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Creative Class in Türkiye: New Job Prospects

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Abstract. This paper covers a comprehensive study of the creative class in Türkiye in terms of new job prospects. Nowadays, creativity is one of key skills necessary for future jobs. People, who have creative and innovative thinking, generate original ideas and produce unique products, form a special stratum of society called creative class. Creative class professionals include scientists, teachers, artists, models, social media influencers, etc. This article is intended to outline the specifics of new type of workers' lifestyle which implies comfortable living conditions known as "quality of place." In order to clarify how ready Türkiye is for the development of the creative class, the state of the labor market is analyzed. It has been revealed that the Turkish labor market is characterized by both strengths (e.g. large population, a large share of the youth, increase in labor productivity) and weaknesses (e.g. labor underutilization, limited female labor participation, lack of skills). People mainly work in agriculture, industry, service sector and construction. These characteristics outline the basis for the rise of the creative class and the emergence of new careers in Türkiye. Correspondingly, this research is aimed at analysis and assessment of factors, circumstances and preconditions for the emergence of the creative class in Türkiye as well as determining the creative class job opportunities. The methodology of the study is founded on exploring new and potential jobs that will be required by the future. The article presents a framework for the assessment of the creative class in Türkiye based on the standard measures of job quantity, as well as job quality and labor market inclusiveness. The paper proposes the vision of how Türkiye can drive talent transformation and upskill its workforce in order to satisfy demand for innovative type of workers and take advantage of new opportunity. This study provides a unique and vital contribution to ongoing discussions about the significance of the creative class for employment highlighting the universalized assumptions concerning the position of these professionals in the Turkish economy.

Keywords. Creativity, Creative Industries, Creative Class, Creative Professionals, Creative Employment, New Job

1. Introduction

For centuries, rich and powerful countries were those, which had a large territory, plenty of natural resources and abundance of labor force. However, rapid globalization processes, technological and digital advances and improvements in the 20th century affected every sphere of human life, and the major source of wealth became human capital based on knowledge, intelligence and creativity. Solutions for the existing issues and challenges are often

associated with the search for non-traditional methods, and the generation and use of original ideas.

Furthermore, the influence of the COVID-19 put a pressure on people to change working patterns: increase in remote work, work online and part-time employment made workers to adapt to a new reality and acquire new skills and abilities.

Thus, a key driver of the modern economy are creative people who are able to generate innovations. These people consist the creative class and are distinguished primarily by a broad outlook and a non-standard view of things. At the same time, things can be of any scale – the invention of a device or the development of a theory. Such professionals possess new skills (creative, technical etc.) necessary for new emerging fields of work and jobs with higher labor productivity.

As researches (Florida, Mellander, & King, 2015) evidence, there is unevenness across the globe: the creative class makes up from only 1% to more than 50% of the workforce. If to look more closely, the creative class makes up around 40% of the workforce in 18 nations across the world. It is estimated that 14% of the existing jobs will disappear, and 32% will undergo radical changes within the coming 15-20 years.

Cultural and creative employment accounts for up to 1 in 20 jobs in some countries, and up to 1 in 10 in some regions and cities. Creative professionals can be found in almost all sectors, helping to drive innovation across the economy (OECD, 2022). The advantage is that creative jobs have a lower risk of automation than jobs overall.

Türkiye is a country that occupies a unique geographic position, lying partly in Europe and partly in Asia. Apart from a large territory, favorable geographical position and climate, Türkiye is rich in history, cultural heritage and intricate architecture. It is one of the world's largest economies (currently at rank 19) and one of the fastest developing nations. Despite of Türkiye has large population, especially the large proportion of young people, due to its location as well as such achievements as fighting tax evasion, corruption, promoting private insurance and improving educational services, the country became a final destination for many foreigners.

2. Aim and methodology

This paper has been funded from different sources of information, including research practices that negotiate the intersection of macro-analysis, creative industries, entrepreneurship, employment and migration. Present publication is dedicated to the rise and development of the creative class as a group of new type of workers needed in today's world.

Richard Florida (Florida, 2002) became a pioneer considering the creative class in 2002. Twenty years later, it is possible to find a lot of literature about the creative class but it focuses predominantly on the significance of creative people for regional and urban development. For this reason, it seems crucial to explore the linkages between human creative skills, employment and economic prosperity at the national level. Moreover, it is hypothesized that the assessment of the creative class and employment in Türkiye has not appeared very clearly. Such a statement has been the key motivation guiding this new publication.

To investigate and research a hypothesis and rationale for importance of the creative class, quantitative and qualitative analyses have been used to identify, collect, and analyze data. The methodology of the study is founded on exploring new and potential jobs that will be required by the future. With this purpose, a more holistic approach has been used, which helped to look more deeply on attributes of new professions.

The literature on the subject reveals a broad range of terminology, including “creative industries,” “creative class,” “creative jobs,” “creative employment,” which are commonly used

in the text. Today, these terms are mostly exploited and understood as the creative class has moved from the fringes to the mainstream in knowledge-oriented economies.

The main body of this research explores the issues related to the emergence of the creative class in Türkiye. There is a need for better understanding of the latest requirements of the contemporary labor market to draw a valid conclusion. Such an approach reveals classifications of creative jobs and careers existing nowadays.

In preparing this article, I used a rich data set, including Türkiye-specific indicators related to employment, education, migration, digitalization as well as the country's position in international ranks by main creative factors, including talent, digital trends, the Global Creativity Index. Funding has come from international organizations (World Bank, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, International Labour Organization, Eurostat, etc.), Turkish Presidency and Ministries as well as from different centers and agencies.

The article includes specifying the key strengths of the Turkish labor market, e.g. a large share of the youth, increase in labor productivity, but that this may be offset as it is associated with factors such as gender inequality, lack of skills, long hours, poor pay.

Special interest is paid to the potential of foreigners, including refugees and asylum seekers, which also can contribute to the development of the creative class in Türkiye. The paper suggests in-depth insight which looks at the quality of work for those from disadvantaged backgrounds, their progression, the underlying constraints and barriers that underpin these trends. It is shown that immigrants face many challenges in the Turkish labor market, which range from lack of skills to legislative requirements.

Finally, the study provides insights regarding perspectives of the rise of the creative class in Türkiye. Key priorities contain improvement of skills, promotion of education, immigrant involvement.

The main difficulty in inferring about the creative employment in Türkiye from the available data is that there is lack of statistics about jobs in the creative industries not classified as creative and creative jobs outside the creative industries that drive changes in the employment outcomes I am interested in.

The aim of the research is to determine, analyze and assess factors, circumstances, preconditions and job opportunities for the development of the creative class in Türkiye. It is crucial to reveal the possibilities of the country to take advantage of creative job opportunities as for local people so for foreigners. However, to unleash the full potential of the creative employment in Türkiye, addressing issues such as skills gaps, diversity and inclusion are essential.

The structure of the paper is as follows: it first presents an overview of the concept of the creative class and creative employment, where its importance for a contemporary society is highlighted. The classification of creative jobs and careers is presented. This is followed by a section dedicated to the analysis of the Turkish labor market, its strengths and weaknesses. Next, the assessment of the creativity class in Türkiye is carried out. To do this, Türkiye's position is ranked using major creative factors and dimensions which evaluate country's contribution to the development of creative employment. In the conclusion section, the main findings will be outlined as well as perspectives of the rise of the creative class and opportunities for the emergence of new (creative) jobs in Türkiye will be discussed.

3. Literature overview

This paper seeks to explore the participation and progression of those within creative employment. This article presents an extensive review of the literature in order to accurately

assess the creative class in Türkiye. It is important to have a clear and accurate picture of the creative occupations and jobs to rebuild the workforce for the better. Despite increased awareness of these issues amongst government and industry, there are significant gaps in what people know about the variety of creative careers.

The concept of creative class was proposed by Richard Florida (2002), an American urban studies theorist, who defines the creative class as a broad grouping of creative workers in the cultural and creative industries, as well as different types of managerial, professional, and technical workers, producing various innovations.

Creative class includes people who are engaged in creative activities as well as share attributes related to their lifestyle and preferences. Creative activities are viewed as individual's expression to make something special and unique. Novelty, in this case, can be considered from the standpoint of four criteria: personal, original, meaningful, and useful (Hawkins, 2006).

Florida's concept caused intensification in the investigation of the creative class as part of socio-economic success. This trend has been reflected in a growing body of research on the creative employment (Cunningham & Higgs, 2009) and wellbeing impact of creative occupations (Fujiwara, Dolan & Lawton, 2015).

However, it seems, not all scholars (Fairlie, 2012) support the Florida's idea about positive influence of the creative class on employment and economic growth. It is assumed that talent, technology, and tolerance are not statistically significant determinants of the unemployment rate.

Today, the literature on the creative class consists of an array of publications which mainly include theoretical and empirical analysis of the impact of the creative class on regional and urban transformations (Faludi, 2019, Pavelea *et. al.*, 2021). Among the other existing studies dedicated to the creative class, it is necessary to mention the investigations made by Feihan (2021), Silva (2023).

Statistical data regarding the creative class are deeply analyzed by international organizations, business centers and agencies such as the ILO (2022), the OECD (2018, 2022), the World Bank (2022, 2022a), the IOM (2023), and the Eurostat (2023), the IMD World Competitiveness Center (2022), the Istanbul Development Agency (2017), the UNHCR (2022), as well as Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye (2022), its Ministries and Institutes, including Ministry of Industry and Technology (2021), TURKSTAT (2021).

Despite these important contributions, the literature has neglected a comprehensive framework for the assessment of the creative class in Türkiye. Some of this neglect can be attributed to a lack of reliable measures of creative employment, a conceptual framework which link the creative class to other factors associated with innovation and economic growth, and ultimately "what works" in overcoming issues related to foreigners' creative participation in order to promote greater inclusivity and diversity. Moreover, those studies related to the creative employment in Türkiye that do exist are, in my opinion, superficial and often refer to only distinct issues such as effects of coronavirus on employees in Türkiye in terms of different anxiety levels (Seven Keleş, Ökmen, & Keleş, 2022) or female labor force participation in Türkiye (Tatoğlu, 2022).

For this reason, my paper is focused on summarizing and identifying the main trends which describe the creative class of Türkiye, factors which affect it and perspective of its further rise and development.

4. Results and discussion

4.1. The Concept of the Creative Class and Creative Employment

The concept of “creative class,” which is a key idea for this article, was first conceptualized by Richard Florida in the publication “The Rise of the Creative Class. And How It's Transforming Work, Leisure and Everyday Life” (2002). American sociologist gave an auspicious name to a new and ever-growing social community. In his opinion, it is not so much about a person’s intellect, but rather about the individual’s ability to synthesize, while the result of creative synthesis can be anything – a logo, the creation of a work of art or even a space satellite. In general, the creative class represents participants in an economy that demands creative thinking and the ability to solve problems in an unconventional way. Therefore, the obligatory components of creativity are, on the one hand, novelty, and, on the other hand, efficiency in solving existing problems. Interpreted in this way, creativity can be found in various realms of human experience. It has become the main source of competitive advantage. From a rare phenomenon, creativity has become a daily practice: people are constantly modifying and improving all kinds of products, processes and operations, fitting them together in new ways.

It is necessary emphasizing that belonging to the creative class does not directly depend on individual’s social status, income, consumption, or even education. Consequently, it is assumed that the creative class represents the middle class. It turned out that outsiders, who previously belonged to the bohemian periphery of society, found themselves in the very center of innovative economic development and began to represent the spirit of the times. The so-called organizational age is gone, and the type of corporate person characteristic of it has disappeared with it.

It is no coincidence that the theory of the creative class arose at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries; it is a kind of attempt to comprehend a new phase in the development of world society. Its transformation from industrial into post-industrial (or knowledge-based) requires more attention paid to human creativity and intellectual potential as knowledge becomes a valued form of capital. There are a number of qualitative and quantitative changes that affect the structure and rules of the functioning of the economy, namely diversification of production, the rapid development of trade and international business, increased intensity of competition, which, in turn, elevated the ongoing innovation process to the rank of a generator of economic success and total well-being. Thus, one of the features of a post-industrial society is also an increase in the number of professionals who are able to take decisions and create, who can be viewed as the creative class.

The creative class represents people with creative abilities and thinking free from restrictions, who have always stood against dogmatism, monotony, group norms, strict rules, and obedience to instructions. The creative class is made up of ambitious people striving for success; own abilities, professional growth and self-development are of major importance for them. Creativity is not just a skill; it’s an essential part of an identity.

For the creative class, any manifestations of diversity are important, as well as the existence of open systems that provide an opportunity for self-expression, development and application of abilities. Attention is paid to the individual’s freedom. The ability to accept a person as he/she is, tolerance for differences and respect for various abilities are among the main values of the creative people. It is assumed that talents cannot be classified based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, etc.

According to Florida (2002), the creative class is divided into super creative core and “creative specialists.” Super creative core includes scientists, professors of universities, writers,

artists, engineers, actors, architects, designers, as well as the intellectual elite of modern society: cultural leaders and icons, publicists, editors, expert analysts and other individuals who form public opinion. These professionals are engaged in creative activities on a permanent and paid basis. "Creative specialists" are engaged in high-tech production, law, finance, health care, business. These members of the creative class, in turn, participate in solving social problems using their own comprehensive knowledge.

The creative class includes people who work in science and technology; arts and culture; and business, management, and the professions. These are the thinkers, leaders, innovators, journalists, writers, scientists, engineers, artists, PR specialists, brand designers, influencers and entrepreneurs who are pushing the cultural and commercial envelope, developing, designing, and marketing the newest products and services. This class makes up between a third and half of the workforce in the advanced nations and much more than that in great cities (SPEAKING.com, 2018).

It is assumed that the creative class contains only workers of the creative industries – those industries that have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property (DCMS, 2001, p.5). As of 2015, creative industries include nine sub-sectors, namely: 1) advertising and marketing; 2) architecture; 3) crafts; 4) design: product, graphic and fashion design; 5) film, TV productions, TV, video, radio and photography; 6) IT, software and computer services; 7) publishing; 8) museums, galleries and libraries; 9) music, performing and visual arts (DCMS, 2015, p.10). Therefore, the creative industries represent demand for labor while the creative class represents the supply for labor (Comunian, Faggian, & Li, 2010).

Indeed, the creative class encompasses most of the professions which require some type of intellectual ability and it is much wider than the creative industries referred to by the DCMS.

I support the idea of Higgs, Cunningham, & Bakhshi (2008) who suggest to consider the creative class as employment in the creative economy and measure it on the “creative trident,” which classifies jobs into:

- 1) creative jobs in the creative industries;
- 2) jobs in the creative industries not classified as creative;
- 3) creative jobs outside the creative industries (“embedded” jobs).

Creative class is identified by between 45 and 340 occupations (Möller & Tubadjı, 2008). In fact, nowadays, it is not easy to differentiate all these occupations since their number can be transformed and modified according to changes, which take place in society. Professional blogs, national agencies and international organizations offer various creative jobs and careers, which I’ve divided into groups and presented in Table 1.

Table 1. List of Creative Jobs and Careers

Artists and related workers	Designers	Media and communication workers	Music workers	Other
Art director	Fashion designer	Editor	Music producer	Operations director
Art therapist	Interior and spatial designer	Photographer	DJs	Business development manager
Arts administrator	Graphic designer	Technical writer	Audio engineer	Training manager
Artworker	Commercial and industrial designer	Journalist	Sound mixer	Marketing assistant or associate
Craft artist	Ceramics designer	Copywriter	Musician	Stylist

Community arts worker	Textile designer	Author	Dancer	Furniture conservator/restorer
Concept artist	Furniture designer	Social media manager	Choreographer	Sous chef
Fine artist	Glass blower/designer	Marketing manager	Music therapist	Teacher
Make-up artist	Floral designer	Ghostwriter	–	Agile coach
Game artist	Set and exhibit designer	PR manager	–	Creative director
Tattoo artist	Jewellery designer	Email marketing manager	–	Museum/gallery curator
Multimedia artist	Marketing designer	Videographer	Cinema workers	Stylist
Painter	UX designer	Photo editor	Actor	Conservator
Illustrator	Web developer	Advertising manager	Assistant director	–
Online craft seller	Video game designer	Copywriter	Stage manager	–
–	Product designer	Broadcast presenter	Theatre director	–
–	Software developer	Social media influencers	–	–
–	Landscape architect	–	–	–
–	Building architect	–	–	–
–	Motion designer	–	–	–

Source: compiled by author based on data (Herrity, 2023; Higginbotham, 2023; Finn, 2023; Moy, 2021; Vilorio, 2015).

But, before considering them, I'd like to specify that the creative job can be defined as a flexible, collaborative and fast-paced position. Creative jobs provide a higher level of autonomy than other jobs. Creative career provides an opportunity for individuals to utilize in-demand competencies in innovating for today and tomorrow.

Creative employment includes freelance and self-employment as well as full-time and part-time employment.

Due to the transition of the role of the main economic resource to creativity, there is a decrease in the role of the capitalist corporation in the society's life. Previously, people moved to where work was and dreamed of getting a job in a company where they could work all their lives. Now technology, companies and venture capital have begun to move to places where the concentration of talented and creative people is highest. If earlier employers were looking for cities with excellent infrastructure and affordable natural resources, now they are searching for the people themselves, not any, but educated and creative. Such people choose to live and work in a place that corresponds to their idea of a bright, rich and creative lifestyle.

Creative people tend to live in comfortable conditions which are treated as "quality of place" and denote a unique set of characteristics that determine the place of residence and make it attractive (Florida, 2002). In most cases, the "quality of place" is determined by three factors:

1) What is there? : A combination of a natural environment and artificial background; proper conditions for creative life. In this context, the concept of *homo creativus* is highlighted – this is a hypermobile person who chooses a place of residence in different parts of the world.

2) Who is there? : People of different types who support interaction with each other, show and prove the fact that any person can settle and arrange his/her life in this place.

3) What is happening there? : Energetic and exciting atmosphere shaped by an active street life, café culture, music preferences that benefits to the life and prosperity of creative people. It demands appropriate conditions for a creative life, including opportunities for work and lifestyle (arts, technologies, sports, etc.). Such a place gives people from diverse social and cultural groups a possibility to connect, communicate and collaborate with each other.

Comfortable living conditions lead to an increase of both productivity and creative solutions which, in turn, lead to an improvement in the standard of living.

To measure the creative class, usually the Global Creativity Index (GCI) is used that was suggested by Florida (2002). This Index is based on factors which attract the creative class to a destination. These factors contain Talent (the ability of human resources based on a number of country's labor force from the creative class and educational attainment), Technology (the development in research, innovation and artifacts based on R&D investment and patents per capita) and Tolerance (attitudes and acceptance of diversity of individuals, which are the factors that encourage creativity, based on ethnic racial and minorities as well as gay and lesbian tolerance), collectively referred to as "3T."

The creative class is distinctly affected by destinations of origin, which create a special atmosphere for the development of talents, technologies and innovation that promotes knowledge and information flows.

4.2. State of the Labor Market in Türkiye

First of all, I'd like to note that over the past few years, the Turkish economy has struggled to maintain its rapid expansion. Considering 2022, it expanded 5.6%, after a record growth of 11.4% in 2021 (Trading Economics, 2023) that negatively affected the labor market.

As of 2022, population of Türkiye is 85.2 million people. Employment rate is 48.5%. Türkiye is among the best performers among OECD countries in terms of employment resilience, as reflected by unemployment rate: for 2018 it was 10.89%, while as of May 2023 the unemployment rate is 9.5% (Trading Economics, 2023a). Türkiye's overall labor force is around 34.3 million people, which makes the country the 2nd largest labor force in Europe (Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye: Investment Office, 2022). Moreover, it shows the largest labor force growth among the EU countries. As of 2020-2021, annual average increase in labor productivity is 3.4% compared to OECD countries (1.2%). Availability of skilled labor is estimated at 4.48 (Survey [0..10]), which is the highest compared to Austria (3.95), Brazil (3.72), Hungary (3.42) and New Zealand (2.70) (Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye: Investment Office, 2022).

When it comes to the structure of employment, 54.5% of individuals are employed in services, 21.1% – employed in industry, 18.6% – in agriculture, 5.8% – in construction (TURKSTAT, 2021).

Türkiye's young population is a significant contributor to labor force growth. The youth jobless rate for those aged between 15-24 years is 17% now, which shows a positive tendency as it was 19% in 2022. 48.7% of the youth (58% young men and 40% young women), representing 5.3 million people, are currently working. Majority of them are university graduates, including foundation degree, undergraduate and graduate degrees (35%) followed by elementary school graduates (31%) and general high school graduates (22%) (ILO, 2022, p.21).

On the other hand, Türkiye has one of the highest broad labour underutilisation rates and the highest employment gap for disadvantaged groups among OECD countries. Apart from that, Türkiye has the second lowest earnings quality and second highest job strain among OECD countries: 42.9% of the workers experience job strain. Working extra hours is common in the country. Moreover, labor market insecurity is the third highest among OECD countries after Greece and Spain. Türkiye remains below the OECD average regarding another aspect of inclusiveness, i.e. low-income rate. Even with recent improvements, the share of working-age

people living in households with less than 50% of the median income remains at 13.5% as of 2018 (OECD, 2018).

COVID-19 also negatively affected the Turkish labor market: as of 2021, 37% of the private sector employees have done short work, 36% – have lost salaries and 76% – have changed their working style. Meanwhile, workers' debts increased by 25% during the pandemic (Seven Keleş *et. al*, 2022, p. 31).

Female labor force participation in Türkiye is also low: despite the fact that in 2022 women constituted almost half of the population (41.7 million), only 11.5 million women participated in the labor force (Tatoğlu, 2022). Women have a less chance of being engaged in the labor force due to their duty of take care of family and children. Moreover, it is women who have suffered the most from the pandemic in Türkiye. As the crisis is reaches its peak, the role of the housekeeper increased.

One more challenge faced by the country is migration issue. Türkiye is a home to more than 5.1 million foreigners, including citizens of Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran among others (IOM, 2023). Furthermore, it should be noted that now Türkiye hosts close to 3.6 million registered Syrian refugees along with around 320 thousand persons of concern from other nationalities (UNHCR, 2022).

However, employment opportunities for foreigners are limited; besides, according to law, foreigners cannot have legal or medical professions as well as are not allowed to work in the mining field. Usually foreigners work in the teaching, tourism, real estate and finance fields. The vast majority of the refugees in Türkiye also don't have a real access to legal employment; as a result, they work in the informal sector in construction, textile and as seasonal farm workers.

Intensive competition between locals and foreigners increases social tension in the Turkish labor market. However, on the other hand, it creates opportunities for new businesses, jobs and careers, especially creative-intensive ones.

Over the last decade, foreigners have become more integrated into economic life not only as consumers, but also job seekers, employees, and even entrepreneurs. For instance, by 2020, Syrians had invested around 500 million USD in the Turkish economy through the establishment of commercial activities; they have also brought their entrepreneurial skills to Türkiye starting businesses predominantly in the wholesale/retail (34.2%), manufacturing (26%), and accommodation and food service (8.9%) sectors (Brown, 2022). These businesses have many advantages, including the use of multiple languages, export capacity, international networks.

As analysis above shows, both citizens and foreigners are occupied predominantly in the same sectors, including agriculture, manufacturing and service sectors. However, large shares of the population, young people as locals so immigrants and unemployed women provides possibilities for development of other segments of the Turkish economy. Labor market adaptability and resilience are important to absorb and adjust to various shocks and make the most of new opportunities. Labor productivity is a key prerequisite for high growth of total output, wages and improvement of quality of life and living standards. Thus, weaknesses can be transformed into strengths by employing people in new type of occupations – creative jobs – in order to respond to existing and future challenges.

4.3. The Assessment of the Creativity Class in Türkiye

This paragraph offers a comprehensive framework for the assessment of the creative class in Türkiye. It goes well beyond the standard measures of job quantity (employment and unemployment rates) and considers job quality (working environment, skills, employee

training, foreign personnel, etc.) as well as labor market inclusiveness (gender equality, employment access for potentially disadvantaged groups) for good labor market performance in a rapidly changing world.

At a time when Türkiye is facing significant economic difficulties, creative employment and creative occupations can boost job creation.

The Global Creativity Index (GCI) of Türkiye is 0.348 as of 2015, which ranked the country 88th among 139 economies of the world (Florida *et al.*, 2015) (see Table 2).

Table 2. Ranking Türkiye by the Global Creativity Index, 2015

Position of Türkiye	Global Technology Index		Global Talent Index		Global Tolerance Index		Global Creativity Index
	R&D investment	Patents per capita	Creative class	Educational attainment	Racial and ethnical minorities	Gays and lesbians	
	32	56	62	32	120	86	
58		53		123			

Source: compiled by author.

It is believed that countries, which score highly on the GCI, have higher levels of productivity, entrepreneurship, competitiveness, equality and total human development. Nations that rank highly on this Index also tend to have more equal societies.

Türkiye's score well on R&D investment (R&D expenditure constantly increase; as of 2020, R&D expenditure is 1.09% of GDP (World Bank, 2022) and educational attainment – 32nd position for both of them. However, I can claim that there are no hard trade-offs that prevent country from thriving in all areas.

It is necessary to note that the creative class endowed Türkiye with the 62nd position among 139 countries, which is pretty high. This statement is supported by such data: cultural and creative employment grew faster than overall employment on average by 30% over the past decade (OECD, 2022). As of 2020, 645,000 people are engaged in cultural and creative employment in Türkiye. Meanwhile, the share of creative employment permanently increases: in 2020, it accounted for 2.4% of total employment, while in 2022 – 3.5%, respectively (Eurostat, 2023). Furthermore, the share of full-time female employment in creative employment is higher compared to other sectors. However, the share of creative employees with tertiary education, is the lowest among OECD countries as of 2020 (Republic of Turkey Ministry of Industry and Technology: Izmir Development Agency, 2021).

As of 2015, the highest share of employees in the creative industries are found in Istanbul – 167,000, Ankara – 35,000, Izmir – 13,000 and Antalya, Isparta, Burdur – total 12,000. In 2017, 344,000 employees (1% of total labor force) worked just in the creative industries, which is 43% more than in 2010. As statistics demonstrates, predominantly creative people live in cities because it is the cities that ensure the “quality of place” as it was discussed above. Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir are characterized by cosmopolitan spirit – intercultural and diverse; they are destinations where creative people seek openness to others, vivid cultural life, excellent amenities and a sound environment for both living and working. Companies increasingly locate and compete where the best people are. Here a closed loop is: more creative people, more businesses; more organizations, more creative professionals. For example, Istanbul is a cosmopolitan hub with design-driven hotels, a lively nightlife and a strong contemporary arts scene. The city was thrust into the spotlight in 2010 when it was named European Culture

Capital. Moreover, 32,000 international companies operate in Istanbul (Istanbul Development Agency, 2017). The effects of diversity on city performance can be analyzed using urban population growth. The city has huge gravitational pull. In 2017, population of Istanbul was 14.8 million, in 2019 – 15 million, in 2022 – 15.6 million, respectively. Apart from that, 382,000 expats live in Istanbul (Directorate General of Migration Management, 2018).

To better understand what other factors attract creative professionals, I’ve considered some extra dimensions as GDP per capita, competitiveness and digital trends, quality of labor force.

GDP per capita is a basic measure of a nation’s economic growth and provides a clear indication of the development of a middle class. Türkiye’s GDP per capita increased from 8,561.1 USD in 2020 to 10,616.1 USD in 2022 (World Bank, 2022a), which places Türkiye among what the World Bank calls “upper-middle income” economies.

Ranking the countries in terms of economic outputs, the IMD World Competitiveness Center estimates competitive advantages and uncovering opportunities of nations. Entrepreneurial activity is a key measure for Türkiye as the country aims for a transition from an efficiency-driven economy to an innovation-driven economy. Sadly, but among 63 nations, competitiveness trends demonstrate some decrease in overall performance of Türkiye (52nd place); in terms of business efficiency, Türkiye’s labor market ranked in 57th place; while digital trends outline 54th place for Türkiye, respectively (IMD World Competitiveness Center, 2022) (see Table 3).

Table 3. Ranking Türkiye by Digital Trends, 2022

Position of Türkiye	Knowledge			Technology			Future Readiness			Overall Performance
	Talent	Training & Education	Scientific Concentration	Regulatory Framework	Capital	Technological framework	Adaptive Attitudes	Business Agility	IT integration	
	47	63	41	44	60	52	42	42	54	54
	59			54			44			

Source: compiled by author.

For some of these sub-factors associated with digital performance of Türkiye, there is evidence of higher well-being (see Table 4). Moreover, 101,000 digital professionals work in Türkiye (Republic of Turkey Ministry of Industry and Technology: Izmir Development Agency, 2021).

Table 4. Digital Ranking Türkiye

Factor	Dimension	Rank
Knowledge	Foreign highly-skilled personnel	52
	Digital/Technological skills	50
	Net flow of international students	26
	Employee training	63
	Total public expenditure on education	24
	Higher education achievement	43
	Women with degrees	51
	Female researchers	30
	Total expenditure on R&D (%)	39
	Total R&D personnel per capita	41
	R&D productivity by publication	11
	Scientific and technical employment	41

	High-tech patent grants	53
	Robots in Education and R&D	27
Technology	Starting a business	35
	Immigration laws	50
	Development & application of tech.	51
	Scientific research legislation	45
	Intellectual property rights	59
	IT & media stock market capitalization	37
	Funding for technological development	55
	Venture capital	55
	Investment in Telecommunications	48
	Communications technology	54
	Mobile Broadband subscribers	17
	Wireless broadband	54
	Internet users	46
	Internet bandwidth speed	60
	High-tech exports (%)	59
Future Readiness	E-Participation	22
	Internet retailing	42
	Tablet possession	44
	Smartphone possession	26
	Attitudes toward globalization	59
	World robots distribution	18
	Use of big data and analytics	40
	Knowledge transfer	51
	Entrepreneurial fear of failure	16
	Cyber security	49
Software piracy	49	

Source: compiled by author based on data (IMD World Competitiveness Center, 2022).

The highest ranks contain R&D productivity by publication (11th), mobile broadband subscribers (17th), world robots distribution (18th). All these dimensions important and necessary when it comes to the formation of the creative class but, at the same time, Turkish people have entrepreneurial fear of failure (16th position) that prevent their possibilities and opportunities. The worst position the country possesses is related to employee training (63^d), Internet bandwidth speed (60th), intellectual property rights, high-tech exports and attitudes toward globalization – 59th for each of them. Since the digital revolution, which made it easy to reproduce and distribute works subject to copyright, and globalization are transforming national labor market, public institutions, policy-makers, entrepreneurs must pay more attention to how to improve each of these dimensions in order to enhance creative employment.

On the other hand, Türkiye's overall performance by talent, including such factors as investment & development, appeal and readiness, increased and reached 53^d place (see Table 5).

Table 5. Ranking Türkiye by Talent, 2022

Position of Türkiye	Overall Performance		
	53		
Factor	Sub-factor	Meaning	Value
Investment & Development	Total public expenditure on education	Percentage of GDP	5.4 %
	Total public expenditure on education per student	Spending per enrolled pupil/student, all levels	\$1,474

	Employee training	is a high priority in companies	4.33 Survey [0..10]
	Health infrastructure	meets the needs of society	5.92 Survey [0..10]
Appeal	Cost-of-living index	Index of a basket of goods & services in the main city, including housing (New York City = 100)	57.40 index
	Attracting and retaining talents	is a priority in companies	5.27 Survey [0..10]
	Worker motivation	in companies is high	4.67 Survey [0..10]
	Brain drain	Departure of well-educated and skilled people	3.31 Survey [0..10]
	Quality of life	is high	4.08 Survey [0..10]
	Foreign highly-skilled personnel	Attracted to Turkish business environment	3.80 Survey [0..10]
	Justice	is fairly administered	3.23 Survey [0..10]
	Exposure to particle pollution	Micrograms per cubic metre	26.85 micrograms
Readiness	Labor force growth	Percentage change	6.45 %
	Skilled labor	is readily available	4.48 Survey [0..10]
	Primary and secondary education	meets the needs of a competitive economy	3.72 Survey [0..10]
	University education	meets the needs of a competitive economy	4.46 Survey [0..10]
	Language skills	are meeting the needs of enterprises	4.41 Survey [0..10]
	Student mobility inbound	Foreign tertiary-level students per 1000 inhabitants	2.21 number

Source: compiled by author based on data (IMD World Competitiveness Center, 2022).

Unfortunately, creative employment remains underestimated for many reasons. To consider a full picture is hard as the data about jobs in the creative industries not classified as creative and creative jobs outside the creative industries are not available. Moreover, there are many volunteers and those who engage in creative production outside of remunerated work that is not captured by the national accounting systems. As a result, these workers are sometimes included in creative participation statistics but excluded from employment figures.

4.4. Subsection. Prospects of the Development of the Creative Class in Türkiye

Digitalization, globalization and demographic changes rapidly transform the way people work, the activities they perform, and the skills they need to succeed. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated all these processes even further, as businesses and workers have had to adapt to new reality. Catching this rapid transformation is of the extreme importance to ensure sustainable growth. The creative people seem to be first who handle with such changes. They become one of main sources for the arise of new jobs and careers needed today as an employment market requires more complex and diverse skills than ever before.

Türkiye is pretty successful in this regard. Basing on the analysis above, I'd like to outline the key attractiveness factors of Türkiye for the development of the creative class, including cost competitiveness, dynamism of the economy, open and positive attitudes, business-friendly environment, strong R&D culture.

However, these factors are not enough to build the foundation for creative employment; there are also weaknesses that should be improved. Key priorities include addressing closing skills gaps and creating the enabling conditions for the creative employment to seize the potential of digitalization; enhancing diversity in terms of gender, social and ethnic background; and improving data collection.

Despite of Türkiye has high labor productivity growth and quite skilled labor force, as I mentioned above, the share of low performing students, unfortunately, is also high: second following Mexico (OECD, 2018). The Talent Shortage Survey conducted by ManpowerGroup (the leading global workforce solutions company) has revealed that 57% of employees in Türkiye has difficulty in filling an open position due to a skills gap or shortage (Sak, 2013). But when it comes to creative worker's productivity, enhancing the quality of education became the principal challenge for increasing the quality of labor supply. Specifically, entrepreneurial and digital skills, which are so important due to the rates of micro-enterprises and self-employment. Moreover, digital technologies and automation could result in transformation of numerous jobs and even some job losses (7.6 million) but lead to the creation of new ones (8.9 million). Furthermore, new jobs (1.8 million) could be created in occupations that currently do not exist, particularly in technology-related sectors, e.g. digital service designers, AI-assisted healthcare technicians, cybersecurity specialists (Cournoyer, 2020). At the same time, job displacement could vary by sector. Interestingly, education as well as arts and entertainment are least prone to automation – 12% and 24%, respectively. Jobs that demand creativity and expertise, such as educators, creatives and technology professionals, have lower automation rates – 7%, 11% and 13%, respectively.

It is expected that in the next decade, demand for workers with technological (e.g. basic digital skills, advanced data analysis, scientific research), social (e.g. entrepreneurship, advanced communication, continuous learning) and higher cognitive (e.g. creativity, critical thinking and decision making) skills will increase.

To take advantage of this opportunity, Türkiye needs to invest in talent transformation to develop the new skills required in the future. In fact, Türkiye has already taken actions regarding this issue. To ensure the success of talent transformation, more than 8 million students are engaged in higher education currently. In 2002, there were only 76 universities in the country compared to 208 in 2022, respectively. Number of university graduates increased more than 3 times from 248,310 people to 903, 673 (Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye: Investment Office, 2022).

A rapid expansion in the number of universities and graduates, enable Türkiye to transform its young population and large labor force into a skilled workforce. This is particularly important in terms of the creative employment since creative people usually young people. Istanbul is a leading city among Top European Cities with the youngest population; Istanbulites' median age is 30 (Istanbul Development Agency, 2017, p.20). Istanbul's talent is skilled, often multilingual and young. Educational institutions, desirable lifestyle and cultural diversity have transformed the city into an internationally recognized hub for human resources. Excellent quality of life has made Istanbul a magnet for professionals. Consequently, the city benefits having access to international talents, and, as a result, to foreign language skills, international business practices and potential business partners. As Istanbul attracts a lot of international migrants due to its bright performance, the talent pool grows in diversity and skills. Investors are lucky to draw talent from a cosmopolitan and creative labor pool.

It is also critical to understand how migration, ethnic and cultural diversity affect the creative employment in Türkiye since population growth and economic expansion over the last

decades have been partly driven by in-migration. Big cities are the major destinations of migration and demographic changes being the building blocks of the national economy.

For foreigners, self-employment often appears more attractive because it can offer enhanced professional standing, higher earnings and a greater sense of independence. In terms of creative occupations, it becomes even more attractive. Such entrepreneurs tend to focus on meeting the demand for the goods and services that they are uniquely positioned to offer such as the sale of cultural and creative products, e.g. ethnic clothing, goods and books. For these unique goods, the entrepreneur has a special niche for which there is little to no competition from outsiders.

The available job opportunities for female immigrants are restrained and irregular. One of the reasons is low level of education and lack of work experience reflecting the limited skills of women.

Generally, to be able to become members of the creative class, immigrants have to improve their education, skills, abilities and awareness of such new jobs.

On the other hand, a law put into force on 1 February 2012 makes it harder for foreigners to continue living and working in Türkiye without a residence and work permit. There is evidence that this regulation negatively affects foreign freelancers' and creative groups' (poets, academics, novelists, painters) lifestyle. One of the labor economists stated that there is no habit of studying the demand side of qualified migrants; one of the biggest problems with the Turkish labor market is its inability to attract international freelance professionals and members of the creative industries (Interview, Ankara, 4 January 2017) (Sánchez-Montijano, Kaya & Sökmen, 2018, p.16). To improve this situation, the country has to pay more attention to adopting competitive laws and regulations to entice skilled and highly skilled foreign professionals.

For immigrants, to meet the needs of creative occupations is also necessary to integrate themselves into the local community by learning the Turkish language, culture, cuisine and lifestyle, familiarizing themselves with the local legal system and obtaining proper documentation to be important contributors to individual success.

Filling of gaps mentioned above will help to decrease the tension in the Turkish labor market and open more opportunities for the development of new occupations, jobs and careers demanded by a contemporary world. Attracting highly skilled migrants may also strengthen country's positions as a knowledge-based economy.

Currently, a lack of comparable data regarding the creative class in Türkiye impedes in-depth analysis. The statistics about employment in the creative industries are available but data related to jobs in the creative industries not classified as creative and embedded jobs are limited. More robust data and evidence can raise awareness of the significance and potential of the creative jobs and opportunities, and lead to more efficient and effective policies to support it.

5. Conclusion

The creative class is a key driving force for post-industrial development.

It is important to highlight that creative class includes professionals and talented people employed not only in the creative industries but also in jobs in the creative industries not classified as creative and creative jobs outside the creative industries. This is particularly important. The creative class cover scientists, engineers, architects, technicians, etc., those professionals which create intangible assets – new ideas, new technologies and new creative content.

Creative people are more selective in their destination choices since they are primarily looking for comfortable living and working conditions, which are treated as “quality of place” and denote a unique set of characteristics that determine the place of residence and make it attractive. It is a so-called creative milieu with a well-developed cultural and recreational sector and creative climate, where people can declare their ideas. In other words, the “quality of place” is a set of interrelated impressions.

The emergence of the creative class influences the development of other sectors and the entire economy (the development of new products, sports, healthy eating, a variety of tourist services, etc.), as well as stimulates changes in urban spaces. Creative people do not suffer from a lack of industrial goods or agricultural products in the broadest sense; they show the need for travel, tourism, theme parks, entertainment, sports centers, fashion, gambling, music and cinema. The creative class is constantly looking for interesting engagements that increase adrenaline.

Good leisure, the absence of timing and space constraints are important characteristics of the creative class members’ lifestyle since they are highly mobile and destroy traditional boundaries of “work space” and “leisure” abandoning standard work schedules and office hours. The work itself began to provide not just living in hard times but allow people to realize their aesthetic, creative, cognitive and communicative needs.

The Turkish labor market is characterized by such strengths as large population and a large share of the youth, increase in labor productivity, decrease of the unemployment rate. However, weaknesses also exist, including labor underutilization, high employment gap for disadvantaged groups – immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, high job strain, limited female labor participation, lack of skills, negative impact of the COVID-19.

People predominantly work in traditional sectors of the economy like industry, services, agriculture and construction. Rapid automation and digitalization, globalization processes at the present phase shape new requirements for labor to increase added value. Satisfying this demand in today’s reality is directly related to improvement of people’s knowledge and skills.

When it comes to creativity, Türkiye is ranked 88th by the Global Creativity Index. The creative class alone secured 62nd position since the share of creative employment permanently increases. Türkiye deals with R&D productivity by publication, mobile broadband subscribers and world robots distribution pretty good. Moreover, the crucial attractiveness factors of Türkiye for the arise of the creative class include cost competitiveness, dynamism of the economy, open and positive attitudes and business-friendly environment.

However, for the permanent development of the creative class, talent transformation is needed in order to ensure necessary in the future skills and knowledge. Findings from this study have underlined the importance of skilled labor force in Türkiye to ensure creative practices and businesses. Besides, immigrant involvement will decrease the tension in the labor market between locals and foreigners. Achieving this success will increase the competitiveness of Turkish economy in a global scale.

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