



## Impacts of COVID-19 on the cultural and creative industry (CCI) in the Mediterranean: What role for digitalisation?

EMEA WEBINAR

Thursday 19 November 2020, 15:00- 16:30 CET

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted labour markets worldwide. According to ILO forecast as of the second quarter of 2020, 495 million full-time jobs globally are lost. Lower and Middle-Income countries suffer the most with an estimated 23.3% drop in working hours – equivalent to 240 million jobs during the same period. Along with the tourism sector, the cultural and creative industry (CCI) are the most affected sectors during the pandemic. According to the OECD, the jobs at risk range between 0.8% and 5.5% of employment. Museums, performing arts, live music, festivals and cinema are hardly hit by the containment measures adopted to halt the viral contagion. The declining demand for the cultural and creative services led to an abrupt drop in revenues, putting at risk existing jobs and disrupting the value chains of the suppliers. In the Mediterranean countries, the health crisis further exposed the structural vulnerabilities of micro firms, creative auto-entrepreneurs, other non-for-profit organizations and artisans active in handicrafts and other cultural products. The demand for these products driven by the touristic sector evaporated due to the consequences equally suffered by this sector. Despite the policy measures adopted by governments across the globe in particular the social measures to support workers, SMEs and the vulnerable population, as shown in [EMEA COVID-19 Policy Response Monitor](#) there is no evidence that these measures targeted the cultural and creative sector. At the same time, the sector was subject to a rapid innovation powered by accelerated digitalization and emerging technologies. Companies that adapted and was already prepared to transform could offer new creative cultural experiences, business models and new markets. The virtual space become suddenly the new meeting point of many producers and creators and the online demand for creative contents emerged. To capitalize on the accelerated digital transition, addressing digital skills shortages in the sector and improve the digital infrastructure in the urban and rural areas could be used as a buffer to limit the losses of activities, revenues and jobs.

The cultural and creative sector is a driver for economic value, innovation, job creation and social impact. The COVID-19 and its policy mitigation responses are threatening the acquis of this sector. Long-term policy responses to support the sector are certainly needed to drive a sustainable and inclusive transformation.

In November 2020, EMEA is launching **a new research initiative** together with its network [EMNES](#) to explore the channels of value and job creation in the CCI in the Mediterranean and Africa post COVID-19 and to propose recommendations to enhance the capacity for the sector to become an engine of innovation powered by digitalization and to transform towards more sustainability and inclusion. A new project [CREACT4MED](#) co-funded by the European Union and led by EMEA aims at uncovering the untapped potential of CCI to enhance economic growth, create decent jobs and promote social inclusion in the Mediterranean by exploring the strengths and weaknesses of the sector, providing training, and sub-granting for projects led by women and youth.

This webinar aims to explore the impacts of COVID-19 on the CCI in the Mediterranean and discuss the role of digitalisation as a vector of resilience during and post health crisis.



## DRAFT AGENDA

**Moderator:** Prof. Rym Ayadi, President, Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association (EMEA) and Professor at the Business School (Former CASS), City, University of London

**Panellist(s):**

**Nizar Hariri**, Associate Professor and Researcher, Faculty of Economics, OURSE, Saint Joseph University, Lebanon

**Michele Rizzi**, Programme Manager in charge of Culture and Cultural Heritage, EU Delegation, Egypt

**Sana Ouchtati**, Coordinator, Cultural Relations Platform, Founder of So Cult, Belgium

**Jihen Boutiba**, Secretary General, BUSINESSMED, Tunisia

**Mauricio O'Brien**, Country Manager for Spain, European Crowdfunding Network (ECN)

**Discussant:**

**Mohammed Elrazzaz**, Project Analyst, Business Development and Employment Division, Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)

The webinar is organised by the Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association (EMEA) and will take place on Thursday 19 November at 15:00 CET on Zoom.

[Register here to join the webinar](#)

**SAVE THE DATE: Next webinar taking place on 03 December at 15:00 CET on the External Dimension of the EU Green Deal.**