

# CREACT4MED

Cultural and Creative Industries in the Mediterranean

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**24TH – 25TH NOVEMBER 2021**



**CREACT**  **MED**

CREATIVE MEDITERRANEAN

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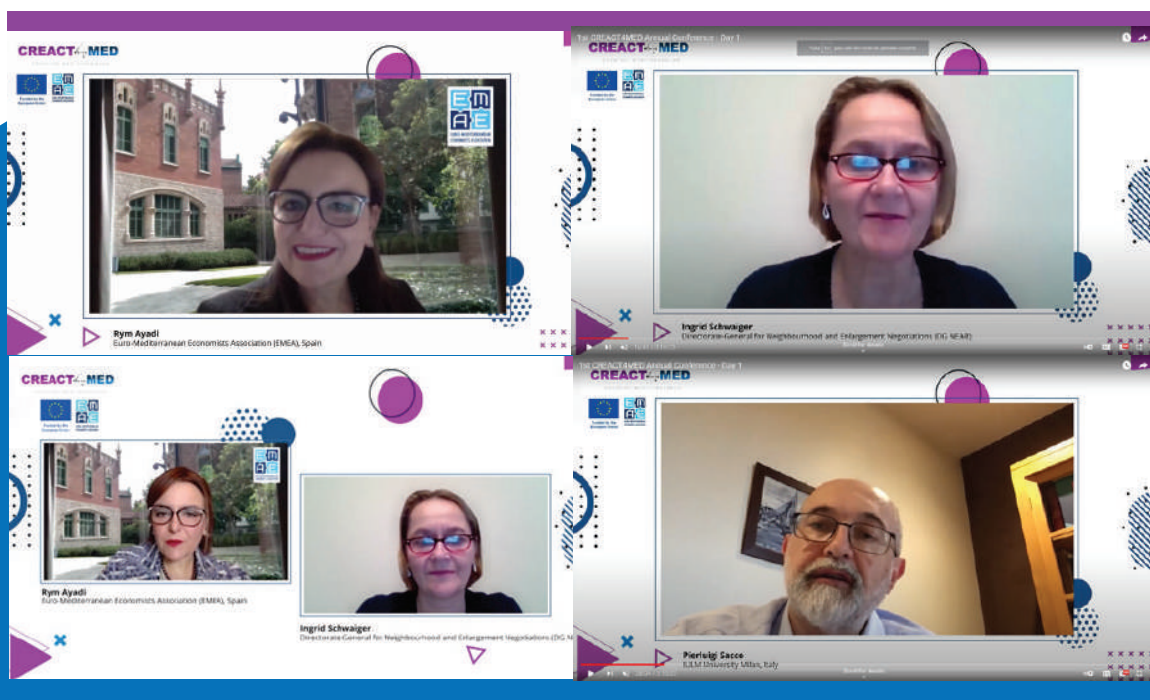
## DAY 1

The first CREAT4MED Annual Conference was opened by Professor Rym Ayadi, founder and president of the [Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association](#), lead partner of the CREAT4MED consortium. She presented the project and its aims, highlighted the importance of cultural and creative industries (CCI), and noted the devastating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. She stressed the importance of raising awareness, promoting cooperation, tackling fragmentation and censorship, and improving access to finance in order to boost the CCI and their contribution to economies and societies.

[Watch the CREAT4MED video here.](#)

Ms. Ingrid Schwaiger, Deputy Head of Unit of the Directorate General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations with the [European Union](#) highlighted the continued support of the EU for CCI entrepreneurship and its role in creating sustainable and inclusive jobs in the South Mediterranean region. She showcased different EU CCI projects in the region, stressing the importance of regional projects as a stimulator of country development.

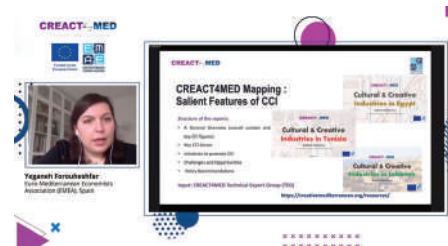
The keynote speech was given by Professor Pierluigi Sacco of the [IULM University of Milan](#). He emphasised the importance of CCI not only for job creation and positive economic impact, but also for their social contribution. In the new European Agenda for Cultural Development there is a strong emphasis on cultural crossovers, and the CCI are an excellent example as they span issues including health and wellbeing, social cohesion, innovation and new models of education. Moreover, it is now evident that culture is an important lever for societal and behavioural change, which will be increasingly necessary to tackle environmental issues and climate change. He noted the importance of narratives for social capacity building, and the link between participation in cultural activities and increased life expectancy and capacity to adapt to societal changes. Cultural progress, therefore, should not be regarded only as a source of economic development, but also a response to societal challenges, that tackles issues such as environmental changes, migration and social exclusion.





## SESSION 1: CCI MAPPING FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN: SALIENT FEATURES

In the first session of the conference, Dr. Yeganeh Forouheshfar, researcher at [EMEA](#), presented the first results of the [CCI mapping exercise](#) in Egypt, Tunisia, Lebanon, Morocco and Jordan. Each mapping report includes a general overview of the CCI ecosystem, including key actors, national and international initiatives to promote CCI, challenges and opportunities, and policy recommendations.

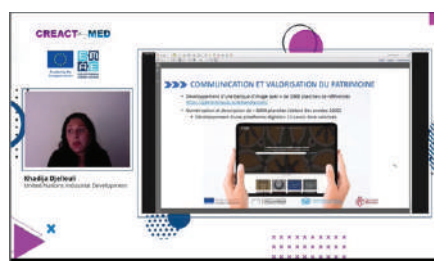
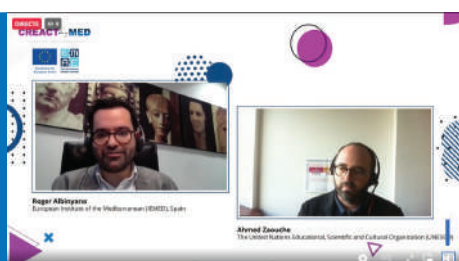


[Read the CREAT4MED CCI mapping reports.](#)

## SESSION 2: INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS' CCI SUPPORT

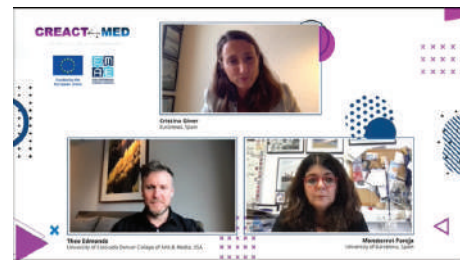
Mr. Roger Albinyana, director of the Mediterranean Regional Policies and Human Development department at the [European Institute of the Mediterranean \(IEMED\)](#), opened the second session of the conference by highlighting the importance and economic relevance of the CCI both in the Mediterranean region and at the global level. He noted that culture plays a key role in human development due to its transformational capacity. The panel included:

- **Ahmed Zaouche** from [UNESCO](#), who noted that the COVID-19 has exacerbated the preexisting vulnerability of artists and CCI professionals. The UNESCO 2005 convention on the promotion and protection of cultural diversity reaffirms the right to adopt policies that support the emergence of dynamic and strong CCI. A monitoring framework has been adopted for the convention to follow up progress and to provide technical assistance; a report will be published in 2022.
- **Nahla Zeitoun** from the [World Bank](#), who focused on the importance of inclusion, particularly of women and young people, in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the two goals of the Bank, namely ending extreme poverty and boosting shared prosperity. She spoke of the ongoing work to increase women's participation in the labour force, particularly in the private sector, and the many issues surrounding this. She noted that creative sectors were particularly resilient to COVID-19 lockdowns as many of these sectors are homebased, and have great potential in boosting the inclusion of women in the workforce. She noted the need to more clearly define CCI, raise awareness of its importance, and to include NGOs and existing initiatives in ongoing work.
- **Khadija Djellouli** from [UNIDO](#), who presented the project [Creative Tunisia](#), which aims to offer holistic support to the craftsmanship sector in Tunisia and reinforce value chains to create a multi-service hub in the country.
- **Mohammed Elrazzaz**, from the [Union for the Mediterranean](#), who spoke about the different levels needed in any attempt to promote creative and cultural entrepreneurship, including policy, education, and access to finance and markets, and the work of the UfM on regional platforms and forums for CCI in the Mediterranean.



## SESSION 3: ROUNDTABLE – ECOSYSTEM ENABLEMENT & BARRIERS FOR CULTURAL & CREATIVE BUSINESSES

Ms. Cristina Giner, [Euronews](#) correspondent and producer, moderated the third session of the conference, noting that in recent years, the CCI are facing dramatic changes due to digitalization, globalization, and the effects of the pandemic, which presented an additional acute challenge for the industries. Understanding this context is key to understanding the factors that enable culture and entrepreneurship, as well as understanding the obstacles to it. The panel included:



- **Theo Edmonds**, Associate Dean for Transdisciplinary Research & Innovation at the College of Arts and Media, [University of Colorado Denver](#), who noted that with the increasing ubiquity of technology, the differentiating factor will be how people use that technology, which is fundamentally a cultural question. He noted the current discrepancy between the levels of female entrepreneurship and the direction of financial flows, and that empowering different types of entrepreneurs means putting money into different ideas of where value is created in the market. He mentioned that innovation cannot happen without culture change, and that culture change is impossible without innovation.
- **Monsterrat Pareja-Eastaway**, Director of Cultural Management Master at the [Universitat de Barcelona](#), who discussed how CCI ecosystems differ from other ecosystems. She mentioned the vocational nature of many CCI, and the blurring of boundaries between the personal and professional in these sectors. She spoke about the importance of technology as an essential tool but not sufficient by itself to produce cultural projects. She underlined the need to identify the spots in the ecosystem that act as connectors between creativity and innovation, as well as the importance of adequate regulation and access to finance.

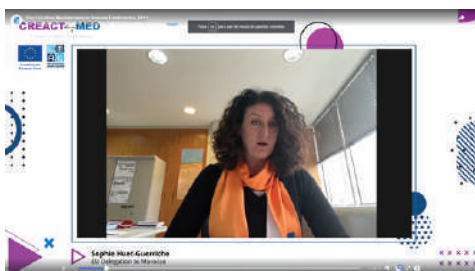


To close the first day of the conference, Dr. Yeganeh Frouheshfar, researcher at [EMEA](#), presented the CREAT4MED initiative to support CCI workers in Lebanon. The difficult economic and political situation in Lebanon is causing brain drain, lack of opportunities, reduction in market size, local currency devaluation and degradation in infrastructure, all of which are severely impacting the CCI. For this reason, CREAT4MED is launching an initiative to support small local CCI businesses and assist them in exporting their products and services. This will be achieved by providing a platform for entrepreneurs and small businesses to promote their products and services, a virtual concert, partnering with shipment companies, and providing payment solutions for small businesses in USD or Non Fungible Tokens.



## DAY 2

To open Day 2 of the conference, **Professor Rym Ayadi** introduced **Sophie Huet-Guerriche**, cooperation officer in charge of youth, employment and culture sectors at the **EU Delegation to Morocco**. Ms Huet-Guerriche noted the importance of the CCI as a sector that fully contributes to economy and employment, particularly for young people, and as a sector with high potential for development and innovation. She spoke of the role of the EU in supporting national policies to enhance the constitutional or regulatory environment, specific projects such as CREAT4MED and All About Culture, and transversal sector-related programmes that focus on entrepreneurship, the private sector, young people or employment, all of which have a connection to CCI. The EU provides expertise, funding and opportunities to bring together partners and stakeholders of all types, as well as artists and creatives from across the region at events such as music or film festivals. She stressed the importance of political engagement and leadership, and that the EU is fully engaged with all stakeholders including institutions, NGOs and private artists.



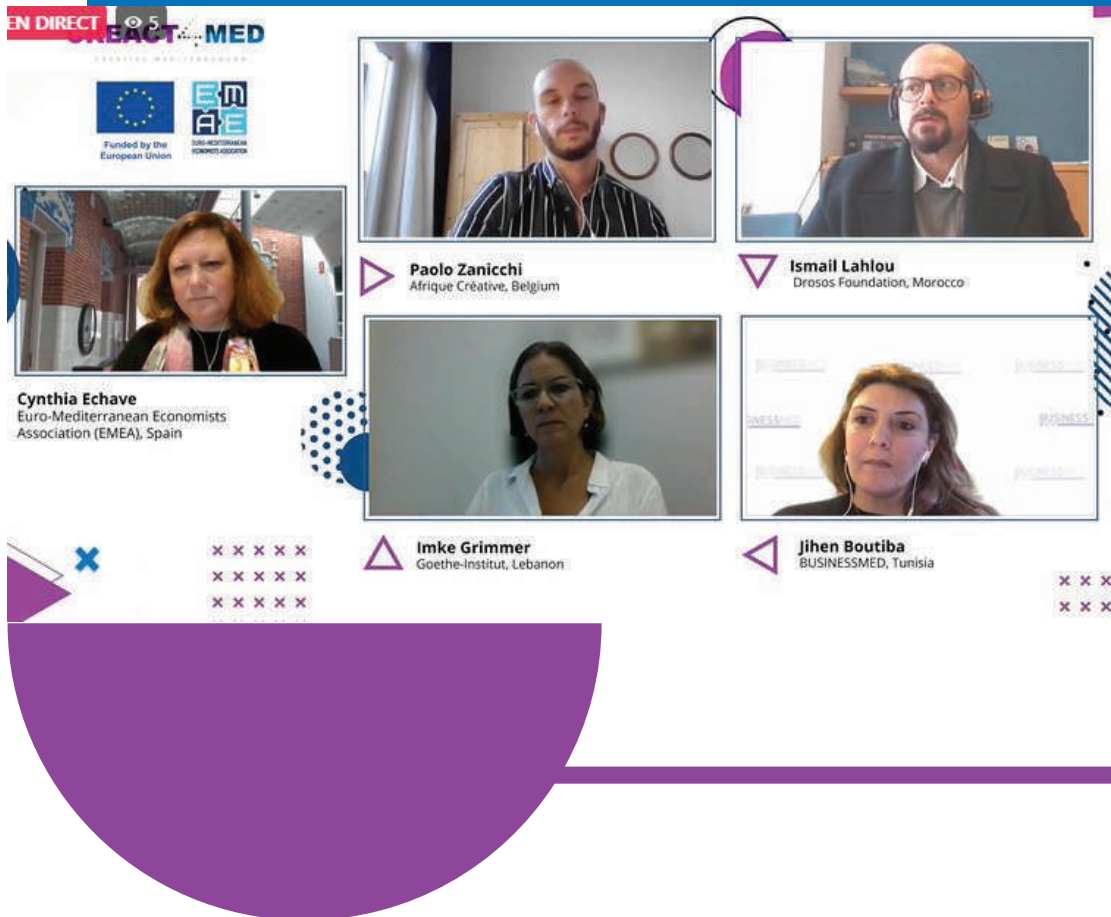
## SESSION 4 : REGIONAL CCI INITIATIVES

In session 4, **Dr. Cynthia Echave**, project coordinator at **EMEA**, led a discussion on regional CCI initiatives and the importance of different actors and programmes in the region finding each other, learning from each other, and supporting each other. They also mentioned the importance of including informal workers and groups in support programmes, and the need for different, cross-cutting types of indicators for tracking success, due to the difficulty in measuring the economic and social impact of cultural and creative initiatives. The panel included:

- **Paolo Zanicchi** from **Afrique Creative**, an incubation and acceleration programme for scaling up African cultural and creative businesses, funded by the Agence Française de Développement and implemented by Africalia, a Belgian NGO. The programme has started its second phase this year, and aims to support the ability of CCI to create jobs, generate growth and bring change.
- **Ismail Lahlou** from the **Drosos foundation**, which aims to provide funding, support and advice to enable people to live a life of dignity, through economic autonomy and youth creativity. He presented a programme dedicated to CCI called OPEN UP.
- **Imke Grimmer** from the **Goethe Institut**, which seeks to promote cultural and linguistic diversity, believing that culture is the fundament of any given society and the driver of societal change. The Institut offers access to training and qualifications, finance, spaces and networks, and fosters visibility. She spoke about a project that aims to improve the employment for creative professionals, particularly in the design sector, which is cross-cutting across many other sectors. The project focuses on food design in Jordan, design branding in Iraq, design and social entrepreneurship in Lebanon, and provides a regional e-learning and knowledge platform for CCI actors.
- **Jihen Boutiba** from **BUSINESSMED**, who presented the project **SOLiD**, which works with NGOs, trade unions, employers' organisations, local authorities and municipalities on developing South Mediterranean social dialogue to improve employment, particularly with regards to young people and social entrepreneurship, and the project **EBSoMED: Enhancing Business Support Organisations in the Mediterranean**, which aims to increase the role of the private sector as a major generator of employment in the South Mediterranean.







## SESSION 5: ROUNDTABLE – CCI ENABLEMENT AND ACTIONS

Session 5, moderated by Hana Lakhdar Ghazal from [Positive Agenda Advisory](#), discussed CCI enablement and actions including legal, policymaking and funding environments. The panel included:

- Soufiane Zanifi, from the [Federation for Cultural and Creative Industries in Morocco](#), which aims to structure and professionalise the CCI sector, promoting it as economic sector that generates value and employment, that can benefit from a full strategy. Difficulties include a lack of data, and the issue of identifying creative workers and artists, the majority of which are informal.
- Saloua Abdelkhalek from the [Tunis International Center for Digital Cultural Economy](#), which aims to promote culture as an economic vector, improve competitiveness and generation of added value and jobs, and support initiatives to promote cultural content and heritage through digital technology and innovation.
- Natalia Menhall, from [Beyond Group](#) in Lebanon, who mentioned that CCI is recognized in Lebanon as a sector that contributes to GDP, to employment, and to promoting the country across the world, particularly in design sub-sectors. Challenges facing CCI in the country include access to markets and finance, regulatory and legal barriers such as censorship, limited coordination between actors, and the ongoing crises in Lebanon specifically.

## SESSION 6: INCUBATION AND ACCELERATION OF CCI

To close the conference, **Tasos Vasileiadis** from CREAT4MED partner **iED** announced the winners of the **CREACT4MED sub-grants**. The sub-grants will be awarded to Business Support Organisations help them develop and launch incubation services for cultural and creative entrepreneurs and start-ups in the project's target countries.. The selected BSOs to be awarded funding are:

- **Nilepreneurs** in Egypt, an initiative funded by the Central Bank of Egypt with the aim of supporting start ups and SMEs in the domains of manufacturing, agriculture and digital transformation. They have 5 incubators, one of which focuses on the creative industries.
- **Minassa** in Tunisia, an incubator for the cultural and creative scene, supported by INCO, which aims to structure the cultural and creative entrepreneurial ecosystem, strengthen the skills of cultural and creative entrepreneurs, and promote the cultural and creative economy. Their 6-month programme for CCI entrepreneurs includes training in design thinking, business models, financial plans, pitch decks and communication strategies, with a new module on exportation being added with the funding from CREAT4MED.
- **Nucleus Ventures** in Lebanon, supported by Tech Hub SAL, which builds innovation ecosystems. Their programme aims to help the large number of freelance creatives in Lebanon to build viable businesses and products based on customer feedback sessions and peer-to-peer learning, in order to create more sustainable and higher quality job opportunities.
- **LaStartupFactory** in Morocco, which aims to support the innovation ecosystem in Africa through incubation and acceleration, open innovation, training and funding. They will run a 6-month support and coaching programme for startups in the creative field.



In closing the conference, Professor Rym Ayadi further underlined the need to join forces, collaborate, and learn from each other in order to strengthen the CCI in the Mediterranean and achieve a prosperous and creative future for all.

The CREAT4MED Annual Conference 2021 was broadcasted live on Facebook with great success, achieving over 9,500 video views and an event reach of 31,500 people.



## CREATIVE MEDITERRANEAN

The Creative Economy has become a strategic asset for innovative job creation around the world. Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI) represent nearly 30 million jobs worldwide and are major drivers of the economies of both developed and developing countries, as well as developing countries (UNESCO). CCI contributed as much as 7% to the global GDP and was estimated to be around 10% of the GDP in the MENA Region (World Bank 2017). It is a growing and promising industry that has become strategic, not only because of its impact on employment creation, but also due to its influence on the creativity and social cohesion of societies.

CREACT4MED is an EU-funded project which aims to strengthen CCI businesses and job creation, giving support to entrepreneurs, start-ups and SMEs, with a particular focus on young people and women, in the Southern Neighbourhood of the European Union.

**Budget:** €2,220, 675, 90% funded by the EU Commission

**Timeline of implementation:** March 2020 - February 2024

## OUR PARTNERS AND ASSOCIATES



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**EMEA** is an independent regional research institution and forum of debate that provides innovative, forward-looking thinking and political, socio-economic and financial integrated analyses on the Euro-Mediterranean region and Africa.

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