

SILICON ROUNDBOUT, TECHNOLOGY-BASED URBAN ECONOMY

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Silicon Valley is the great myth, having a success story of wealth creation linked to the opportunities of new technologies. Who doesn't want something like that? In Silicon Valley **things also twisted with the crisis**, but still working and **other cities** aspire to be the new global hub.

The development of cities and the opportunities for creating well-being, economic activity and job creation opportunities are aspects that no longer necessarily depend on the size of the city. Faced with the accumulation of population, companies and spatial dimension, a central factor in traditional urban development, today a city has greater economic dynamism if it is well **connected** into the dynamics and flows of the global economy. This integration also requires that the economic and business agents that operate in the area of influence of the city are also **connected to each other**, in dense contexts of relationship and social capital. The most competitive territories specialize and concentrate their activities in peripheral neighborhoods or areas. All of that and more is part of Silicon Valley's success.

This is a risky strategy, as Margaret O'Mara recalled in [Don't try this at home](#), article we talked about a few weeks ago about the special of [Foreign Policy](#). Risky because it doesn't always work. Similar cases can be found in Bangalore or Tel Aviv, but many others have failed or have fallen by the wayside. [Esko Aho](#) (Chairman then from SITRA, the Finnish innovation fund, former prime minister of the Nordic country and currently executive vice president of Nokia) wrote an article more than two years ago, [How to build a Silicon Valley in Europe](#), in which at the beginning of the crisis, He called for courage in Europe. Someone who has lived on the front lines of the deep technological commitment that Finland made years ago will know something about this (on the back, it is true, of a great giant like Nokia), a country where we also find one of the best examples of urban concentrations of technology companies. technology bases, [Kista Science City](#).

Silicon Roundabout is an area of London where different technology-based companies have established themselves, forming an urban cluster of high-value-added technology activities. In this [map produced by Wired \(here in large format\)](#) with information on the companies and their location) you can see the high concentration of companies in a very specific area of the British capital. Also a Tech Crunch article reviews the British government's plans to boost this area, which it calls East London Tech City, with 200 million pounds of investment, facilities to attract new activities through a Start-up Visa, the revision of intellectual property rules and the creation of different equipment and support programs (accelerator of projects, a new research laboratory, etc.) that will accompany the planned investments of companies such as Google, Facebook, Cisco or British Telecom. And with this they will join companies that already carry out their activity in London: [Dopplr](#), [Last.fm](#), [Berg](#), [Kizoom](#), and so on until nearly 100 technology-based companies.

The least of it is, as the newspaper headlines always insist on these things, if London will end up being the competition to California's Silicon Valley or if it will be the next epicenter of innovations in the digital sector. The important thing is that **these things happen**, always out there. But I will talk about this in the **next post**.

I take advantage of and leave the notes regarding this topic that I included in the September course on Creative Urban Sustainability, even if they are only a few images.

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