



OBIDOS CITY



On the basis of typical endogenous assets, advantaged topographical position as well as public policies of public on culture, innovation and creativity, the Obidos city is tremendously alluring as a exclusive place to work, live, interact and learn. With the view to study the emergence of creative cluster, Obidos city, it is analysed on the basis of five important dimensions. It includes, governance, natural and build environment, symbolic and social capital, cultural facilities and economic activities, and connectivity (Selada, 2008). Each of these dimensions are discussed below.

**Governance:** On the basis of qualified local government as well as the strong leadership of Mayor, a formal strategy was followed in Obidos city with the view to become an eco-friendly, creative, eco-friendly as well as healthy town. The local authority of the city, since the year 2002 has been looking for implementing a growth strategy that could syndicate economy, tourism, and culture, as an enticement for the diversification and regeneration of the local economy (Europa, 2009). Such strategy of development was the result of the influential campaign of marketing with the brand ‘Creative Obidos’ and by organizing the cultural events which appeal substantial visitors to the historic town. The events of these kinds conducted in Obidos have echoed a robust structural capacity and also participation of the local associations and community. They persuaded the growth of a cluster of people having explicit technical know-how as well as events in parts such as painting, sculpture, theatre etc. Additionally, the local authorities have been endorsing public policies for the advent of a creative economy, i.e. in architecture, arts, design, gastronomy, and digital technologies.

In the year 2009, the programme of ‘Creative Óbidos’ was initiated by having focus on the qualification and attraction of talents, wealth growth, job creation, as well as enhancement of quality life (Dozhdeva, 2014). The areas of priority were more focused on creative production, along with sustaining the emphasis on the cultural atmosphere of excellence, also on high class tourism. In this initiative, set of financing schemes and support infrastructure were started that concerned with attraction of companies / talents and retention as well, for e.g. technology park that offered material benefits like microcredits and tax incentives, excellent working environment. Furthermore, local public policies of the city, are partnering with the private sector in beginning an urban revival programme that comprises of renovation of old houses with the view to create studios, ateliers, co-working spaces, as well as live-work lines for national as well as international designers, artists, and researchers. This artistic stimulus purposes also to uphold the traditions as well as intangible and symbolic capital of the city, connecting heritage, innovation and knowledge. For instance, a ‘Network of

Research, Innovation and Knowledge' has been formed to yield detailed historical evidence about Óbidos city and delivering this info to the public by user-friendly and interactive instruments (Selada, 2008).

An activity model was implemented for managing of pertinent local initiatives by creating municipal companies, namely; Óbidos Patrimonium and Óbidos Requalifica. Private and public partnerships were encouraged, like OBITEC, the Óbidos Association for Science and Technology. It involved Óbidos city , the municipal company namely, Óbidos Requalifica, and institutions of higher education, business associations and training companies. Óbidos city also participated in numerous systems with other cities and towns at national as well as European level, by way of achieving a wider dimension as well as obtaining more prominence globally ( INTELI, 2011).

**Natural and built environment:** Obidos city is located in an area that is rich geomorphologically as it is a coastal strip having many beaches such as the Óbidos Lagoon, that has a natural unique landscape having rural settlements and paddy fields. It is a primitive town in the interior castle walls. Obidos has extensive set of old monuments such as pillar of judicial stone, town gate and several religious monuments such as the São Pedro Church, the Misericórdia Church, also the São Martinho Chapel. Besides, the city has traditional houses with straight alleys from diverse styles and periods. In addition to walled town, Obidos comprises rural villages along with modern architectural projects that are designed by architects who are well-known (Dozhdeva, 2014).

**Symbolic and Social and capital:** The primitive walled city, Óbidos has a robust iconic image which is well known at national as well as global levels. Though, the local distinctiveness is engrained in its cultural heritage and ancient past, it is also demarcated by its rural lifestyles, old traditions and natural landscape that are still significant for the local economy. The city has an recognized heritage which comes from the aristocrats and sovereigns who had left their spot on the town. A climate that is creativity-friendly, is armoured by the survey of rural-urban associations, the probable of a good life quality, a solid community sense which is the result of pertinent social projects and networks as well as an attractive atmosphere. Several civic associations, music bands and local communities represented a significant associative spirit (URBACT II TN5, 2016).

**Cultural facilities and Economic activities:** In Obidos city, tourism has attained growing importance which has resulted in increase in employment percentage, and various services such as residential tourism, hotels, restaurants, handcrafts and golf projects. Additionally, the activity of agriculture is also pertinent, particularly horticulture, wine and fruit. In the

industrial sector, furniture, construction and food processing are the most pertinent sectors in industrial sector. The goal to change Obidos, to a creative cluster, numerous infrastructures for entrepreneurship was built, several cultural infrastructures like São Tiago Bookshop, Casa das Rainhas, Casa do Arco, a grid of museums. Besides such cultural built, the city has diverse and strong cultural offerings which included performing arts and music for entertainment that appeal the tourists and visitors. The city also invested in new school complexes, which has the base on new concepts related to open-minded education and creativity, besides the previously existing expert training centres and schools (Selada, 2008).

**Connectivity:** The city Obidos is situated near central urban centres like Alcobaça, Peniche and Caldas da Rainha, hence has good networks with the city parts of Lisbon, which is the Portuguese capital, Porto and Coimbra. In order to rise virtual connectivity, the local authorities the city provided hotspots, also offering free access to internet at public spaces (UNESCO, 2016).

The analysis of the Culture and Creativity led strategy of Obidos city on the basis of five important dimensions directs to the growth of benchmarking exercises and extracting its best practices and global characteristics in the progress of creative clusters strategy in the city.



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