# BUSINESS AND DIGITAL COMPETENCES IN CREATIVE INDUSTRIES: ANALYSIS OF STUDY PROGRAMS IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA AND SLOVENIA

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#### Abstract

Term 'creative industries' is quite broad and encompasses variety of activities, such as: advertising, architecture, arts, crafts, design, fashion, film, interactive leisure software, music, performing arts, publishing, software, television and radio. The main purpose of this paper is to find out whether traditional study programs that are inherently related to some fields of the creative industries, prepare graduates for the labor market, self-employment and professional career development in the creative industries sector. For the purpose of writing this paper it was carried out qualitative analyzes of the study programs' curricula in different fields of the creative industries. Research included all public universities in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Slovenia. Through this research we analyzed whether learning outcomes of the observed study programs contain business competencies (personal/social, legal, managerial, marketing and financial competences) and digital competences (information literacy, digital communication and collaboration, digital content creation, digital security and digital problem solving). Research results show that observed study programs offer qualifications in a particular art form or creative practice. On the other hand, business and digital competences, which are significant to selfemployment and career-building in the creative industries, are not sufficiently represented in learning outcomes. Addressing the current gap and competence shortages is the starting point for improving the education model for creative industries. Results of this research indicate which business and digital competences should be taken into consideration in the education of creative industries' professionals.

Keywords Creative industries, business competences, digital competences, education models

#### INTRODUCTION

Creative industries have gone a long way from criticism to acceptance. For the several decades concept of the creative industries has been subject of the academic, industry and policy discussion. Today, in many developed countries, creators of cultural and economic policies, as well as professionals in this field, believe that creative industry is a key factor for the survival in the 'knowledge economy'. Creative industries are wide-ranging field that includes different activities from traditional cultural industries such as music, visual performance, creative writing and similar, to relative new digital content such as software and multimedia design (Bridgstock, 2011). Over the years, several authors, as well as organizations, have developed different frameworks for the mapping and classification of the creative industries (Thorsby, 2001, 2008; Hesmondhalgh, 2002; DCMS, 2001). Because the creative sector is eclectic mix of

different industries, it is difficult to generalize opinion and knowledge regarding working conditions in the creative industries. However, based on the literature review, certain characteristics of working conditions in the creative industries can be summarized. For example, individual entrepreneurs, micro, small and medium enterprises dominate in the creative industries (Bridgstock, 2011, 2019). Traditional linear career patterns are not common for the creative industries (Freakley and Neelands, 2003; Plataman, 2004), and creative workers are predominately freelance and self-employed (Mietzner and Kamprath, 2013). Because of such working conditions, the creative workforce must be able to "adapt quickly to new markets and market niches, technologies, consumer needs, business models and jobs" (Hennekam and Bennett, 2017: 70). Although the average level of the formal education of creative workers is similar to professionals in other industries (Bridgstock, 2011), the precarious work environment imposes a continuous development of competencies.

Education of creative workers is a key factor for the development of creative industries. In other words, education institutions, primarily universities, should be the drivers of the development of creative industries and creative workforce. Because creative industries are highly heterogeneous and dynamic sector, future professional development of creative workers represents a huge challenge for educational institutions. The main purpose of this paper is to find out whether traditional study programs that are related to some fields of the creative industries, prepare graduates for the labor market, self-employment and professional career development in the creative industries. This paper present the results of the comprehensive qualitative analyse of the of first and second cycle study programs' curricula in different fields of creative industries. Research included all public universities in Bosnia and Herzegovina (8) and Slovenia (4). Since business and digital competence are very important for the selfemployment in the creative industries, through this research we analyzed whether learning outcomes of the observed study programs contain business competencies grouped into five basic categories (personal/social, legal, managerial, marketing and financial competences) and digital competences (information literacy, digital communication and collaboration, digital content creation, digital security and digital problem solving).

Research results show that observed study programs offer qualifications in a particular art form or creative practice. On the other hand, data suggest the lack of business and digital competences, which are significant to self-employment and career-building in the creative industries. Only small percentage of the observed study program contains business and digital competences in their learning outcomes. Addressing the current gap and competence shortages is the starting point for improving the education model for creative industries. Results of this research are significant because they indicate which business and digital competences should be taken into consideration in the education of creative industries' professionals. Also, this paper offers a few recommendations for development of education models for creative industries.

#### 1. THEORETICAL BECKGROUND

Concept of cultural and creative industries has been subject of debate by academics, public policy makers and practitioners for a several decades. The term 'cultural industries' dates back to Second World War, and it was firstly used in a negative context as a critique of American popular culture (Horkhajmer and Adorno, 1989). Through this term Horkheimer and Adorno highlight problem of planned and organized production of arts and culture by the industry and imposition of their products to the masses. In their opinion culture become the instrument of capital (Adorno, 1991; Tomka, 2013). On the other side, proponents of the cultural industry have criticized the elite culture. For example, Williams (2009) advocated the thesis that high art is just one of the many activities that make up the culture and that ordinary people participate in the creation of culture as much as the elite. In this debate, it was prevailed opinion of the advocates of the cultural industries. In the last decade of the twentieth century, a new term has been introduced into the discourse of culture and public cultural policies -'creative industries' (Flew and Cunningham, 2010). This term reflects the continuity of strengthening industrial and economic logic in culture. Today, criticism related to the merging of culture and industry is largely abandoned and there is increasing evidence that culture and arts produce significant social and economic benefits. According to some authors (see Miller, 2009; Freedman 2008) emerging of the creative industries represent the victory of neo-liberal politics in culture.

#### **1.1. Structure of the creative industries**

A creative industry is concept that removes distinction between elite and mass. In relation to the cultural industries, this term is more comprehensive because it includes all creativity-based products. An origin of this concept is related to the United Kingdom Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), which introduced one of the most cited definitions of creative industries. The creative industries include "those activities which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property" (Department of Culture, Media and Sport, 1998, p.3). In other word, creative industries are a new analytic definition of the industrial components of the economy in which creativity is an input and content or intellectual property is the output" (Potts and Cunningham, 2008; Also see: Cunningham, 2001; Hesmondhalgh and Pratt, 2005; Galloway and Dunlop, 2007).

The aforementioned DCMS report (1998) is significant document because it affirms the economic potential of the creative industries, but also because it sets clear parameters for determining the domains of the creative industries. Several different models that systematically classify the fields of creative industries have been developed over the years. The most cited are the DCMS model (DCMS, 2001), Symbolic text model (Hesmondhalgh, 2002), and Concentric circles model (Thorsby, 2001, 2008). The classifications of the creative industries which are derived from the above models are presented in the following table.

DCMS model	Symbolic texts model	Concentric circles model	
15 domains	3 groups 12 domains	4 groups 15 domains	
<ol> <li>Advertising         <ol> <li>Architecture</li> <li>Art and antiques                 market                 <ul> <li>Crafts</li> <li>Design</li> <li>Fashion</li> <li>Film and video</li></ul></li></ol></li></ol>	Core cultural industries (1) Advertising (2) Film (3) Internet (4) Music (5) Publishing (6) Television and radio (7) Video and computer games Peripheral cultural industries (8) Creative arts Borderline cultural industries (9) Consumer electronics (10) Fashion (11) Software (12) Sport	Core creative arts (1) Literature (2) Music (3) Performing arts (4) Visual arts Other core creative arts (5) Film (6) Museums, galleries, libraries (7) Photography Wider cultural industries (8) Heritage services (9) Publishing and print media (10) Television and radio (11) Sound recording, video and computer games Related industries (12) Advertising (13) Architecture (14) Design (15) Fashion	

Source: DCMS, 2001; Hesmondhalgh, 2002; Thorsby, 2001; Thorsby, 2008;

As can be seen from the table above, creative industries include "long-established 'cultural' industries such as crafts, music, dance, publishing, and the creative arts, as well as relative newcomers emphasizing digital content such as software and multimedia design" (Bridgstock, 2011, 11). Furthermore, creative industries cover "activities which have a commercial focus as well as non-profit activities performed by private or public organizations, often including cultural activities such as museums or libraries" (Müller, Rammer and Trüby, 2009, 150). The common denominator of creative industries is that they all use creativity to produce products and services with social and cultural meaning, and with the opportunity to generate employment and welfare.

#### **1.2.** Working condition and characteristic of the creative workforce

Unlike conventional industries, creative industries are characterized by the dominance of individual entrepreneurs, micro, small and medium enterprises (Bridgstock, 2011, 2019). One of the features of work in the creative industries is the multiple jobs holding within and outside the creative sector (Ashton, 2015; Pollard, 2013; Throsby and Zednik, 2011). Traditional linear career patterns are not common for the creative industries, which mean that creative workers are "dependent on active job-search

strategies and work in an over-supplied labour market with consequent unemployment and under employment" (Freakley and Neelands, 2003: 53). Career pattern such as portfolio career is much more prevalent for the creative industries (Plataman, 2004). Career portfolio is a concept that reflects the efforts of individuals to strike a better work-life balance and to liberate from organization employment. Career portfolio involves that individuals accept "personal responsibility for the development and exercise of skills" (Mallon 1999: 358) and "tailor their own careers" (Platman, 2003: 28). Therefore, creative workers are predominately freelance and self-employed (Mietzner and Kamprath, 2013). In order to understand the characteristic of creative labor, it is important to consider which categories of workers represent its components. For example, Cunningham's (2001: 27) creative trident presents three groups of creative employment. These groups are: (1) Individuals with a creative job and working in the creative industries - specialists; (2) Individuals with a non-creative job working in the creative industries - typically support employees; (3) Individuals with a creative job and not working in the creative industries - embedded (Also see Higgs et al., 2008; Cunningham, 2011).

There is a whole set of stereotypes regarding working conditions in creative sector, and especially regarding creative workforce. Creative work is perceived as "collaborative, fulfilling, unpredictable, fun" (Munro, 2017: 16) and with higher level of freedom in order to salaried jobs in other industries. As for the creative workforce Menger (1999: 545) has written that is an "occupational group, who are on average, younger than the general workforce, are better educated, tend to be more concentrated in a few metropolitan areas, show higher rates of self-employment and higher rates of unemployment". Some creative workers rely on multiple jobs to generate enough income (Guile, 2006) and financial support from "family and friends, particularly during periods of unpaid up-skilling" (Hennekam and Bennett, 2017).

### **1.3.** Competences in the creative industries

In human resource management literature competences are described as complex theoretical construct that covers different elements, such as knowledge, skills, attitudes, individual traits, which determine work behaviour and performance. Furthermore, competence can also be defined as the ability to meet job requirements. Competences classification has been subject of the interest of many researchers (Gessler, 2009; Haukka, 2011; Mietzner and Kamprath, 2013, 2015). Some frameworks are generic, and others are specific for the creative industries and professionals. For example, Dobrunz, Schoppner and Wolfram (2006) divide competences of creative professionals into three categories: (1) professional competence, (2) methodological competence, (3) soft competence. Mietzner and Kamprath (2013: 290) suggest competence framework for the creative professionals consisted of three competence groups: (1) personal-social, (2) methodology and (3) professional competencies. Some of personal-social competencies are: ability to work in a team, communication, networked holistic thinking, being aware of consequences and strategic thinking, etc. Examples of methodological competences are management of multi and cross-media projects, change management, analysis understanding, and ability to organise. Regarding professional competencies Mietzner and Kamprath suggest IT competencies, business administration, entrepreneurial thinking, network management, etc. Competences frameworks are also attracted interest of governments, public organisations and association around the world. From an educational perspective, some of well-known competences frameworks are: European Reference Framework (European Commission), New Millennium Learners (OECD: Centre for Education Research and Innovation), ICT Competency Standards (UNESCO; Cisco, Intel, Microsoft), Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> century skills (US Department of Education), etc. The competences mentioned in all of the above frameworks are: collaboration, communication, ITC literacy, social and cultural skills (see Voogt and Roblin, 2012).

In the last decade, digital competences have also been increasingly discussed. The creative industries are characterized by rapid technological changes and creative professionals are usually intensive users of technology. Because of that, some researchers are focused on digital skills and competences in creative industries (see Van Laar et al. 2017; Kamprath and Mietzner, 2015; Ferrari et al., 2012). Van Laar and other authors (2017) identified seven core digital skills (technical, information management, communication, collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, and problem solving) and five contextual skills (ethical awareness, cultural awareness, flexibility, self-direction, and lifelong learning).

As already pointed out creative workers are often individual entrepreneurs, freelance professionals or micro, small and medium enterprises owners. Their work is also called creative entrepreneurship (Oakley, 2014). Creative entrepreneurship often involves non-creative work which means that in creative industries, success and competitive advantage are based on intellect, ideas and imagination, but also on the business competencies.

### 2. METHOD

After the short literature review about concept and structure of the creative industries, working condition and characteristic of the creative workforce, as well as competences in the creative industries, the aim of the empirical research was to explore whether traditional study programs in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Slovenia, which are inherently related to some fields of the creative industries, prepare graduates for the labour market, self-employment and professional career development in the creative industries sector. This research included all public universities in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Slovenia.

Public universities in observed countries offer several hundred of study programs. However, in this research, subject of deep qualitative analysis were curricula of the first and second cycle study programs, which are related to the creative industries by their nature or content. Observed study programs are categorised in three main groups (according to Bridgstock, 2011), which cover most creative domains listed by DCMS. These groups are Creative Arts (CA), Performing Arts (PA) and Technical and Digital Arts / Design (TDA). In this research, Creative Arts include following study programs: fine arts, sculpture, graphics, photography, languages, creative writing, composition, and church arts. Performing Arts include study programs such as: acting, dramaturgy, performance art, conducting, solo singing, studies for instrumentalist and

ethnomusicology. Technical and Digital Arts / Design are the most comprehensive group of study programs, including: architecture, landscaping and urban planning, directing, production, film and television, communication, multimedia, public relations and journalism, archaeology and cultural heritage management, digital and media arts, graphic and software engineering, graphic, product, textile, industrial, stage and visual communications design.

Through this research we analyzed whether learning outcomes of the observed study programs contain business and digital competences. Business competences are grouped into five basic categories. These categories are following: (1) Personal/social competences - oral and written communication, interpersonal skills, networking skills, presentation skills, negotiation skills and conflict management, ability to work in a group or/and team; (2) Legal competences - identifying, protecting and using of intellectual property, legal options for business starting; (3) Managerial competences - business planning, project management, fundraising, resource management; (4) Marketing competences - marker research, products or services promotion including digital media, web site design, maintains of business profiles on social networks, etc; (5) Financial competences - basic financial literacy, basic of financial management, and project budgeting.

Digital competences are also divided into five categories, as follow: (1) Information literacy - search, filter, assessment and maintain of data, information and digital content; (2) Digital communication and collaboration - maintain of digital identity, interaction with potential consumers of creative products or services through digital technologies, content sharing and collaboration via digital technologies; (3) Digital content creation - development of digital content, basic of programming, copyrights and licenses; (4) Digital security - device, data and privacy protection; (5) Digital problem solving - solving of specific technical problems, as well as creative use of digital technologies. Descriptive results of this qualitative analyse are presented in the next section of this paper.

### 3. **RESULTS**

The higher education system of Bosnia and Herzegovina is represented by eight (8) public universities, namely: University of Sarajevo, University of Banja Luka, University of Tuzla, University of Mostar, University of East Sarajevo, Dzemal Bijedic University of Mostar, University of Bihac and University of Zenica. The higher education system of Slovenia is consisting of four (4) public universities, which are: University of Ljubljana, University of Maribor, University of Primorska and University of Nova Gorica. Some general information about public universities in observed countries are presented in the following table.

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	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Slovenia
Number of the public universities	8	4
Number of the faculties	107	56
I cycle study programs	416	164
II cycle study programs	428	236
III cycle study programs	111	88
Total number of the study programs	955	488

Table 2: General comparative info	rmation about public universities in the
observed countries	

Source: Authors' creation

The data in the table above shows that eight public universities in Bosnia and Herzegovina provide the possibility of enrolling students in more than 950 study programs. At the same time, four public universities in Slovenia offer almost 500 study programs. In this research, only I and II cycle study programs were covered by the analysis. Study programs which are inherently related to some fields of the creative industries have been extracted of the total number of I and II cycle study programs. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, 22.83% of the first cycle study programs and 21.50% of the second cycle study programs meet these criteria. Similarly, in Slovenia 28.66% of the first cycle study programs fulfils criteria for the analysis. In the further analysis process these study programs are divided in three main groups: Creative Arts (CA), Performing Arts (PA) and Technical and Digital Arts / Design (TDA). The results are shown in the following table.

	Bosnia and I	Herzegovina	Slovenia		
	I cycle	II cycle	I cycle	II cycle	
Creative Arts (CA)	47 (49.47%)	46 (50.00%)	13 (27.66%)	14 (25.92%)	
Performing Arts (PA)	12 (12.63%)	11 (11.96%)	5 (10.64%)	8 (14.81%)	
Technical and Digital Arts / Design (TDA)	36 (37.89%)	35 (38.04%)	29 (61.70%)	32 (59.26%)	
Total	95 (100.0%)	92 (100.0%)	47 (100.0%)	54 (100.0%)	

Table 3: Observed study programs divided by creative industries fields

Source: Authors' creation

As can be concluded from the previous table, group Creative Arts is the most represented among the observed study programs in Bosnia and Herzegovina. On the other hand, group Technical and Digital Arts / Design (TDA) is the most represented among the observed study programs in Slovenia. The curriculum of each of the observed study programs was the subject of a detailed qualitative analysis in order to explore whether their learning outcomes contain business and digital competences. Results of this analysis segment are presented in the following tables.

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Bosnia and Herzegovina						
Business	I cycle		II cycle			
competences	CA	PA	TDA	CA	PA	TDA
Personal/social	3 (6.38%)	-	10 (27.78%)	-	-	10 (28.57%)
Legal	-	-	8 (22.22%)	-	1 (9.09%)	2 (5.71%)
Managerial	-	-	8 (22.22%)	-	1 (9.09%)	8 (22.86%)
Marketing	-	-	13 (36.11%)	-	-	9 (25.71%)
Financial	-	-	2 (5.56%)	-	-	3 (8.57%)
	•		Slovenia			
Business		I cycle	•	II cycle		
competences	CA	PA	TDA	CA	PA	TDA
Personal/social	1 (7.69%)	-	11 (37.93%)	1 (7.14%	б) -	6 (18.75%)
Legal	-	-	5 (17.24%)	-	-	1 (3.13%)
Managerial	-	-	11 (37.93%)	-	-	6 (18.75%)
Marketing	-	-	5 (17.24%)	-	-	3 (9.38%)
Financial	-	-	4 (13.79%)	-	-	2 (6.25%)

Table 4: Study programs which learning outcomes contain business competences

Source: Authors' creation

In the learning outcomes of the study programs we tried to identify five types of business competencies, namely: personal/social, legal, managerial, marketing and financial competences. All listed types of business competencies are identified in the Technical and Digital Arts / Design group of study programs. This conclusion applies to both study cycles and both observed countries. Personal/social, marketing and managerial competences are most prevalent, but generally in both observed countries number of the study programs, which learning outcomes contain business competences, is small.

Bosnia and Herzegovina						
Business	I cycle		II cycle			
competences	CA	PA	TDA	CA	PA	TDA
Info. literacy	5 (10.64%)	-	8 (22.22%)	-	-	2 (8.00%)
Com. & coll.	4 (8.51%)	-	7 (19.44%)	1 (2.17%)	-	3 (8.57%)
Content creat.	2 (4.26%)	-	5 (18.89%)	4 (8.69%)	-	4 (11.43%)
Security	-	-	-	-	-	-
Prob. solving	-	-	2 (5.56%)	-	-	1 (2.86%)
			Slovenia			
Business	Business I cycle			II cycle		
competences	CA	PA	TDA	CA	PA	TDA
Info. literacy	1 (7.69%)	-	12 (41.38%)	1 (7.14%)	-	3 (9.36%)
Com. & coll.	-	-	9 (31.03%)	-	-	5 (15.63%)
Content creat.	-	-	8 (27.59%)	-	-	4 (12.50%)
Security	-	-	1 (3.45%)	-	-	1 (3.13%)
Prob. solving	-	-	4 (13.79%)	-	-	3 (9.36%)

Table 5: §	Study programs	which learning	outcomes contain	digital competences

Source: Authors' creation

Regarding digital competences, we tried to identify whether learning outcomes of the study programs contain: information literacy, digital communication and collaboration, digital content creation, digital security and digital problem-solving group of competences. Similar to the business competences, digital competences are most represented in the Technical and Digital Arts / Design group of study programs. Also, number of the study programs which learning outcomes contain digital competences is small in both observed countries.

#### CONCLUSION

The Creative Industries have been subject of the academic, industry and policy discussion. Regarding academic discussion, creative industries have been studied from different points of view e.g. economic, political, sociological, and the like. This paper provides a brief theoretical overview of the concept and structure of the creative industries, working conditions and characteristics of the creative workforce, as well as competencies in the creative industries. Also, this paper presents part of the results of a comprehensive qualitative research of traditional study programs in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Slovenia. Some studies dealing with the mapping of the creative industries can be found in Slovenia as well in Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, in observed countries this is first study which demonstrates the rigidity of the education system in terms of insufficient adaptation to contemporary trends in the creative industries.

The results of the research are quite similar in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Slovenia. Most of the observed study programs provide students with narrow expertise in some art form or creative practice. Furthermore, most study programs direct students to work in educational institutions (for example, teacher of music, fine arts, and similar), cultural institutions (for example, a curator at a museum), other public institutions such as ministries, institutes for the protection of cultural heritage and the like. Many of the analysed study programs state that students are trained for self-employed and independent entrepreneurial work in selected art for or creative practice. However, their curricula dispute such claims because learning outcomes do not contain business and digital competences that are crucial for self-employment and starting a business.

This research is significant because it provides insights into the current offer of public high education institutions to the creative industries. In addition, this research addresses business and digital competence shortage, which is the starting point for improving existing education models. There are several different approaches to implementing business and digital competencies in education practice. Some of them are: (1) Complete transformation of existing study programs whereby business and digital competences would be added to an existing curriculum as a new subject or new content of existing subjects; (2) Development of new study programs that would strike a balance between professional expertise in a particular art form or creative practice and competencies that are necessary for self-employment and professional career development in the creative industries; (3) Development of specialized business study programs in which traditional subjects (e.g. marketing, management, finance) would be applied in a specific art form or creative practice; (4) Development of less formal

education programs, such as lifelong learning courses, that would enable creative workers to acquire missing business and digital competencies. Implementation of business and digital competencies in education practice is a complex issue, and an interesting direction for further research in the creative industries.

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