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CULTURAL-CREATIVE CITIES AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

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Summary

The main objective of this doctoral thesis is to consider the analysis and promotion of the concepts of cultural and creative cities, as well as to provide some examples of best practices that reveal their contribution to local development. The focus is on cultural-creative cities in Romania, with special reference to those that were included in the three editions of *the European Monitor of Cultural-Creative Cities* (2017, 2019, 2023), which highlight the positive impact of these types of local communities on local development, urban regeneration and, implicitly, on social cohesion and inclusion. Cultural and creative cities are examples of a harmonious combination between cultural traditions, on one hand, and current innovations, on the other hand, a fact that leads to the increase in the attractiveness of these types of communities. Cultural-creative cities have a significant impact both on the economic dimension of development, as well as on the social and, respectively, ecological ones, in a harmonious relationship with the environment. These types of communities significantly contribute to local and regional development by ensuring a viable interconnection between many economic sectors, as well as with other sectors of activity such as education, arts and other information and communication technologies of the ITC type, which leads to the creation of a vibrant and viable ecosystem. The cultural vibrancy of the cities is illustrated by the projects, events and cultural festivals that are organized within them. Cultural-creative cities contribute to stimulating the local economy by attracting investments, by generating jobs, but also by other activities, such as cultural tourism. Moreover, these cities contribute to the promotion of social cohesion and inclusion by reducing inequalities and by improving the quality of life. Urban regeneration is an important process specific to the contemporary development of cultural-creative cities, as they carry out various projects regarding the preservation of cultural heritage and the revitalization of industrial or neglected areas. In addition to these considerations, another important aspect is the attraction of talented people, through investment in lifelong learning and through vocational training programs in the cultural and creative fields. Over time, they have the effect of generating an attractive, vibrant environment that helps stimulate competitiveness and innovation. Entrepreneurship and the stimulation of innovation, through the formation of innovative hubs, but also through the development of accelerators and business incubators, can contribute to the development of new ideas, products or services, a fact that represents another important pillar of sustainable, resilient, inclusive economic and social development, both for the culturally creative cities and for the local communities and regions to which they belong.

KEYWORDS: *cultural-creative cities, local development, creative industries, social cohesion, talented individuals, urban regeneration.*

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