

Creative Economy Outlook **2022**

The International Year of Creative Economy for Sustainable Development:
Pathway to resilient creative industries

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Pathway to resilient creative industries



**United
Nations**

Geneva, 2022

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This publication has not been formally edited.

United Nations publication issued by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

UNCTAD/DITC/TSCE/2022/1

ISBN: 978-92-1-113072-0

eISBN: 978-92-1-002141-8

Sales No. E.22.II.D.41

Foreword

The creative economy is one of the world's fastest-growing sectors. Creative industries create employment and income, promote innovation and contribute to societies' well-being. Yet more data and innovative and multidisciplinary policy responses are needed to enhance the development impacts of the creative sector. This is essential, as the creative economy provides all countries, particularly developing economies, with a feasible option for development.

The Bridgetown Covenant, adopted at the fifteenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, mandated UNCTAD to support developing countries in diversifying production and exports in the creative sector, analyse the creative industries and provide insight into the global creative economy as a means to support countries in exploiting the potential the sector presents. Furthermore, in United Nations General Assembly resolution 74/198 on the International Year of Creative Economy for Sustainable Development, UNCTAD was requested to inform the General Assembly at its seventy-seventh session on the implementation of the resolution, through a dedicated section of the *Creative Economy Outlook*.

This new report offers insights into the survey carried out by UNCTAD with member States on the creative economy highlighting institutional arrangements and national plans and strategies for 33 countries. The findings show how the creative economy has become a sector of growing social, political, and economic importance.

International trade in creative goods and services generates increasing revenues for countries, but creative services exports vastly exceed those of creative goods. The global exports of creative goods represented US\$524 million in 2020, while world exports of creative services reached US\$1.1 trillion. In addition, UNCTAD estimates that, in 2020, creative goods and services represented 3 and 21 per cent of total merchandise and services exports, respectively. The report also shows that creative services were more resilient during the COVID-19 pandemic than other services sectors.

South-South trade in creative goods has almost doubled in the past two decades. In 2020, South-South trade in creative goods represented 40.5 per cent of creative exports by developing economies. On the other hand, developed economies mainly tend to exchange cultural goods among themselves. South-South trade can be important for developing economies to create new trading opportunities and diversify exports.

The report is published at a time when the global community faces some of the most significant challenges in decades: the COVID-19 (coronavirus disease) pandemic, looming climate change and environmental crisis, geopolitical tensions and a major cost-of-living crisis. Despite these challenges, the creative economy remains a critical sector for sustainable development.

It is my hope that this report will provide crucial data for strengthening the creative sector and its contribution towards inclusive economic development.



Rebeca Grynspan
Secretary-General of UNCTAD

Acknowledgements

The Creative Economy Outlook 2022 was prepared by an UNCTAD team in cooperation with various United Nations organizations.

This report was written by Marisa Henderson (team leader), Katalin Bokor and Michele Dookie under the overall guidance of Miho Shirotori, Officer-in-Charge, Division on International Trade and Commodities. The report benefitted from substantive inputs and insightful contributions by UNCTAD staff members from the Trading Systems, Services and Creative Economy Branch, in particular from Bruno Antunes, Ebru Gokce-Dessemond, Taisuke Ito, Mesut Saygili, Vincent Valentine and Dong Wu. We wish to gratefully acknowledge the research inputs by Carolina Quintana, technical assistance provided by Sophia Munda, design and layout work done by Laura Moresino-Borini and Belén Camarasa, and support by Jeanelle Clark and Graham Mott. Our special thanks go to the Acting Director of Statistics at UNCTAD, Anu Peltola and her team, Sanja Blazevic, David Cristallo, Onno Hoffmeister, and Ildephonse Mbabazimana.

UNCTAD is grateful for the participation of Andorra, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Belgium, Benin, Cambodia, Canada, Central African Republic, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Georgia, Germany, Guatemala, Honduras, Latvia, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Oman, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, and United Arab Emirates in the 2021 UNCTAD survey on the creative economy.

The publication builds on valuable contributions of member States and organizations across the United Nations, including the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Labour Organization (ILO), International Trade Centre (ITC), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), and World Trade Organization (WTO). These contributions showcase the implementation of the International Year of Creative Economy 2021 and how it advances the 2030 Agenda.

UNCTAD extends its profound appreciation to all the colleagues from the United Nations agencies who provided inputs to the report and in particular: Aurélie Fernandez, Georgios Mermigkas, and Clelia Maria Puzzo from FAO; Chris Donnges, David Kapya, Margherita Licata, and Mito Tsukamoto from ILO; Amelia Diaz, Giulia Macola, Mathieu Lamolle, Sylvain Périllat, Julia Spies, Annabel Christine Sykes, and Julia Zietemann from ITC; Toussaint Tiendrebeogo from UNESCO; Sibilla Sartori, Riccardo Savigliano, and Kjell Sundin from UNIDO; Alexander Cuntz, Dimiter Gantchev, Victor Owade, Michele Woods, and Daphne Zografos from WIPO; and Martin Roy from WTO.

The study was enriched by insightful comments and suggestions from creative economy experts Rupert Allen (Senior Economist, International Trade, Department of Canadian Heritage, Government of Canada), Hubert Escaith (former Chief Statistician at the World Trade Organization and former Director of Division, United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean), Esteban Santamaria (Director and Founder, Centre for Analysis for Research in Innovation, Mexico), and Jen Snowball (Professor, Department of Economics, Rhodes University and Chief Research Strategist, Cultural Observatory, South Africa).

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