

Trends and skills in the European audiovisual and live performance sectors

Trends

A **YOUNG WORKFORCE**, a majority of **SMALL-SIZED COMPANIES**, a large (and increasing) number of professionals operating **OUTSIDE THE 'EMPLOYEE STATUS'**, relatively **DYNAMIC MARKETS** that translate into a growing number of companies but not a similarly upward growth in employment opportunities.

The **DIGITAL SHIFT**, the **MULTIPLATFORM ENVIRONMENT**, their impact on the sector's **BUSINESS MODELS** and on individual career paths.

SQUEEZED PUBLIC FUNDING, more precarious work opportunities, as seen in shorter employment contracts, an increase in **FREELANCING** and **NEW FORMS OF WORK ARRANGEMENTS**.

Skills

The appearance of **NEW OCCUPATIONS** and the disappearance of others.
The increased relevance of **MULTI-SKILLING**.

The need to **INNOVATE AND EXPERIMENT** with new development schemes. The opportunities offered by the **DIGITAL TOOLS** and by the high demand for **NEW CONTENTS** in the digital environment.

The diversification of skills sets to accommodate **MULTI-ACTIVITY**. The legal, administrative and financial requirements, and other **HORIZONTAL SKILLS**, needed to face self-employment, freelancing and new types of work arrangements.

Creative Skills Europe, the European Sector Skills Council for the Audiovisual and Live Performance Sectors, is a partnership of European professional organisations and national skills bodies.

In 2015 and 2016, Creative Skills Europe shared labour market intelligence and identified trends in what skills sets are needed to improve the quality of professional training schemes, contribute to developments in the sector, and increase the security of career paths.

Both the audiovisual and the live performance sectors have young workforces, both are made up of an increasing number of small-sized companies, both count a large (and increasing) number of professionals operating outside the standard 'employee status' (as free-lancers, intermittent workers, self-employed, etc. or any other status as provided by the provisions of national labour law or civil law).

The two sectors also have relatively dynamic markets that translate into a growing number of companies but do not necessarily lead to a similarly linear upward growth in employment opportunities.

In the audiovisual sector, most companies are active in the field of production, with broadcasters still employing the larger workforces.

The acquisition of digital skills is a key challenge for the development of the sector. The digital shift has also deeply impacted the sector's business models, demanding even stronger capabilities

to innovate and experiment with new development schemes.

Individual career paths have also been affected, with the emergence of multi-skilling, the appearance of new occupations and the disappearance of others.

In the live performance sector, most companies are active in the creation and production field. Highly dependent on public subsidies, this sector has suffered from the squeezed public funding that followed the 2008 financial crisis. Work opportunities have become more precarious.

In parallel, since live performance occupations remain highly attractive, job demand is still higher than supply. The 'multi-activity' of workers is therefore becoming increasingly important (both within the sector and when combined with activities in other sectors).

The key evolution for the audiovisual sector stakeholders has been the transition to a 'multiplatform environment' combining a presence on the web and on new multimedia applications with their traditional distribution channels.

This multiplatform environment requires not only new maintenance skills but also new competences in the fields of creation and production.

In the live performance sector the digital environment has opened up new opportunities for diversifying income streams, reaching out to new audiences and exploring new creative horizons, demanding specific skills as well.

Given that the digital environment has engendered a pressing need for new skills, it has also placed the audiovisual and live performance sectors at the forefront of the creative and innovation forces that drive digital technological development. If it is to thrive, the digital environment needs creative new content.

Equipping audiovisual and live performance professionals with the necessary skills to engage fully in the digital environment constitutes a solid investment for the future.

The economic downturn has dramatically reinforced some of the employment features of the audiovisual and live performance sectors, namely project-based work and self-employment.

To manage their careers, which have become less and less linear, professionals have to diversify their skill sets even more than before. Many also have to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to be able to cope with the legal, administrative and financial requirements of being self-employed or freelance. ■

COLLECTING THE RIGHT DATA FOR MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Sectoral stakeholders and policy makers need to access reliable and stable national data in order to monitor developments in the audiovisual and live performance markets. They have to understand the deeper trends, be better at anticipating future conditions, and then be capable of adapting the skills of the workforce accordingly. In addition, more detailed pan-European data must be collected, including on employment mobility (sectoral and transnational).

SETTING UP INFORMED AND SUSTAINABLE SECTOR PLATFORMS

Platforms should be set up, at national and EU levels, composed of the relevant representatives of sector stakeholders (employers, unions, national skills bodies, professional associations, education and training organisations) to develop analytical studies of the data gathered, and open up possibilities for practical decision-making that will respond to sectoral needs.

RESPONDING TO THE DIGITAL SHIFT

The new digital environment, with its constantly evolving technological advances, has operated a thorough transformation of the creative and cultural industry, affecting production and distribution channels, performances and publicity, and has also made content creation far more important. EU funding programmes and national funding policies must be made compatible with the needs of skills development in the audiovisual and live performance sectors, going well beyond basic ICT skills and recognising the role of creative stakeholders in content creation and innovation.

IMPROVING CAREER MANAGEMENT

Project-based work, intermittent employment, and retraining needs have been features of the sector for decades. However, the digital shift and precarious economies are putting new pressures on individual workers, confronting them with greater insecurity than before. Support schemes must be designed to offer the right tools for career development (specific and horizontal skills) to all workers, whether salaried or self-employed. Better publicity is needed to advertise training opportunities for a greater take-up by businesses and individual workers.

DEVELOPING ON-THE-JOB LEARNING

On-the-job learning has proved its effectiveness in helping new professionals entering the market, gaining a better understanding of their future work environment, and acquiring the right set of skills to navigate it. More opportunities must be developed, fully in line with the specificities of the sector (project-based, seasonal, and supported by small structures).

To download the full version of the publication
'Trends and skills in the European audiovisual and live performance sectors',
visit the Creative Skills Europe's website:
www.creativeskillseurope.eu

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