

## The effect of Creative and Cultural Industries on Social Cohesion and Crime

Several empirical studies support the importance of the geography of Creative and Cultural Industries (CCIs hereafter) for local development. However, there is still scarcity of evidence on the spatial contribution of CCIs to social resilience and social cohesion. Recent research supports culture and creativity as important elements for inclusiveness, tolerance and well-being, but with a focus on the consumption of cultural and creative goods. The impact of the production side is still largely unexplored.

This evidence gap also matters for policy, given the prominent role that many institutions assign to CCIs to foster social cohesion. Knowledge constrains associated with this lack of evidence are addressed on a national and international, overlooking the acknowledged strong spatial dimension of CCIs. Data on the effect of the geography of CCIs on social cohesion could provide valuable insights for effective policy addressing territorial injustice and resentment. This holds particular importance, given the relevance of territorial cohesion in many institutional agendas. Territorial disparities between underdeveloped and prosperous regions are widely recognized together with their impact on feelings of resentment, decline, and inequality in Europe. The development of more comprehensive policy could be informed by empirical evidence on the impact of CCIs on territorial social cohesion.

This paper contributes to fill this gap through the empirical investigation on the effect of the geography of CCIs on several measures of social cohesion in Italy, including propensity to law abiding, openness and hate. Endogeneity concerns are addressed through a Two-Stage Least Square model which exploits a Bartik-type instrumental variable fed with historical data on the geography of Italian CCIs.

Estimates suggest that higher presence of CCIs makes places more law abiding and inclusive towards minorities.

This paper contributes to the existing literature in several ways. First, the paper demonstrates that high presence of CCIs makes communities more cohesive and inclusive. This evidence adds to the growing literature on the contribution of CCIs to economic development, by presenting evidence on socio-institutional outcomes. Second, it complements recent research that investigates the causal effect of the geography of CCIs on the different dimensions of local development. Third, it complements existing evidence on the effect of consuming cultural and creative products with findings on the production side. Forth, the findings of the paper provide new information which could benefit research on territorial cohesion and left-behindness.

CCIs, Institutions, Crime, Cohesion, Italy