

Cultural and creative sectors in post-COVID-19 Europe:

Crisis effects and policy recommendations



Since **the COVID-19 pandemic** hit Europe in spring 2020, the **Culture and Creative Sectors (CSS)** have been among the **most negatively affected sectors**. The containment measures which have been put into place throughout the EU have led to a chain of effects, which have severely **impacted the economic and social situation in the CCS**. Especially the venue- and visitor-based sub-sectors such as the performing arts and heritage were most severely hit. Furthermore, the crisis has highlighted the **very vulnerable position of many non-standard workers** in the CCS, essentially artists, freelancers and temporary workers.

organisations and professionals to **the well-being of citizens, social innovation and social cohesion**.

This study highlights the fact that this is now of critical importance to capitalise on the most forward-looking new approaches and to further develop them into sustainable policies and practices. The authors of this study believe that policy-makers have an important role to play in accelerating the upscaling and consolidation of those new approaches, while at the same time ensuring the phasing-out of unsustainable structures and practices in the CCS.

Main observations

Given the **multilevel vulnerabilities** which had already characterised the sectors, pre-COVID-19, **a return to the 'old normal'** after the crisis **is not considered a viable option**. A more **systemic transition** is needed in which unsustainable **practices** (related to, e.g., vulnerable working situations, fragile remuneration structures) are replaced by more **sustainable alternatives**. The alternatives which have emerged so far during the crisis provide a strong foundation upon



The study:

analyses the effects so far of the Covid -19 crisis on the Cultural and creative sectors (CCS), as well as the policy responses that are formulated to support the sectors. Policy recommendations are formulated to further improve the resilience of the CCS in Europe in the medium and longer term.

which to further flourish.

During the crisis many CCS workers and organisations have shown their **innovative power** to experiment with **possible alternatives**.

The most **prominent opportunities** that the crisis has accelerated relate to the **great contribution of CCS**

Conclusions and policy recommendations

The study has clustered recommendations for policy action into three Flagship Initiatives for a long-lasting and sustainable recovery of the CCS:

1. **ensure a fair work system for the CCS in Europe** with special focus on the most fragile parts;
2. **establish a European digital framework that fits the CCS' DNA** based on the values of democratic systems; and



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3. **support CCS as an integral part of innovative and cohesive societies** with special attention given to artistic freedom, social innovation and inclusiveness and international (cultural) cooperation, as the main challenges of the 21st century are global.

In addition to the Flagship Initiatives a number of **transversal issues** which directly influence the CCS' abilities to act as an integral contributor to the sustainable development in Europe, need to be addressed. These are: **ecological sustainability, access to research and development and innovation systems, skills development, improved sector representation, enhanced role of non-public founders** and a **re-establishment of the EU freedom of movement and common market**.

Key area for EU action:

3 Flagship initiatives:

- Ensure a fair work system for the CCS in Europe
- Establish a European digital framework that fits the CCS' DNA
- Support CCS as an integral part of innovative and cohesive societies

6 Transversal issues:

- ecological sustainability
- access to R&D and innovation systems
- skills development-
- improved sector representation
- enhanced role of non-public founders
- re-establishment of the EU freedom of movement and common market

Figure: CCS sub-sector assessment of post-Great Lockdown effects



Source: Figure developed by the study authors.

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