Workshop Creative Clusters, 18 April 2012

Regional Creative Clusters
An example from Portugal

Joaquim Carvalho

University of Coimbra, Portugal

joaquim@uc.pt
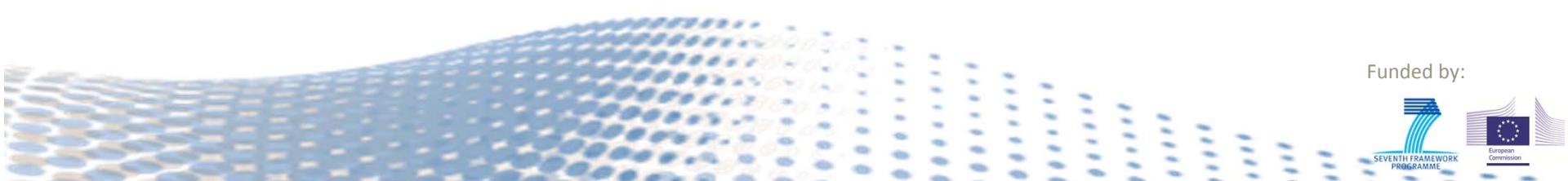
Summary

- RUCIs. Urban Networks for Competitiveness and Innovation
- Network of Creative Economies a network of small cities in Portugal
  - Network of Castles and Walls of the Mondego River
- Why they exist
- How they work
- How local authorities, S&T centres, ICT companies cooperate

RUCIs

- *Redes Urbanas para a Competitividade e Inovação* (Urban networks for Competitiveness and Innovation)
  - One of the instruments created by the Portuguese government to channel European funding for regional development in the period 2007-2013 (QREN)
- No formal "regions" in Portugal: recurring theme in political discussions; referendum in 1998, 64% against
- RUCIs designed to make municipalities cooperate in regional development

RUCIs

- Distinction between "common projects" and "individual projects"
  - "common" means immaterial and transversal
  - "individual" means material and local
  - Most of the budget goes to individual projects
- RUCI are administered by specially created inter-municipal consortia which can integrate S&T centers and other entities
  - But S&T can also participate as contractors

Network of Creative Economies
REC (rede de economias criativas)

- Lead by Óbidos
- Óbidos had coordinated the Creative Clusters in Low Density Urban Areas project: an URBACT II project.
- UC had worked with Montemor in defining a local project which was integrated.

Objectives

- First urban network in Portugal centered on the creative economy strategies.

- Aims at creating articulated attraction centers for creative talent.

Common (immaterial) projects

- Designing a Creative Environment
  - Common communication strategy
  - *Creative Event* at each city
  - *REC-TV, iTunes K-12*
- Building a Creative Environment
  - Attracting talent
    - Living & work spaces
    - *Link to educational system*
  - Project coaching
    - *Creative Entrepreneurship*
    - Funding opportunities for startups
- UC is contractor in *some of these*.

MAIO CRIATIVO
- epic lab -
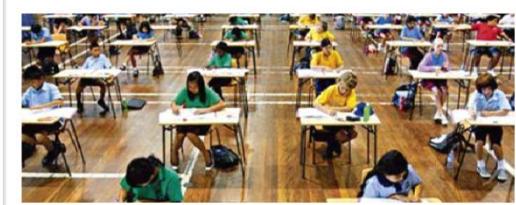
UM MÊS PARA TESTAR O SEU NEGÓCIO CRIATIVO JUNTO À PORTA DA VILA DE ÓBIDOS.

SEM CUSTOS, APENAS MUITA CRIATIVIDADE.

Individual project
## *Streets of culture* Montemor-o-Velho

- Attraction of creative talent to deserted city center
- Equipment
  - Center for Creative Technologies
  - Creativity incubator with work and live spaces in historical building
  - Multifunctional space
- Stake on common projects (event, educational, entrepreneurship)
- UC: original feasibility, specs of equipment, definition of management structure
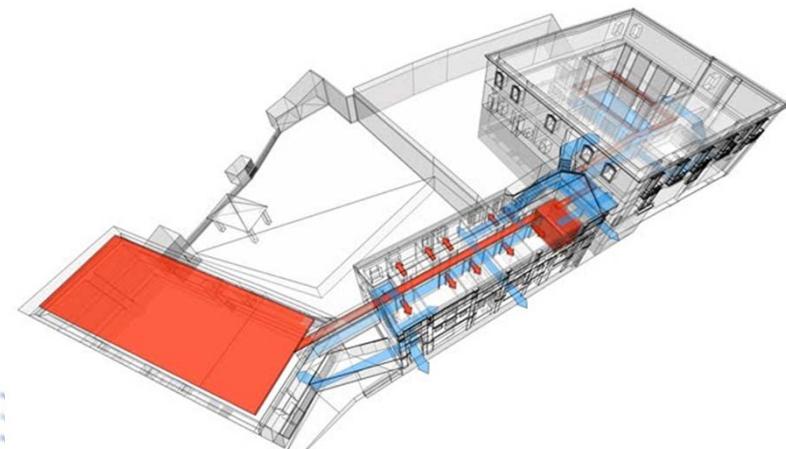
Another example

Network of Castles and Walls of the Mondego River

- Medieval frontier in the 12th century
- Reconstructing and sharing a common historical narrative for tourism
- European dimension in the border theme
- Inventing cultural heritage products
  – Augmented reality viewpoints
  – E-guides
  – Computer game
- UC is partner, responsible for background content, computer game, genealogy based educational project
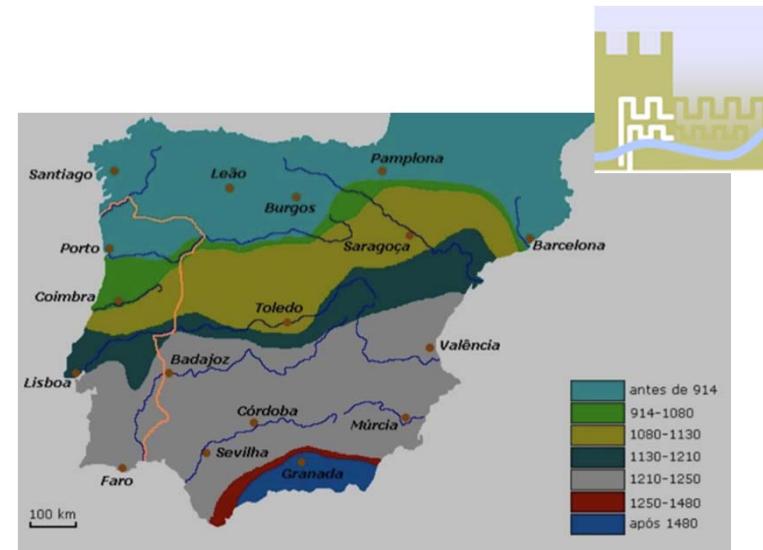
Current status

- Individual projects moving along;

- Common projects should have started in 2011, funding agency giving mixed messages

  - (Portugal under financial aid since June 2011).

- Austerity measures hinder execution; low execution increases funding risk

- Still different networks, different stories

Summing up

- Cluster of small cities created through funding induction.

- Need to cluster promotes value of immaterial projects (content based)

- Need for content creates links with S&T, promotes interdisciplinary cooperation

- Changes in political orientation and economic context creates turbulence

- New uses for academic knowledge