I am proud that Creative Forum Ljubljana has grown into an important regional platform for a lively and cross-sectoral exchange and action planning between creatives, entrepreneurs and policymakers. This is what we call Creative Capital United.

At the 2019 edition of the forum, numerous new partnerships were established and new ideas born: between creatives and policymakers, and between creative hubs and entrepreneurs. Important policy recommendations were noted, many networks were expanded and others were imagined for the future. The inspiration was mutual and the effects multiple.

Of particular importance are the outputs and the continuity of engagement. Slovenia is pleased about the continued joint support with the Union for the Mediterranean for the cultural and creative sector in the region. It is crucial to make it the pillar of the regional development strategy.

I sincerely thank all the partners who made this forum possible and all the participants who made it successful. We hope to welcome you again to the forum’s future editions.

Miro Cerar
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia

The second edition of the Ljubljana Creative Forum provided us with inspiring discussions, expressing a sincere will to coordinate our efforts and boost the creative economy in the Euro-Mediterranean Region, unlocking its full force and fulfilling its potential.

It is this gathering of stakeholders from the public and private sectors that helped us once again effectively outline the challenges and the critical success factors in the cultural and creative industries landscape: proper mapping of major actors, facilitating access to finance, developing platforms and forums for networking, exchanging best practices and lessons learned, and adopting multiple stakeholders’ approach are all elements of an enabling environment that we all would like to see in our Mediterranean region. It is one that stands again at the verge of a new creative metamorphosis, gazing into a future where the economic, social and cultural potential of creativity must be harnessed through supportive policies and investment in a creative class.

I would like to thank once again the Government of Slovenia for its continuous engagement in supporting the creative and cultural industries across the Euro-Mediterranean region through its remarkable bridging role between the Balkans and the southern shore.

Nasser Kamel
Secretary-General of the Union for the Mediterranean
| 2nd edition | governments, international organisations, hubs, entrepreneurs, media, civil society |
| 3 shores of the Mediterranean |  |
| 4 days | 32 hours of programme |
| 2 study trips, 2 workshops, 3 panels, 4 keynotes and many inspiring presentations | 200+ participants from 25 countries |
|  | 7 creative businesses visited |

“I didn’t expect to meet so many creative people, listen to their experience, transfer knowledge, look for mutual understanding . . . . This is a great moment for me.”

(Azza Fahmy, Iconic Jewellery Designer, Egypt – keynote speaker at the forum)
The Forum was launched by two inspiring keynote speakers – Jana Konstantinova, an architect and researcher from North Macedonia, presented the elements for building creative ambience in the region, and Peter Florjančič, a 100-year-old Slovenian inventor, who holds more than 400 patents, shared with the participants his recipes for nurturing innovation and creativity. The networking evening was accompanied by DJ Sami Shehade from Palestine, who set a lively tone for the following days of the Forum.

Creative hub managers, creative entrepreneurs and Creative Europe representatives enjoyed a tailor-made programme aimed at peer-to-peer exchange, best practice sharing and networking. Twenty creative hub managers participated in four workshops on creative workers, creative hub programmes, policies and financing. They were accompanied by Barbara Stacher from the European Commission and by Cristina Farina from Portugal, a renowned cultural and creative expert. In parallel, a group of selected creative entrepreneurs explored some of the most innovative local practices (DobraVaga, RogLab, Academy of Fine Arts and Design, Metelkova, Kucha, City of Design and Donar) and exchanged experience with their founders and managers. They were also joined by Creative Europe representatives from Kosovo, Slovenia and Tunisia, who dedicated their get-together to strengthening the links and establishing feasible cooperation models with and between the “new” members of Creative Europe, i.e. the Western Balkans and Southern Mediterranean. After an alternative evening tour of Ljubljana, the City of Ljubljana welcomed the participants at the City Museum and presented the success story of Ljubljana as a creative capital and a regional creative hub.

Governments and international organisations met with creative hubs, entrepreneurs and civil society representatives at a high-level conference aimed at boosting and better targeting the political support provided to the cultural and creative sectors in the Western Balkans and the Southern Mediterranean. The conference was opened by Dr Miro Cerar, Slovenia’s Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Zoran Poznič, Slovenia’s Minister of Culture, and by Nasser Kamel, Secretary-General of the Union for the Mediterranean. As keynote speaker, the iconic jewellery designer from Egypt, Azza Fahmy, one of the region’s most influential creatives, inspired the participants with her success story of breaking boundaries through creativity. The leaders’ panel united ministers of culture and the economy in the desire to stimulate cross-sectoral support for the cultural and creative sectors. The "way forward" panel highlighted the steps needed for stronger and more cohesive cultural and creative sectors in the region: supportive ecosystems, needs-oriented actions, a stronger regulatory framework, new economic indicators, measuring culture and creativity's impact on the GDP, and so on. The representatives of the cultural and creative sectors provided the participants with interesting insights into the state of play regarding creative knowledge, workers, hubs and entrepreneurs in the region. The representatives of the European Commission, UNIDO and EUNIC Global presented some policies and good practices that could respond to some of the challenges highlighted. The conference closed with announcements of upcoming programmes and opportunities for the cultural and creative sectors in the region. The participants ended the day at the opening of BIO26, Biennial of Design, and its Opening Knowledge Night.

The last day of the Forum was dedicated to the potential and challenges of creative tourism. After the keynote speech by Milena Dragićević Šešić, Professor and Head of the UNESCO Chair in Cultural Policy and Cultural Management, the participants visited the company Lushna, designers and producers of unique co-natural tourist dwelling units. There, government representatives, entrepreneurs and hubs met for the Forum’s last panel on creative tourism practices, exchanging their “recipes” for successful and sustainable tourist narratives and boosting both business and intercultural understanding.
THE MAIN MESSAGES TO TAKE HOME

1. Support for the cultural and creative sector can only be effective if it is cross-sectoral. It is vital to understand the hybrid nature of the sector to help it prosper.

“This is what we call Creative Capital United; not only cities, regions and countries working hand in hand, but also different sectors finding common ground for breakthroughs: industry, education, foreign affairs, tourism, information technology and more.” (Miro Cerar, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Slovenia)

2. Governments have the opportunity and power to connect creatives - creatives that, due to distance, mobility obstacles and intercultural barriers, would otherwise never meet. It is important that they use this leverage to unlock creativity’s potential for regional integration.

“We have many similarities and differences. We build trust on these similarities, while we learn and innovate from the differences. This is why it was super important for me to be here.” (Atılım Şahin, Creative Hub Director, Atölye, Turkey)
THE MAIN MESSAGES TO TAKE HOME

3. Platforms like Creative Forum Ljubljana are crucial for raising the profile of the region’s creative potential on the one hand, and of the creative sector’s strategic place in the economy and society on the other.

“Our cultural and creative industries play an increasingly important role in our economies, societies and our well-being. What used to be a niche sector for experts, is today relevant for health, education, innovation, you name it.” (José Ángel Gurría, Secretary-General, OECD)

4. It is vital to multiply such events. Creatives have to meet in person. Further support is needed for their peer-to-peer exchange and co-creation at the operational level. Only by meeting regularly can creative communities from the region gain visibility and reinforce their bonds, mutual trust and the understanding of their synergies.

“I promise this is not our last and not even one isolated event where the Union for the Mediterranean will be investing in the creative economy. We’ll take what we learn from you, young creatives, today.” (Nasser Kamel, Secretary-General, Union for the Mediterranean)
5. The EU programme Creative Europe, which supports the cultural and creative sector in the region, is one of the main platforms for improving international cooperation in culture.

“It is important to create more solidarity between countries with bigger or smaller capacities when it comes to exchange of experience and peer-to-peer learning about cultural cooperation.” (Hazar Hichri, Creative Europe Desk Tunisia)

6. Creative entrepreneurs urgently need better infrastructure (access to tools, credit and shared working places), capacity building (especially in the management of creative industries) and political support (mapping needs, reduction of VAT and other incentives, and clear support strategies).

“Access to finance, markets and talent remain a challenge. The solution lies in developing investment schemes for creative workers and forming partnerships for cross-border cooperation.” (Rania Seddik, GebRaa, Egypt)
7. Cultural and creative industries are key to preserving and promoting cultural heritage, making it more appealing and accessible, especially for younger generations.

“Creative projects are driven by the exceptional global preference of end customers for what is perceived as authentic and genuine as a reaction to rapid changes brought about by globalisation. Nowadays customers are willing to pay a premium for products that are true to the roots and tell a story.” (Dina Kattan, National Project Coordinator, UNIDO, Jordan)

8. While the risk of large-scale unsustainable low-cost tourism looms large, ethics are increasingly important in creative tourism. Tourist narratives have to be built in partnership with local communities, based on trust and respect for tangible and intangible heritage.

“New and revitalised old narratives will become the essence of new cultural tourism products that could link various cities across national borders. This is a chance for many thematic cultural tourism networks and cultural routes to be implemented connecting peripheries.” (Milena Dragićević Šešić, Professor at the University of Belgrade, Head of the UNESCO Chair in Cultural Policy and Management, Serbia)
9. Creative hubs are valued as the key infrastructure for the development of creative industries. Bottom-up approach development of creative hubs should be encouraged in order to build strong multidisciplinary communities that enable sharing of know-how, mutual collaboration and generation of social capital.

“We are now referring to communication and collaboration as the must-have competencies to thrive in the 21st century. These two are the backbone of successful communities. If we desire to be future-proof, either as an individual or as an organization, we stand a better chance if we embrace community-oriented thinking. In this sense, creative hubs serve as a propelling force for the creative industries, pushing them forward by offering the most fertile environment for creative encounters, generating new opportunities for collaboration, and fostering innovation with their creative communities.” (Atılım Şahin, Creative Hub Director - ATÖLYE, Turkey; Secretary-General, ECHN)

10. Programmes for developing soft skills of self-employed creatives are in high demand. With proper infrastructural support and powered by system changes to make their work more secure, a solution can be found for a more sustainable future of CCI.

“Lately a lot is being said about the enormous potential of creative industries and very little how fragile this sector actually is. Self-employment is the difficult lived reality for most creative workers in the region and therefore their business is nothing but usual. Although highly educated creatives are still not sufficiently equipped with the essential tools, skills and knowledge required to successfully navigate through unpredictable (global) labor market.” (Eva Matjaž, Programme Director – Poligon Creative Centre)
SPEAKERS AND MODERATORS

Khaled al-Osaily - Minister of National Economy, State of Palestine
H. E. Ms Esen Altuğ - Ambassador, Turkish Embassy in Ljubljana, Turkey
Jaka Ažman - Chief Marketing Manager, Lushna Glamping d.o.o., Slovenia
Dr Marlen Bakalli - Industrial Development Officer, United Nations Industrial Development Organization, Austria
Aleksandar Bogdanović - Minister, Ministry of Culture, Montenegro
Dr Miro Cerar - Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia, Slovenia
Vassilis Charalampidis - President, ECHN European Creative Hubs Network, Greece
Martin Cuff - Strategic Advisor, South Africa
Dr Milena Dražićević-Šešić - Professor, University of Arts Belgrade, Serbia
Abdelhamid ElZoheiry - President, Euro-Mediterranean University (EMUNI)
Mohammed Elrazzaz - Project Analyst, Union for the Mediterranean
Azza Fahmy - Chair and Creative Director, Azza Fahmy Jewellery, Egypt
Cristina Farinha - Cultural and creative sector expert, freelance, Portugal
Matej Fegus - CEO, DONAR D.O.O., Slovenia
Mato Franjičević - Deputy of Minister, Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Greta Galezzi - Policy Officer at DG DEVCO, EU Commission, Belgium
H. E. Nasser Ahmed Kamel - Secretary General, Union for the Mediterranean
Petra Kežman - Head of Department for Public Diplomacy and International Cooperation in Culture, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Slovenia
Robert Kieft - Project Manager, European ‘Houses’ of Culture’, EUNIC Global, Netherlands
Dr Jaime Molí de Alba - Chief Inter-Regional Adviser, UNIDO, Spain
Zmago Novak - CEO, Zavod Big, Slovenia
Dr Mario Pezzini - Director, OECD Development Centre, Italy
Zdravko Počivalšek - Minister, Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, Slovenia
Dr Danica Purg - President and Dean, IEDC - Bled School of Management, Slovenia
Aida Ridanovic - Director of MedForum2020, Anna Lindh Foundation, Croatia
Atılım Sahin - Creative Hub Director, ATOLYE, Turkey
Barbara Stacher - Cultural policies and CCIs, EU Commission, Belgium
Zoran Stancić - Head of the EU Representation
Valbona Shujaku - Deputy Minister, Ministry of Culture, Albania
Siniša Šešum - Head of Office, UNESCO, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Eva Štravs Podlogar - State Secretary, Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, Slovenia
Meta Štular - General Manager, RogLab at Museum and Galleries of Ljubljana, Slovenia
Ahmed Yehia - Founder and CEO, Eco Nubia, Egypt

CREATIVE HUBS

Houssem Aoudi - CEO and founder, Wasabi/Afkar, Tunisia
Kamal Abuzyan - Co-founder and General Manager, Deraz Corner, Libya
Marina Batinic - Co-founder and Project Manager, Culture Hub Croatia, Croatia
Relja Bobić - Co-founder and International Cooperation Manager, Nova Iskra, Serbia
Amra Comor - Project Leader, Networks INT, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Shadda Elmagri - CEO, Deraz Corner, Libya
Riane Guefaïfa - Digital Content Officer, Sylabs, Algeria
Raed Hamouri - Executive Director, Disarming Design from Palestine, Palestine
Elvis Hoxha - Co-founder, Destil Creative Space, Albania
Matan Israeli - Co-founder and Director, Muslala, Israel
Nevena Korač - Web Content Creator, Propeler, Montenegro
Arijana Koskarova - Founder, Creative Hub, North Macedonia
Malek Maazoun - Founder and CEO, Coart – Creative coworking space, Tunisia
Muhammad Nagi - Managing Director, AlMaqarr Co., Egypt
Luka Pikorić - Co-founder and managing director - Poligon Creative Centre, Slovenia
Atılım Sahin - Creative Hub Director, ATOLYE, Turkey
Talel Sahmim - National Coordinator, Unido, Tunisia
Blerta Thaci - Executive Director, Open Data Kosovo, Kosovo
CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURS

Sonila Abdalli - Co-founder, Destil Creative Hub, Albania
Nassar Abujabal - Director of the Development Department GIS and Photogrammetry, Palestine
Tuğçe Akbulut - Founder/Director/Collaboration Designer, Cross Change, Turkey
Keren Allon - Video Editor, Gerard Allon Productions, Israel
Elona Bojo - Manager, Ferma Grand Albanik, Albania
Nizzar Ben Chekroune - Digital communication and marketing expert, Gürü Marketing, Morocco
Eyal Bloch - TOP Global; Muslala; ESD Institute; David Yellin Academic College of Education, Israel
Matija Brajović - Art Director, Daa Montenegro
Rania Chaabouni - Student, EMUNI, Tunisia
Habib Chabbouh - Général Manager, MAISON DE L'ARTISAN "MDA", Tunisia
Bojana Cipot - Head of International Cooperation and Project Management, Primorski tehnoški park, Slovenia
Moustapha Djimera - CEO, i-Wanga inc., Mauritania
Habiba El-Zeiny - Business Innovation Advisor, GI2 Egypt, Egypt
Dalal Rahma Elkaddi - Fashion Designer / Entrepreneur, Imagineer clothing line, Algeria
Risto Hajduković - CEO, Circle, Montenegro
Dina Kattan - National Project Coordinator, UNIDO, Jordan
Abdessalam Khedrougui - Student, EMUNI, Algeria
Wafa Kiran - Designer, ZINE & ZWINE, Morocco
Maruša Kovacić - Junior designer, Speakap, Slovenia
Getoar Krasniqi - Startups Consultant, GK Consulting, Kosovo
Ivo Krug - Co-founder, Tek Bunkeri, Germany
Sanja Kulenović - Designer – Senior Associate, International Theatre Festival MESS – Scene MESS, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Ghada Kunash - Managing Director and founder, The Workshop Amman, Jordan
Tina Kuzman - Creative Director, Open Box Studio, Montenegro
Rima Malallah - Owner & Designer, Love on a Bike, Jordan
Dina Maqdah - Fashion Designer, Garment Design & Training Services Centre, Jordan
Milan Mijailović - CEO, NGO "Rural Urban", Montenegro
Ahmad Mousa - Founding director, The Fiction Council, Palestine
AbdELrahman Muhammed - Sports Digital Marketing, MMC SPORT GmbH & Co. KG, Germany
Ines Novak - President, Children's Creative Center – DOKICA, Croatia
Nour Nsheiwat - Founder and designer, Hunaya and Shawerma Zarb, Jordan
Nikola Radojić - Creative Director/Founder, Braća Burazeri Design Studio/Dechkotzar Clothing Company, Serbia
Sirine Rebai - Responsible for External Relations, Coart Creative Coworking Space & Artist Without Border, Tunisia
Pezana Rexha - CEO and Founder, Pana Storytelling Furniture, Albania
Hazar Hichri - Culture Sub-programme Manager, Creative Europe Desk, Tunisia

CREATIVE EUROPE

Sabina Briški Karlič - Head of AV sector, Motovila, Centre for the Promotion of Cooperation in the Cultural and Creative Sectors, Slovenia
Ksenija Đurović - Producer, BITEF Festival, Serbia
Rina Gurgule - Head of Creative Europe Desk Kosovo, Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports Kosovo, Kosovo
Hazar Hichri – Culture Sub-programme Manager, Creative Europe Desk, Tunisia
In 2020, Slovenia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Union for the Mediterranean, together with partners, will respond to two major needs emphasised throughout the forum: further peer-to-peer exchange for creative hubs and training in management for creative entrepreneurs. Stay tuned.

The next Creative Forum Ljubljana will take place in 2021 with the focus on creativity and education.

In the meantime, Slovenia will host Creative Forum 17+1 from 15 to 17 September 2020.

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