

## **ArtS – Skills for the Creative Economy**

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This presentation will aim at presenting the overall aims, objectives and results produced in the framework of the project “ArtS – Skills for the Creative Economy”.

It will also focus on the field research conducted in the framework of the project. The aforementioned Needs Assessment research provided interesting data regarding skills imbalances and training needs in the Cultural and Creative sectors in Greece, Italy and Spain.

ArtS is a three year Erasmus+ project (Sector Skills Alliances), which aims at the exploitation of the Cultural and Creative Sectors (CCS) potential for creating growth and jobs and at the enhancement of cultural economy at local, regional, national and transnational levels. The purpose of ArtS project is to respond to a strong need for a partnership between the cultural and creative sectors (CCS), social partners and training providers in order to identify the current and future skill requirements of the culture and creative labour market in Greece, Italy and Spain and to develop an innovative joint training programme which will have to provide sectors with the mix of skills needed for creative entrepreneurship. The project covers the following areas a) Craft, b) Performing arts (music, dance, theatre), c) Cultural Heritage (archives, libraries, museums), d) Literary arts (book and press), e) Visual arts, f) Audiovisual and multimedia. It contributes to a) the development of a Vocational Education and Training (VET) curriculum, according to EQF/ECVET standards, that is outcome-oriented and responds to specific skill shortages in the creative and cultural sectors’ market, b) the facilitation of networking and labour mobility, c) the innovation of the VET sector through the design and delivery of a novel training programme.

The Cultural and Creative Sectors (CCS) potential for growth and job creation in Europe is well recognised. The purpose of ArtS project is to respond to a strong need for a partnership between the CCS, social partners and training providers that will identify the current and future skill requirements of the cultural and creative labour market in Greece, Italy and Spain and develop a joint training programme which will provide sectors with the mix of skills needed for creative entrepreneurship.

Studies have shown that recent technological advancements and CCS sector-specific characteristics, such as the prevalence of SMEs and micro-enterprises, freelancers and

project-based work, have led to an under-investment in skills development, fewer training opportunities and a lack of structured career progression. Major skill gaps common to cultural and creative subsectors concern entrepreneurship and project funding; major challenges are digital skills and globalisation, access to finance, cultural and linguistic fragmentation, (sub)sectoral seclusion.

ArtS will deliver a joint vocational training programme that will provide artists the opportunity to:

- update their professional skills and knowledge and provide them with management, business and networking skills, with a special focus on export possibilities,
- guide them into finding work or internship at a company of their choice,
- present their work in a joint project at the project closure that will be prepared by the learners themselves, as an exercise of effective networking and will reach the widest possible pool of stakeholders and audience.

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In the preparatory phase of the project, WP2, a major field research was conducted.

The aim of the research – needs assessment was to highlight the skills gaps and imbalances in the CCS in the participating countries, in order to guide the development of an innovative and specific targeted training programme.

The target group of the research comprised by: (a) artists (unemployed, employed part-time, employed full-time, freelancers, members of cultural/artistic social enterprises, members of amateur's groups), (b) representatives of the labour market (employers, representatives of professional associations, representatives of cultural and creative bodies and companies), (c) representatives of the VET sector (representatives of VET providers, VET & ECVET networks, informal and non-formal education, Universities, certification and validation bodies, bodies providing career counseling, artistic schools and training centres, human resources departments and/or companies), (d) representatives of the civic society (representatives of local regional public authorities, social organisations providing services to vulnerable groups, social and youth associations, local community centres, policy makers). The above combination created the possibility to investigate the commonalities and differences in the perceptions on skills shortages per region, country, subsector and type of actor.

Skills imbalances in the cultural and creative fields are well-acknowledged. However, national and sector-specific data is often incomplete. This needs analysis aims to clearly define the required skills, competences and qualification standards as well as the pedagogical methods that are best suited to unlock the potential of the target group in Greece, Italy and Spain. Although the survey results and findings are attributable to the three participating countries, it is possible - under specific conditions - to be generalized for other European countries and to become a basis for further research. People from Greece, Italy and Spain are concerned about the rise of unemployment in their regions and recognise the cultural and creative sectors' potential for growth and jobs creation. At a time when Greece and Spain have the highest unemployment rates in the EU, with Italy following close, the Greek, Spanish and to a lesser extent Italian exports of cultural products represent a significant share of all exports. Yet, according to Eurostat's Cultural Statistics in all three countries the share of CCS employment as a percentage of total employment is below the EU-27 average. The reasons for this mismatch are unclear. One reason can be that sector activities are often project-led and therefore artists are often self-employed (Italy has the highest percentage of freelancers in CCS in EU-27) or temporary employees (eg. in Spain). Another reason is that the sector faces important skill imbalances. Studies have shown that recent technological advancements and sector-specific characteristics (eg. the prevalence of SMEs and micro-enterprises, freelancers and project-based work) have led to an under-investment in skills development, fewer training opportunities and a lack of structured career progression. Major skill gaps common to CCS subsectors concern entrepreneurship and project funding; major challenges are digital skills and globalisation, access to finance, cultural and linguistic fragmentation, (sub)sectoral seclusion .



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