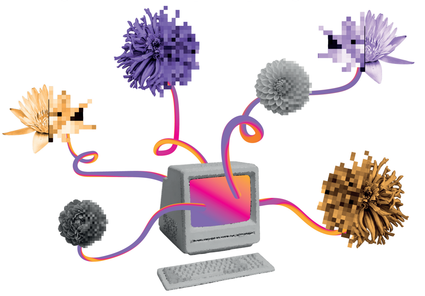
POLICY AREA FOR INNOVATION #13

Creativity as civic infrastructure: CCIs and digital common

#collective governance #community driven creative ecosystems #community led innovation #cross sectoral collaboration #open access #democratic resilience #democratizing creativity #digital commons #equity diversity and inclusion #participatory culture #data space

01 BACKGROUND

CCIs are relevant to the transformation of digital societies, contributing to **cultural expression, creativity, innovation, and civic participation**. However, their diverse and multifaceted nature can hinder **collective action and coordinated growth**, while their limited presence in the public agenda may constrain their engagement in governance and innovation processes. At the same time, **digitalisation is transforming creative practices, value chains, and business models**, opening opportunities for openness, co-creation, and new forms of collaboration. Within this context, digital commons provide **shared infrastructures** for creating, preserving, governing, accessing, and reusing cultural resources, supporting knowledge sharing and creative experimentation. Their long-term value nevertheless depends on **sustainable governance, stewardship, infrastructure, institutional support, and investment, particularly amid generative AI, platform concentration, and the EU's pursuit of digital sovereignty**. CCIs can contribute to sustaining and activating digital commons, strengthening their role as civic infrastructure and supporting more inclusive and **resilient innovation ecosystems**.



> *Digital Commons are digital resources, including software, data, infrastructures, archives, datasets and cultural heritage materials, that are collectively created, maintained and governed by communities. They are based on openness, sharing, non-exclusive ownership, public use and reuse, and distributed forms of production. Their governance systems define how resources are accessed, shared and reused.*
>
> Krewerm, J., & Warso, Z. (2024)[1]

> *Cultural Commons refer to shared systems of collective action, located in time and space, either physical or virtual, and shared and expressed by a community. Cultural may be economically productive or non-monetary, depends on shared knowledge systems and is essentially non-rival.*
>
> Macri, E., Morea, V., & Trimarchi, M. (2020)[2]

Why are Digital Commons relevant in CCIs?

A two-way dynamic connecting digital commons as civic infrastructure with cultural commons, enabling shared knowledge, collective creativity and open innovation.



02 CHALLENGES

- **Digital sovereignty:** address platform concentration and dependence on non-European digital and AI infrastructures.
- **Regulation and governance:** address AI, copyright, training data transparency and licensing.
- **Cultural diversity and value:** protect creators, cultural diversity and the public domain from extractive practices.
- **Infrastructure and innovation:** strengthen provenance, transparency and interoperable infrastructures.
- **Skills and investment:** ensure skills, long-term funding and maintenance for shared digital infrastructures.

03 OPPORTUNITIES

- Connecting GLAM institutions, CCIs, communities and creators to **combine resources, expertise and capacities**.
- **Supporting the reuse** of collections, archives and **community knowledge** for new creative production.
- Fostering community engagement, co-creation, **knowledge sharing and collective decision-making**.
- **Strengthening access to digital collections, metadata and tools** for cultural participation and creative experimentation.
- **Balancing openness and reuse** with consent, attribution, and respect for community ownership and care.

04 EMERGING CONVERSATIONS AMONG PRACTITIONERS

CCIs, blending collaborative investment, financial capacity building, and digital monetisation experiments, are reshaping financing ecosystems toward more resilient and distributed models, while facing growing pressure to prove measurable social impact and long-term sustainability.

Most affected CCIs

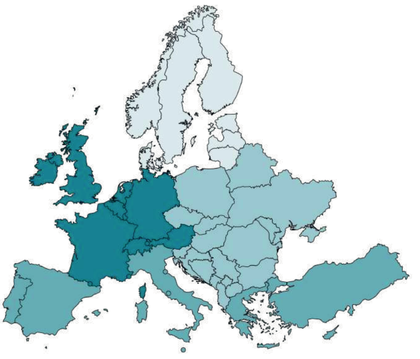
- *Education*
- *Gaming & IT*
- *Architecture*
- *Cultural Heritage*

Rising conversation in the last 6 months

+111% Decentralized Trust

Regulatory Clarity +68%

In which countries are most actively discussing digital commons as civic infrastructures?



less discussed — more discussed

The Regional Relevance showcases the most to least associated regions to the examined conversation cluster, determined by the origin of analysed profile. Top CCIS reflects the industry distribution of contributing profiles, displayed as percentages across the considered industries. Data regarding the analysed ***ekip*** community over the past six months is based on a mapping of conversations on research-access platforms and forms part of a broader mixed-method data collection framework.

> *We believe culture and media shouldn't be controlled by any centralized tech platform or venture-backed corporation. As we continue to build open infrastructure for the future of publishing, Ghost is now recognized as a Digital Public Good.*
>
> Gaming & IT, Western

> *Draft guidelines to monitor 3 key CI recommendations on multilingualism, digital heritage & OER were discussed at UNESCO EX today. We invite engagement to strengthen impact and advance inclusive knowledge societies.*
>
> Education, Central & Eastern Europe

> *[...] AI is reshaping access to creativity, memory work, and inclusive participation in cultural heritage. From AI-driven storytelling and archival revival to community-led digital practices [...].*
>
> Cultural Heritage, Sourthern & Turkey

05 EXISTING POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

European Digital Infrastructure Consortia | EDIC[3]

- **EDICs** allow Member States to jointly develop, deploy and operate cross-border digital infrastructures with dedicated governance and legal personality.
- **Alliance for Language Technologies EDIC (ALT-EDIC)** addresses the scarcity of European language data available for training AI systems. It aims to develop a common European infrastructure in language technologies, including large language models for European regional and official languages. Its objectives are to support advanced AI models capable of understanding and generating human-like language, strengthen digital competitiveness, preserve linguistic diversity and promote cultural richness within the EU.
- **The Digital Commons EDIC (DC-EDIC)** established by Commission decision late 2025, it aims to build a European community around digital commons by facilitating access to funding, supporting development and scale-up, enhancing public contributions and participating in digital commons projects. It will act as a one-stop shop for stakeholders such as open-source communities, public administrations and developers, serve as an incubator for strategic digital commons, and accelerate joint projects such as a European digital workplace.

EU digital cultural heritage | EUROPEANA[4]

Europeana established in 2010, it brings together digital cultural heritage in the public domain from across the EU to support knowledge sharing, creativity and innovation. It includes a network of **GLAM aggregators**, such as public museums and galleries, and a European common data space infrastructure that allows cultural heritage assets to be shared with the public. Europeana also supports the digital transformation of the cultural heritage sector by developing expertise, tools and policies, and by encouraging partnerships that foster innovation. Its website gives cultural heritage professionals, teachers, researchers and the wider public access to millions of cultural heritage items from more than 2,000 European providing institutions, including artworks, books, music, videos, newspapers, archaeology, fashion, science and sport. A network of aggregators collects, checks and enriches these items and their related data, including through geo-location, links to associated people, places and topics, and connections to other material or datasets.

06 CASE STUDIES AND RELATED INITIATIVES



AMPLIFY | Europe[5]

By merging physical and digital (phygital) experiences and fostering collaboration, it is creating innovative ways to connect creators and audiences. **AMPLIFY** responds to the difficulty faced by creators and organisations in integrating new technologies while preserving the essence of their craft. T**he project develops two open-source tools: AMPLIFY PORTABLE for remote collaboration and AMPLIFY IMMERSIVE for enhancing live performances.** Both tools are designed to be adaptable across creative sectors and accessible to diverse communities.



EXCENTRIC | Europe[6]

It supports the digital transition and responsible growth of the CCs and industries. It focuses on the underuse of data in live music, festivals, theatre and museums. The project develops and tests collaborative data practices through sector-specific and cross-sectoral pilots under real working conditions. It co-designs smart data infrastructure and tools with organisations in experience sectors, supporting data-driven innovation in programming, pricing, resource management and audience engagement. It also builds organisational capabilities, **data literacy and skills, and will formulate evidence-based policy recommendations** for digital transformation based on pilot results.



Godot Engine | Netherlands[7]

It provides a complete environment for creating 2D and 3D interactive applications and games, and is used by independent developers, studios, educators and learners worldwide. Godot **combines shared technological infrastructure with an open model of collaboration, enabling broad access to game development tools without licensing fees or dependence on proprietary platforms**.



Codeberg | Germany[8]

A community-led and non-profit digital platform that provides open infrastructure for collaborative software development. It offers freely accessible services including **code hosting, collaborative project management, website hosting, translation tools and software development infrastructure for free and open-source projects**. Codeberg shows how digital commons can support innovation, collaboration and digital sovereignty while reducing dependence on proprietary platforms.

References:

[1] Krewerm J. Warso. Z. (2024). Digital Commons as Providers of Public Digital Infrastructure, Open Future. Retrieved 19 June 2026, from https://openfuture.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/241113_Digital-Commons-as-Providers-of-Public-Digital-Infrastructures.pdf .

[2] Macri E. Morea V. Trimarchi M. (2020), Cultural Commons and Urban Dynamics, Springer Pp. 14-15. Retrieved 19 June 2026, from https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-54418-8_2

[3] EDIC. European Commission, European Digital Infrastructure Consortium. Retrieved 19 June 2026, from https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/edic

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