

This is a draft summary of societal relevance and policy impact of research conducted by Karol J. Borowiecki.

## **Shaping Cultural Policy on Video Games in the UK**

Impact summary:

- **Co-designed novel survey questions** on video games participation in the Taking Part Survey, commissioned by the [UK Ministerial Department for Culture, Media and Sport](#) and the [Arts Council England](#).
  - [The Taking Part Survey](#) provides a central, reliable evidence source that can be used to analyse cultural, digital, and sporting engagement.
- According to Dr Jo Twist OBE, CEO of Ukie, my research provides “robust evidence championing the social and cultural value” and is used to “**educate policy makers and investors** of the (...) value of the UK games industry” ([link](#)).
- As an expert on the social and cultural value of video games I have been **consulted and involved in designing of policy proposals** (e.g., “[Cultural policy in the time of the creative industries](#)”).
- I have been **supporting NESTA**, an innovation foundation based in the UK, **in their lobbying** for an official definition of the cultural sector and the production of government statistics to support such a definition. We believe that this would help clarify creative industries policy and would create the opportunity to revisit the scope and nature of cultural policy.

My publications/reports include:

- [Cultural value of video gaming](#), *Policy brief commissioned by the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA) in the UK*, 2017
- [Did you really take a hit? Understanding how video games playing affects individuals \[pdf\]](#), joint with Hasan Bakhshi, *Research in Economics*, 2018, 72: 313-26
- [The Cultural Value and Variety of Playing Video Games](#), joint with Juan Prieto-Rodriguez. In J. Prieto-Rodriguez, V.M. Ateca-Amestoy, V. Ginsburgh, I. Mazza and J. O'Hagan (Eds.), [Enhancing Cultural Participation in the EU. Challenges and Methods](#). Heidelberg: Springer, 2017
- [Video Games Playing: A substitute for cultural consumptions? \[pdf\]](#), joint with Juan Prieto-Rodriguez, *Journal of Cultural Economics*, 2015, 39(3): 239-58

Media coverage (examples):

- [Typical video gamer is middle-aged, educated and female, Nesta study finds](#), The Sunday Times, 22 July 2017
- [Economists defending video game players](#), liveMINT, 18 February 2017
- See [media coverage](#).

## Reducing VAT rates on e-publication in the EU

Background:

- Reduced VAT rate for books are common across the EU.
- France and Luxembourg introduced in 2012 a reduced VAT rate for *e-books*. However, in 2015 the Court of Justice of the European Union ruled that e-books supplied via download or streaming are a service and therefore fall outside of the VAT exemption.
- European Commission issued in December 2016 a proposal to amend the EU VAT directive (the VAT digital single market package).
- In October 2018 European Council agrees to allow reduced VAT rates on e-publications ([link](#)).

Impact Summary:

- Myself at SDU and as part of the RICHES Consortium have been **at the forefront of research and discussion related reduced VAT rates on e-publications** and have been lobbying for these rates over the years 2015-2018.
- My work included policy briefs, policy reports, chapters commissioned by cultural ministries, academic publications, media dissemination, presentations at policy seminars in Brussels (twice) and Berlin, a public talk in Paris to the Ministry of Culture and Communication, and academic presentations.
- My argument was to establish VAT rate based on the content and not on the carrier.
- The **implementation of reduced VAT rates on e-publications in 2018 is a tremendous success** that supports European creative industries, the digital sector in the EU and increases cultural consumption (book reading), which is associated with significant positive externalities.

Selected keynotes and media coverage:

- **Keynote:** “Cultural and Media Economics”, National Library in Paris, invited by the **Ministry of Culture and Communication in France**, audience of 300+
- Public talk: “Economic History and Economic Policy”, Paris, invited by the **National Bank of France**
- Media: [La TVA, le prix, et le pass culture](#), Livres Hebdo, 2 May 2018
- See [media coverage](#).

My publications/reports include:

- [Fiscal and Economic Aspects of Book Consumption in the European Union \[pdf\]](#), joint with Trilce Navarrete, *Journal of Cultural Economics*, 2018, 42(2): 309-39
- [Consumption of Europe's Cultural Heritage in the Digital Age: Does Fiscal Policy matter?](#), joint with Trilce Navarrete and Lucie Duggan, Chapter commissioned and **published by the Ministry of Culture and Communication in France**, 2017
- [The Economic and Fiscal Dimension of Cultural Heritage](#), *European Policy Brief*, 2016
- [Fiscal and Economic Issues in the Digital Age](#), *RICHES Policy Report*, 2015

## Cultural Heritage in a Digital Europe

### Background:

- Cultural heritage has enormous potential in terms of its contribution to improving the quality of life for people, understanding the past, assisting territorial cohesion, driving economic growth, opening up employment opportunities and supporting wider developments such as improvements in education and in artistic careers.

### Impact summary:

- I have been shaping and participating in the debate surrounding the cultural heritage domain in a changing world, which involved policy makers, funding bodies, managers of cultural heritage institutions and interdisciplinary academics.
- My contributions included publications, policy briefs, co-creation of relevant networks and platforms.
- My insights have been presented at the UNESCO Institute for Statistics in Montreal, at policy seminars in Brussels and Berlin, and at specialized conferences.

### My publications/reports include:

- **Hugely popular book:** [Cultural Heritage in a Changing World \[pdf\]](#), joint with Neil Forbes and Antonella Fresa (Eds.). Heidelberg: Springer, 2016
  - Book downloaded more than 200'000 times.
- [Digitization of heritage collections as indicator of innovation \[pdf\]](#), joint with Trilce Navarrete, *Economics of Innovation and New Technology*, 2017, 26(3): 227-46
- [The Long-tail of Museum Collections: Ethnographic collections onsite and online](#), joint with Trilce Navarrete, *UNESCO Institute for Statistics Symposium Proceedings*, 2016
- [Cultural Heritage as fuel for innovation: Enabling the power of creation](#), *Think Papers Collection*, 2016
- [Place-making, promotion and commodification of Cultural Heritage resources](#), *RICHERS Policy Report*, 2015
- [Economics of Culture](#), *RICHERS Information Brochure*, 2015
- [RICHERS Taxonomy of cultural heritage definitions](#), *European Policy Brief*, 2015

### Selected keynote lectures and media coverage:

- **Keynote:** “International Conference on Cultural Heritage”, Pisa, specialized audience of ca. 200
- See [media coverage](#).

## Other Examples of Policy and Societal Impact

- Global media coverage by >50 outlets in >10 countries in ca. 10 languages. See [media coverage](#).
- Media coverage has been often directed towards ongoing debates, and likely influencing them, for example:
  - **In Support of Creative Clusters:** The Washington Post wrote in 2014 an article based on my research ([Why it pays to live near creative people — just not too many](#)) in support of a controversial funding by the Omaha city government to support the local music scene. The funding was eventually granted.
- **Substantial coverage of my research in the United Nations [World Happiness Report 2019](#)** (by John F. Helliwell, Richard Layard, Jeffrey D. Sachs), which argues in the chapter “Big Data and Well-being” that novel, creative ways of data generation may “**improve well-being predictions, and help solve what economists have called ‘prediction policy problems’**”, and as an example provide my work.

## Research Impact

- Author and co-author of >25 publications in international peer-reviewed journals (since 2015: >450 citations (Google), H-index 13). Co-author of 3 book chapters, 8 policy briefs, 1 textbook (forthcoming with Cambridge University Press). Co-editor of 1 book (Springer).
- Less known or visible are my contributions towards **pushing forward the frontiers of research methods** in economics and economic history. I have been one of the first economists to:
  - collect large, historical data from biographies of famous artists (in the years 2009-2010), which I analysed and published in:
    - [Birth Location, Migration and Clustering of Important Composers: Historical Patterns \[pdf\]](#), joint with John O'Hagan, *Historical Methods: A Journal of Quantitative and Interdisciplinary History*, 2010, 43(2): 81-91
  - write a **computer application which systematically scraps data** from online dictionaries in an automated way (2010-2011), which I published in:
    - [Historical Patterns Based on Automatically Extracted Data: the Case of Classical Composers \[pdf\]](#), joint with John O'Hagan, *Historical Social Research (Section 'Cliometrics')*, 2012, 37(2): 298-314
  - apply **linguistic analysis software** to written correspondence in order to illuminate emotional well-being of a person (2014-2015), which I published in:
    - [How Are You, My Dearest Mozart? Well-being and Creativity of Three Famous Composers Based on their Letters \[pdf\]](#), *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 2017, 99(4): 591-605
  - obtain key-attributes of music compositions in order to **measure the style of the creative work** of an artist, which is work in progress:
    - The Transmission of Creativity: Evidence from Western Music, ca. 1450-1920, joint with Daniel P. Gross (Harvard Business School)
- Impact on the frontiers of research methods: Economic research building on biographical data and scraped data or using linguistic analysis techniques has been increasingly common in recent years and was published in Nature, top-5 economics journals, and other leading field outlets. Whereas the United Nations [World Happiness Report 2019](#) by building on the example of my research argue in a chapter that “Big Data” may “improve well-being predictions, and help solve what economists have called ‘prediction policy problems’”.

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<sup>i</sup> Updated on 25/02/2020