

CREACT MED

CREATIVE MEDITERRANEAN

EU-SOUTHERN MEDITERRANEAN DIALOGUE

CREATIVE HUBS MEET-UP REPORT

Barcelona, 29 November 2022



Funded by the
European Union
(90%, 2020-2024)

Co-Funded by the European Union
بتمويل مشترك من الاتحاد الأوروبي



Coordinated by the
Euro-Mediterranean
Economics Association

ABOUT CREAT4MED

CREACT4MED is a project funded by the European Union (EU) through the EuropeAid Programme, which aims to strengthen businesses and entrepreneurship in the cultural and creative industries (CCIs) in the Southern Neighbourhood of the EU, with a particular focus on young people and women. CREAT4MED is led by the Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association (EMEA), and project partners and associates include: the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMED), the Union of Mediterranean Confederations of Enterprises (BUSINESSMED), the Institute of Entrepreneurship Development (IED), RedStart Tunisia, the Med Confederation, Beyond Group, LUMSA University, the Association of Organisations of Mediterranean Businesswomen (AFAEMME), Positive Agenda Advisory, Womenpreneur Initiative, Neapolis University Pafos, FEPS Business Incubator, and MedWaves.

ABOUT THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE - "UNLEASHING THE FULL POTENTIAL OF THE CULTURAL AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN"

Cultural and creative industries (CCI) are increasingly being recognised as an important source of economic independence, job creation, social cohesion, and wellbeing. The Mediterranean's rich cultural background and dynamic young population means there is great potential for the CCI to be real drivers of growth and prosperity, but industries and infrastructures are fragmented and poorly supported.

CREACT4MED seeks to strengthen CCI ecosystems in the region and unleash the full potential of the CCI to create empowered and flourishing societies. The CREAT4MED Annual Conference 2022 aims to build on the progress achieved so far, strengthen links between identified stakeholders, and fortify the foundations of a solid CCI Med Hub to create a productive and sustainable enabling environment for budding cultural and creative industries.

The conference showcased the project's achievements to date, set forth goals for the coming year, and provide a space to discuss innovative ideas for programmes, policies, and financial models to support CCI entrepreneurs and businesses in the Southern Mediterranean.

The conference is organised by the Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association (EMEA) and the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed) in collaboration with CreativeForum.si, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia, and MedWaves.

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ABOUT THE EU-SOUTHERN MEDITERRANEAN DIALOGUES

Held in the framework of the Mediterranean CCI Hub, the EU-Southern Mediterranean Dialogues are debates held in person and gathering CREAT4MED-supported projects and key counterparts from the Euro-Med area which aim to promote the continued promotion and evaluation of entrepreneurs and BSOs awarded with grants, to contribute to the creation of regional links and cross-border collaborations between CCI initiatives and projects, and to improve exchanges on best practices for replication at a regional level.



ABOUT THE CREATIVE HUBS MEETUP

The first dialogue was held on November 29th, 2022, and it was organized in collaboration with CreativeForum.si, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia and the European Creative Hubs Network.

The event brought together 12 business support organisations acting as creative hubs in their respective regions:



During the dialogue, participants had the chance to present their organisations and initiatives, discuss about the main challenges faced and opportunities found, and uncover possible synergies and collaborations between them.

The session was moderated by **Luka Piskoric** and **Eva Matjaž**, Poligon Creative Centre in Slovenia.

Dialogue participants:

Alejandro Papadopoulos, PAU, Spain

PAU is a coworking space, creative community, events, agency and academy in Barcelona. The space itself is a working space for creatives with space for 110 members. Community is key as it kept the space alive during covid by maintaining membership during the pandemic. They have a learning platform for and by professionals that is short and accessible meaning people can learn without having to undertake lengthy university courses.

Ayah Awwad, ASALA, Palestine

ASALA is a business incubator for CCI projects under the CREAT4MED project in Palestine. It is an entrepreneurial Palestinian women's business organisation which aims to support marginalized women and contribute social justice and equality. They have launched a membership program to have a good relationship between their 300 members. The sectors involved include food processing, handmade products, embroidery, and jewellery. Their three main programs are supporting entrepreneurial women, working to export products out of Palestine to reach the international market, and research. They have branches in Ramallah, Jerusalem, and Gaza.



Douja Gharbi, RedStart, Tunisia

RedStart is a CREAT4MED consortium partner in charge of supporting the incubators and entrepreneurs. They work in a dynamic ecosystem, not just with startups. They provide encouragement and help entities access the market and finance.

Esra Gonen, Originn, Turkey

Originn is a meeting point and working space for entrepreneurs located in Esmirna, Turkey. In the city there is a lack of collaboration meaning repetition of creative work. As a creative hub, they provide a space for collaboration focusing on innovation, impact, and sustainability. They run a Kitchen lab which is a combination of agriculture, tourism, and gastronomy, as they are strong sectors in the city. Catering is an industry that is usually outsourced, so they started production in the hub which created a space for gastronomy related startups to test their products on the community.

Israa Asaad, Nucleus Ventures, Lebanon

Nucleus Ventures is a business incubator for CCI projects under the CREAT4MED project in Lebanon. It is a leading startup hub in Lebanon running programs that build cutting edge scalable businesses attractive to investors. They support startups at different stages and focus on mentorship, offering subject matter experts and also matchmaking opportunities with startups who were there before them.

Ivan Manojlovic, Nova Iskra, Serbia

Nova Iskra is a pioneering creative hub in the Balkans, established in 2012 with the mission to create spaces and experiences for people, organizations and businesses to work, learn, innovate and create together. They have coworking spaces with three buildings in Belgrade with 300 members. The members are diverse and are not confined to the cultural sector. They work on locating problems that the community has and then apply the funds aiming to solve them. Most of the services are free. They are cofounders of the European Creative Hubs Network which is making connections between businesses at the local level and putting CCI on the agenda within the political system.

Leila Hizaoui, Minassa – INCO Tunisie, Tunisia

Minassa is a business incubator for CCI projects under the CREAT4MED project in Tunisia. They focus on growth and development in budding entrepreneurs providing training and monitoring. They also involve university students to cultivate ideas and offer personal coaching in business models, accounting, and themes such as female empowerment.

Marwa Cheikh Youssef, LaStartupStation, Morocco

LaStartUpStation is a business incubator for CCI under the CREAT4MED project in Morocco. Their product Startup Square allows them to manage their activities in a more digital way. They focus on open innovation and ensure that the start-up school is accessible. They are part of social entrepreneurship and work closely with the public sector. They have also been working in countries surrounding Morocco helping to enhance soft skills in the form of short bootcamps.

Mohamed Abbas, Nilepreneurs Initiative, Egypt

Nilepreneurs Initiative is a business incubator for CCI under the CREAT4MED project in Egypt. They have a creative design incubator and provide support in several different sectors to 45 start-ups. They offer financial and technical support and encourage networking and matchmaking. They also run an ecommerce platform. Outside of the CCI, they work in the engineering sector on prototyping, manufacturing, product design, and social media.

**Ouafa Belgacem, Culture Funding Watch, Tunisia**

CFW supports access to finance area of CCI in the local sphere. Their work extends across the MENA region, but the reality is that most financing is not local, and this is not sustainable. They work with many approaches: access to information, capacity building, investment education, and research and development. Their work focuses on identifying the needs of entrepreneurs and investors and making appropriate matches keeping in mind that beneficiaries and entrepreneurs can be from anywhere and CFW has a role in facilitating their mobility.

Tania Santos, CRU Creative hub, European Creative Hubs Network, Portugal

CRU is a creative hub that, in one place, combines a coworking space for creative activities, a design store, a coffee bar, and an area for art exhibitions and studios for digital production which is part of the European Creative Hubs Network (ECHN). The ECHN is a consortium of creative hubs. The programs were designed for managers of creative hubs providing training to allow for professionalization and formal processes. Mapping the goals and capacity of each hub was carried out to pave the way for enriched hub communities. They share final projects, tenders, calls, mobility programs for creative industries to form a 'one stop shop' for progress, cooperation, and collaboration.



Viorica Cerbusca, Artcor, Moldova

Artcor is a Creative Industries Centre in Chisinau, product of a collaborative project of the Association of Creative Industry Companies in Moldova and the Academy of Theatre, Music and Fine Arts (AMTAP). The building is attractive and provides the perfect communal space for collaboration. Under their activities, they also educate and have run analyses of creative skills and found them to be low in the city. Entrepreneurship is developed but there is not much innovation. They started to work with students and teenagers - trying to grow through schools and universities. Now, they run an Artcor school which has courses on branding, communication, and interior design building on the existing appetite for citizens to create.

Main conclusions of the dialogue:

The EU-Southern Mediterranean Dialogues gathered together 12 business support organizations that act as creative hubs in their respective regions. During the event, the participants engaged in a fruitful discussion on the major challenges and opportunities faced in the creative economy. They also explored potential synergies and collaborations among themselves.

One of the key takeaways from the dialogue was the importance of collaboration at local and regional levels. This collaboration could involve sharing resources and expertise and cooperating on projects to strengthen the creative economy in the region. Additionally, the participants emphasized the need for public-private partnerships to leverage resources and expertise to support the growth of the creative sector.

Investment in digital infrastructure was also identified as crucial to supporting the growth of the creative economy. The participants highlighted the importance of improving access to high-speed internet and digital tools and providing training to help creators develop the technical, managerial, and digital skills they need to succeed.

Moreover, the participants recognized the need to boost the technical, managerial, and digital skills of creators to help them succeed in the digital age. Providing training and support to help creators develop the skills they need to succeed in the digital economy was deemed necessary.

Lastly, the participants suggested the establishment of IP help desks to reinforce intellectual property rights in the region. They noted the importance of providing information and support to help creators understand their rights and protect their intellectual property.

In conclusion, the EU-Southern Mediterranean Dialogues highlighted the significance of collaboration, investment in digital infrastructure, and support for the skills development of creators to promote the growth of the creative economy in the Southern Mediterranean region.



Field visits activity

During the EU-Southern Mediterranean Dialogues event, participants had the opportunity to go on field visits to two creative hubs in Barcelona: [Fabra i Coats](#), a repurposed factory, and [We are PAU](#), a newly designed creative hub. The visits were intended to inspire participants with new ideas and best practices that could be applied in their respective countries.



At Fabra i Coats, the participants learned about the factory's history and how it was transformed into a space for artistic creation and cultural innovation. They saw the different types of projects being developed in the space, including music, theater, and dance performances, as well as exhibitions and workshops. Meanwhile, at PAU, the participants were shown around the creative hub and saw how it had been designed to encourage collaboration and innovation. They also learned about the different

types of projects and activities that took place in the space, such as design workshops, photography exhibitions, and cultural events.

The visits provided the participants with valuable insights into how creative spaces can be transformed and repurposed to promote cultural innovation and artistic creation. The emphasis on collaboration and innovation in the creative economy was highlighted, which could be instrumental in promoting the development and expansion of creative hubs and the creative economy in the Southern Mediterranean region. Overall, these visits aimed to inspire the participants with new ideas and best practices that they could apply in their respective countries, emphasizing the importance of creativity, collaboration, and innovation in driving economic growth and cultural development.



Networking lunch

After the field visits, all participants of the EU-Southern Mediterranean Dialogues event had a networking lunch to conclude the day. The lunch provided an opportunity for participants to share their experiences from the field visits, exchange ideas and contacts, and discuss potential collaborations.

The atmosphere was lively and engaging, with participants from different countries and backgrounds sharing their insights and perspectives on cultural innovation and the creative economy.

The networking lunch was a valuable opportunity to build connections and foster relationships, and to further promote cross-cultural exchange and cooperation in the Southern Mediterranean region.

