
Towards New Approach to Media Cluster Research: Bringing the Human Factor back into Scope

Abstract

This working paper is part of a collaborative project being undertaken by the three leading universities of Brussels, VUB, ULB and USL-B supported by Innoviris. The project called Media Clusters Brussels - MCB - started in October 2014 with the goal to analyze the development of a Media Park at the site of Reyers in Brussels being host of a media cluster in the capital city. Not only policymakers but also many authors recognized in the last decade that the media industry is characterized from a geographical point of view by a heavy concentration to a limited number of large cities, where media clusters have emerged (Karlsson & Picard, 2011). The common assumption about media clusters is that locating inside a regional agglomeration of related actors brings advantages for these firms. Especially, the interrelations and interactions between the actors on a social level matter for the shape and efficiency of the agglomerations (Picard, 2008). However, even though the importance of the actors and their interrelations has been a common assumption, many authors solely focus on the macro-economical aspects of the clusters.

Within this paper, we propose to realize a socio-economical analysis of media clusters to make informed decisions in the development and so, bring the social (human) factor back into scope. Therefore, this article focuses on the development of a novel valuable framework, the so-called 4P framework with a multilevel and interdisciplinary approach, which includes three entities: companies, (media) professionals and communities of practice. To each entity, we have identified a particular aspect, potentially a success factor of media clusters: partnerships, a common pool of workers, and (positive) knowledge spillovers.