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## **Defining the Creative Industries – their role in London and beyond”**

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### **Abstract**

To collect data to evaluate and develop policy including copyright, a definitional framework or classificatory system is essential, which is normally the standard industrial classification (SIC) or standard occupational classification (SOC) and international variations of these.

However, in the case of the creative industries, the New Labour government defined the creative industry sector based on work carried out by DEMOS, a think tank closely associated with the Party. This reflected the national government social and economic policy imperatives. The paper investigates the history and rationale for this definition and exposes weaknesses, such as a lack of consistency, regional and local interests or detailed explanation of what each subsector comprises. It also touches on other interpretations such as copyright industries, cultural and content industries. Consequently it is suggested the evidential base derived from the definitional framework established by the Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) for the British Government under Blair and New Labour, cannot be taken seriously. Nevertheless the definitional inconsistency cannot simply be attributed entirely to the British Government, UNESCO, and other International professional bodies all define components of the creative industries and the arts for that matter differently. Examples of this confusion are provided. It is noted that the practitioners are rarely consulted about their practice and how they would define it.

These observations are placed in the context of recent research into the creative industries data collection in London, Beijing, Mumbai and Shanghai.