

The Ideopolis

A city whose economy is driven by the creative search for and the application of new ideas, thinking and knowledge, - and is firmly rooted to the creative transfer of ideas, to opportunities, to innovation, and eventually to production.

Cannon et al (see below)

The distinctive mix of physical, economic, social and cultural features is what we call the ideopolis.

High tech manufacturing

Knowledge services or soft technology

A university or universities with strong connections to industrial partners

An airport or major communications nodes

Architectural heritage and/or iconic new physical development

A flourishing service sector, both in symbolic analysis personal protective services and indigenous SMEs

Large numbers of highly skilled professionals

Large numbers of front-line service positions

An ethos of tolerance, reflected in local attitudes and economic structures

Significant local political direction and autonomy

Regions and cities prosper if they are open to trade and new ideas. They can attract new investment by offering skilled labour and a good infrastructure. They can also profit from companies merging together to integrate their operations, to exploit economies of scale or to draw on a pool of specialist labour.

E Balls and J Healey 2001, Partnership approach is bridging regional divide' Guardian 5 Feb

Recent years have seen a blurring of work and leisure for many people enabled partly by new technologies that facilitate working in many locations and micro-management of time.

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The number of professionals, managers and technical and sector employees has grown in parallel with huge changes in the structure of industry. Over the 1990s eg the number of managers, professionals and associated professional technical employees rose from 32 to 37% of the UK workforce (14)

In Western democracies, large-scale manufacturing has been displaced by smaller high-tech industry and a massive service sector increasingly geared around lifestyles. Within the service sector, changes in sources of economic value are making certain knowledge sectors (consultancy, media and creative industries, software and new media services, hi-tech manufacturing, biotech) more and more important.

Welcome to the ideopolis Cannon T, Nathan M and Westwood A - Work Foundation working paper 2003

For Britain's big urban centres the appeal of becoming a city of ideas is enormous. Cities often identified with the term, SF, Boston, and in Seattle in the US, Barcelona and Helsinki in Europe are seen as hubs for international business, centres of indigenous growth and creative, dynamic communities. (ibid)

Half the world's population now live in urban centres and in Western countries. That figure is commonly 70-80%

It's all about quality of life. An attractive physical or natural environment is central to liveability, and can in turn directly and indirectly generate jobs and investment. Similarly innovation and creativity of all kinds flowing out of urban areas has historically given cities their dominant position in western societies. Cultural industries are an important sector in their own right (cf Sheffield) ;

The vital buzzword is diversity: diversity of lifestyles and housing, diversity of ambitions, skills and career opportunities, and diversity in social and cultural life. It is whether all these diversities can co-exist in an area

which decides whether the society of city becomes a people-smart, socially responsible and culturally diverse space or a 'bad neighbourhood.'

Clusters – key drivers of economic growth - typically comprising networks of knowledge orientated and/or high value adding organisations – essential drivers of economic growth and employment in the ideopolis. Policy makers have an important role to play in promoting cluster development – notably through education and skills policies but also through facilitating business growth, ideas exchange, and innovation networks of key actors. (Porter M 1995 The Competitive advantage of the inner city Harvard Business Review, May-June(25) (cf Gothenburg)

A city's diversity, its level of tolerance for a wide range of people – is key to its success in attracting talented people. Diverse inclusive communities that welcome unconventional people – gays, immigrants, artists, and freethinking 'bohemians' - are ideal for nurturing the creativity and innovation that characterise the knowledge economy., Florida R and Gates G 2002 Technology and tolerance; diversity and high-tch growth – Brookings Review Vol 20 No 1

Emerging European ideopolis – Edinburgh, Dublin, Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Berlin, Frankfurt, Manchester, Bologna, Strasbourg, Lisbon, Leeds, Valencia, Marseilles, Milan, Munich, Stockholm and paris.

Promote smart growth and urban investment

Invest in poor working families

Enhance access to opportunity

Fix urban schools

Promote greater devolution and local reform

Katz B 2000 enough of the small stuff towards a new urban agenda Brookings review, summer.