



# Championing 'Local' Culture and Economy

## At a Glance

In an ever globalising world, strengthening local identities, practices and economies can provide substantial benefits for long term economic resilience (particularly in times of global downturns and pandemic events). Thinking locally also helps leverage traditional place-specific knowledge about sustainable building design, resource conservation practices, approaches to disaster management and other challenges. The push for local will have to be made on several fronts such as reinforcing the 'sense of place', local economic development, boosting cultural and creative economies, protection of historic city fabrics and socio-economic networks, etc. In fact, locally developed frugal innovations can potentially provide cost-efficient solutions to many urban needs. Governments, industry and non-profit sectors have to create conducive policy environment for encouraging local practices and managing cultural assets. India's Prime Minister made the clarion call to be 'Vocal for Local'. U20 can recommend a robust framework for re-positioning the 'local' within urban development.

# Key Facts and Figures

## Cultural and natural heritage

- The Convention concerning Protection of World cultural and natural heritage (1972) is an international treaty to encourage the identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage of outstanding value to humanity
- World Heritage belongs to all the peoples of the world, irrespective of the territory on which it is located. Ahmedabad walled city is in fact a UNESCO world heritage city!
- Countries/ cities have their respective charters and acts for protection of cultural and natural heritage that belongs to specific places and people/ communities

## Creative goods and services

- In 2020, creative goods and services represented 3% of total merchandise exports and 21% of total services exports.
- Between 2010 and 2020, global exports of creative goods increased from \$419 million to \$524 million and global exports of creative services increased from \$487 billion to almost \$1.1 trillion.
- Creative services were more resilient than other services during the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, exports of creative services fell by only 1.8%, while exports of all services fell by 20%.
- Cultural and creative industries have been recognised by the UN as essential for inclusive economic growth, reducing inequalities and achieving the SDGs.

## Cultural and creative industries

- Are among the most rapidly growing sectors in the world accounting for 6.1% of the global economy
- Generate nearly 30 million jobs worldwide and employ more people aged 15-29 than any other sector

## Governance for 'Culture'

- The 2005 Convention, provides a framework for informed, transparent and participatory systems of governance for culture. A multi-donor 'international fund for cultural diversity' has been set up to make a long-lasting impact on the ground. It has funded 105 projects amounting to US\$7.5 million in 54 developing and least developed countries since 2010.



Policies/ measures for informed, transparent and participatory systems of governance for culture



A balanced flow of cultural goods, services; ensuring global mobility of artists and cultural professionals



Sustainable development policies and assistance integrate culture as a strategic dimension.



Human rights legislations to promote artistic freedom and artists' social and economic rights

*The 2005 Convention aims to support.*

# 'Local' Culture & Economy : points to ponder

The connected archipelago structure of cultural and creative industry has to be an important consideration while formulating policies. These industries comprise a set of knowledge-based activities that produce tangible goods and intangible intellectual or artistic services with creative content, economic value and market objectives.

- **Incentive frameworks help diversify economic activities and provide a boost to creative and cultural industries:** Six 'Creative Enterprise Zones' were launched by the Mayor of London to support artists and creative businesses and to develop skills and jobs for Londoners. Funded by London Economic Action Partnership (LEAP), these CEZs will leverage £30million and the Mayor's Good Growth Fund to realize their potential.
- **Enhancing skills and infrastructure for creative industries to promote competitiveness and quality:** Barcelona's Strategic Plan focussed on 'culture' and 'knowledge' as the driving force for the economy. Parallely, the city formulated cultural policies to secure Intellectual Property Rights, promote artistic creation and ensure rights of access to arts education and cultural participation. Barcelona has become central to the economic development of the country. Additionally, the Barcelona City Council created the 22@Barcelona Innovation District to co-locate creative and cultural institutions and facilities. The Councillor's office for Tourism and Creative Industries deals with business promotion, international relations, the social aspects, exemplifying the importance of government policy.
- **Built and intangible heritage as an instrument for local economic development and attracting tourism and businesses:** Built heritage of a place is an essential feature of 'local' identity. The first step is identification of such heritage in order to protect and leverage it. The Government of UK has drafted the 'Historic England Industrial Heritage Strategy' crafted to identify industrial heritage and re-use such buildings for newer functions.  
Regeneration of areas can be centred around heritage. Mexico City successfully managed to regenerate its historic city centre by converging public sector leadership at the national and city level with the interests of the private sector. derelict historic structures conservation and adaptatively reused and historically significant part of the city was revitalized. The value of investors' shares increased by 50% within ten years and 300% in 20 years. The city's tax base was enhanced and utilized for infrastructure and upkeep of the area.
- **Special events leveraged as catalysts of cultural and economic revival of places:** Events and festivals attract a lot of people to a city. The local culture and creative industry play a crucial role in imparting a sense of place and formulating an image of the city for visitors. Cannes in France has recently been declared as a UNESCO creative city in the cinema category. While the city was initially known only for the annual international film festival, it is now recognised as a global destination for professionals and businesses related to the creative audio-visual sector. In fact, the Cannes City Council devotes 16% of its operating budget towards creation, dissemination and promotion of artistic and cultural activities.

- Cities build an environment of creativity and encourage innovations:** Bandung, Indonesia is supporting the creation of co-working spaces across the city to enable agencies and individuals in the creative sector to collectively harness their potential. Bandung is now a UNESCO creative city of Design. The Bandung Creative Economy Bill, 2021 ensures that the city plan will cover creative economy. New York's New Labs is a multi-disciplinary technology centre established in 2016 in a revitalised machine shop. The enterprise imparts relevance to the history of the place by championing entrepreneurship, innovation, and frontier technologies with a network of more than 200 members and numerous entrepreneurs, investors and engineers.
- Enabling frameworks to document, employ and scale up traditional practices, community based solutions and frugal innovations:** Communities play a significant role in keeping alive as well as evolving local arts, crafts and practices. This helps establish a market for commodities and knowledge that is unique to a particular place. Bangalnataka is a social enterprise in the state of West Bengal in India that engages with the market to salvage traditional musical forms through fair trade agreements, archiving and recording folk music, and creating capacity building and marketing opportunities. Its 'Art for Livelihood' project has benefitted thousands of traditional performing artists not only from cities but even remote villages.

## Key Drivers for Action

- Rethink economic models to strengthen public policy investment in creative sector
- Explore global partnerships to support creative economy and harness its potential for sustainable development.
- Research and evidence can help identify the economic and social value of cultural and creative industries and enable data driven decision making. As the sector perimeter of these industries is usually undefined, mapping can assess their inter-relationship with surrounding businesses.
- Social cohesion and civic pride can be positive impacts of community ownership and stakeholder participation which are integral elements for urban regeneration.
- A bottom-up approach coupled with a local champion (such as the Mayor) and active support from local businesses, philanthropy and civil society provides impetus for consideration by the upper levels of government decision makers.
- Heritage infrastructure requires consideration at policy level for enabling adaptive re-use and preservation.
- Clustering of creative industries and co-location of cultural facilities enables agglomeration benefits and builds a strong sense of place.
- Establishing a clear vision and strategies for the sector at the city/region level can enable aligned actions which contribute to successful integration and implementation.
- Recognising and mainstreaming cultural and creative industries and allocation of funds for local economic development.
- Establishing a dedicated body within the government administrative system to oversee policy measures and to catalyse investments through industry participation.

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