodology. It turns out that the usual 10 to the 15-year difference between the change in statistical classification schemes is not flexible enough. This creates a real threat of losing relevant data for some emerging sectors that remain statistically unobserved. Frequent variation of the statistical data collection methodology, however, endangers the reporting value of the data collected. To avoid this scenario, the methodology needs to be changed more often than in the case of traditional sectors, but at the same time, the changes will have to be so small that the data could maintain their reporting value and time series. The methodology of the Czech Satellite Account of Culture has already undergone two incremental changes for obtaining statistical data in 2012 and 2017 in its relatively short history (NIPOS, 2017b). It is, therefore, possible to say that the positive trend of incremental but frequent change to the methodology of collection of statistical data has prevailed in the Czech Republic.

The development of the share of creative industries in the Czech GDP also deserves special attention. Table 2 shows that there is a slow increase. One of the specific problems of the Czech Republic is the gradual “getting over” the Communist past, which in many areas still has a significant impact on the ordinary course of things in the country. As Jürisson (2007) claims, many post-communist countries have different orientation of public policies. Unlike, for example, western countries, they do not address the production of cultural goods and services. Instead, they seek to preserve and restore cultural infrastructure, the quality of which has been markedly affected by the former regime. Hence, these countries are not yet interested in the competitiveness of their creative production in a global context to such an extent, and their public policies do not focus on modernising or innovating culture as such, but instead focus on restoring or maintaining cultural infrastructure. Another specific characteristic of the Czech Republic is a large number of cultural heritage it has. Countries that are rich in tangible cultural heritage (such as castles and chateaus) also face a similar problem. These countries will not be able to spend the same percentage of public subsidies on cultural innovation, such as for example the Nordic European countries, which do not have as much tangible cultural heritage (Žáková, 2015). If the cultural infrastructure, which is now the main focus of governmental policies, is stabilised and modernised, there is a presumption of increased investment in innovation in creative industries and thus growing share on the Czech Republic’s GDP.

#### Conclusion

An active effort to use creativity as a driving force for future development is still relatively rare in the CEE region. In the matter of a global problem with an unclear definition, the Czech

Republic has decided to follow the recommendations of the European Union but has also taken into account the understanding of creative industries in their cradle, the United Kingdom. Nevertheless, the Czech Republic has set a linguistic definition that best fits into its own cultural environment. In the case of providing statistics, the Czech Republic is one of the leaders in this field, as it maintains a separate Satellite Account of Cultural, which is based on the ESSnet project methodology. It is thus assumed that if other countries are going to approach the future cultural statistics similarly, then it will be possible to compare and monitor indicators across the European Union. Czech model of the gradual adaptation of the data collection methodology avoids the problem of losing relevant statistical data during the emergence of a new dynamically developing creative industries subsector, or some significant change in existing subsectors.

The process of mapping of creative industries is a remarkable accomplishment in this field of research in the Czech Republic. It was based on local needs, possibilities and trends of individual subsectors. Although not everything was exemplary, and many scholars have suggested that the output documents bare a sign of emotional undertone, it is indisputable that a great deal of work has been done that has moved forward the understanding of creative industries in the Czech Republic. In the words of Flew and Cunningham (2010), research on creative industries and contemporary theory is today a very welcome tool for advocating the contribution of SMEs to the growth of a global knowledge-based economy and society.

In the case of public policies, the situation is not as bright anymore. At the national level, policies have not yet reflected the efforts of the Ministry of Culture for the greater incorporation of the creative industries concept. Nevertheless, in most relevant documents, it is possible to find the general recognition of the need to innovate and to invest in R&D. At the local level, however, several programs attempt to develop creativity in the regions, but without conclusive strategy from a national government, this may result in deepening the gap between regions. With regard to public policies in the case of territorial distribution of the concentration of creative industries and with regard to contextual conditions; policies at the governmental level can contribute to the promotion of creative industries in a particular location (Lazzeretti, Boix, Capone, 2008). There is a clear need for support for the development of creative industries at the national level so that they can develop to a greater extent outside of Prague, where they are often concentrated at present.

We do not live in a black-and-white world, so there is no point in covering up our eyes. Creative industries and their full establishment in the Czech economy have many problems and much work ahead of them. The work that has already been done has not always been flawless, but it has taken the research a great deal forward. In the Czech Republic, the concept of creative industries is still subject to active debate and many conflicting beliefs, whether by politicians, academics or by people directly involved in them. However, the very existence of

such a debate, the existence of statistical data provision and the existence of a tool for mapping of creative industries, makes the Czech Republic a front-runner for leadership positions within post-communist countries and will certainly not be lost among its western neighbours.

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#### **Contact address**

Ing. Mgr. Peter Mičák  
Brno University of Technology  
Faculty of Business and Management, Department of Economy  
Kolejní 2906/4, Brno, 612 00  
Czech Republic  
E-mail: xpmicak00@vutbr.cz