counting culture

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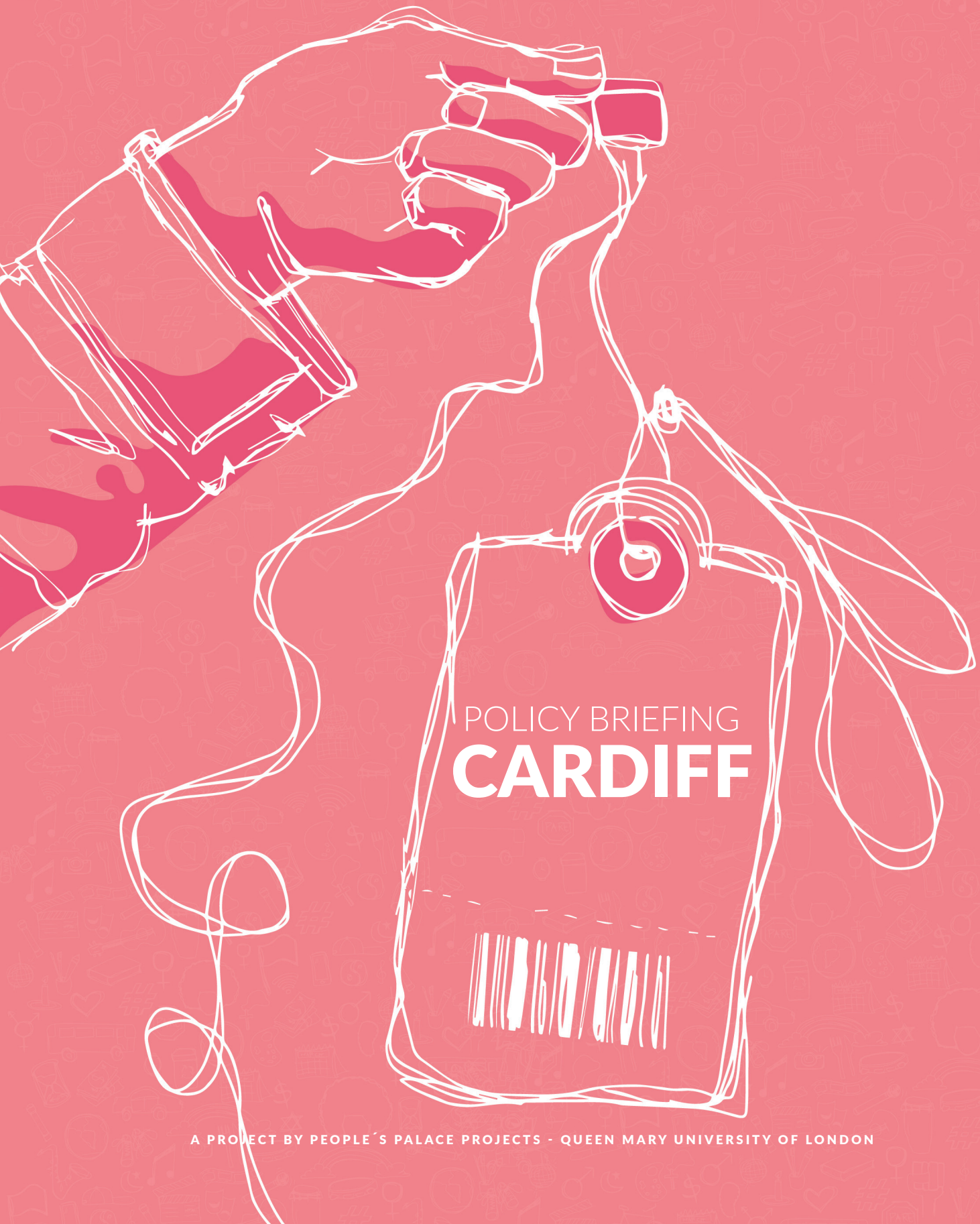

POLICY BRIEFING

CARDIFF

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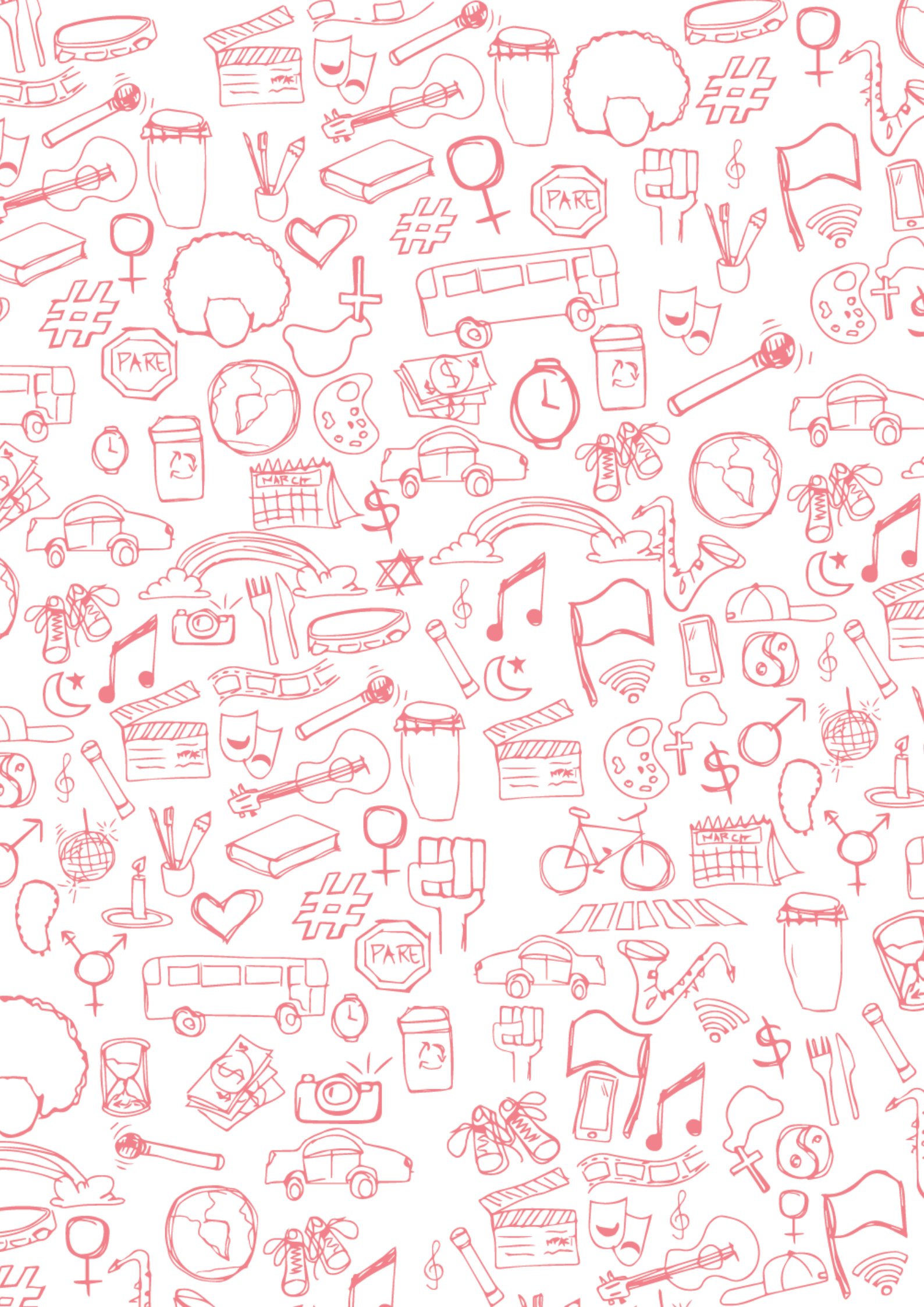
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Policy Briefing
CARDIFF

Counting Culture is a project led by Leandro Valiati and Paul Heritage as part of a British Academy Newton Advanced Fellowship. Over the last decade, there has been a strong influence from the UK model for the creative industries on policy actions undertaken in Brazil. This investigation was set up to raise questions about how far this shared model has been successful in addressing inequalities such as income distribution, gender, and ethnicity within the creative industry economic sectors in both countries. The process has focused on seeking to characterise how the evolving model of creative industries policy is seen in Britain and to trace the impacts of its influence on Brazil.

As part of the project, workshops were held in Glasgow, Cardiff, London, and Manchester to explore perceptions of the UK's cultural industries policy and its relevance to arts and cultural activities in a variety of settings across the UK. Each workshop engaged local academics, policymakers, and cultural practitioners, as well as young people.

This briefing is based upon a conference that was held on **27 September 2019** as part of **Policy for the Creative Industries: Challenges for the 21st Century,** hosted by Catriona Noonan from the University of Cardiff at the university's School of Journalism, Media and Culture. Contributors included Welsh policymakers, practitioners, and local academics from the university.

The following summary, statements, and recommendations, unless cited from another source, are based upon notes taken by rapporteurs appointed by the host organisation.

SUMMARY

The city of Cardiff's draft for its cultural strategy defines the creative industries as covering 'a wide range of activities and areas, including visual arts, literature, music, dance, museums, galleries, cinemas, theatres, libraries, festivals, events, heritage, craft, design, popular and grassroots culture' (Cultural Cities Enquiry, 2019). The strategy also acknowledges that 'distinctions between "cultural", "creative", and "digital" enterprises are fast eroding. Artists are increasingly incorporating digital mediums into their practice, and at the sharp end of the creative industries this is mirrored in widespread fluidity of people, skills and technology' (2020, p. 7). According to the strategy, the creative industries is the fastest growing sector in the country, 'generating jobs, raising the profile of Wales and attracting visitors' (2020, p. 9).

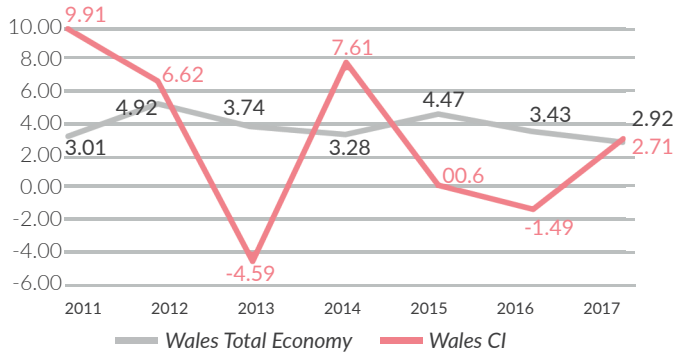
In Wales, 96% of cultural organisations are micro-creative organisations, or those with fewer than nine employees. There are a few large organisations like National Theatre of Wales, but not many in the middle that serve as intermediaries. Many smaller organisations use the network of the larger organisations, but there is a pressure on these large organisations because of the lack of mid-scale organisations, and this can lead to frustrations within the community.

Cardiff is the biggest economic cultural hub in Wales, receiving the most investment of any city in Wales. This investment is still primarily focused on the city centre, and there is a need to focus on the whole of Cardiff – and on Wales more widely – to make culture more inclusive and accessible.

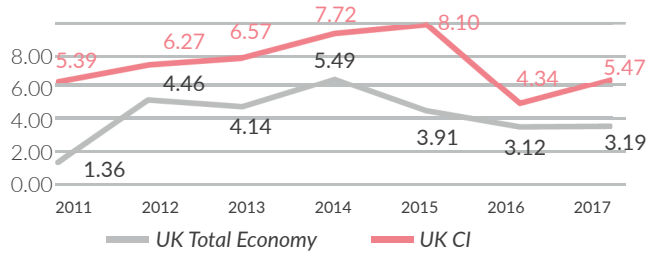
Data summary on creative industries and labour market inclusion

GVA Growth rate (%)

Wales



UK



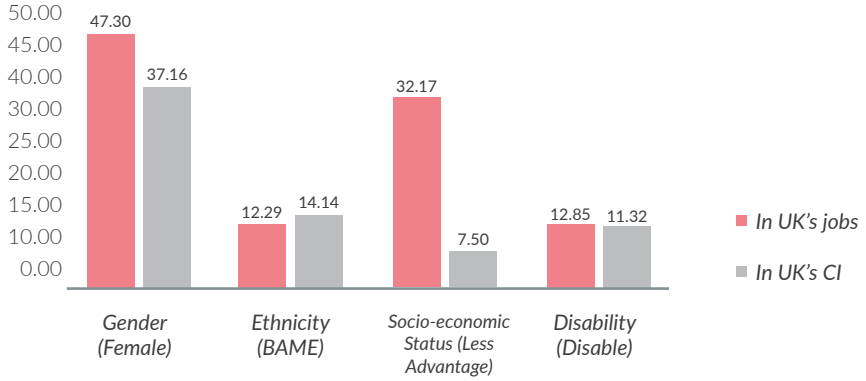
Note: Data for the economic estimates from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS, 2019), adjusted by the UK CPI (World Bank, 2019).

GVA growth rate (UK CI vs. UK economy) (%)

Year	England		Wales		Scotland		Northern Ireland	
	UK CI	UK Economy	UK CI	UK Economy	UK CI	UK Economy	UK CI	UK Economy
2011	93.69	84.64	1.44	3.48	3.67	7.74	1.20	2.18
2012	93.59	84.97	1.44	3.49	3.69	7.75	1.27	2.20
2013	93.55	85.02	1.29	3.48	3.95	7.82	1.21	2.17
2014	93.58	85.38	1.29	3.41	4.02	7.84	1.11	2.14
2015	93.60	85.78	1.19	3.42	4.10	7.68	1.10	2.14
2016	93.73	85.95	1.13	3.43	4.08	7.63	1.06	2.18
2017	93.87	85.87	1.10	3.42	3.95	7.60	1.07	2.18

Note: Data for the economic estimates from the DCMS (2018), adjusted by the UK CPI (World Bank).

Labour market – social inclusion (2018) (%)



Note: Data for Gender, Ethnicity and Socio-economic status from the UK Office for National Statistics (ONS, 2019); and for Disability from Full Fact (2018).

MAIN ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

Cultural policy

Developing policy in the creative industries requires collaboration and political trust so that it can be truly representative of the people it is trying to serve. In order to foster development in the cultural sector, one must think about and understand the real role of the cultural industries within the wider political climate. The way funding is invested in other sectors can also relate to how the creative industries are seen in wider policy, but work needs to be done in this area.

Social inequality and accessibility

There is a strength in the creative industries in Wales, but the same people are often represented in meetings and at events, and have been for the many years. The industry needs new voices. There are active attempts to diversify, but these approaches and looking at ways of going out to communities to recruit people (via job centres etc). are not working.

Access to the Arts Council of Wales and its support depends on financial security and other socio-economic factors. To broaden access, it is important to look at what is available in the vicinity and whether young people can reach or access the different centres and projects, as many do not leave their communities very often. Even though the arts centres and creative industries have funding for projects for local people to get involved, the lack of connection between communities and young people and the centres creates barriers to getting involved in the projects. The creative policies in Cardiff are not looking at long-term solutions, cultural access, or what the barriers for access are, such as lack of transport, information, or education. Artists also often do not feel represented in these policy conversations.

Globally, the creative economy is regarded as an urban phenomenon. Other than in the south, Wales is a rural country. However, many projects and types of work in the creative industries are urban- and tourism-focused.

Social impact

Policies are made but it is not clear what evidence is used to inform how this policy is developed, which raises concerns about how effective policy is created. It is unclear how policy looks on the ground, so a change in the language used in policy to include more emphasis on what is done on the ground. Building on that, there needs to be a clear set of indicators of impact that are outlined and accessible to implement.

Funding

There is a focus in Welsh cultural funding on Cardiff and on more urban areas, though the majority of the country is rural. Much of the funding is also on a short cycle which diminishes the impact of work from the creative industries, as many of the impacts are longer term. There is also an emphasis, as with other arts funding in other countries, upon social impacts and products rather than celebrating process and the intrinsic value of art. This provides a difficulty for artists as it focuses a great deal on the practicalities and bureaucracy for short-term funding, while losing the legacy and imagination of the artists.

Accessing funding is also difficult for many as there is no plan or template for grant funding. There are also challenges for the majority to take part in policy discourse, as translating government policy can be impenetrable in the creative industries.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Cultural policy

Policy development needs to be more joined up across sectors to support them to work better together, share resources, and make the creative industries more accessible.

Social inequality and accessibility

There needs to be a broader analysis of what is needed and what the barriers are for meaningful changes – a broader reflection of this ecology – in order to see how the arts can contribute to those changes. The focus of policy needs to be widened to include rural areas and people

from different backgrounds to get them into the sector and to help them to be more involved in decision-making.

Social impact

The numbers and hard data such as economic metrics are essential to understand the reality of the sector, but it is important that data about the impact of the creative industries comes in multiple forms. GDP and traditional economic metrics are only one type of metric for informing cultural policies. Arts organisations and artists need to be trained to understand how to capture and analyse these different types so they can be used towards policy change.

Funding

Funding documents such as grants and the guidance and processes of applying need to be more accessible to avoid the same people being awarded funding and the sector remaining stagnant.

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