

Second edition of the Cultural and Creative Cities Monitor

What does the Monitor measure?

The second edition of the Cultural and Creative Cities Monitor measures and assesses the performance of 190 'Cultural and Creative Cities' in Europe vis-à-vis their peers, using both **quantitative** and **qualitative** data.

The quantitative information is captured in 29 indicators relevant to nine dimensions, and reflecting three major facets of cities' cultural, social and economic vitality. The 29 individual indicators were selected following an extensive literature review and several rounds of expert consultations:

- **Cultural Vibrancy** measures a city's cultural 'pulse' in terms of cultural infrastructure and participation in culture;
- **Creative Economy** captures the extent to which the cultural and creative sectors contribute to a city's economy in terms of employment, job creation and innovation;
- **Enabling Environment** identifies the tangible and intangible assets that help cities attract creative talent and stimulate cultural engagement.



Figure 1. Cultural and Creative Cities Monitor's conceptual framework and indicators

The scores for cities are calculated as a weighted average of the 'Cultural Vibrancy' (40%), 'Creative Economy' (40%) and 'Enabling Environment' (20%) sub-index scores. The weights have been designed by a group of 15 professionals with international experience in policy or research in the field of culture, creativity and urban development. The data comes from eight sources: Urban Audit and Regional Statistics (Eurostat), a Eurobarometer survey on the quality of life in cities, the Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy of the European Commission, university rankings, the European Tertiary Education Register, TripAdvisor and Open Street Map.

The qualitative component includes highlights of cities' creative economy

strategies or best practices in the field of cultural management to illustrate and complement the quantitative evidence. The results show what cities are good at and where they can do better, learning from similar cities.

How were cities selected?

190 cities have been selected based on three measurable and comparable criteria which can be consistently applied across a wide and diverse pool of cities in Europe (see Annex I in the report):

1. 98 cities which have been or are European Capitals of Culture up to 2019, or which will become European Capitals of Culture up to 2023;
2. 33 UNESCO Creative Cities (up to the winner in 2017) – excluding overlaps with the European Capitals of Culture;
3. 59 cities hosting at least two regular international cultural festivals running until 2018 or 2017 for biennial festivals.

The selection also includes all the capital cities of the 30 countries covered by the Monitor (28 EU Member States, Norway and Switzerland). 11 cities have been included in the Monitor, but not in the final rankings because they did not meet the data coverage criterion of at least 45% data coverage at the index level, and at least 33% for the 'Cultural Vibrancy' and 'Creative Economy' sub-indices. Some or all of the excluded cities could be added in future editions if the required data becomes available. The rankings and analysis presented are therefore based on a total of 179 cities, but qualitative information is provided for the full sample of 190 cities. Clearly, many other cities not included this time are active in promoting arts, culture and related creative activities and professions.

More generally, the Monitor adopts an inclusive approach: any city is given the opportunity to monitor its performance on culture- and creativity-related aspects. While the three selection criteria represent a pragmatic entry point to select a first city sample, the online platform enables users to add new data or change the weights given to the dimensions and sub-indices to better reflect what matters more locally.

Which city in Europe is the most cultural and creative?

The Cultural and Creative City Monitor 2019 does not provide a fixed ranking of cities. Scores will always be different, depending on various factors such as how much weight you give individual indicators, or for which city size in terms of population you search, for instance.

In this year's edition, the 'ideal' Cultural and Creative City in Europe would have the Cultural Venues & Facilities of Weimar (Germany), the Cultural Participation & Attractiveness of Florence (Italy), the Creative & Knowledge-based Jobs, the Human Capital & Education and the Local & International Connections of Paris (France), the Intellectual Property & Innovation of Eindhoven (the Netherlands), the New Jobs in Creative Sectors of Budapest (Hungary), the Openness, Tolerance & Trust of Glasgow (United Kingdom) and

the Quality of Governance of Aarhus (Denmark).

Why and for whom is the Cultural and Creative Cities Monitor useful?

Cities wanting to harness culture to drive economic growth, social development and cohesion need a solid evidence base. The Monitor helps to provide them with clarity about the fundamental resources that define local cultural and creative ecosystems, as well as an adequate basis for their measurement and evaluation.

The Cultural and Creative Cities Monitor is the first agreed framework aimed at building a common evidence base on the cultural and creative performance of European cities, with a view to supporting policymakers in identifying strengths, assessing the impact of policy actions, and learning from peers. It also clarifies the importance of culture and creativity for improving resilience and socio-economic performance in cities, and it inspires new research about the role of culture and creativity in cities.

Recognising these benefits, local stakeholders will be able to use the Monitor as a tool to map cultural and creative assets and measure their value and impact in a systematic and comparable way across Europe. Moreover, the Monitor will help to promote the sharing of good practices and peer learning in cultural heritage and creativity.

Overall, the goal of the Cultural and Creative Cities Monitor is to engage the public and policy makers alike to fully acknowledge the importance of culture and creativity for people, and to trigger investments in promoting culture and creativity.

How is the Monitor embedded in EU policymaking on culture?

The '[New European Agenda for Culture](#)', adopted in May 2018, puts forward the goal to 'do more, through culture and education, to build cohesive societies' as well as work towards 'a more inclusive and fairer Union, supporting innovation, creativity and sustainable jobs and growth'. In a similar vein, the new [EU Work Plan for Culture 2019-2022](#), adopted by the European Council in November 2018, identifies five main priorities to be addressed because of their European added value and need for joint action. They are: sustainability in cultural heritage; cohesion and well-being; an ecosystem supporting artists, cultural and creative professionals and European content; gender equality; and international cultural relations. Along with digitalisation, the development of comparable and reliable cultural statistics is considered an important additional horizontal issue that needs to be tackled to support evidence-based policymaking, both at the European and national levels.

Both documents pay special attention to the role of culture at local level. A city cannot thrive without a lively cultural offering and healthy creative sectors. Flourishing local culture(s) and creativity improve citizens' quality of life, strengthen social cohesion, and enhance business competitiveness. The ambitious culture-led regeneration programmes initiated by the European Capitals of Culture, such as Mons 2015 (Belgium), Linz 2009

(Austria), Liverpool 2008 (United Kingdom) as well as Matera 2019 (Italy), show that city governments that care about sustainable development pay greater attention to policies that valorise local cultural resources and promote creative endeavours.

The Monitor is also one of the actions included in the 'European Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage' to help ensure that the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 has a lasting impact.

How unique is the approach of the Monitor?

The Monitor is not a ranking in the traditional sense. Rather, it helps cities understand the manifold and complex relationships among the many factors that contribute to a city's capacity to produce culture and creative content, and to make it attractive and accessible.

The creation of the Monitor was inspired by 40 similar international indices, which have been developed at city level. They generally cover a smaller sample of cities, mainly including capitals and other major cities, such as London, Berlin, Barcelona or Milan. In a few cases, they are accompanied by qualitative facts that help illustrate the quantitative scores, or interactive platforms allowing users to explore data and offering customisation options (for instance to adapt the weighting scheme of the index). The Monitor combines 29 individual indicators, setting it apart from other similar indices and making it valuable for a large number of cities, thus providing a powerful resource that can inform city-level policy debates both within and across countries.

Can the scores of the 2017 and 2019 Monitors be compared?

The Monitor compares the performance of local cultural ecosystems, and it also presents changes in performance and rankings over time. Data adjustments introduced for the 2019 edition have been applied to the 2017 edition as well, so that results are directly comparable.

Making inferences about absolute or relative performance on the basis of year-on-year differences in rankings can, however, be misleading. Each ranking reflects the relative positioning of a particular city on the basis of the conceptual framework, the treatment of outliers and missing values, and the sample of cities in the given year, also reflecting changes in the underlying indicators at the source and data availability.

For more details see also [Annex B](#).

What is the future of the Monitor?

The Monitor will continue to be updated every two years to make sure that it remains both conceptually and statistically sound across countries, cities and time, and that progress can be tracked. The Commission will continue to explore big data sources that would enhance the Monitor's capacity.

Moreover, one of the main objectives for the years to come is to strengthen capacities in cities: the European Commission's Joint Research Centre, which has developed the Monitor, will work with cities in a hands-on way to help them to use the data in the Monitor for evidence-based policy-making. It will also support them in stepping up data collection to fill in current data gaps.

The accompanying ['Cultural gems' app](#), released in the course of the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 to complement the Cultural and Creative Cities' profiles with facts and opinions on cities' 'hidden treasures', will also be regularly enriched by city authorities, NGOs and local associations and citizens themselves.

For More Information

[Cultural and Creative Cities Monitor website](#) (including full report, online interactive tool, factsheets and infographics)

[Press release](#)