

Heritage as an Alternative Driver for Sustainable Development and Economic Recovery in South East Europe

Cultural heritage entrepreneurship (CHE) – challenges and difficulties

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Abstract

The research analyses the situation of Cultural Heritage Entrepreneurship (CHE) in SEE countries participating in Sagittarius Project (EU-7). A special attention is paid to the problem of CHE contribution to economic recovery and re launching sustainable development taking into considerations challenges and barriers related to: lack of financial sources; access to market and innovation; intellectual property rights; education and training. An intercountry comparison of CHE characteristics and at the EU-7 and EU-27 levels reveals a series of difficulties and shortcomings for the case of Sagittarius countries in the period 2009-2012.

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Keywords: cultural heritage; entrepreneurship; economic, social, cultural, aesthetic environmental values; source of financial funding.

1. Main text

Cultural heritage entrepreneurship occupies a central place in debates on unlocking the innovative, non-technological potential of SEE area taking into consideration the diversity and rich culture of the countries' history in the respective zone. The aim of the paper is to provide some important aspects regarding the obstacles faced by CHE, especially in the case of SME's which represent the major part of entrepreneurship in this domain. At the same time we intend to present some transversal problems and recommendations related to possible ways the CHE could benefit from internal and EU market and the digital impact. In this context we are focusing on the importance of national and international factors playing the role of key determinants for strengthening of entrepreneurship such as: efficient access to funding; innovation challenges; market obstacles; intellectual property rights; training and

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education; national and international cooperation. CH entrepreneurship represents an important component of cultural entrepreneurship which becomes an important factor contributing to countries GDP, labour force market development, to export and import of goods and services (WIPO, 2003). Although there is no consensus on CHE definition, the OECD EUROSTAT Entrepreneurship Indicator Project reveals six important areas for CHE efficiency and well functioning such as:

- access to finance;
- technology and R&D;
- entrepreneurial capability;
- market conditions;
- regulatory framework;
- entrepreneurial culture.

CH entrepreneurs, with the particular case of SME, operate in specific market conditions, offer goods and services the nature of which is mainly cultural, content-driven and less commercially.

CH entrepreneur brings to market goods and services, organises and runs cultural heritage in a commercial or not-for-profit manner depending on the characteristics of cultural heritage (as an assets, cultural capital or as a pure public good). CHE tries to cope with the strategic objectives of cultural environmental, social, economic and entrepreneurship policies.

CHE involves an important dimension spirit of creativity where the first priority could be considered cultural value and a second one the economic value or vice versa. In many cases, CHE prefer the economic motivation, exploitation over the cultural value.

The large diversity of CH generates many types of direct and propagated effect on different time horizon. The major part of CH activities consists of small enterprises, micro SMEs 1-3 employees. The larger enterprises (more than 50 employees) are the most important part of the turnover (revenues) in the sector, although their share in the total number of CH enterprises is less than 1 per cent. This size characteristic of CH enterprises called “missing middle”^{*} impose important differentiation for policy-makers especially for funding conditions of micro-enterprises facing difficulties to grow into medium-sized ones. Large scale enterprises have the advantage of effective infrastructure for development and research activities. Small-scale enterprises have higher dynamism, better flexibility and lower, risk-taking. Adaptation of a more flexible and dynamic attitude in response to market opportunities, in clustering with larger infrastructure, involving out sourcing.

2. Cultural heritage entrepreneurship: main role, characteristics and significance

Cultural heritage has a determinant role in the development of bilateral and multilateral cooperation between countries, and is a factor contributing to diminishing economic, social, scientific and environmental gaps between developed and developing countries. CH assets knowledge and entrepreneurship impose an in-depth research of its typology, volume, structure and evolution, effective methods of quality management strategies, including the institutional and legal framework, at national and international levels, as well as standard systems and benchmarking procedures.

The **main elements of CHE** to be evaluated are:

- **importance** for regeneration and economic and social sustainable development, attaining efficiency at macro, micro, national, regional, European and international levels on short, medium and long terms;
- **the knowledge absorption capacity** vis-à-vis the “state-of-the-art” level and interconnectivity with other economic, social and cultural domain in supporting innovation, competitiveness and good practices;
- as a complex, social, economic, environmental and knowledge asset, CH requires specific approaches and

^{*} Medium – size enterprises are very few.

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