



# Cultural and Creative Industries

## Needs and challenges of the cultural and creative industries

Results of the 2024 survey

### The PULSE podcast: How EU creative entrepreneurs can grow

The PULSE podcast: 'How EU Creative Entrepreneurs Can Grow' is a podcast series exploring the challenges and opportunities for EU professionals in the cultural and creative industries (CCIs). Experts discuss access to finance, digital transition, internationalisation, and EU support programs.

**The cultural and creative industries (CCIs) ecosystem represents approximately 3.95% of EU value added and employs around 8 million people, including around 1.2 million firms, over 99.9% of which are small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).**

## Cultural and creative industries ecosystem

As identified by [the EU Industrial Strategy](#), the CCIs ecosystem is an important part of Europe's economy.

CCIs encompass a wide variety of sub-sectors. This includes architecture, archives, libraries and museums, artistic crafts, audiovisual (including film, television, video games and multimedia), tangible and intangible cultural heritage, design (including fashion design), festivals, music, literature, performing arts, (including theatre and dance), books and publishing, radio, and visual arts.

The ecosystem's cross-sectoral impact (spill-over effects) should not be understated. For instance, CCIs play a great part in driving innovation and creativity in other industries. Moreover, the social dimension of the CCI is equally relevant. CCIs can be crucial in driving sustainable change in communities and achieving the EU Green Deal at the local level.

[The Annual Single Market Report 2021](#) describes in detail all 14 industrial ecosystems.

The European Commission regularly monitors and analyses the functioning of the EU single market for services. The analytical work includes a confidence indicator updated every month, providing a timely indication of the state of each ecosystem at the EU level.

## Economic analysis

# Design, fashion, high-end industries

## Design

Design as a driver of sustainable growth and prosperity has capacities to offer solutions to current and future challenges. It can help foster among others

- climate change and sustainability
- the digitalisation of our futures
- growth and prosperity in Europe

Design's role continues to increase, particularly in times of urgent transformation.

As a subsector of the cultural and creative industries ecosystem, design plays a key role in fashion, interior and architecture, for example, but also across many other industries of the EU economy e.g. textiles, mobility-automotive, construction, health etc.

## Fashion and high-end industries

**The fashion and high-end industries represent European cultural heritage and expertise. With 5 million people directly employed in the fashion value chain and over 1 million people employed in the high-end industries, these activities provide a major contribution to the EU economy.**

The fashion and high-end industries are some of the most vibrant and creative sectors in Europe. They are present in the everyday life of millions of people and act as ambassadors of European values, such as culture, creativity, innovation, and craftsmanship. These industries form complex and interlinked value chains, from the design and manufacturing of fashion goods (such as textiles, clothing, footwear, leather, fur products, jewellery, and accessories) and high-end goods, to their distribution and retail.

These industries face several challenges, such as the growing number of counterfeit goods, the protection of intellectual property rights, increasing shortages of skilled workers as well as green and digital transition.

## Report mapping sustainable fashion opportunities for SMEs

The fashion industry can make a big contribution to reaching the Paris Agreement's and the EU Green Deal's goal of climate neutrality by 2050. With this in mind, we commissioned a report to map the current initiatives and key organisations in sustainable fashion and textiles across Europe. The report also gives an overview of opportunities and challenges related to adopting environmentally and economically sustainable business models in the fashion sector.

- [Report mapping sustainable fashion opportunities for SMEs & annexe 1](#)
- [Annexe 2: database mapping of initiatives and players](#)
- [Annexe 3: case studies](#)
- [Annexe 4: listing of key recent research and enterprise projects](#)
- [Annexe 5: overview of financial schemes and instruments](#)

## Useful links

- [Textiles, clothing, leather and footwear industries](#)
- [Leisure apparel and clothing accessories, household/interior textile, leather and fur products](#)

## Archives

- [Where manufacturing meets creativity – policy options for the competitiveness of the European fashion industries \(2012\)](#)
- [Competitiveness of the European high-end industries \(2012\)](#)
- [Action Plan for Fashion and high-end industries \(2014\)](#)

## What we do

The Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs supports entrepreneurship, cross-sectoral innovation, SMEs and skills in the cultural and creative industries.

See the focus of our main actions below.

## Access to EU finance portal

The access to EU finance portal provides information on financing options available to EU SMEs. It offers an overview of EU financial instruments that support SMEs, including loans, guarantees, and equity investments. It also explains how to apply for financing and find financial intermediaries.

See the [access to EU finance portal](#).

## Invest EU programme - Cultural and Creative Sectors Guarantee Fund (CCS GF)

The Cultural and Creative Sectors Guarantee Fund, managed by the European Investment Fund for the European Commission, supports micro-businesses and SMEs in the cultural and creative sectors. It provides a capped portfolio guarantee for loans to creative enterprises. Financial intermediaries can also access free capacity-building services to improve their expertise in financing CCS.

See more on [Invest EU](#).

Supporting innovation and entrepreneurship in design, fashion and lifestyle industries through the WORTH partnership project

**WORTH partnership project** is the sole European project where designers, SMEs, manufacturers, and tech providers work together to develop innovative, design-oriented business ideas.

The project focuses on lifestyle industries, including fashion and textile, footwear, leather and fur, furniture/home decoration/interior design, jewellery and accessories.

The project provides companies and designers with an incubation programme of the value of around €60 000 to develop new businesses, including:

- a) coaching on business strategy and technology development
- b) legal advice on intellectual property rights and protection
- c) participation in exhibitions
- d) networking and professional links
- e) €10 000 to 20 000 in financial support

#### WORTH Partnership Project

The awarded transnational partnerships under WORTH develop new business ideas (products, services, production processes or business models) and address at least one of the challenges, including green and circular economy, digital manufacturing, high-added value solutions, high-performance materials, re-inventing craftsmanship, social innovation, etc.

Providing business support to CCI SMEs through pan-European networks

## **Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) and its sectoral group for CCIs**

The [Enterprise Europe Network](#) (EEN) helps businesses innovate and grow internationally. As the world's largest support network for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with international ambitions, it is active worldwide. It brings together experts from member organisations that are renowned for their excellence in business support.

Other business support measures relevant to CCIs include EU cluster initiatives funded under the Single Market Programme. This includes the [European Cluster Collaboration Platform](#) – an online hub providing support to clusters, and [Euroclusters](#) , which are cross-sectoral, interdisciplinary and trans-European strategic initiatives. Currently, there are two Euroclusters dedicated to the CCIs ecosystem. Other related initiatives include the [European Digital Innovation Hubs \(EDIHs\)](#), which are one-stop shops, located across the EU, supporting companies and public sector organisations to respond to digital challenges and become more competitive. You can use the [EDIH catalogue](#) to search for EDIHs by sector, including the cultural and creative economy.

Boosting skills and professionalisation in the CCIIs through the Pact for Skills and Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs

## **The large-scale skills partnership for the CCIIs ecosystem under the pact for skills.**

This stakeholder-driven European umbrella partnership is committed to working together to upskill the CCIIs workforce.

Launched as part of the [pact for skills](#) in April 2022, it brings together over 100 stakeholders from the CCIIs ecosystem dedicated to establishing a shared model for skills development in the EU, pooling resources and engaging in concrete upskilling and reskilling initiatives in the cultural and creative industries. The development of the partnership was promoted by the European Commission and actioned by three coordinating organisations

- The Bureau of European Design Associations (BEDA)
- Creative Skills Europe
- European Creative Business Network (ECBN), currently called Creative FED

The partnership's objectives and commitments are outlined in the common manifesto, endorsed by all the partnership members.

## [Industrial Ecosystems and Partnerships](#)

### **Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs**

[Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs](#) is a cross-border programme facilitating the exchange of entrepreneurial and management experience. During the exchange, a newly established or potential entrepreneur stays with a well-experienced entrepreneur running a small or medium-sized enterprise (SME) in another country. The programme aims to boost Europe's entrepreneurial culture and reinforces entrepreneurial attitudes by offering skills, knowledge and experience.

### Intellectual property rights

Intellectual property (IP) is at the heart of the creative economy in terms of generating and exploiting creative works (including creative content and products). IP rights are legal rights for the protection of creative works. The EU's legal framework for protecting IP rights is essential to supporting innovation and the growth of creative enterprises in the EU. Relevant IP rights for cultural and creative industries include copyright, patents, trademarks and design protection.

See more [information on IP rights and the EU legal framework for IP](#).

# Capacity-building tools for CCI SMEs and entrepreneurs

The Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW) offers capacity-building tools to support cultural and creative industry SMEs and entrepreneurs.

These tools provide information and resources on various topics like access to finance, sustainability, digitalisation, intellectual property, and skills, to foster growth and competitiveness in the single market.

## Infographic

This infographic highlights key EU solutions for creative entrepreneurs and SMEs, covering areas such as access to finance, business development, innovation, skills, and intellectual property.

See the [infographic with solutions](#).

## Reports and studies

- [European monitor of industrial ecosystems – cultural and creative industries](#)
- [Boosting the competitiveness of cultural and creative industries for jobs and growth](#)
- [Impulse paper on cultural and creative sectors' role in innovating European industry](#)

## Useful links

- [2022 Annual Single Market Report](#)
- [European Commission Culture and Creativity website](#)
- [Funding opportunities for the Cultural and Creative Sectors](#)
- [Cultural heritage funding in Horizon Europe for CCIs](#)
- [Media and digital culture webpage](#)
- [The Virtual and Augmented Reality Industrial Coalition](#)