

State-of-the-art analysis report

Deliverable 2.1

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The Cultural BEES Consortium

The Cultural BEES project is implemented by the following Consortium of Partners:

No	Partner	Acronym	Country
1	Junior Achievement Europe	JA Europe	Belgium
2	Junior Achievement Cyprus	JA Cyprus	Cyprus
3	C.A. InnoEUsphere Limited	InnoEUsphere	Cyprus
4	Materahub - Cultural and Creative Industries	Materahub	Italy
5	University of Nova Gorica	Nova Gorica Uni	Slovenia
6	Danmar Computers	Danmar Computers	Poland
7	Junior Achievement Italy	JA Italy	Italy
8	Isola Catania Impresa Sociale SRL	Isola Catania	Italy
9	ANCI Lombardia	ANCI Lombardia	Italy
10	Junior Achievement Bulgaria	JA Bulgaria	Bulgaria
11	University of Economics-Varna	UE-Varna	Bulgaria

No	Associated Partner	Acronym	Country
1	Cyprus National Commission for UNESCO	UNESCO Cyprus	Cyprus

About the Cultural BEES Project

The Cultural BEES project intends to develop and implement a training programme and digital toolkit supporting the promotion of entrepreneurship skills in the Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI) among youth. The project is aimed at providing young people aged 15-30 years with the necessary skills, knowledge, and tools to succeed in their careers within the CCI sector. The programme is designed to support youth in developing their ideas, projects, and businesses in the CCI sector and to provide them with the means and skills to ensure that their projects are sustainable, inclusive, and innovative.

Large-scale piloting of the developed methodology will include the training of 1000 students at secondary and tertiary level education in 3 European countries (Cyprus, Bulgaria and Italy).

Scope of this Deliverable

Work Package 2 of the Cultural BEES project aims to identify, analyse and document the current and future skills requirements for professionals working in the CCI sector. This task is crucial for the development of the project as it provides the foundation for creating effective training programmes and curricula for the target groups, which are 15–18-year-old students (Secondary Education Level) and 18–30-year-old young adults. Based on the results of the mapping process, the project team can then develop a list of priority skills and competencies that the target groups should be trained in. The outcome of WP2 will comprise the backbone for WP3, dedicated to the development of the Cultural BEES training curriculum.

This Deliverable presents a comprehensive report documenting the results of the mapping process and the analysis of the current and future skills requirements for professionals in the CCI sector. The report analyses the state of the art and current situation of cultural and creative enterprises, examines market dynamics, operational challenges, growth opportunities and public and private support policies. The impact of digital technologies and new trends in cultural consumption is also considered, as well as the strategies adopted by companies to adapt and innovate in a changing context.

1. Introduction

Culture and creativity, in addition to enriching the identity of countries, serve as a key to decoding the present and addressing collective challenges, from the climate crisis to wars and other socio-economic issues. It is essential to consider cultural heritage as a pillar of our society and economy, and it is necessary to reinterpret it in an entrepreneurial key. This means viewing it as an industrial sector made up of organizations dedicated to understanding, protecting, and promoting both tangible and intangible heritage. This concept perfectly aligns with the principles of the Creative Economy, where conservation, regeneration, and enhancement of the territory play a central role. Open and inclusive approaches to these practices can not only stimulate economic growth but also promote the social and cultural well-being of communities. In this context, investing in the creative and cultural industry emerges as a strategy to catalyse financial innovation and foster sustainable, people-centred development.

From these premises arises Cultural BEES, a project dedicated to shaping a brighter future for our heritage by bringing young people closer to the cultural and creative world. The goal is to enable them to connect with their local and European cultural and historical identities, encouraging them to develop creativity and innovation in the field of cultural and creative industries. The project aims to foster the creation of new enterprises by leveraging cultural heritage and providing solid entrepreneurial training, building a bridge between the past and the future and promoting dialogue between the two dimensions. As we train the next generation of entrepreneurs in the cultural and creative industries, we simultaneously build on the foundations of our historical past and create catalysts for future creative and cultural change. In fact, in a world characterized by unstable conditions and unexpected crises, our cultural heritage represents a stable variable that offers a unique opportunity for a resilient and multifaceted response to global and EU challenges. In particular, many of the most powerful resources we have today risk being lost due to a lack of awareness of their transformative economic value. Therefore, by capitalizing on the sustainability of cultural heritage and introducing a reliable model of entrepreneurial development for young people, we aim to shape agents of change for a better and more resilient future for the EU.

To successfully address the challenges and seize the opportunities in the dynamic European landscape of cultural and creative enterprises, it is essential to start from a solid understanding of these enterprises, the current regulations, the available funding sources, and the best practices existing in Europe. Throughout this report, we will thoroughly examine the distinctive characteristics of cultural and creative enterprises in the European context. The report starts from a broader, continental scale to deeply analyse the context of the three pilot countries of the project: Cyprus, Bulgaria, and Italy, as they will be the sites for experimenting and implementing the Cultural BEES training programme. The central chapters, three, four, and five, follow a precise structure; each opens with an introduction and general contextualization with a broad view of the European context, detailing in subchapters the current state of the three pilot countries. Meanwhile, chapter six, dedicated to skills mapping, is built based on desk research contributed by all partners from the six consortium countries. Additionally, the collaboration with UNESCO of Cyprus, as an Associated Partner of the project, has provided a guidance.

Combining creativity and competence, we aim to provide a comprehensive and practical training experience for young people who wish to embark on a successful entrepreneurial path in this fascinating sector. The analysis includes both qualitative and quantitative readings, providing an overview of the different types of cultural and creative enterprises, highlighting their importance in the context of cultural

heritage, and analysing the market, key players, and recent trends. It examines the international, national, and local regulatory framework, with particular attention to the laws, regulations, tax incentives, and support programs that influence the sector of cultural and creative enterprises. Furthermore, it analyses the ecosystem of museums and cultural centres, identifying best practices among private and public entities in each of the three pilot countries, describing the different types of institutions, their role in the conservation and enhancement of heritage, collaborations, and operational and financial challenges. Museums are analysed in detail because during the project they will be used as training spaces, physical spaces of inspiration and sharing, where young people can work and create their sustainable and digital cultural heritage products. Finally, the report maps necessary skills in the cultural heritage sector, highlighting the technical, managerial, and digital skills required, current skill gaps, and future trends. This research in its entirety, from awareness of the current role of cultural and creative industries to identifying the most sought-after skills in sector job profiles, is the first step towards building curricula for future cultural and creative managers, which represents the next phase of the project.

For the preparation of the report, the main reports, practical guides, policy papers, and scientific articles on the topics addressed were collected. The contributions of the chapters dedicated to the pilot countries were written by national partners to ensure that the contents are accurate, relevant, and representative of the specificities and cultural dynamics of each country.

This project, and even more so this partnership, is a sign of a shared commitment to advancing cultural heritage conservation, promoting entrepreneurship, and guiding the sustainable growth of the sector, with the aim of inspiring innovation and ensuring its lasting relevance and vitality.

The mapping process of WP2 of the Cultural BEES project will be further extended and integrated through research carried out in 5 National Ecosystem Forums and related stakeholder surveys, which will be summarized in *D2.2 Ecosystem forum summary report*.

2. Overview of cultural and creative enterprises in the cultural heritage in Europe

In 1992, with the Treaty of Maastricht, a shared commitment to safeguarding European cultural heritage was formalized. This document outlined key cultural principles for participating countries. The first paragraph of Article 167 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) emphasizes the Union's role in fostering the development of Member States' cultures while recognizing their diversity and common cultural heritage. Collaboration between the EU and its member states, including in the creative and cultural sector, is governed by Article 5, paragraph 2 of the Treaty on European Union (Source: Official Journal of the European Union, C326/15, 26/10/2012). This underscores that cultural development and investments within member states' territories are primarily their responsibility, with the Union playing a reinforcing role in economic and organizational aspects. In 2010, the Green Paper "Cultural and Creative Industries, an Untapped Potential" highlighted the need for Europe to foster creativity and innovation to a new entrepreneurial culture to remain competitive globally. The policies promoted by the EU in recent years increasingly prioritize the cultural sector, recognizing its significant social, spiritual, and economic contributions. While past economic theories often overlooked the sector's potential, there is now a

growing acknowledgment of its value, with culture being seen as capable of generating various positive externalities and fostering societal cohesion.

The cultural and creative sectors encompass activities based on cultural values or artistic expressions and are defined by the Creative Europe program. With over 7.6 million workers, these sectors are essential for the EU's industrial strategy, yet they face competitiveness challenges such as fragmentation and evolving value networks.

The Creative Europe 2021–2027 project builds upon the previous program (2014–2020), aiming to continue its efforts. The increased funding for this project, totalling approximately 2.44 billion euros, reflects a commitment to supporting the cultural sector, particularly in light of challenges posed by the pandemic. This investment underscores a deliberate focus on nurturing and sustaining the cultural sector's vitality and resilience. Additionally, there are specific challenges facing European cultural diversity and heritage, including increasing pressure from works originating in third countries, insufficient circulation of European works, and limited adaptation to digital platforms. These challenges underscore the need for strategic initiatives to promote and protect Europe's cultural richness.

In the following paragraphs the scenario will be declined in the context of three main topics which are the contextualization of the cultural and creative enterprises field, the main sectors and subsectors and the recent trends and future perspectives.

2.1 Contextualization of the cultural and creative enterprises sector

With over 7.6 million workers, the European Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI) are recognized as an economic powerhouse, vital for the EU's industrial strategy. These sectors encompass a wide array of goods, services, and activities rooted in human creativity and cultural expression, operating with diverse business models. However, CCI face competitiveness challenges stemming from fragmentation, diverse subsectors, and evolving value networks. Today, the sector must navigate innovation, growth, and competitive challenges within the context of Europe's transition to climate neutrality, with the European climate law demanding a significant reduction in emissions by 2030. Key challenges include addressing skills gaps for future job markets, reconciling sustainable growth in volatile global and tech markets, fostering venture creation and growth, and tackling rising societal challenges with coordinated policy approaches. (Source: [About Us – EIT Culture & Creativity \(eit-culture-creativity.eu\)](https://eit-culture-creativity.eu/))

The **Italian cultural landscape** is sustained by a fusion of public funding and private initiatives. This sector, essential to both the economy and societal fabric, is currently experiencing growth, propelled by a myriad of national and European endeavours. Notably, the Creative Europe program for 2021-2027 has earmarked substantial funding to bolster cultural and creative endeavours, including endeavours facilitating international mobility. Additionally, the establishment of a collaborative cloud for cultural heritage preservation represents a concerted effort to safeguard and uphold European cultural heritage through the development of shared digital infrastructure. These initiatives underscore Italy's commitment to preserving its rich cultural legacy and fostering a vibrant creative milieu. The Cultural and Creative Production System staged a remarkable comeback in 2022, outpacing pre-pandemic levels. National accounts reveal a surge in value added, reaching €95.5 billion, a robust +6.8% growth from the previous year and a promising +4.4% rebound from 2019. This vibrant ecosystem, encompassing both core and creative-driven sectors, remains a steadfast contributor to national wealth, holding steady at 5.6%.

Businesses within the core component led the charge with €52.7 billion in revenue, marking a stellar +7.2% jump from 2021 and a commendable +3.5% rise from 2019. Meanwhile, creative-driven activities surged ahead, generating a record €42.8 billion, reflecting a noteworthy +6.4% increase in the past year and a remarkable +5.5% leap compared to 2019. These figures underscore the pivotal role of culture and creativity in shaping Europe's economic landscape and driving sustainable growth. (Source: Io Sono Cultura 2023 – Fondazione Symbola - Union Camere). Various initiatives underscore the intersection of cultural heritage with innovation and sustainability. Projects such as REACT and Flock Together demonstrate how art and culture can promote a just transition towards sustainability and support communities affected by climate change. Italy's cultural and creative sector has exhibited resilience and adaptability and the challenges of the pandemic while significantly contributing to the Italian economy.

In similar historical context **Cyprus'** cultural and creative industries are profoundly shaped by a rich heritage influenced by Greek, Turkish, and British histories, and they play an important role in both the national economy and local identity. This sector is important not only for its economic contributions from tourism and local crafts, but also for its emphasis on cultural sustainability, which includes preserving traditional practices while embracing modern artistic expressions. The significance of cultural heritage in sustainable development has prompted innovative conservation efforts, which have been funded by the European Union. Despite obstacles such as the island's division and the need for unified cultural strategies, the government and non-governmental organizations actively promote these industries. Festivals, museums, and cultural events are important platforms for promoting Cypriot cultural wealth, attracting both local and international attention. (Source: <https://www.inderscienceonline.com/doi/abs/10.1504/IJLTM.2016.077128>). Furthermore, there is a growing emphasis on digital innovation, which involves using technology to preserve and globally promote Cypriot cultural heritage, thereby positioning the sector for future growth and wider recognition.

For what concern **Bulgaria's** rich cultural heritage and significant presence in the cinema and film industry, challenges persist in fully deploying its creative and cultural sectors. Compared to the EU average, Bulgaria has lower employment shares (2.8% vs. 3.7%), fewer companies (3.2% vs. 5.2%), lower turnover (0.9% vs. 1.5%), and lower value added (1.7% vs. 2.3%), as per EUROSTAT data from 2019-2022. According to data from the Ministry of Culture, Bulgaria has more than 300 museums and galleries, attracting millions of visitors annually. Certain institutions all over the country are focused on preserving and portraying the cultural heritage of the country, exposing objects and organizing activities that showcase the rich cultural heritage from ancient historical periods until modern days. For instance, the National History Museum in Sofia is home to more than 650,000 artefacts about Bulgarian cultural heritage dating back from antiquity (Source: National History Museum). In Bulgaria, these museums and galleries are essential in the preservation of cultural identity and protection of cultural heritage, however, they lag in terms of digitalization. For example, there is no adequate cataloguing system that showcases paintings and other visual arts, making the artefacts hardly accessible to people, especially those in remote locations (e.g smaller regions) (Source: Interreg Project, Euroregion-Pleven - OLT). Data from the Creative Europe Desk in Bulgaria suggests that the cultural industries, cultural tourism and cultural heritage are sectors in the economy that have a significant impact, bring positive image to the country and are sectors that provide opportunities for further development. In recent years, start-ups in the field of creativity, mainly in design, digital media and advertising, have become rather prosperous in Sofia, hence, have been attracting investments from international parties, as well as an international pool of talent (Source: Invest Sofia). However, funding is not sufficient, with experts in the field receiving below the average salaries in places. There is an ongoing campaign of the Bulgarian museums association to advocate for funding increase (Source: Official documentations from Bulgarian Museums Association).

All in all, the innovations in the CCI in Bulgaria are often driven by individual micro-enterprises that receive funding on a project-basis, rather than adequate support from national/municipal funding bodies. Most museums, similarly to educational initiatives and organizations, seek external funding mechanisms to support their activities - an example of a list created to support such institutions in their sustainability efforts (<https://bg.museumspace.com/blog/spisyk-s-fondove-za-finansirane-na-muzei.html>). What appears to be a trend in Bulgarian's cultural heritage ecosystem is the lack of contemporary elements in portraying the heritage, which result in a lack of interest especially amongst young people who are very much connected to digital ways of exploration and education.

Despite resulting in about 3.8% of Bulgaria's GDP (Source: Creative Europe Desk in Bulgaria), cultural lifestyle in the country is still lagging behind among the people.

2.2 Main Sectors and Subsectors

In accordance with European Legislation, the cultural and creative production system can be of a core composed of the following sectors:

- Architecture and Design;
- Communication;
- Audiovisual and Music;
- Videogames and Software;
- Publishing and Printing;
- Performing Arts and Visual Arts;
- Cultural Heritage.

It is defined by a sectoral delineation of economic activities and professionals belonging to the business world, namely that set of economic activities that, with the finest possible sectoral detail, participate in defining the cultural supply chain, intercepted using the Business Register. The adopted methodological approach allows for obtaining national accounting estimates related to the value added and employment generated by the supply chain.

Alongside activities considered strictly cultural and creative, the field also considers another component called "creative driven," which encompasses all economic activities that, while not directly falling within the cultural and creative sectors, contribute to the cultural enrichment of the country through the presence of professional profiles that play a significant role in the supply chain.

In terms of promoting the cultural heritage field, in **Bulgaria**, in 2022 the total number of activities carried out to promote cultural heritage and exhibitions, including online activities, was 1,249,590 activities. In 23 institutions (museums and art galleries) on the territory of 19 municipalities, no activities have been carried out to promote the cultural heritage and exhibitions, including online activities (guided talks, visits to the Internet page, publications on social media, films, reports and announcements in media and publications, interactive technologies used, items sold in museum shops, etc.), according to the information provided. (Source: Ministry of Finance of Bulgaria, Museums Analysis 2022). In terms of economic benefit, the audio-visual sector is the most prominent in the Bulgarian economy, with a concentration of activities and workforce in Sofia. 97% of the turnover and added value of the sector is generated in Sofia and 86% of the employees are based there (Source: Vasileva & Petrova, 2019, Journal

of International Cooperation and Development). The related activities include TV, digital media, advertising, design, photography, sound recording, new media, gaming, etc.

Cyprus's Cultural and Creative Industries encompass diverse sectors crucial to its economic and cultural progress, too. Traditional domains like visual and performing arts, including theatre and dance, play pivotal roles in preserving Cypriot culture.

The vibrant music industry, with its rich local and folk traditions, holds significant sway together with modern creative ventures like digital media, video game development, and graphic design which reflect global technological trends. Film and television production benefit from Cyprus's scenic landscapes and historical sites, attracting international productions. Literary arts foster cultural discourse and education, supported by local publishers and educational institutions. Crafts, highlighting traditional Cypriot craftsmanship, contribute to heritage preservation and tourism.

Finally, for what concerns **Italy**, the pandemic crisis of the past years significantly impacted the Italian economy the cultural sector which specifically relies on live events. Government-imposed restrictions to curb COVID-19 spread severely affected cultural and creative businesses, leading to substantial economic challenges. However, in 2022, national accounting estimates a recovery in the Cultural and Creative Production System compared to the pre-pandemic period. The entire value chain, comprising both core and creative-driven components, saw a substantial increase in value added, reaching €95.5 billion, with a growth rate of +6.8% compared to the previous year and +4.4% compared to 2019. The overall contribution to national wealth creation remains constant at 5.6%. Core businesses generated €52.7 billion in 2022, recording a +7.2% increase from 2021 and +3.5% from 2019, while creative-driven activities saw a +6.4% increase in the past year and +5.5% compared to 2019, totalling €42.8 billion. Core activities accounted for 55.2% of the value added generated by the Cultural and Creative Production System, while creative-driven activities accounted for 44.8%. (Source: Report Io sono Cultura 2023 – Fondazione Symbola – Union Camere)

2.3 Recent Trends and Future Perspectives

For the purpose of this section, it is very important to assess the context of these first years of the 2020s in terms of innovation, and new trends. The integration of digital technology and Cultural and Creative Industries continues especially after the pandemic, entering a more mature phase. One of the main effects is the growing prominence of the younger generations. In terms of consumption, this phenomenon is driven by the increasing importance of digital channels in many sectors, especially those where the digitalization of cultural consumption is already established.

The younger generations, with their ability to flexibly interpret the uncertainties of the ongoing transition and their heightened sensitivity to relevant issues, play a fundamental role in content development. This results in a renewed and more attractive offering to new audiences, thanks to contemporary tools and content. In the post-Covid recovery, a growing number of cultural and creative operators and enterprises are tackling the challenge of green transition.

Then, in the history of technology, 2023 will be remembered as the year when the public became aware of the power of artificial intelligence (AI). Generative AI applied to cultural products doesn't just touch simple consumer goods but affects a sphere with strong identity and social implications. The standards

safeguarding creativity, like those typically attributed to humans, are, in principle, those for copyright protection, but it is far from clear whether and how they can be applied to AI developments.

For what concerns **Italy**, it is possible to analyse different sub-sectors to see the range of trends influencing operators and industries. For instance, in the Design sector, the concept of *transition* was more and more present during Design Week in 2023 with a strong focus on sustainability and accessibility. Both concepts were retaken during this year's Design Week in Milan and Fuorisalone, too, the format that diffuse the Design Week to the actual city, transforming streets and entire Milan's areas. Moreover, in 2022, many companies began exploring an "Italian approach" to adopting the metaverse. These experiments combine technology and creativity, utilizing tools such as NFTs and AR/VR in existing digital and three-dimensional worlds like Roblox, a historic social gaming platform, or by building new ones from scratch. These communication experiments have both short-term impacts, such as increasing brand value by attracting a global audience, and long-term impacts, serving as an investment in the future. Although these technologies are still very recent and rapidly evolving worldwide, some Italian companies are developing innovative projects that could significantly impact digital communication in the future. Another digital trend that made a significant impact in 2022 concerns online communities. The relationship between brands and communities has changed considerably in recent years. This is due to new users entering the arena and shaping it according to their needs, as well as imposing new norms. Sharing has become more niche, growing within micro-communities of interest, while the public dimension has become more performative and entertainment focused.

In recent years, there has been a notable surge in foreign investment within **Bulgaria's** cultural sector, encompassing cultural tourism, heritage, arts, and creative industries. Investment figures have surged from €248 million in 2012 to over €490 million in 2020, marking a significant doubling trend (Source: NSI, 2012-2020). A pivotal factor contributing to this trend is Bulgaria's tax legislation, positioning the country as an attractive destination for foreign investors, offering favourable tax rates of 10% on income (Source: NSI, 2012-2020).

Geographic concentration emerges as a crucial determinant for successful cultural enterprises in Bulgaria, with Sofia, the capital city, hosting over 80% of activities within the Cultural and Creative Industries , functioning as a prominent cluster of cultural and creative endeavours nationwide.

Embracing global trends, museum operators are increasingly integrating information technologies, such as Virtual Reality (VR), to enhance visitor experiences and educational outreach in cultural heritage. However, the adoption of multimedia technologies appears sporadic, lacking clearly defined strategies for the digitalization of Bulgarian cultural heritage. Current research predominantly focuses on archaeological and architectural heritage, cultural heritage preservation, management, and museum activities (Source: Vasileva & Petrova, 2019, Journal of International Cooperation and Development).

Bulgaria's cultural and creative sector has demonstrated increased openness to collaborations and interdisciplinary approaches. Initiatives like the Creative Europe Program and other European-funded programs, festivals, art fairs, and the audio-visual sector have facilitated knowledge exchange and partnerships with international entities. Despite promising prospects, the integration of IT into interactive experiences faces challenges due to limited state and municipal funding. However, successful implementation could cultivate greater interest among younger generations in cultural heritage and its preservation (Source: Vasileva & Petrova, 2019, Journal of International Cooperation and Development).

Recent developments and future trajectories within **Cyprus'** Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI) reflect substantial growth and adaptation, influenced by local initiatives and broader European dynamics.

Montalto et al. (2019) offer an empirical evaluation of cultural and creative vitality across European cities, highlighting the pivotal role of cultural venues and facilities in fostering cultural vibrancy and driving job creation and innovation in the creative economy. This framework is crucial for grasping Cyprus' CCI landscape, particularly the increasing integration of these industries into economic development strategies through innovative practices (Montalto et al., 2019).

Furthermore, Sacco et al. (2018) discuss the re-evaluation of the economic potential of cultural and creative industries in Europe, signalling a notable shift towards recognizing and leveraging the economic advantages of cultural endeavours. This trend resonates in Cyprus, where there is a growing acknowledgment of culture and creativity's significance in fuelling economic growth and promoting cohesion across Europe (Source: Sacco, P.L., Ferilli, G., & Tavano Blessi, G. (2018). From culture 1.0 to culture 3.0: Three socio-technical regimes of social and economic value creation through culture, and their impact on European Cohesion Policy. Sustainability.) Looking forward, Cyprus' industries are poised for further evolution, with a strong emphasis on incorporating digital technologies and fostering environments conducive to creativity and innovation. The COVID-19 pandemic has expedited the transition towards digitalization, likely shaping future trajectories and underscoring the importance of digital literacy for the sustainability of the CCI sector.

These insights, drawn from recent research and publications contextualizing Cyprus' CCI within the broader European landscape, offer a comprehensive perspective essential for understanding the future trajectory of Cyprus' cultural and creative industries.

3. Relevant Legislations and initiatives

3.1 European perspective

To outline a summary of the European Union's overall political strategy in the cultural field, it is useful to look at the priorities defined by the European Commission for the 2019-2024 period, which are extremely important for developing policies in the cultural sector and key themes of European cultural collaboration.

The six political priorities of the Commission for the 2019-2024 period include the European Green Deal for climate neutrality, preparing Europe for the digital age, an economy that works for people to promote social fairness, strengthening Europe in the world, promoting the European way of life based on equality and rights, and a new push for European democracy to protect and strengthen democratic institutions.

Based on these priorities and the positive contribution of culture to sustainable, inclusive development of society, the economy, and Europe's international relations, the Commission drafted the Agenda and the Staff Working Document in 2018. The Agenda defines working methods with Member States, civil society organizations, and international partners. In turn, the Member States define the themes and working methods for political collaboration in the cultural field through the work plans adopted by the Council of the European Union.

The new agenda is developed in three distinct strategic areas, each with specific objectives related to the social, economic, and external dimensions. First, the *social dimension* of the agenda aims to leverage culture and cultural diversity to promote social cohesion and well-being. This means fostering cultural

participation for all Europeans, supporting the mobility of cultural professionals, and protecting and promoting cultural heritage as a shared resource that strengthens a common European identity. In the *economic dimension*, the agenda focuses on supporting cultural creativity in education and innovation to promote employment and economic growth. This involves promoting culture in educational institutions at all levels, creating conducive environments for cultural industries, and enhancing the necessary skills in cultural sectors. Finally, in the *external dimension*, the objective is to strengthen the EU's international cultural relations. This translates into using culture to promote sustainable development and intercultural dialogue, as well as collaborating to preserve cultural heritage. This new cultural agenda builds on the experience of the past ten years and envisages close cooperation with Member States, civil society, and international partners.

These are strategic trajectories through which Member States define priorities for developing cultural policies at the EU level in multiannual work plans adopted in the form of Council of the EU conclusions. The work plan is a strategic and dynamic tool for cultural collaboration that addresses political developments and sets priorities in compliance with the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality. The current work plan for culture 2023-2026 has been drafted in recognition of the negative impact that current challenges such as the ongoing war in Ukraine, the COVID-19 pandemic, and climate change have had and continue to have on society. In this context, which also includes biodiversity loss and the need to intensify the green transition, culture can play a decisive role as an accelerator through specific actions of awareness-raising and innovation.

The priorities established in the work plan are divided into four points:

- *Artists and cultural professionals*: strengthening cultural and creative sectors.
The Council of the EU recognizes the peculiarities of cultural and creative sectors, characterized by self-employment, small businesses, fragmented markets, and irregular income. It commits to promoting the resilience of workers in these sectors through actions that promote sustainability, technological innovation, and fair working conditions, recognizing all creative and cultural professionals. One such action is the creation of an online platform to enable continuous exchange of information and best practices among stakeholders regarding the improvement of working conditions for artists and creative professionals.
- *Culture for citizens*: increasing cultural participation and the role of culture in society.
The Council emphasizes the role of culture in improving quality of life and promoting social well-being. Cultural institutions are essential for strengthening democracy and social cohesion, providing spaces for dialogue and debate. Additionally, they can contribute to combating misinformation and hatred. The current work plan aims to promote the development of libraries as accessible and inclusive spaces and to raise awareness about the positive effects of culture on health to prevent and manage diseases.
- *Culture for the planet*: harnessing the power of culture, including cultural heritage, contributes to the goals of the European Green Deal and the 2030 Agenda. Digital technologies play a crucial role in this context. It is necessary to enhance innovation in cultural and creative sectors, digital transformation, and the accessibility of culture and cultural heritage online. Furthermore, a balanced approach to the built environment is essential. Promoting the initiative for a new European Bauhaus can raise awareness of the importance of quality architecture and sustainable built environment.

- *Culture for co-creative partnerships*: strengthening the cultural dimension of EU external relations. Transnational cultural co-creation plays a crucial role in promoting European values and limiting the influence of authoritarian systems, communicating artistic freedoms and cultural rights. The EU's approach, which starts from civil society and values the richness and cultural freedom of Europe, is an advantage for international relations, promoting sustainable partnerships on an equal footing. Maximizing this potential is essential by increasing both the number and visibility of transnational cultural cooperation activities and projects

The priorities identified by the European Commission and work plans are implemented through economic support. Numerous European tools and initiatives are dedicated to the cultural and creative sector, including those focused on international mobility within the industry, strengthening links between this sector and production and technology worlds, and projects supporting cultural heritage.

Creative Europe is the European program supporting cultural and creative sectors for the period 2021-2027, with a total budget of 2.4 billion euros for seven years. It intervenes in three strands: media to support the audiovisual industry, culture to support other creative and cultural sectors, and cross-sectoral initiatives. In 2023, the program financed 1500 projects and supported over 2600 organizations active at the European level. *Culture Moves Europe* is the program's action supporting the mobility of artists and creatives from 2022 to 2025, creating approximately 7000 scholarships for individual mobility programs and artist residencies.

In addition to Creative Europe, the European Commission has initiated a dialogue on the creation of a collaborative cloud for cultural heritage to contribute to the protection and preservation of European cultural treasures through the establishment of a digital infrastructure. The project will be financed by *Horizon Europe*, with a budget of 110 million euros until 2025. The platform, created through collaboration among specialists, curators, and archivists, will enable the digitization of artefacts, research, data documentation, and thus implement the digital dimension for the conservation, protection, and restoration of cultural heritage, enhancing collaboration and research and innovation activities.

Support for the creative ecosystem is provided through the *KIK Culture and Creativity* of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology, with a budget of 10.45 million euros to be invested between 2023 and 2025, aimed at funding proposals to provide innovative products, processes, and business services in the audiovisual, media, architecture, fashion, and cultural heritage sectors.

The *New European Bauhaus* (NEB) is a design laboratory, an accelerator, and a network aiming to be a creative and interdisciplinary movement to develop a meeting space where sustainable practices are recovered, current visionary practices are valued, and future ways of living are designed at the intersection of art, culture, and science. Creativity, innovation, and imagination are the focal points of the NEB, allowing for experimentation and reimagining of places and spaces for better living together in the post-pandemic era. Thanks to 100 million euros, several NEB projects on a small and large scale are underway across Europe, and the Commission plans to increase funding with another 106 million euros. Since 2021, the NEB has created a broad community of organizations and people working around a common vision that combines sustainability, inclusion, and beauty, with approximately 600 official partner organizations. The NEB's key activities are the Festival and the Laboratory, to which the Academy will be added, moments of exchange, meetings alternating with project implementation moments and training courses mainly dedicated to architects and designers.

The Council resolution on the EU Work Plan for Culture 2023- 2026 states that “*culture is a source of inspiration and innovation, a reflection of humanity, a language, and a common heritage of Europe*”

Additionally, it asserts that cultural and creative sectors not only represent a factor of social and civil growth but also are a significant driver of economic development. (Source: Council resolution on the EU Work Plan for Culture 2023- 2026, as approved by the Council - Education, Youth, Culture and Sport- at its meeting on 29 November 2022.).

3.2 Legislation and regulations for setting up a company in the CCI sector and sector funding

Exploring the local dynamics of the three pilot countries is essential to laying the foundation of the project. A detailed analysis of the legal and administrative context will allow us to understand whether and how cultural enterprises can be established and grow. Acquiring in-depth knowledge of the current state and its foundations is crucial to providing young people with the necessary information and tools to start their own businesses independently and consciously.

Setting up a business in **Cyprus's** Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI) necessitates an understanding of the sector's specific legislation and regulations. At this moment, there is no single resource that comprehensively outlines all relevant laws and regulations for Cyprus within the context of the CCI. Local governmental websites and Cyprus-specific business advisories are excellent sources of information for specific details about starting a business in Cyprus, such as registration processes, taxation, and specific regulations that may affect the CCI sector. These resources typically provide the most recent and relevant legal frameworks for business operations in Cyprus. A young entrepreneur interested to start their own business, will need to receive legal advice and refer to sources such as the Department of Registrar of Companies and Official Receiver in Cyprus. The Cyprus Investment Promotion Agency (CIPA), provides detailed guides and resources to investors and businesses looking to operate in Cyprus, including those in the CCI sector. They provide information about investment incentives, the business environment, and specific sector opportunities. Finally, the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI), is a primary source of information about business regulations and company formation in Cyprus. Their resources can offer tailored advice and necessary steps for legal, tax, and regulatory compliance.

According to the established structure in **Bulgaria**, the state cultural policy is implemented at two levels – national and local. At national level, the responsibility for the formation and implementation of cultural policy is divided between the legislative body in the face of the National Assembly /Parliament/ and the executive body – the Council of Ministers (the Government) and the Ministry of Culture. At the local level, cultural policy is implemented by the local self-government bodies - the municipalities. A supreme central executive body in the field of culture with the right of legislative initiative is the Ministry of Culture, which is empowered to form and implement the general principles of the state cultural policy. As direct and active participants in the process of forming a cultural policy, are the artists presented by specialized associations, along with non-governmental organizations working in the field of culture, museum work, cultural and historical heritage. In a legal and normative aspect, there is a system of specific laws that directly influence the individual areas of culture. Over the years, the specific laws have undergone a lot of changes, which are dictated by the dynamic legal environment and are also influenced by changes imposed within the European Union. The basic principles of protection and development of culture are introduced in the Law on Protection and Development of Culture (Source: State Gazette No. 50/01.06.1999).

The law regulates the legal status of cultural organizations and different types of cultural institutes – state, municipal, private and with mixed structure. The financing of cultural activities is centralized, as it is the function of the Ministry of Culture which is the main distributor of funds from the state budget. In Bulgaria there are very specific cultural centres -The People's Community Centres (Chitalishte). They are traditional self-governing Bulgarian cultural and educational associations in the settlements, which also perform state cultural and educational tasks. All individuals can participate in their activities regardless of age and gender restrictions, political and religious views and ethnic consciousness. The Chitalishte shall be non-profit legal entities. Their status and activities are regulated by the Law for The People's Community Centres. The enterprise can be established under the Commercial Law and Law on non-profit legal entities. (Sources: Ministry of Culture Bulgaria)

In recent years, **Italian** institutions have increasingly focused on the development of Cultural and Creative Industries, recognizing them as driving forces for the Italian economy, the country's culture, and the enhancement of the Made in Italy brand. This attention has led the legislature to adopt legislative initiatives aimed at supporting and promoting this sector. CCI are strategic sectors for the economic and cultural development of the country and are regulated by various laws and provisions: The concept of "cultural enterprise" was initially introduced in Article 1, paragraph 57 of Law No. 205 dated December 27, 2017. However, implementation procedures are still pending, subject to the decree of the Minister of Cultural Heritage and Activities and Tourism, in agreement with the Minister of Economic Development. In addition, the Ministerial Decree dated August 8, 2022, focuses on the dissemination and strengthening of the social economy, offering valuable guidance for the optimal implementation of measures to support the social economy and the CCI sector. The decree outlines terms and methods for submitting applications for facilitation, establishes criteria for evaluating and monitoring investment programs presented by companies.

The regulatory framework further defines and establishes CCI within the Made in Italy Bill, converted into Law No. 206 on December 27, 2023. This law contains organic provisions aimed at enhancing, promoting, and protecting Italian excellence both domestically and internationally. It introduces measures to stimulate the growth of national strategic supply chains, combat counterfeiting, and develop new skills related to Made in Italy. The provision broadly defines "cultural and creative enterprises" and delegates the definition of their recognition methods and conditions to an implementing decree. It requires these enterprises to be registered in a specific section of the business register. According to the law, "cultural and creative enterprises" encompass all entities, regardless of their legal form, including those governed by Book V of the Civil Code, and self-employed workers who: Conduct stable and continuous activities based in Italy, an EU Member State, or countries adhering to the Agreement on the European Economic Area, provided they are taxpayers in Italy. Engage exclusively or predominantly in one or more activities related to the ideation, creation, production, development, dissemination, promotion, conservation, research, enhancement, or management of cultural goods, activities, and products. CCI also include private entities that primarily engage in economic activities supporting, auxiliary, or strictly functional to the ideation, creation, production, development, dissemination, promotion, conservation, research, enhancement, or management of cultural goods, activities, and products.

During parliamentary discussions, an amendment was approved, expanding the definition of cultural and creative enterprises to include third sector entities and social enterprises primarily conducting business activities. The decree of the Minister of Culture, to be adopted in agreement with the Minister of Enterprises and Made in Italy, outlines methods and conditions for recognizing the 'cultural and creative enterprise' qualification, as well as revocation criteria. The establishment of the National Register of

Cultural and Creative Enterprises of National Interest at the Ministry of Culture is also mandated. Registration in the register implies inclusion in the portal of the National Archival System (SAN) of the Ministry of Culture, aimed at safeguarding historical archives of Italian companies, especially those holding historical brands of national interest. This initiative aims to enhance cultural and creative enterprises.

Law No. 206/2023 allocates €3 million annually from 2024 to 2033 for granting contributions to CCI by the Ministry of Culture. These contributions aim to promote and enhance Made in Italy and increase competitiveness in the cultural and creative sector. Terms and conditions for granting such contributions are defined by decree of the Minister of Culture, in agreement with the Minister of Enterprises and Made in Italy and the Minister of Economy and Finance. Moreover, every three years, the Minister of Culture, in agreement with the Minister of Enterprises and Made in Italy and the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, is required to adopt a "National Strategic Plan for the Promotion and Development of Cultural and Creative Enterprises." This plan aims to define organizational and coordination methods for competent administrations, encourage financial and managerial training paths, promote integration with other productive sectors, develop intellectual works, protect intellectual property, and promote national-level studies, research, and events.

3.2 Funding and support programs that can support youth entrepreneurship

Culture, understood as a set of goods and services, is considered a merit good in economic literature. The role of public intervention, as well as that of non-profit private institutions, is directed towards the production of such goods and is justified by the potential benefit to society, generating economic and social development on par with education and healthcare.

This perspective makes it crucial to consider the measures contributing to the financing of the cultural system. It is essential to have an overview of the composition of public and non-profit private expenditure, starting with the identification of the main institutional actors involved in the definition and allocation of resources.

In **Bulgaria**, most common funding instruments for the distribution of funds in the cultural field are the National Culture Fund at the Ministry of Culture and the National Film Center. Professional guilds and independent artists continuously advocate for bigger resources to be allocated towards these funding mechanisms and for better transparency and selection criteria to be implemented.

Youth entrepreneurship is officially recognized in the educational framework of 21st century skills, which is why there are multitude of funding instruments through the Ministry of Education and science that are mostly provided to the schools themselves or huge private operators. The lack of long-term consistency of the processes and programs and the overwhelming bureaucratic burden often discourage schools from fully taking advantage of such opportunities. Private operators are often limited to publishing and IT businesses, whereas access to funds for non-governmental organizations who are the main provider of such content is severely limited.

Another public funding mechanism for youth activity is the Ministry of Youth and Sports which has an annual budget composed of taxes on gambling businesses. These funds are supposed to support youth activities at the local level but are often mismanaged or insufficient to cover all needs.

An overall significant challenge is that the public funding opportunities often do not reach potential beneficiaries effectively, as links on public institutions pages are often non-functioning or hard to locate. (Source: e.g <https://mc.government.bg/page.php?p=58&s=429&sp=512&t=660&z=0>)

Municipalities in Bulgaria also have the opportunity to include youth and culture activities in their local government budgets, however, these are often overlooked and priority is given to more immediate needs. Bigger municipalities traditionally designate humble budgets for financing activities and events for youth - associations, clubs, students' unions, etc.

Community centres in Bulgaria (called chitalishte) serve a crucial role as the sole culture and sometimes education centre in rural areas. There are good examples of private initiatives that keep these structures and whole communities and traditions alive.

Overall, public funding in both youth entrepreneurship and culture is on a project base. Educational and cultural organizations apply on a project basis and no consistent public funding mechanism is currently available to sustain such programs long term. Often private operators and non-governmental organizations are also not eligible for the mechanisms provided. There is still no established mechanism for financing culture by private individuals and legal entities and a developed legal framework for alternative forms of financing (donation, sponsorship, etc.). Also, donations amount to a very insignificant part of funding in education and youth activities.

For the most part, entrepreneurship youth programs receive funding from private donors, corporate sponsors and European program funding. Some private education institutions engage their own fundraising mechanisms to sponsor activities of their students.

In **Cyprus**, several funding and support programs exist to encourage youth entrepreneurship in the cultural and creative industries (CCI). These programs include both national initiatives and funding opportunities from the European Union.

The *Creative Europe Programme*, the EU program that supports the cultural and creative sectors by funding a variety of projects, includes actions aimed at youth entrepreneurship in the CCI. The program aims to strengthen the sectors' ability to operate transnationally and internationally by encouraging innovation, audience development, and new business models.

The *Youth Board of Cyprus* (ONEK) provides a variety of programs and grants to support youth activities, including entrepreneurship in the cultural and creative sectors. These initiatives frequently provide training, mentorship, and financial assistance to young entrepreneurs as they start and grow their businesses.

Cyprus Entrepreneurship Fund (CYPEF): This fund provides financial tools such as loans on favorable terms to SMEs, including CCI start-ups. Young entrepreneurs can use these funds to cover costs associated with starting and running creative businesses.

Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund: Under the EU Cohesion Policy, Cyprus receives funding that can be used for projects that promote regional development, such as entrepreneurship in the creative industries.

These funds frequently support projects that generate jobs, encourage innovation, and boost economic growth.

Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs: This cross-border exchange program allows new or aspiring entrepreneurs to learn from experienced entrepreneurs who own small businesses in other participating countries. The program includes sectors such as cultural and creative industries, which offer on-the-job training and knowledge and experience exchange. It is available all over Europe.

Local initiatives: Several local government initiatives in Cyprus provide assistance, such as business development services, incubation space, and networking opportunities tailored specifically to the needs of creative and cultural entrepreneurs.

Young entrepreneurs should contact the respective program offices or visit their official websites for more detailed and specific information, including how to apply for these programs. Each program has unique criteria, application processes, and deadlines that must be understood before applying.

In **Italy**, the Ministry of Culture, through the new Law No. 206 of December 27, 2023, "Made in Italy," has allocated €3 million annually from 2024 to 2033 for grants to cultural and creative enterprises to promote and enhance the "Made in Italy" brand and to make the cultural and creative sector more competitive. Another key milestone of the government's intervention concerns the *ordinary and extraordinary programming of public works* on assets belonging to the state cultural heritage, a primary tool aimed at implementing conservation interventions on cultural assets throughout the national territory. In 2021, the resources allocated for ordinary interventions amounted to €54.3 million, while for extraordinary ones, it was €306 million. Special measures are also designated for the protection and enhancement of Italian sites included in the UNESCO cultural heritage.

Remaining within the scope of heritage, interventions by the Department for Cultural Activities of the Ministry of Culture, as outlined in the Contemporary Art Plan (PAC), allocated €3.7 million in 2021, primarily for new acquisitions and productions of contemporary artworks to increase the public collections of contemporary art held by Italian museums and cultural venues. Recognizing the significance of the sector, in 2021, the Ministry of Economy, in conjunction with the Ministry of Culture, established the *Creative Enterprises Fund* to promote the birth, development, and consolidation of micro, small, and medium-sized Italian cultural and creative enterprises, with an initial endowment of €40 million for the biennium 2021-2022. This represents a different approach from solely providing non-repayable grants, which are nonetheless included, as it is complemented by forms of facilitated financing, a tool typically used to incentivize enterprises in other economic sectors, and a necessary share of own resources not covered by any incentives.

The still active *Creative Enterprises Fund* is one of the tools managed by Invitalia, the national agency for the development owned by the Ministry of Economy, which oversees all national incentives to foster the birth of new companies, strengthen existing ones, and develop territories. Among the most important incentives in the cultural sector are *Resto al Sud*, *Cultura Crea*, *ON-new businesses at zero interest*, *Enterprises in villages*, *Ecological and digital transition of cultural and creative bodies*, *UNESCO Sites Fund*, and *creative cities*. Some of these incentives fall within the framework of the Next Generation EU.

Among non-profit entities, *Banking Foundations* are the most significant actors in the processes of enhancing heritage, but also in the development of small and medium-sized cultural enterprises. Despite territorial heterogeneity, which sees a greater presence in the regions of the Centre-North, they contribute to the support of art and culture with their granting activities, allocating significant amounts:

in 2021, €245.5 million were granted to support the sector, accounting for 27% of the total grants of the Banking Foundations, which contributed to the realization of just under 7 thousand interventions. Among these, mention should be made of Fondazione Cariplo, Fondazione Giordano dell'Amore, Fondazione CDP, Fondazione con il Sud, and others. Among the programs promoted by the foundations, many aim to support new ideas, businesses, and start-ups.

4. Ecosystems of museums and cultural centres

A significant amount of museum literature recognizes a shift to the view that museums are seen as more than depositories of objects and collections. They are considered active public educational institutions where relationships and networks among people are located at the centre of their mission and where visitors' voices are heard and reflected in their practices. The new definition approved in 2022 in Prague by the International Council of Museums starts from this premise and defines the museum as *"a not-for-profit, permanent institution in the service of society that researches, collects, conserves, interprets and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage. Open to the public, accessible and inclusive, museums foster diversity and sustainability. They operate and communicate ethically, professionally and with the participation of communities, offering varied experiences for education, enjoyment, reflection and knowledge sharing."* (Source: International Council of Museums)

The museum thus becomes a tool for sharing the knowledge and value of both tangible and intangible cultural heritage, educating and engaging not only with a local audience but with a diverse and varied public. The challenges posed by this new vision to museum institutions are numerous, and the establishment and qualification of specialized professional figures, guided by responsible and competent administrations, are essential prerequisites for achieving the proposed objectives and ensuring consistency in the development of the undertaken projects.

Based on these premises, museums will be an integral part of the Cultural BEES project as physical spaces of inspiration and sharing, where young people can work, spark ideas, and create their own sustainable cultural heritage products.

Nowadays the total number of the museums worldwide is estimated at 104.000, which has increased from 22.000 since 1975 (Source: UNESCO report, April 2021). Europe is definitely the continent which houses the most (per number of inhabitants), with Germany leading with 7,245 museums and exhibition houses and France together with the United States, they represent 61% of the museums and cultural centres around the globe. This represents a testament to the rich European heritage. About 7.7 million people were employed in the cultural sector in the EU in 2022 (Eurostat, August 2023), with an increase of 4,5% since 2021.

Since the beginning of the 21st century, the main trends in the development of museums have been observed in three main categories:

1. the application of digital technologies for the purposes of more attractive and interactive exhibition of cultural values, exhibits and artefacts;
2. combination of museum and research work with business practices - rented areas, trade, catering and beverage establishments;

3. organizing and conducting events of different nature and educational activities.

The use of technological innovations is most strongly represented in museums for contemporary art, science and nature, with specific topics dedicated to personalities, etc. Active trade in museums is carried out mainly in countries with Anglo-Saxon culture, Western and Central Europe. Holding events, lectures, seminars and educational programs is slowly becoming a part of activities in national and regional historical and archaeological museums. As a result of these trends, museums are transformed from "passive guardians" of cultural and historical heritage into "active" participants in the cultural life of local communities, from exhibition spaces into "living" centres for knowledge, communication, entertainment, etc.

In this chapter, we will attempt to analyse part of this rich European heritage by focusing on the museum ecosystems in the three pilot countries. We will identify some best practices among national museums that can serve as models and guides for stimulating entrepreneurial mindsets in young people.

4.1 Introduction of the museum ecosystems in the 3 countries

The management of the museums of history in **Bulgaria** is restricted by the centralized state authority regarding the laws and Ministry of Culture. The public relations related to the preservation and protection of cultural heritage are regulated under the Cultural Heritage Act (Source: State Gazette No. 19 of 13.03.2009, in force as of 10.04.2009), which introduces the definitions of intangible and tangible immovable and movable cultural heritage. This enactment regulates the status of cultural values and the state policy and system in their protection and preservation field. The law contains a special regulation of the status of museums as cultural and scientific organizations which research, preserve, study and present cultural values. The Cultural Heritage Act regulates the presentation of cultural values in exhibitions and establishes conditions under which cultural artefacts may be reproduced in replicas, copies and indicated commercial objects. The legal environment of history museums is very restrictive, especially in regard to the entrepreneurial types of initiatives which can guarantee the protection of valuable heritage, its authenticity and scientific nature.

According to the Cultural Heritage Act in Bulgaria there are general and specific, public - national, regional and local museums and private museums. The trends in the development of museums in Bulgaria in the period 2017-2019 seem to be generally favourable, considering the number of visits, organized events, exhibits and museums, see table 4. The imposed measures and restrictions on museums, including their complete closing for a certain period due to the COVID 19 pandemic in the period 2020-2021, have a negative impact. In 2020, the number of visitors and the events have decreased by 58%, compared to 2019. In 2021 the registered slump stops and there is an evident increase of visits and events with 30 % and the next growth is in 2022 with 37 % against the level of 2021, keeping in mind that the discussed rates continue to be lower compared to the figures in 2019.

The development of museums is positive in terms of an increase in the number of museums, exhibits and specialists in academic positions during the whole period 2017-2022.

The view of museum experts in Bulgaria, expressed during in-depth interviews in the framework of the project № BGCULTURE-1.001-0005-C01 "Development of the Regional Museum of History – Varna as a multifunctional public space for science, art, culture and communication", outlines some important directions for development of museums, including the regional museums of history in Bulgaria. But first

of all, they point out the key strengths and weaknesses of cultural institutions. The main advantages are described as diverse and numerous cultural values, the richness of the scientific archive, the highly qualified specialists and experts, the preserved and predominant educational and scientific roles. The disadvantages are formulated regarding the insufficient funding of museums, especially with cultural values of national importance, lack of commercial approach to museum management, the presence of still non-attractive and old-fashioned presentations of cultural values, and the monotony in expositions. The key opportunities for future working of the museums in Bulgaria are related to implementation of ICT, diversification of museum functions and building new connections with audiences. (Source: Research conducted in the framework of the project № BGCULTURE-1.001-0005-C01 "Development of the Regional Museum of History – Varna as a multifunctional public space for science, art, culture and communication", funded by the Financial Mechanism of the European Economic Area, with main beneficiary Regional Museum of History Varna, Bulgaria and partners University of Economics Varna and Nordland Museum, Bodø, Norway, in a period of 2021-2023.)

Cyprus is one of the few regions in the world where culture begins in the 10,000 B.C. The density and quantity of archaeological findings is very high in proportion to the area and population. Its geographical location has always been a blessing and a curse and has resulted in the island's culture accepting and giving elements that make up a remarkable and unique distinctive civic and cultural identity.

Most of the archaeological sites and monuments of Cyprus are located very close to villages, towns and communities, while the Cypriot Museums, state or private museums, are growing year by year, thus contributing to the protection and promotion of Cypriot culture, the art of the Cypriot people, and the art of the history of society, folklore and many other subjects. The tragic events of 1974 have marked the culture and its authentically Cypriot character and the social and other problems that have arisen continue to be an obstacle to the completion of the character of generations who have lived, live and will live in the country. While we wish we could discuss our museums for the whole island, for lack of sufficient information, this narrative focuses on the museums and cultural centres of the Greek Cypriot community.

The first museum in Cyprus, the Cyprus Museum, was inaugurated in 1909 during British rule and is still the largest archaeological museum in Cyprus. During the first half of the twentieth century a number of museums were initiated by the British authorities or by local societies. After Cyprus' independence in 1960, three major groups took over the responsibility for establishing new museums: the Republic of Cyprus, communities, and individuals. The most active decade for the establishment of museums was the 1990s. A study commissioned by the Ministry of Education and Culture and executed by the Leventis Municipal Museum of Nicosia indicates that almost half of non-state museums in the southern part of Cyprus (33 out of 68) were created between the years 1990–2000 (Loizou-Hadjigavriel and Constandinide 2004).

Museums usually evolve from individual, community, municipal, or state initiatives. In this report the Cyprus' museums were categorized in eight categories and by 2017 were identified as follows: Archaeological, byzantine, historical, ethnographic, arts & galleries, cultural centre, natural history & environment, others. (Sources: 1. [Museums and cultural sustainability: stakeholders, forces, and cultural policies](#) Theopisti Stylianou-Lambert, Nikolaos Boukas and Marina Yerali (2014), 2. Guide to the Museums of Cyprus by Theopisti Stylianou - Lambert and Chrystalla Antoniou (2017).)

Italy boasts a rich and diverse cultural heritage, encompassing millennia of history, art, and innovation. The country's museum and cultural centre ecosystem reflect this wealth, serving as custodians of its heritage while also fostering creativity, education, and community engagement. This introduction

provides an overview of how the system of both public and private institutions operates, the types of museums and centres present, and their initiatives in community involvement programs and training projects.

The museum and cultural centre ecosystem in Italy are diverse, encompassing a wide range of institutions dedicated to preserving, exhibiting, and promoting cultural heritage. These include renowned art museums, archaeological sites, historical landmarks, contemporary art galleries, and cultural centres focused on specific themes or regions.

Community involvement programs and training projects are integral components of many museums and cultural centres in Italy. These initiatives aim to engage diverse audiences, foster cultural exchange, and promote lifelong learning. Through workshops, lectures, guided tours, and outreach programs, institutions seek to enrich the cultural experience of visitors and enhance their understanding of Italy's rich heritage.

In conclusion, Italy's museum and cultural centre ecosystem are vital components of the country's cultural identity and economic landscape. Supported by public and private investment, these institutions play a crucial role in preserving and promoting Italy's cultural heritage while also fostering innovation, sustainability, and community engagement. As Italy navigates the challenges and opportunities facing its cultural sector, initiatives aimed at collaboration, innovation, and inclusivity will continue to shape its cultural landscape for generations to come.

4.2 National mapping and best practices of working with youth

In the dynamic landscape of museums and cultural centres, innovation, youth engagement, technological integration, and sustainability have emerged as crucial focal points for enriching visitor experiences and ensuring long-term relevance. This subsection highlights exemplary institutions—both public and private—that have demonstrated commendable practices in stimulating innovation, fostering entrepreneurship among youth, leveraging technology and artificial intelligence, and addressing sustainability concerns.

By delving into the initiatives undertaken by these museums and cultural centres, we gain insight into the diverse strategies employed to inspire creativity, empower the next generation of leaders, harness cutting-edge technologies for educational purposes, and promote environmental stewardship within the cultural sector. These institutions serve as beacons of excellence, setting precedents for others seeking to navigate the intersection of culture, innovation, and sustainability in a rapidly evolving world.

BULGARIA - Public Institutions

Chitalishte (Community Cultural Centre)

The Bulgarian Chitalishte, or Community Cultural Centres, exemplify a remarkable safeguarding practice for the vitality of Intangible Cultural Heritage, recognized in 2017 on UNESCO's Register of Good Safeguarding Practices. Established by communities across Bulgaria since 1856, these centres serve as key organizational units, fostering cultural and educational activities to preserve Bulgarian customs and traditions while promoting inclusivity and access to knowledge. Guided by the Chitalishta Act of 1996, they engage all age groups, with a special focus on transmitting intangible heritage from elders to youth.

Through festivals, exhibitions, and innovative initiatives such as local knowledge centres, the Chitalishte play a pivotal role in popularizing and preserving Bulgaria's rich cultural heritage, embodying principles of community participation and sustainable cultural development.

Source: [Bulgarian Chitalishte \(Community Cultural Centre\): practical experience in safeguarding the vitality of the Intangible Cultural Heritage - intangible heritage - Culture Sector - UNESCO](#)

Interactive Museum Gabrovo, opened on March 21, 2014, was created with the mission to build on the cultural and tourist product of the region, revealing the richness of long-lived traditions and inspiring historical heritage related to the industrial past, present and future of the city. The museum presents in an extremely attractive way the development of Gabrovo as an industrial centre. It is located in a building declared a cultural heritage of local importance in 1986. The new museum has a completely restored original architectural appearance from more than 120 years ago, while preserving its characteristic features and general aesthetics. New interior solutions have been introduced, tailored to the specifics of the museum exhibitions presented. The building, in its entirety, represents a revived cultural and historical heritage, uniting past, present and future into one. The development of the Gabrovo industry is the main theme of the museum exhibition, which includes more than 20 video installations, software products, virtual images and decors representing the industrial development of Gabrovo in the 19th and 20th centuries. Thematically, the museum is divided into three parts: Industrialization – from the end of the 19th century to 1944, Socialism – from 1944 to 1989 and Present – from 1989 to the present day. Each period is presented in its entirety, being thematically and spatially divided into a separate floor of the building.

The museum offers various alternatives to explore the expositions – guided tour or virtual storyteller in three languages, giving many options for your own choice of digital audio and video applications. A modern 3D screening room presents the most beautiful and emblematic sights in the surrounding area. On the underground floor of the museum there is a comfortable cinema where visitors can explore the region from a bird's-eye view in a ten-minute three-dimensional film. One of the most attractive offers for residents and guests of the city is the spectacular evening show, including screenings on the facade of the museum, realized through 3D mapping technology.

Regional Museum of History Varna, founded 1906 by the Archeological Society in Varna with the first exhibition of the new Museum of Archaeology, today administratively includes 5 museums and sites of cultural heritage - the Archaeological Museum, the Museum of New History of Varna, the Ethnographic Museum, the Museum of Natural History, the Museum of the Bulgarian Revival and Roman Thermae Baths, the Aladzha Monastery and the Desert Stones. The organizational and management structure of RMH Varna follows the classical model, typical for this type of institution, headed by a director and directly subordinate to him specialized units of archaeologists, restorers, curators, but at the same time today includes the Library and the Educational Children's Museum.

The spatial capacity of RMH Varna consists of total terrain open area 13486 m²; built-up area 2725 m²; floor area 9025 m²; exposure area 5450 m²; fund-storage and administrative-auxiliary area 3575 m². Only in the Archeological Museum, located in the former Girls' High School (constructed in "New Renaissance" style during the period 1892-1898), there is an exhibition area of 2150 sq.m not including the storeroom, the Educational Children's Museum and the Library. The building in the shape of a complete square comprises a basement area and two floors, and also includes a spacious inner yard. At the end of 2022, RMH Varna is in possession of 67,436 expositions and artefacts.

As a result of implementing different projects, RMH Varna today has developed an Entrepreneurial plan for development of the museum till 2027, a new online platform which allows continuous contact with people and virtual visit to the museum and personal museum guide via mobile app in 5 languages. In the museum there is a new space for interaction, events, cultural activities and meetings which is a revitalized hall and relaxing area, which allows visitors to talk, discuss and just have a rest. There is a new job position - PR specialist, young professional.

Regional Ethnographic Open Air Museum Etar, established in 1964 by Lazar Donkov, stands as Bulgaria's sole open-air museum of the Skansen type, preserving the traditional culture of the Balkan Range people. The construction of the museum is carried out through three main methods: restoration of objects welded in the field; transferring original facilities and recreating buildings from previously taken photographs. It showcases a variety of architectural structures and artisan workshops, offering visitors a glimpse into life from the 18th to the early 20th centuries. Notably, it houses Bulgaria's only collection of operational water facilities, emphasizing the historical significance of water in crafts development. Throughout its history, the museum has evolved, maintaining a focus on research, preservation, and public engagement.

Projects like the creation of a new visual identity and educational programs, including the "In the world of Balkan Range architecture" project, demonstrate the museum's commitment to cultural preservation and innovation. Additionally, initiatives like the KEVIS symposium and the "Crafted by Hand. Photo Diary" project further promotes traditional crafts and sustainable living. The museum offers thematic tours and activities, allowing visitors to gain first-hand knowledge of craft production traditions, test their skills, and immerse themselves in Bulgarian folklore and traditional habits. The museum is located 8 km south of Gabrovo, northern Bulgaria, on the northern edge of the Bulgarka Nature Park. (Source: Regional Ethnographic Open Air Museum Etar (<https://en.etar.bg/>))

BULGARIA - Private Institutions

Sarieva Gallery, established in 2011, holds a significant position within Bulgaria's contemporary art landscape. Stemming from the Sarieva Gallery, it provides a platform for artists ranging from established figures to emerging talents. Located in Plovdiv, with a branch in Sofia, the gallery is known for its diverse exhibitions and cultural initiatives. Through programs like the "Night/Plovdiv" series and the Open Arts Foundation, it actively engages with broader audiences and fosters cultural exchange. The gallery serves as a central hub for contemporary artists, collectors, and enthusiasts. Beyond its primary exhibition space, the gallery offers a dedicated collectors' space known as *Кабинет [kəbine't], facilitating intimate encounters with artworks and fostering deeper connections between collectors and artists. Additionally, the gallery hosts educational workshops and community events, further enriching its role within Bulgaria's artistic community. (Source: <https://sarieva.org/>)

The Museum of New Bulgarian University established in 2010, represents a novel approach to museum activity in Bulgaria. Led by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Tatyana Shalganova, it integrates education closely with cultural heritage preservation. Operating within New Bulgarian University, the museum provides practical training for students in various humanities and social programs. Each semester, students curate temporary exhibitions, enhancing their academic learning while gaining valuable skills for their future professions. This model not only enriches academic experiences but also fosters community engagement with Bulgaria's cultural and historical legacy. As a private institution, the Museum of NBU showcases the potential for innovative approaches to youth education and cultural sustainability within the museum sector. (Source: <https://museum.nbu.bg/>)

Toplocentrala is a successful initiative launched in 2014 by a collaboration between independent artists and Sofia Municipality, aiming to repurpose the former heat plant of the National Palace of Culture into a Centre for Contemporary Arts. Through a thorough selection process involving international experts during a key cultural event, the heat plant emerged as the ideal location. With the support of the Mayor and key stakeholders, including municipal authorities and non-governmental organizations, the project gained momentum. Over the following years, multiple project models were explored, leading to the selection of a final model in 2016. Through extensive debates, public consultations, and visits to similar centers across Europe, Toplocentrala has evolved into a multifunctional space with seven adaptable indoor and outdoor areas, poised to enrich Sofia's cultural landscape. (Source: <https://toplocentrala.bg/en>)

Bishop's basilica of Philippopolis in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, dating back to the mid-4th century AD, stands as one of the largest late antique early-Christian churches discovered in the region. With its central nave, side aisles, apse, narthex, and colonnaded atrium, the basilica reflects significant architectural sophistication. Excavated over years, its magnificent floor mosaics covering an area of nearly 22,000 square feet feature intricate geometrical designs, eternal knot symbols, and an array of birds, symbolizing pious souls. Renovation efforts, managed through a public-private partnership between Plovdiv Municipality and the America for Bulgaria Foundation, aim to transform the site into a modern museum complex, showcasing the mosaics and preserving this remarkable testament to ancient Christian heritage.

The restoration and conservation project, led by a team of archaeologists, historians, and conservationists, involves innovative approaches such as augmented and virtual reality, interactive exhibits, and a mosaic studio. This initiative not only highlights the historical significance of the basilica but also underscores the educational potential of the space, offering immersive experiences and educational programs that engage visitors with Bulgaria's rich cultural history. Through collaborations with schools, universities, and cultural institutions, the basilica museum complex has the opportunity to become a hub for learning, research, and cultural exchange, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of Bulgaria's past and present.

CYPRUS - Public Institutions

Archaeological Museum Cyprus The Cyprus Museum, the first archaeological museum in Cyprus, exhibits finds from the earliest periods of human settlement on the island, from the 10th millennium BC to the Roman period. The Museum organizes various temporary exhibitions, lectures and seminars, events for International Museum Day (18 May) and other events in its garden. It also offers educational programmes in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Museum of the Holy Monastery of Kykkos The Museum of the Holy Monastery of Kykkos is housed in a modern building in one of the oldest monasteries in Cyprus. It consists of five independent rooms, which house some of the exhibits from the large collections held by the Museum. It brings together a variety of objects from prehistoric times to the mid-20th century. In particular, there is the room with antiquities, with particular emphasis on Cypriot pottery, and the room with works of Christian culture from the early Christian, Byzantine and post-Byzantine periods, such as ritual vessels, coins, jewellery and gold woven objects. Another room of the museum houses frescoes, Byzantine and post-Byzantine icons, as well as representative wooden carved church furniture. In another room, objects made of paper or parchment, such as manuscripts, books, scrolls, and various documents related to the history of the monastery are

exhibited. Most of the Museum's exhibits are related to the history of the Monastery, while others were purchased in the past by the Monastery, either from Cyprus or abroad.

The Museum occasionally organizes conferences and lectures, conducts archaeological excavations, participates in research projects and presents publishing work.

Museum mansion of Chatzigeorgakis Kornesios The mansion of Chatzigeorgakis Kornesios is the most important example of urban architecture of the Ottoman period in Nicosia. Through the house, the family life of Hadjigeorgakis Kornesios is presented, as well as the role he played as a Dragoman for the Ottoman authorities (interpreter of the Gate) during the Ottoman period. The restoration of the house was honoured with the Europa Nostra award. The two-storey house (1793), in the shape of a P, encloses an inner courtyard in which there is a monumental fountain and a private Turkish bath (hamam). On the ground floor of the house were the service rooms, the kitchen, the stables and various storage and auxiliary rooms. The formal reception room, the odas, is located at the end of the eastern wing of the upper floor and stands out from all the other rooms with its richly carved, gilded woodwork and oil painting, probably depicting a fictional city. The rooms on the upper floor have been designed as exhibition spaces where, with the help of a variety of visual material and authentic objects of the period, the history of the Hadjigeorgakis family and the restoration process of the mansion are presented. Various objects of the Byzantine and medieval period, as well as of the Turkish occupation, are also exhibited. Art exhibitions are organized in the museum's premises and events are held in the inner courtyard for the International Museum Day (18 May) and other cultural activities.

Cyprus - Private Institutions

Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation Since its establishment in 1984, the Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation has developed a wealth of activities, in keeping with the objectives originally delineated for the Cultural Foundation by the Bank of Cyprus. The Foundation's main strategic aims are to encourage the research and study of Cypriot civilisation in the fields of archaeology, history, art and literature as well as to preserve and disseminate the cultural and natural heritage of Cyprus, with a particular emphasis on the international promotion of the island's centuries-long Greek civilisation. These activities range from development of research programs, making publications, developing educational tools and materials for children and youth that promote our cultural heritage, organizing and funding performances, concerts, dance, art, music events etc.

Leventis Art Gallery The A. G. Leventis Gallery brings the grandeur of European art from the Renaissance to the 20th century to the heart of Nicosia, connecting the European continent with its south-eastern outpost by highlighting the unique relationship between art and its history. The Leventis Collections demonstrate that the celebration of beauty cuts across nationalities, historical periods and styles to constitute a shared inspiration evoked by artists to communicate with the viewer. Art unfolds in a space where, regardless of their origin, artists contribute to a better understanding of their own achievements and of European art more generally. Anastasios G. Leventis wanted the art he collected and loved during his lifetime to be enjoyed by his compatriots and envisioned a fine arts museum that would make a lasting contribution to his homeland.

This museum employs its own museo-pedagogue and runs various educational programs for adults and children alike, especially engaging various educators related to arts and running a wide variety of events, plays, conversations and educational programs.

Cyprus Food Museum The Museum of Cypriot Food and Nutrition is a non-profit association, founded as a continuation of the Virtual Museum of Cypriot Food and Nutrition. Its main objective is the study, preservation and dissemination of traditional Cypriot cuisine. Its main purpose is to undertake activities for the promotion of research, study and education in the fields related to Cypriot traditional forms of: food, nutrition, means (utensils, tools), techniques of production, distribution and storage of food, as well as food production and distribution sites. In the Virtual Museum of Cypriot Food and Nutrition there is a wealth of material, information and photographs, which is constantly being enriched and which could not be exhibited in an exhibition space of any capacity. Very important documents are the postgraduate theses and books written in the context of the creation of the online museum. The Museum participates in European research projects and European networks of museums. It also organizes a pan-Cypriot cooking competition for children and young people, a pan-Cypriot photography competition, workshops on Cypriot cuisine, and offers online educational activities.

ITALY - Public Institutions

Palazzo Strozzi (Florence, Italy) Palazzo Strozzi is renowned for its inclusive approach, offering activities tailored for various demographics, including youth. The institution emphasizes engagement with art and artists, fostering dialogue and group activities to encourage self-reflection and social interaction. [Initiatives like the "Teenager Kit"](#) provide young visitors aged 12 to 19 with engaging materials and activities to enhance their experience with art. These resources are designed to make art exploration both personal and collaborative, whether through independent visits or group experiences.

Galleria Nazionale (GNAM) (Rome, Italy) GNAM's educational services have a rich history of engaging with schools and universities, aiming to stimulate learning, sensitivity, and collective creativity through art. Programs cater to diverse audiences, including families, children, youth, seniors, and visitors with disabilities. The institution's ["Summer School 2023"](#) offered structured activities focusing on elements such as water, air, earth, fire, shadow, and light. These activities, tailored for different age groups, provide unique perspectives on art and its relationship with the environment.

Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Taranto (MArTA) (Taranto, Italy) [MArTA's educational services](#) complement its scientific and research endeavours, aiming to make the museum an inclusive and vibrant space for cultural exchange. The institution offers a wide range of educational activities targeting diverse audiences. Projects like "First Steps at MArTA" introduce preschool and early primary school children to the museum through playful experiences guided by experts. These activities aim to make museum visits engaging and informative for young learners. MArTA also organizes cultural events like the "Wednesday at MArTA" series, featuring conferences, performances, and presentations, enriching the cultural landscape of the region.

ITALY - Private Institutions

Fondazione Prada (Milan, Italy): Fondazione Prada is known for its commitment to organizing educational and cultural programs for young people. Through initiatives such as workshops, creative labs, conferences, and collaborative art projects, Fondazione Prada provides teenagers and young adults with the opportunity to explore contemporary art and actively participate in the cultural scene. Fondazione Prada - Accademia dei bambini: "Let's Pretend That..." is a new workshop curated by Stefano Colombo,

Eugenio Cosentino, and Luca Marullo of Parasite 2.0, a research and design agency, that was implemented from April 20th to June 16th, 2024. In this workshop, children explored using unconventional materials to transform themselves and their surroundings. They create imaginative structures by assembling colorful architectural forms, fostering creativity and collaboration. Acting as members of a small tribe, they learn to utilize and share available resources, cultivating a sense of community and empathy. The Accademia dei bambini's projects cater to families and are led by various experts, including architects, educators, artists, and scientists, who aim not only to teach but also to inspire.

Activities led by these experts are further developed by a team of educators under the guidance of Marta Motterlini, a museum education specialist. Originally conceived by neuropsychiatrician Giannetta Ottolia Latis, the Accademia's theoretical and operational foundations were laid by her until June 2019. Since September 2019, neonatologist Gabriele Ferraris has overseen the program.

The adaptable space, designed by students from the École nationale supérieure d'architecture de Versailles, under the guidance of Cédric Libert and Elias Guenon, evolves to accommodate diverse programs. The storytelling through video documentaries of these workshops is compiled in the "Little Masters" series, curated by Maicol Casale and Claudia Ferri. Through engaging activities and imaginative play, children discover the importance of kindness, sharing, and creative expression in shaping a more vibrant and inclusive world.

Sandretto Re Rebaudengo Foundation (Turin, Italy): The Sandretto Re Rebaudengo Foundation stands out for its commitment to offering educational and cultural programs that promote the inclusion of young people in the world of contemporary art. Through initiatives such as artistic labs, residencies for young artists, curatorial projects, and meetings with emerging artists, the Sandretto Re Rebaudengo Foundation strives to provide young people with the tools and resources to explore and understand contemporary art.

The Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo annually sponsors the Young Curators Residency Programme in Turin. Established in 2007, this program offers an intensive research residency in Italy with the aim of enhancing the professional and critical skills of selected young curators while promoting Italian contemporary art internationally. Over three months, the selected curators engage in thorough research, visiting over two hundred artist studios, museums, and art institutions nationwide under the guidance of an Italian reference curator. This immersive experience culminates in an exhibition curated at the Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, showcasing the culmination of their work. Preparation for the final exhibition involves in-depth study, meetings with key figures in the art world, and visits to cultural centres across Italy. The Italian scene is explored under the guidance of an Italian reference curator. Notable alumni of the program hold prominent positions in museums and institutions worldwide.

MAXXI - National Museum of the 21st Century Arts Foundation (Rome, Italy): MAXXI is committed to organizing events and projects that actively involve young people in the discovery and appreciation of contemporary art. Through innovative educational programs, interactive workshops, guided tours, and artistic competitions, MAXXI aims to stimulate creativity and promote active engagement of young people in the world of art and culture.

The MAXXI has initiated the "MAXXI Young Architects" project, inviting young architects to participate in competitions and workshops to develop innovative projects in the field of contemporary architecture. This project offers participants the opportunity to collaborate with industry professionals and exhibit their works at the museum. The latest edition, dating back to 2020, featured the "YAP ROME AT MAXXI 2020" curated by Pippo Ciorra. The Young Architects Program, originally launched and coordinated by MoMA,

reached its 8th edition at MAXXI. London-based studio Cut-Out of Lucy Styles, formerly with SANAA Studio founded by Pritzker Prize winner Kazuyo Sejima, emerged as the winner of the eighth edition of YAP Rome at MAXXI. Lucy Styles' winning project, "Home Sweet Home," comprises a sequence of intimate yet open spaces, open-air rooms serving as both a metaphor for domestic life and the museum's secret garden, extending its exhibition space. These projects were showcased in an exhibition dedicated to the YAP program and the inaugural edition of the Italian Architecture Prize, promoted by MAXXI and Triennale Milano. The winner of YAP Rome at MAXXI received the "best designer under 40" award.

5. Skills Mapping

5.1 Research methodology

To develop the Cultural BEES training programme, the importance of the skill mapping process cannot be overstated. This process aims to identify essential competencies within the expansive CCI sector, particularly those crucial for aspiring cultural and creative entrepreneurs. First steps within WP2 regarded desk-research-mapping, which was implemented by analysing current job vacancies and in the CCI sector across the six partners countries. All project partners researched and analysed job profiles in vacancies related to cultural and creative managerial/middle management roles as these reflect a responsibility level and many characteristics needed by cultural entrepreneurs. Partners researched 120 active job vacancies with creative and administrative profiles needed in the sector and listed hard skills and soft skills required for each, with the latter being the primary focus of the following analysis.

The vacancy research was carried out through the most common job finding platforms like LinkedIn, Adecco and more, and partners also contributed with a deeper approach through their national systems and specific industry platforms. Many of the job profiles arrived from platforms dedicated to CCI-specific roles and institutions. Some of these platforms are further organized by subsectors of the cultural and creative field, each having its own landing page. The use of such sector-specific platforms has ensured the identification of relevant roles to analyse and understand the general context of the entire field. It has supported the identification of the specific hard and soft skills identified as necessary by the sector for success.

Following the vacancy mapping and collection of skills, we were confronted with a diverse array of 150+ soft skills. Recognizing the need for conciseness and clarity, we embarked on a process of condensing similar skills to distil the essence of professional competencies. With the support of AI tools, we considered all the similar skills listed in the various vacancies and then we embarked in a conversation with the tool to summarise and cluster the different skills. Through this endeavour, we identified overarching themes and commonalities, resulting in a more streamlined list that encapsulates core competences needed in today's dynamic CCI sector. In the subsequent sections, we delve into a quantitative examination of this refined skill set, shedding light on the prevalence and significance of key competencies in shaping success in various professional domains.

5.2 Analysis of skills currently required by the sector

The comprehensive skills list provided offers valuable insights into the multifaceted landscape of professional competencies, shedding light on the diverse array of skills sought after by employers across various industries. Through quantitative analysis, it becomes evident that certain skills recur with higher frequency, indicating their heightened importance in today's CCI sector.

Communication emerges as the most prevalent skill among the soft skills listed across examined vacancies, underscoring its universal relevance and indispensable nature in fostering effective relations with colleagues, clients and stakeholders. Its prominence reflects the vital role effective communication plays in fostering collaboration, resolving conflicts, and driving organizational success.

Following closely, *teamwork*, *problem-solving*, and *adaptability* were identified, showcasing the increasing emphasis placed on collaborative environments and the ability to address challenges with agility. These skills are generally highly valued due to their capacity to drive innovation, overcome obstacles, and navigate rapidly changing business landscapes.

Moreover, *leadership* and organizational *skills* feature prominently, emphasizing the demand for individuals capable of guiding teams, inspiring others, and orchestrating complex projects with finesse. *Creativity and innovation* are also notable, indicative of the growing recognition of the value of novel approaches and innovative thinking in modern workplaces.

On the other hand, there are more and more skills that can be taken into consideration, and the research provided additional soft skills that promise to remain useful in the sector in the future. It was possible to group the 155 skills in 10 clusters, with subsequent specifics on lateral skills that compose each cluster as following:

Interpersonal Skills

- Customer Service and Hospitality
- Written and Oral Expression
- Communication ability

Analytical Skills

- Critical Thinking
- Analyse Situations
- Problem-Solving Abilities
- Knowledge of digital tools

Leadership and Management

- Strong Negotiation Skills
- Strong public relations Skills
- Decision Making

Adaptability and Flexibility

- Initiative
- Continuous Learning Mindset
- Proactive Attitude

Organizational Skills and Time Management

- Planning Skills
- Task Management
- Multiple Project Management

Creativity and Innovation

- Art Direction Skills
- Innovative Spirit
- Thinking out of the box
- Collaboration

Independence and Autonomy

- Self-Reliance
- Ability to Plan and Organize Work
- Ability to multi-task

Positive Attitude and Motivation

- Passionate and Energetic
- Positive Attitude
- Curiosity
- Inquisitive and Creative

Customer Service and Hospitality

- Ability to satisfy needs
- Inclination to Work with the Public
- Communication and Promotion Skills
- Ability to Manage Relations with Customers

Strategic Thinking and Ambition

- Community Management
- Entrepreneurship
- Anticipate trends
- Spot opportunities

This breakdown not only elucidates the core competencies valued by employers but also underscores the evolving nature of skill requirements in today's dynamic professional landscape.

Considering all desk research, from the CCI sector analysis per country, to recent and trending topics and development, to the skills and competence mapping exercise through sector vacancies, four additional competence clusters could be identified as crucial to the CCI sector in the next future.

- *Digital Literacy*: with the ongoing digitization of the CCI sector, proficiency in digital tools, platforms, and technologies, will likely become essential for cultural and creative entrepreneurs.

- *Data Analysis*: as businesses plan and strategize with potentially vast amounts of data, the ability to analyse and derive insights from data sets will become crucial for informed decision-making and strategic planning.
- *Emotional Intelligence*: with a growing emphasis on workplace well-being and employee engagement, skills related to emotional intelligence, such as empathy, self-awareness, and conflict resolution, are likely to gain prominence.
- *Cultural Competence*, with globalization and diversity becoming integral aspects of many workplaces, skills related to cultural competence, such as cross-cultural communication and cultural sensitivity, will be essential for fostering inclusive environments and global collaboration.

6. Challenges and Opportunities

This research underscored the multifaceted nature of challenges and opportunities confronting European cultural and creative industries. These encompass a broad spectrum, from workforce skills to technological advancements and environmental sustainability. Positioned at a critical juncture, these industries encounter a myriad of evolving circumstances. Navigating through these complexities, they confront both challenges and opportunities that shape their trajectories.

In 2019, the European Commission published the “*Research for CULT Committee - Culture and creative sectors in the European Union – Key future developments, challenges, and opportunities*”. The study addressed the dynamic nature of culture and creative sectors, recognizing their susceptibility to evolving environments that test established practices, business models, and market equilibriums. It outlined the significant trends expected to influence the future of CCI within the European Union by 2030.

In this chapter, we explore the diverse dimensions of these challenges and opportunities, examining their impact on the industries and considering potential pathways forward.

6.1 Current and expected Future Challenges for Cultural and Creative Enterprises

In the dynamic landscape of museums and cultural centres, innovation, youth engagement, technological integration, and sustainability have emerged as crucial focal points for enriching visitor experiences and ensuring long-term relevance. This subsection highlights exemplary institutions—both public and private—that have demonstrated commendable practices in stimulating innovation, fostering entrepreneurship among youth, leveraging technology and artificial intelligence, and addressing sustainability concerns.

Furthermore, as part of the broader Cultural and Creative Industries, museums play a pivotal role in shaping cultural narratives and economic prosperity. While traditional domains like visual arts and cultural heritage preservation remain vital, modern ventures like digital media and video game development reflect global trends. The pandemic-induced crisis underscored vulnerabilities, particularly for sectors reliant on live events, prompting innovative adaptations and resilience.

In **Bulgaria**, promoting cultural heritage faces disparities, with concentrated activities in certain regions. Conversely, the audio-visual sector thrives, especially in Sofia, showcasing the importance of regional dynamics. Challenges persist in ensuring equitable distribution of resources and opportunities across the cultural sector, highlighting the need for targeted policies to support diverse cultural expressions and economic development.

Similarly, **Cyprus'** CCI blend tradition and modernity, leveraging rich cultural assets like music, film, and crafts to foster economic growth and cultural identity. However, challenges remain in integrating traditional and contemporary practices while ensuring sustainable development and preserving cultural heritage in the face of rapid globalization.

In **Italy**, the pandemic's impact on live events highlighted economic fragility but also spurred recovery efforts. National accounting data reveals resilience, with substantial growth in value added across core and creative-driven activities, signalling opportunities for sustained growth and innovation. However, persistent challenges include ensuring inclusivity and diversity in cultural representation, fostering creative entrepreneurship, and enhancing digital literacy to harness the full potential of emerging technologies in the cultural sector.

Diversity, Fragmentation, and Concentration pose significant challenges within European Cultural and Creative Industries. The diversity and fragmentation within these sectors limit the circulation of European works and the ability of industries to organize and protect their interests. Additionally, the concentration of power among large non-EU operators, particularly in sectors like streaming services, presents hurdles for smaller operators within the Union.

The Evolution of Funding Environment and Business Models is another critical area of focus. Cultural and Creative Industries are adapting to new funding environments and exploring innovative business models to ensure sustainability. While many turn to private funding sources, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) often face challenges accessing investment. Initiatives like the Creative Europe Guarantee Facility aim to address these funding gaps.

Workforce and Skills are becoming increasingly important considerations. Professionals in cultural and creative industries now require a blend of creative, digital, managerial, and entrepreneurial skills to foster innovation. The development of general and cross-sectoral creative skills is becoming crucial, particularly considering advancements in artificial intelligence and automation.

New Technologies offer both opportunities and challenges. Innovations such as virtual reality and augmented reality hold promise for cultural and creative industries, yet the rise of AI-driven content recommendation systems raises concerns about consumer privacy in the digital realm.

Audience and Cultural Participation present another set of challenges and opportunities. Digital cultural participation offers new ways to engage audiences, but cultural institutions must innovate to attract and retain audiences while fostering social connections in an increasingly digital landscape.

European Cultural and Creative Industries operate in an ever-changing international environment. *Hypermobility* has become a defining characteristic, with new technologies offering alternatives to traditional modes of international engagement. However, environmental concerns related to carbon footprint remain a challenge, particularly in digital activities and cloud computing dominated by large online platforms and intermediaries.

Environmental Challenges persist, despite efforts to reduce carbon footprints. While some cultural and creative operators lead sustainability efforts, challenges remain in addressing the environmental impact of digital activities and cloud computing, which are dominated by large online platforms and intermediaries.

6.2 Growth and Innovation Opportunities in the Sector

Despite challenges, the CCI contribution to national wealth creation remains significant, with core and creative-driven activities playing complementary roles in shaping cultural narratives and economic prosperity. Embracing technological advancements and fostering cross-sector collaborations will be key to navigating future challenges and unlocking the full potential of the cultural and creative industries.

European projects such as "Culture Moves Europe" and the "New European Bauhaus" initiative exemplify efforts to address these challenges and provide new opportunities. These initiatives demonstrate the European Union's commitment to fostering innovation, creativity, and sustainability in the cultural sector, paving the way for a more resilient and vibrant cultural landscape.

Finally, a Strategic Framework is essential for guiding industry development and collaboration. European Union policies, such as the European Agenda for Culture and the Creative Europe program, aim to support the growth and resilience of cultural and creative industries in the international and digital spheres, providing a strategic framework for industry development and collaboration.

Then, the "Horizon Europe" programme has dedicated a specific area to the Cultural and Creative Field within Cluster 2, known as 'Culture, Creativity, and Inclusive Society' under the Work Program 2023-2025. This cluster aligns with EU objectives of enhancing democratic governance, citizen participation, and the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage. It aims to address diverse social, economic, technological, and cultural shifts, mobilizing the multidisciplinary expertise of European social sciences and humanities to understand contemporary societal transformations. The overarching goal is to provide evidence-based policy options that support a socially just, inclusive, green, and digital transition and recovery for Europe.

7. Conclusions

The Cultural BEES project kicked off at the beginning of 2024 and its goal is to support the implementation of the Creative Europe goals through education and training programmes that can provide the skills needed by future entrepreneurs in the field. The main goal of this report was to obtain a general overview of the European cultural and creative sector system but also to analyse different scenarios, focusing on the countries in which the new trainings will be piloted.

Following the Consortium's analysis of different sector job profiles, the report was enriched with a qualitative skill mapping of the soft skills needed to succeed in the field. More than one hundred job profiles were analysed, and the main output was a set of specific skills that are unanimously needed, aside from the interested departments that can be found in Cultural and Creative Industries. In these terms, communication skills are for instance very important in all areas of the sector, just as the ability to

maintain interpersonal relationships among peers and seniors. However, just knowing what is needed today, is not enough. This is the reason why the report aimed to understand the future trends in terms of emerging sectors and, contextually, emerging skills. As imaginable, the emerging ones that were considered more are the digital skills, but it is necessary to stress the fact that these kinds of skills are already needed nowadays. Just for instance, Culture Moves Europe can be considered as a digital-oriented programme that aims to create a stronger network, exploitable by artistic professionals through a digital cloud. (Source: <https://culture.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe/creative-europe-culture-strand/culture-moves-europe>)

The European potential in terms of cultural offer is rich but not fully exploited and in support of this hypothesis, Bulgaria's and Cyprus' case studies are significant. The cultural heritage in these countries is wide and rich, but too little considered by a globalized system that inevitably tends to consider the most important goods in those countries under cultural spotlight. On the other hand, the Italian case study is significant for a similar reason. Although Italy is renewed to be the richest country in the world in terms of Cultural Heritage, lots of those attracting goods such as monuments, palaces, museums, works of art, are not always well valorised such as it happens in other parts of the world, but more and more exploited in a passive way, without the right amount of investments in terms of protection and ordinary maintenance. Moreover, the same issue is transposed to a lot of young students who do not feel interested in their traditions and cultural heritage.

An important output of the Cultural BEES project will be a returned awareness among young people for cultural heritage and its wide applications. It will stimulate youth who will lead future companies, and who, understanding that European cultural heritage is richer than they may have used to think, can contribute to create new value proposals and to shape and future-proof the CCI sector with their energy and innovative thinking.

8. Glossary

Cultural BEES builds on a shared vocabulary, where each word represents an essential starting and ending element of the research itself. Every term in the vocabulary is carefully selected to embody key concepts for the entire project. Through the outlined objectives, Cultural BEES aims not only to explore and understand these terms but also to map and connect them into a coherent and meaningful framework.

CREATIVE ECONOMY

A creative economy is based on people's use of their creative imagination to increase an idea's value. John Howkins developed the concept in 2001 to describe economic systems where value is based on novel imaginative qualities rather than the traditional resources of land, labour and capital. Compared to creative industries, which are limited to specific sectors, the term is used to describe creativity throughout a whole economy. (John Howkins, 2001; 2nd Edition, 2013, *The Creative Economy*, Chap. 1) The creative economy, in short, is that set of activities that support entrepreneurship, stimulate innovation and bring people together, starting with young people and women, while preserving and promoting cultural heritage and diversity.

CULTURAL AND CREATIVE INDUSTRY (CCI)

The cultural and creative industries refer to those parts of the modern economy where culture is produced and distributed through industrial means, applying the creativity of individuals and groups to the generation of original cultural product, which may have commercial value either through direct sale to consumers or as intellectual property. The cultural and creative industries typically bring together the arts, media, and design sectors, with a focus upon convergent digital technologies and the challenges and opportunities of globalization. Sectors of organised activity whose principal purpose is the production or reproduction, promotion, distribution and/or commercialisation of goods, services and activities of a cultural, artistic or heritage-related nature. (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2009 UNESCO Framework for Cultural Statistics)

CULTURAL HERITAGE

Cultural heritage includes artefacts, monuments, a group of buildings and sites, museums that have a diversity of values including symbolic, historic, artistic, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological, scientific and social significance. It includes tangible heritage (movable, immobile and underwater), intangible cultural heritage (ICH) embedded into cultural, and natural heritage artefacts, sites or monuments. The definition excludes ICH related to other cultural domains such as festivals, celebration etc. It covers industrial heritage and cave paintings. (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2009 UNESCO Framework for Cultural Statistics)

CULTURAL SPACES

They are physical places dedicated to culture, such as theatres, libraries, art galleries, cultural parks, and other venues that promote artistic expression, cultural enjoyment, and social cohesion.

DIGITISATION (CULTURE DRIVEN)

It refers to the world of digital technologies, digital transformation, and the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) to enhance processes, services, and experiences. Digitisation is profoundly changing our cultural experience, not only in terms of new technology-based access, production and dissemination, but also in terms of participation and creation, and learning and partaking in a knowledge society.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Entrepreneurship is an individual's creative capacity, independently or within an organisation, to identify an opportunity and to pursue it in order to produce new value or economic success. It is the capacity to act upon opportunities and ideas and transform them into financial, cultural or social value for others. (EntreComp: The Entrepreneurship Competence Framework, Bacigalupo, Kampylis, Punie, Van Den Brande, 2016-06-06, Publications Office of the European Union.)

SOCIAL INNOVATION

New ideas (products, services, and models) that simultaneously meet social needs more effectively than alternatives and create new social relationships or collaborations. Innovations that are beneficial both for society and for enhancing society's capacity to act.

INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION

It refers to the involvement, interaction, or expansion of a project, activity, or organization beyond national borders, with a focus on the internationalization of relations, strategies, or policies

MUSEUM

A museum is a not-for-profit, permanent institution in the service of society that research, collects, conserves, interprets and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage. Open to the public, accessible and inclusive, museums foster diversity and sustainability. They operate and communicate ethically, professionally and with the participation of communities, offering varied experiences for education, enjoyment, reflection and knowledge sharing. (New museum definition approved by the ICOM Extraordinary General Assembly during the 26th ICOM General Conference held in Prague in August 2023).

SKILL

The ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve useful problems, typically in the workplace.

SOCIAL INCLUSION

Social inclusion is a process that ensures citizens have the opportunities and resources necessary to participate fully in economic, social and cultural life and to enjoy a standard of living and well-being that is considered normal in the society in which they live. It encompasses, but is not restricted to, social integration or better access to the labour market, and also includes equal access to facilities, services and benefits. It is a concept that is now central to the European policy agenda. (eurofond.europa.eu)

SUSTAINABILITY

Ability to meet the needs of the present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, ensuring a balance between economic, environmental, and social aspects.

YOUTH

Youth is a transitional period from childhood to adulthood. As a category, youth is more fluid compared to other fixed age groups. The term youth refers to the young population, according to the European Commission typically aged between 15 and 29 years old, and the issues, challenges, and opportunities concerning them, such as education, employment, well-being, and social participation.

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