



IO1.4. Consolidated Report

Georgia Alexandrou, KMOP, Greece

Theodora Morou, KMOP, Greece



This project has been funded with support from the European Commission under the Erasmus+ Programme. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.
[Project Number: 2020-1-UK01-KA227-YOU-094512]



Erasmus+

Table of Contents

Summary	4
Introduction	5
Young artists in the partner countries	5
Employment	5
Navigating the post-pandemic environment	6
Skills for artists as entrepreneurs	7
Modes of delivery	7
Similar projects or initiatives	8
Conclusions and suggestions	9
Methodology	10
Focus Groups' Methodology	10
Cyprus	10
Ireland	10
Greece	10
Italy	11
UK	11
Questionnaires' methodology	11
<i>Participants</i>	11
<i>Social and demographic characteristics of the respondents</i>	11
<i>Scope and duration</i>	12
Field research findings	13
Entrepreneurial skills - Coping professionally with a pandemic	13
Digital Skills	14
Psychological capacities of young artists	15
Learning Material Design – Modes of delivery	16



Conclusions	18
Recommendations	19
Literature review on the situation in EU level	20
References	24



Summary

The present consolidated report is developed in the context of the Erasmus+ project “Helping ARTists of Europe Survive As Freelancers and Entrepreneurs” (HeART), which aims to enhance the competences and skills of artists and individuals working in culture and creative sectors and secure their inclusion to the labour market and society in general. It is based on the content of the national reports partner countries created and it includes the findings of their primary and secondary research on the subject. More precisely, the introduction includes the findings of their desk research and covers inter alia the following topics: young artists, employment, navigation the post-pandemic environment, skills for artists as entrepreneurs. The first main section contains the methodology of the primary research and the second one its results. The main aim of the focus groups and the questionnaires was to identify artists’ capacity to cope with the coronavirus aftermath, if they are facing any difficulties promoting their work and attracting a clientele and if they use any online platforms to do so and how. In addition, it was investigated whether young artists believe that they receive appreciation, acknowledgement and reward that responds to their efforts and creative products. Finally, the report concludes with certain recommendations that are expected to improve the situation.

Introduction

Young artists in the partner countries

The situation of young artists in the partner countries presents many similarities. Desk research conducted in the partner countries pointed out that young artists face great difficulties in being employed. As a result, they tend to get usually employed in an older age than the national average. For example, as data in **Greece** show artists begin usually their career after 30 (Mpaltzis & Tsiggilis, 2018). In general, the proportion of cultural workers in the partner countries in relation to their entire economy is rather low. In **Ireland**, people working in the cultural sector represent only about 3% of the total Irish employment (Crowley, 2017) and in **Italy** 2.1% of the its entire economy.

Employment

The late start of their career is not the only concern artists face. Another one, equally important is that the earnings that artists and especially young ones usually have are very poor. Data from the partner countries reveal the situation. In **UK**, it was found out that artists earn less in comparison to other similarly qualified careers. In **Ireland**, even prior to the onset of the pandemic, 72% of artists earned less than the national minimum wage, i.e. €9.80 per hour (Oireachtas, 2020). In **Cyprus** also, artists are struggling to survive financially and sustain a stable source of income due to the lack of professional opportunities in Cyprus and support of the Cyprus's government. Thus, artists make sure to build and maintain professional links abroad and continue to participate either in artistic events or seek to find abroad further training programmes, conferences and international exhibitions, since the prospects for career development and opportunities to exhibit their work in their country are limited (Zanti, 2015).

As a result of the poor earnings artists have, in many cases their job in the artistic sector is not their primary source of income. In **Greece** for example, only a quarter of the respondents (24%) have their artwork as their primary source of income (Mpaltzis & Tsiggilis, 2018). Similarly, in **UK**, a large proportion of artists (68%) takes second jobs to supplement their income.

Insecurity and lack of support from the part of the states has also been reported in the majority of partner countries. Specifically, in **Greece** visual artists usually work uninsured, with insufficient public support. The same applies in **Cyprus**. Whereas, in **Ireland** there is support from the part of the state,

through the *Artists Exemption Scheme* which supports composers, sculptors, visual artists and writers by offering them an exemption from paying income tax.

Navigating the post-pandemic environment

Present-day research points out that “Art and Leisure” sectors suffered the most by the measures taken to tackle the pandemic (Barrot, Grassi , & Sauvagnat, 2021). Specifically, in **Ireland** the artistic industry was one of the first industries impacted upon the pandemic and it will be one of the last industries to recover (Falvey, 2020). In **Cyprus**, many artists reported that their income decreased as high as 80% (Cyprus Mail, 2020).

It was found out that sectors related to physical events and venues (defined as venue-based, such as museums, performing arts, live music, festivals, film, etc.) were affected the most by social distancing measures in **Italy**. This is of course an observation that applies broadly to almost every country and had as a consequence the development of online market places. More precisely, in **Ireland** the pandemic resulted in a significant rise in online social media entrepreneurship since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. A lot of people then began selling online through social media channels and dedicated global online market places including, *Etsy*. In **Greece** also, digital technology became the centre of human communication and art could not be the exception. Digital media took a position next to traditional media within communication networks. They proved that they could influence the public similarly, playing a pivotal role in the public sphere. Because of COVID, a shift to selling online was also observed in the **UK**. 80% of the artists were selling their work this way with the vast majority doing that through their own web sites. Websites, such as *Saatchi Art* and *Etsy* were only used by less than 18% of artists to make sales. *WordPress*, *Squarespace* and *Wix* were the most frequently used platforms for developing web sites. Social media, word of mouth and the web sites were the main ways of gaining clients.

Fortunately, to counterweight the damage suffered in the artistic sector, states offered support to the artists. The *July Stimulus package* is currently supporting the industry in **Ireland** with thanks to a €3.8 million stimulus fund (Creative Ireland Programme, 2020). In **Cyprus**, during the peak of the pandemic period, a special government scheme for artists and professionals of the creative industry and cultural activity, not covered by the general scheme was announced by the government. Following the already announced measures to support the cultural sector, it approved the allocation of an additional amount

of €240,000 to subsidise the activities of cultural institutions during the 2021. In **Greece**, there was also a special purpose compensation given by the Greek state to professionals in the arts and culture sector. Although, many artists could not receive it, as they might not be officially recognised as art workers (as mentioned before, many artists in Greece work without insurance).

Skills for artists as entrepreneurs

Artists are not much different from standard entrepreneurs. They both have a product or idea to sell, and they need to get out into the marketplace. To do this, artists need -at least- basic business skills and a willingness to learn and practice selling arts as any entrepreneur would.

More precisely, the Craft Council of **Ireland** found out that young people need training in: how to apply for funding opportunities to promote their continuous professional development, finance and marketing skills and awareness of the incubation facilities. A joint committee (Oireachtas-Joint Committee on Jobs, Enterprise, and Innovation, 2015) recommended the introduction of entrepreneurship on the Irish school curricula at primary and secondary level to support young artists to acquire the skills needed. The need for the development of entrepreneurship skills amongst artists is urgent also in **Cyprus**, as the majority of undergraduate programmes are focused on artistic skills and in most cases, they do not include entrepreneurship skills on how to promote or sustain their artwork. In **Italy** also, there is a need in the sense of multidisciplinary training offerings so as to integrate the historical-artistic background with hybrid tools and methodologies to meet the needs of sustainability, effectiveness and internationalisation. In contrary in **UK**, subjects in entrepreneurship skills are already included in the university programme.

Modes of delivery

Many countries are currently in the process of trying to raise awareness regarding the need for artists to obtain entrepreneurship skills in order to enter the labour market.

Data from the partner countries reveal that effective entrepreneurial learning activities for artists learners shall have the form of: mentoring enabling specific changes in the art business, short workshops tailored to artists providing introduction to skills, online discussion groups/support networks, creative hubs and co-working spaces to support young artists to develop the required skills

needed to succeed as entrepreneurs (Oireachtas-Joint Committee on Jobs, Enterprise, and Innovation, 2015).

Regarding their content, the entrepreneurial learning activities shall be: context-specific, place the centre of learning with the student, enable student agency and encourage explorative behaviour, be of career relevance, and reframe entrepreneurship. An example of an initiative where such activities were developed is the Erasmus+ project, *ArtENprise* which was implemented amongst other countries also in **Greece**, and aimed at cultivating entrepreneurial skills amongst artists and cultural operators (Artenprise, 2017).

Similar projects or initiatives

More and more projects and initiatives are taking place recently on the subject.

In **Greece**, examples of such projects are:

- **CRAFT Lab.** Interreg Greece-Italy 2018. In this project where 30 young artists, six teachers and three technical operators participated, ancient techniques and crafts were updated and renewed thanks to new technologies and the languages of art, promoting youth entrepreneurship and job opportunities in these sectors.
- **SNF-SART Cultural Entrepreneurship Pilot Programme.** Stavros Niarchos Foundation and the Siena Art Institute launched this project that sees the direct involvement of former students of SART as cultural entrepreneurs (Siena Art Institute, 2021).
- **ArtENprise.** In the context of this project, research was conducted on best practices in Europe offering training courses, formal and non-formal mentoring programmes, and online learning opportunities to the cultural and creative sectors.

In **Ireland**:

- **ESB Brighter Future Arts Fund.** Through the project, artists can apply for funding to engage the Irish public through creative art forms, on transitioning to a cleaner and greener energy supply.
- **#GetIrelandMaking.** Through this online initiative, a series of online and TV workshops to encourage all households across Ireland to use common household materials to create pieces of art was created.

- **Young Ensembles Scheme.** Funded by the Arts Council of Ireland, it provides funding for groups to create an original piece of artform.

In Cyprus:

- **Youth-Art.** It aims at improving the quality of public services related to youth entrepreneurship in the cultural sector.
- **Pinolo-Professional Training of Unemployed Artists.** It aims at fostering employability, socio-educational and personal development of unemployed artists.
- **Entrance.** The project aims at developing an entrepreneurship training programme by enhancing the entrepreneurial mindset and competences of non-business academics and students, from the areas of Humanities, Arts, Education, etc.
- **IDEA and Bank of Cyprus Synergy.** IDEA Innovation Centre an Incubator – Accelerator and comprehensive innovation centre for entrepreneurs, startups and SMEs in Cyprus in collaboration with the Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation support cultural startups and initiatives on cultural entrepreneurship.
- **InterArt Database.** This platform features Cypriot artists, curators and art historians under the age of 40 who live and work abroad.

Finally, in **Italy** the portal [“Giovani Artisti in Italia”](#) (*young artists in Italy*)-GAI. It belongs to the GAI organisation that aims at documenting activities, offering services, organising training and promotional opportunities in favor of young people under 35 working in the field of creativity, arts and entertainment.

Conclusions and suggestions

Desk research in partner countries showed that young artists face a lot of uncertainty. They cannot find jobs easily and even when they find one they are not paid satisfactorily. As a result, they often have to work other jobs to earn enough for a living. Pandemic had an even more aggravating impact on the situation. The use of digital media became then necessary and many artists used them in order to promote their work. Entrepreneurial skills for artists are thus more and more important.

Methodology

Focus Groups' Methodology

Qualitative research was conducted for the purposes of the [HeART](#) initiative; five focus group discussions were organised and implemented in the partner countries (one focus group in each country) during the period 21-29/7/2021. In total **29 individuals** participated in the online (in **Cyprus, Ireland, Greece**, and in **the UK**) and offline (in **Italy**) discussions whose demographic data can be found in detail below. The recruitment of young artists and professionals from the Creative and Culture Industry (CCI) was realised through partners' personal and organizational networks. Consent forms were gathered through Google Forms (in case of online implementation) and in hand (in case of offline implementation), informing the participants about the project, the importance of the research and ensuring their anonymity. The focus groups were recorded, and the facilitators took notes to analyze the data further.

Cyprus

Five individuals (two men and three females) participated in the focus group organised by CARDET and IoD. The mean age of the group was 30.2 years and the Cypriot partners managed to reach different art professionals, promoting the diversity of points of view. Regarding their artistic preoccupation and general expertise, the discussion attracted one fiction novel and comics writer, one photographer, one visual/medical artist, lecturer and researcher, one musician and lectures and one soprano-opera musician.

Ireland

In Ireland, the focus group organised by the Rural Hub was conducted with **five individuals**, three artists and two CCI coaches. During the discussion, the local young artists and other Culture and Creative Section professionals gained the opportunity to participate in a session about specific difficulties and needs within the CCI.

Greece

Five individuals (three women and two men) participated in the focus group organised and implemented by KMOP. One fashion designer, two graphic designers, one researcher on art projects and organiser of artistic events, and one creative writer took part in the discussion in July 2021.

Italy

Seven individuals (four women and three men) participated in the focus group organised by CDPZ. The mean age was the 35.7 years and the participants had diverse backgrounds. Specifically, a) one theatre producer and amateur actress, b) one amateur theatre actor, c) one singer and DJ producer, d) one singer, teacher, musician and trainer, e) one art school student and amateur painter, f) amateur writer and g) one entrepreneur and event manager shared their views on the topic.

UK

Seven individuals (six women and one man) participated in the focus group organised by the UoG. During the discussion, two mixed media artists, two painters, two sculptors and one illustrator explored the topics at stake.

Questionnaires' methodology

Participants

- **Greece.** The questionnaires were answered by 41 people related to art, either artists or people working in the creative sector.
- **Ireland.** The questionnaires were answered by 40 people related to the cultural and creative sector.
- **Cyprus.** The questionnaires were answered by 43 people related to the cultural and creative sector.
- **Italy.** The questionnaires were answered by 49 people related to the cultural and creative industries.

Social and demographic characteristics of the respondents

- **Greece.** Nine of the respondents were between 18 and 24 years old. The majority of the respondents, i.e. 16 people were between 25 and 30 years old. Ten respondents were between 30 and 40 years old and three people were between 40 and 50 years old. Three of the respondents were above 50. Regarding their gender, 11 of the respondents were identified as females, and eight as males. The rest of the respondents did not want to identify themselves as any gender. As far as their occupation is concerned, 33 of the respondents are

artists, either practicing performing or visual arts, six of them work in the creative sector and two neither are artists, nor work in the creative industry.

- **Ireland.** 37.5% of the respondents were aged 18-24 years old, 25% of the respondents were aged 25-30 and 30-40 years old respectively, while 7.5% of the respondents were aged 40-50 years old and 5% were aged 50+. Regarding their gender, 22 (55%) of the respondents were females, while 18 (45%) were males. As far as their occupation is concerned, all participants pertained to the job roles of: musicians, actors, sculptors, dancers, visual artists, etc.
- **Cyprus.** Three of the respondents were between 18-24 years old, ten of the respondents were between 25-30 years old, 25 of the respondents were between 30-40 years old, five of the respondents were between 40-50 years old. Regarding their gender, 24 were women, 14 men, and five preferred not to say. 30 of the participants are performing or visual artists and 13 are working in the cultural sector.
- **Italy.** One in three respondents falls into the 30-40 age group, about 27% into the 40-50 age group. The younger age groups (18-24 and 25-30) represent 14% of the total. This distribution is representative of the current Italian market, in the cultural and creative industries; that is, a strong presence of mature people. Regarding their gender, there was a slight prevalence of female respondents, indicating that, especially in recent years, their presence in the creative and cultural industry has grown.

Scope and duration

- **Greece.** The questionnaires were published using the software [LimeSurvey](#) which ensures the respondents' anonymity and they were answered by the respondents during a month, from the 11th of October until the 8th of November, 2021.
- **Ireland.** The questionnaires were conducted during face-to-face sessions from the 14th to the 15th of October, 2021 in the Rural Hub office in Virginia, Ireland.
- **Cyprus.** The questionnaires were available online via the Google forms platform and it was held during October 2021.

Field research findings

Entrepreneurial skills - Coping professionally with a pandemic

Most participants agreed that it is generally challenging for artists to survive as businesspeople, a challenge magnified during the Covid-19 pandemic. The main obstacles may be related to their attitudes towards art [*“artists find it difficult to see their work as a business”* according to the **Greek** report, while the question *“why should a young artist also be an entrepreneur?”* was raised in the **Italian** context], their struggles to identify the key components of entrepreneurship and the lack of training on this field, their difficulties in attracting donors, their fear of sickness with the SARS-CoV-2 virus, the lack of opportunities and their distance from their target audiences during the lockdowns. Indeed, the overwhelming majority of the participants from **Cyprus** agreed that the pandemic paralysed all cultural/artistic activities. For the aforementioned reasons, participant artists from **Cyprus, Italy** and **Ireland** were forced to seek other professional opportunities (full-time or part-time) or started online endeavours (mainly teaching courses or performances supported by donations).

Interestingly, the participants from **Greece** benefitted from lockdowns by making use of their free time to develop their portfolios, cultivating their skills and expanding their horizons of what is feasible, arguing however that the pandemic affected visual artists and performers in different ways, with the second ones being “destroyed”. Participants in the Greek quantitative research provided a more complete picture of this reality by almost unanimously agreeing with the lack of governmental support for the artists. In **Ireland** and **Italy** where State support was available to the cultural and creative sector, it was known only to a minority of the individuals participating in the surveys (15% in Ireland and 43% in Italy).

The vast majority of respondents in **all partner countries** agreed that artists lack basic entrepreneurial skills, which were valued as central in the modern world. The participants agreed on a set of skills necessary to navigate in the business world, which is depicted in the Table below:

Management skills	Budgeting and Financing skills	Marketing skills	Communication and Networking skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organising deadlines and creating opportunities' calendar • Time management • Career plan • Handling managerial tasks • Business organisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guides for pricing work • How to apply application strategies • Filling out Grant forms • Logistics and Financial management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Self-)Promotion skills • Digital branding/presence • Online advertising • Promotion plan and long-term goals • Pricing Market recognition/ Familiarisation with the market • Online advertising 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening skills • Ways to connect with other arts professionals in a structured way • Ways to approach galleries • Selling skills

Table 1: Necessary entrepreneurial skills for artists

Digital Skills

All participants from **all partner countries** valued the use of digital space as foremost importance, especially during the lockdowns. For example, participants from **Cyprus, Ireland** and **Italy** mentioned that social media was the only means to promote their products or events, and was also an essential tool for networking and attracting new clients. On the latter, **Cypriot** participants commented that the pandemic and the high restriction measures impact the public's perceptions of online entertainment, making them more aware and open to paying a certain fee to acquire quality entertainment. The **Greek** participants also added that digital tools are necessary for both the creative and entrepreneurial parts of their job, highlighting the importance of digital marketing and branding. Concerning the platforms they use, Instagram was the common denominator among countries, with YouTube (in **Italy** and **Cyprus**), Facebook (in **Italy** and **Ireland**), and TikTok (in **Cyprus**) being also (less extensively) mentioned. Participants from **Greece** added Etsy, eBay and Amazon to be also popular among visual artists. Italian partners commented that the selection of the platforms depends a lot on the users' age group. However **in all countries**, the majority of the respondents would prefer the combination of online-offline methods in attracting new clients and finding funds.

In **all participant countries**, challenges regarding the use of digital space were identified. In all countries, most respondents characterized the digital space as quite competitive, which is time-consuming and challenging. For example, in **Italy**, the older participants mentioned that they were used to doing things offline, so it is difficult for them to learn how to change and manage their job with different rules and actions. Participants from **Cyprus** mentioned also that the time and energy they need to spend on social media to promote their job is often “*draining and overwhelming*”, with negative effects on their mental health. The need for cultivating artists’ digital skills and technological knowledge became apparent in all countries, focusing on the effective and efficient use of social media (**Italy**), content management, networking and marketing (**Greece**), communication, online selling, transacting, problem-solving, social media marketing and networking (**Cyprus** and **Ireland**). Additionally, participants from the **UK**, **Cyprus** and **Italy** proposed the development of an online space/website/forum/platform where artists would have the possibility to expand their circle and showcase their work, fostering a sense of community.

Psychological capacities of young artists

The participants offered an overview of artists’ mental situation during the pandemic and shared the techniques that could develop a mindset, resilient to adversities. The Irish report pointedly comments that “*participants often suffered with their well-being in both their personal and professional lives. Although they work to maintain positive mental health, the Covid-19 pandemic did affect them in terms of character strength, empowerment, stress management, and emotion regulation*” (The Rural Hub, 2021, p. 15). When the topic of the reviews came up, all participants supported that all artists receive negative ones and it is possible one’s psychological state, moods or even self-perception be affected. The majority of participants from all countries agreed that the negative reviews affect them emotionally, but most of them had never thought of giving up their careers because of them; in some cases, the reviews can even be proven beneficial for artists’ personal development. Participants from **Cyprus** interestingly commented that “*what strikes them the most is not the negative feedback, but the fact that people seem indifferent when it comes to art and culture in general, a fact that they often find equally or even equally disheartening*” (CARDET, 2021, p. 21).

At this point, participants from all countries stressed the need for resilience building (especially in young artists, according to the **Greek partner**), and proposed methods to achieve it:

- a. Acceptance of the diversity of people, mainly in perception and aesthetics (“*Art is subjective*” and “*matter of taste*”, KMOP, 2021, p. 17) – “*Art is subjective and therefore cannot be appealing to everyone*” (The Rural Hub, 2021, p. 15).
- b. Stubbornness – Converting negative reviews to “motivating power”
- c. Self-reflection/ Self-critique
- d. Analysis of criticism (Is it constructive? If yes, what can you learn from it?)
- e. Study and skills development

Next to these techniques, participants from **Ireland** and **Italy** identified key attributes of psychological capacities:

- Self-confidence
- Self-motivation
- Stress Management skills/Coping mechanisms
- Realistic arts abilities
- Tenacity
- Self-motivation
- Creativity
- Determination
- Proactivity
- Humility
- Dedication
- Hard work ethic

Learning Material Design – Modes of delivery

Participants shared their views and ideas on the nature of the training program that would raise the effectiveness level for cultivating artists’ entrepreneurial and digital skills and fostering their well-being in their profession. Participants from the partner countries agreed almost unanimously that the program should be included practical elements, such as case studies, practical tips and expert advice. The potential learners highlighted the need for the program to be learner-oriented and be connected with each learner's professional profile, providing personalized learning experience. **Italian** participants expressed the necessity for an orientation towards the post-pandemic recovery in terms of funds and grants for the cultural and creative industry. Participants from **Greece** and **Italy** proposed the integration of networking opportunities, not only among learners but also by inviting successful artists as guests, while participants from the **UK** supplemented the program with career mentoring elements. The feedback from the learners was considered of foremost importance by one **Greek** participant who stressed the need for the continuous program’s optimization. Considering the

learning material, a downloadable PDF guide and a PowerPoint presentation with the key information highlighted were the most popular options, while the **Cypriot** participants preferred also an infographic with key data and embedded links for future reading.

Conclusions

The present Consolidated Report aimed to provide comparative information from the research attempts initiated in **Cyprus, Ireland, Greece, Italy** and the **UK** on the needs and difficulties young artists face during the Covid-19 pandemic. These research attempts were both twofold, as each partner mapped the local context in detail by conducting both desk and field research. By all accounts, the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak had a devastating effect on artists' professional lives and ventures in all partner countries. Indeed, the restrictive measures imposed in the European countries forced artists, whose professional lives are built on personal connections, into isolation, halting that way their livelihood, stable income, social contribution and professional development with many facing unemployment. Moreover, national data mainly from **Cyprus** and **Ireland** supported a general lack of awareness regarding the Arts and Culture importance and the recognition of artistic labour as "genuine labour", a situation that was worsened during the pandemic.

Consequently, many artists realised that they had to adapt themselves and their profession to this new era; many found alternative means and ways how to support their artistic activities and subsequently livelihood and income, often by utilising contemporary technologies like the internet, social media channels and online events. Others tried to use the free time the lockdowns offered for self-growth and development. It became apparent that the vast majority of the participants from all partner countries seemed to value future endeavours for their upskilling in a range of practical competencies to progress career-wise and prosper as professional artists.

Arts professionals' gaps and needs in the acquisition of entrepreneurial and digital skills were identified everywhere. Participants recognised their lack of familiarisation with organisational, networking and negotiation skills, time management, marketing and self-promotion, budgeting and financial management along with content and social media management, digital branding and digital marketing. These skills were felt to directly link to their success as an artist and as an entrepreneur. Artists mentioned their individual efforts in filling these gaps, which are isolated without structure and comprehensive guidance from official institutions. They also mentioned their difficulties in finding reliable support, resources, and training provisions. Clear and accessible financial, education and mentoring, theoretical and practical workshops on entrepreneurship, digital skills and well-being were

highly valued for escaping the uncertainty they have faced in the past two years; providing them with sustainable working lives and professional prosperity in the post-pandemic era.

Recommendations

From the overall analysis of the qualitative and quantitative research carried out in the partner countries, the following recommendations can be made:

1. EDUCATION

- A. Organisation of educational programmes for young artists, adapted to the demands of the digital era, that will enhance their entrepreneurial and artistic skills from the states (ministries of culture) and NGOs. Those programmes shall include: **meetings, info days, trainings, professional mentoring and coaching support** for artists in -inter alia- business management, business strategies, business planning, digital approaches.
- B. Development of material with “Art Entrepreneurship” as the central theme that shall include info on: learning resources, networking, social media management, self-presentation skills, project management skills, etc.

2. NETWORKING CHANNELS

Young artists, like any other entrepreneur or freelancer in general tend to be individualistic in their actions. It is thus rather important to make them aware of the importance of networking with other artists through networking channels. This will help them exchange ideas, good practices, and even provide feedback to each other.

3. FUNDING

- A. Financial support for arts organisations that find themselves at risk of closure or unemployment.
- B. Identification of new ways to approach the market, in order to increase turnover and the number of clients and recover (public funding, grants, sponsorship, etc.).

4. RAISING-AWARENESS INITIATIVES

Development of raising-awareness activities regarding the importance of Art and Culture in our everyday lives and the existence of new ways in doing business in the art’s sector.

Literature review on the situation in EU level

Artists face significant difficulties in being employed. The vast majority of them get usually employed in an older age than the national average. The belated start of their career is not the only concern artists face. Another one, equally significant is that the earnings that artists and especially young ones usually have are very low. As a result, in many cases their job in the artistic sector is not their primary source of income.

Pandemic had an even more aggravating impact on the situation. Present-day research pointed out that “Art and Leisure” sectors suffered the most by the measures taken to tackle the pandemic (Barrot, Grassi, & Sauvagnat, 2021). More specifically, the sectors that were affected more were that of the physical events and venues (defined as venue-based, such as museums, performing arts, live music, festivals, film, etc.). Fortunately, to counterweight the damage suffered in the artistic sector, states offered support to the artists through several schemes.

There are also various initiatives in EU level supporting and complementing the actions of member states to support artists further develop their entrepreneurial competences that existed long before the pandemic. One of the most important one's is the [Creative Europe Programme](#). It is European Commission's flagship programme to support the culture and audiovisual sectors. It invests in actions that reinforce cultural diversity and respond to the needs and challenges of the cultural and creative sectors, by providing funding and support to projects that promote entrepreneurship and innovation. More precisely, the main objectives of the programme are to safeguard, develop and promote European cultural and linguistic diversity and heritage, as well as to increase the competitiveness and economic potential of the cultural and creative sectors, in particular the audiovisual sector. Indicative of the commitment of the EU in the realisation of these objectives due -inter alia- to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the cultural and creative sectors is the fact that the current “Creative Europe 2021-2027” Programme has a budget of € 2.44 billion, compared to € 1.47 billion of the former “Creative Europe 2014-2020” Programme. It is believed that the novelties of the programme will contribute to the recovery of these sectors, reinforcing their efforts to become more inclusive, more digital and environmentally more sustainable. The Creative Europe Programme is divided in 3 strands: (i) culture strand, (ii) media strand, (iii) cross-sectoral strand.

Another emblematic initiative towards the aim of supporting artists further develop their entrepreneurial skills is the [European Creative Hubs Network](#). It is a non-profit association consisted of more than 300 hubs around Europe that provides support and resources to young artists and entrepreneurs. Artists and creatives within the hubs have a safe space to grow, become empowered and connect with the wider ecosystem. This way its members share a platform for networking in order to create synergies and increase their impact on the cultural and creative sectors. Except of the networking opportunities, the European Creative Hubs Network offers training and mentoring to its members to help them develop their skills and grow their businesses.

There is also a European cross-border exchange programme that helps young entrepreneurs gain experience and learn from experienced entrepreneurs on other participating countries, called [Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs](#). The exchange of experience takes place during a stay with the experienced entrepreneur, which helps the new entrepreneur acquire the skills needed to run a small firm. During their stay abroad, young artists are provided practical and financial assistance to support them. The host benefits also from fresh perspectives on their business and gets the opportunity to cooperate with foreign partners or learn about new markets. It is thus a really win-win collaboration whereby both can discover new European markets or business partners, as well as different ways of doing business. It is financed by the European Commission and operates across the participating countries with the help of the [local contact points](#), competent in business support (e.g. Chambers of Commerce, start-up centres, etc.). Their activities are coordinated at European level by the [Support Office](#) of the programme.

Another EU initiative aiming at promoting entrepreneurship in Europe is [Startup Europe](#). Startup Europe aims at helping startups grow by providing support and funding to young entrepreneurs, through a wide range of programmes, including the [Startup Europe Partnership \(SEP\)](#), the [European Startup Network \(ESN\)](#) and the [Startup Europe Awards \(SEUA\)](#). Similar are the objectives of the [Creative Business Network](#). This association aims at providing training, mentoring and networking opportunities to young entrepreneurs and helps them connect with investors and potential partners. It also organises an annual global competition, called [Creative Business Cup](#) for creative and innovative startups that is shaped by a shared goal of all the national partners in the network, of connecting and empowering the cultural and creative industries worldwide.

Digital art platforms may also prove to be very important in the development of the entrepreneurial skills of young artists. By hosting part or the whole digital art portfolio of an artist, they render it visible and available to the widest possible audience. An example of such a platform is [Artit](#), that aims at creating a vibrant, inclusive community where artists can showcase their work and access a range of prizes, awards and visibility opportunities.

In addition, various EU funded and co-funded projects tackle the need for artists to further develop their entrepreneurial competences. More specifically, given the importance for art professionals to develop entrepreneurial and digital competences defined in [EntreComp \(The European Entrepreneurship Competence Framework\)](#) and [DigComp 2.1 \(The Digital Competence Framework\)](#) to foster entrepreneurship and encourage them to become key players to modify the way creative products, cultural goods and events are created, managed, disseminated and consumed during and after COVID-19, the project: ["CO-ART. Challenge-based online tools to develop entrepreneurial and digital competences among young ARTpreneurs"](#) was developed. Project CO-ART aims at: providing non-traditional online learning tools that will empower young artists and help them gain the digital and entrepreneurial skills they need, equipping and training youth workers with non-traditional online learning tools to support the development of entrepreneurial and digital competences among young artists, establishing and reinforcing virtual cooperation between young culture workers and organisations at local and European levels and reinforcing digital networks between young unemployed or self-employed young artists.

Similar are the objectives of the project: ["4ArtPreneur. Innovative thinking competences for Creative Art entrepreneurship"](#). In its context, an open-access online course on entrepreneurship addressed to creative arts faculties to train students and teachers in the acquisition and validation of entrepreneurial skills adapted to their specific needs was created.

Furthermore, the project: ["SE4ARTS. Social Entrepreneurship 4 Arts"](#), aims at promoting the notion that artists can be transformed to creative entrepreneurs through the utilisation of digital technology and tools. With the aim of addressing the needs and barriers young artists face in accessing market opportunities and acquire them with the necessary entrepreneurial (soft and hard) skills to exhibit and market their work, manage finances and establish business collaborations, project's partners will provide artists and creatives with effective and concrete tools and educational resources to develop an enterprising approach, review, solve problems, plan and scope their creative project. They will also create and pilot tools and practical models

to foster collaborations between the world of creativity and the world of business through the mutual exchange of professional skills and visions of artists and social entrepreneurs.

["ArtENprise. Supporting Artists and Cultural Organisations in developing Entrepreneurial Skills"](#) is another project that aims at supporting artists, cultural organisations and professionals to develop and improve their entrepreneurial skills which are necessary to potentially make their art or creative work more financially rewarding. In the context of this project, an [online training](#) was developed addressed to artists and all those who are already, or planning to get professionally involved in the cultural sector, and wish to acquire or further develop their entrepreneurial skills.

["ARTployment"](#) is also another project promoting entrepreneurship to young people entering the arts. In the context of this project a toolkit for youth workers was developed that provides a series of activities that can be run for young people hoping to explore their creative potential. Accessible, clear and flexible, the activities cover subjects including: branding, finances, return on investment, networking.

References

- Artenprise. (2017). Artenprise - Artists developing entrepreneurial skills. Retrieved from <https://www.artenprise.eu/>
- Barrot, J., Grassi, B., & Sauvagnat, J. (2021, 05). Sectoral effects of social distancing. *111*, 277-281. AEA Papers and Proceedings.
- Creative Ireland Programme. (2020). Creative Ireland: Progress Report 2020. Retrieved from https://report2020.creativeireland.gov.ie/57/?utm_source=CI&utm_medium=Banner&utm_campaign=Rep2020
- Crowley, F. (2017, 11 22). Irish policymakers must focus more on the creative sector. Retrieved from <https://www.rte.ie/brainstorm/2017/1121/921676-irish-policymakers-must-focus-more-on-the-creative-sector/>
- Cyprus Mail. (2020). Education Ministry now in a position to aid professional artists. Retrieved from <https://cyprus-mail.com/2021/01/22/education-ministry-now-in-position-to-aid-professional-artists/>
- Falvey, D. (2020, 08 10). The "Arts Recession" will be five times worse than the rest of the economy. The Irish Times. Retrieved from <https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/the-arts-recession-will-be-five-times-worse-than-the-rest-of-the-economy-1.4376857>
- Mpaltzis, A., & Tsiggilis, N. (2018). Working and living conditions of visual artists in Greece. Retrieved from https://www.momus.gr/news/ereuna_web
- Oireachtas. (2020, 06 10). Covid-19 (Arts): Statements. Dail Eireann Debate. Retrieved from <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2020-10-06/13/>
- Oireachtas-Joint Committee on Jobs, Enterprise, and Innovation. (2015). Report on Hearings in Relation to Examining the Potential for Job Creation, Innovation and Balanced Economic Development in the Creative Economy. Retrieved from https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/31/joint_committee_on_education_and_social_protection/reports/2015/2015-07-15_report-on-hearings-in-relation-to-examining-the-in-the-creative-economy_en.pdf
- Siena Art Institute. (2021). SNF-SART Cultural Entrepreneurship-Programs-Siena Art Institute Onlus. Retrieved from <https://www.sienaart.org/Programs/SNF-SART-Cultural-Entrepreneurship/>
- Zanti, N. (2015). Artists' identities: a study of the living and working conditions of visual artists in Cyprus. Birkbeck: University of London.