



LIST OF PANELLISTS

CREATIVE KNOWLEDGE AND POLICY

Ahmed Taha

Executive Director, Industrial Modernisation Centre, Egypt

Ahmed Taha is Deputy Executive Director of the Industrial Modernisation Centre (IMC) in Egypt. He has been providing expertise to the IMC, with the aim to perform as the prime agent for substantiating the government's vision of a vibrant and globally competitive industrial sector. Ahmed is responsible for administrative procedures and processes dedicated to maintaining fiscal accountability and control, equitable and fair personnel practices, and the efficiency of operations. He is also in charge of overseeing and coordinating fundraising and donor management activities, and develops other revenue sources, including business arrangements and funding proposals.



Colm Croffy

Board Member, European Festivals Association (EFA), Belgium

Colm is Executive Director of the Association of Irish Festivals and Events (AOIFE). He serves as Director of the International Festivals and Events Association (IFEA) and as Hon. Treasurer of International Festivals and Events – Europe. Formerly Co-ordinator for Ballinasloe Fair and Festival – one of the largest festival and heritage events in the west of Ireland, he is presently involved with The Rose of Tralee – one of Ireland's longest running televised festivals based in Kerry in the South West.



Sonja Kralj Bervar

**Attaché for Culture and Audiovisual Affairs,
Permanent Representation of the Republic of Slovenia to the European Union,
Slovenia**

Sonja Kralj Bervar pursued her graduate and master degrees at the Musical Academy of Ljubljana and obtained a PhD at the Department for Musicology at the Faculty of Arts. She has been active in the fields of performing arts, cultural management and cultural policy. She spearheaded the national project preparing the Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the EU at the Ministry of Culture and was the first Slovenian to act as Chair of the Council's Cultural Affairs Committee. Since 2013, she has been working as culture and audio-visual affairs Attaché at Slovenia's Permanent Representation to the European Union in Brussels, as well as the national representative in the Friends of the Presidency Group, aimed at strengthening international cultural relationships of the European Union.



Suzana Žilič Fišer

Member of ECOC selection panel, Slovenia

Suzana Žilič Fišer, PhD is Head of Department at the Institute of Media Communication of the University of Maribor, Slovenia. She is an external expert at the panel for the European Capitals of Culture for the European Commission. She was Director-General of the European Capital of Culture Maribor 2012 and spent ten years in the media industry.



Flora Krasniqi
Project and Research Development Coordinator,
Polis University of Tirana, Albania

Flora Krasniqi is Project and Research Development Coordinator at the Faculty of Research and Development, University Polis. She is also a coordinator of the first Energy Community Summer School, her main duties are writing, management and reporting for projects Erasmus+ and Horizon 2020, she is also a research and development coordinator. She has previous experience as journalist in several newspapers and the TV, in Albania and abroad, especially in the economy and social sector. Flora is currently working on her PhD in Economic Sciences at the International University of Struga.

MODERATOR



Mohammed Elrazzaz
Project Analyst, Business Development and Employment Division,
Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean

Mohammed joined the Union for the Mediterranean in 2013 and worked for the Cabinet before assuming business development responsibilities. He has a 10-year experience in the financial sector as former Head of IR for Egypt's Commercial International Bank (CIB). He is also a published author and Professor of Art, Culture and Mediterranean Heritage in Barcelona.

CREATIVE FUNDING AND ECONOMY



Branimir Brkljač
Entrepreneur, Mokrin House, Serbia/Slovenia

Branimir Brkljač, marketing expert, media strategy and direct sales, the founder of the leading brand in the field of TV sales TOP SHOP, i.e. Studio Moderna, renowned for the famous Kosmodisk products, now the owner of the Terra Panonica cultural and tourism project in Mokrin, dedicated to the incubation of creative energy and affirmation of a Vojvodina village through modern creativity. Branimir's inspiring speeches are full of new ideas, knowledge and perceptions of reality from a different angle.



Ladeja Godina Košir
Founder and Executive Director, Circular Change, Slovenia

Ladeja Godina Košir is Founder and Executive Director of Circular Change (CC), a private non-profit company. She is recognised as the regional "engine of the circular economy", engaging different stakeholders in circular economy transition. CC is currently working on the first Slovenian Circular Economy Roadmap. Transdisciplinary approach and a holistic view are what Ladeja is implementing as an entrepreneur, marketing-communications professional, speaker, moderator, lecturer, mentor and passionate connector. She is empowering a new narrative and circular culture as a member of the ECESP Coordination Group, Vice President of the Slovenian Dutch Business Forum, co-chair of the AmCham Circular and Sharing Economy Committee, and a member of the Management Board of the Managers Association of Slovenia. Ladeja was the finalist of The Circular Leadership Award 2018 (WEF).



Mateja Lazar
Head of the Culture sub-programme, Motovila, Slovenia

Creative Europe Desk Slovenia provides information on the Creative Europe's funding and opportunities and offers free advice and support to applicants. Creative Europe Desk Slovenia is led by Motovila – Centre for the Promotion of Cooperation in the Cultural and Creative Sectors. The Motovila team has many years of experience in the field of networking, providing information and advising about the financial mechanisms for funding and support in the cultural and creative sectors.



Edmond Hajrizi
University for Business and Technology, Prishtina, Kosovo

Edmond Hajrizi has a diploma and MSc from the University of Prishtina, a diploma and PhD from the Vienna University of Technology, and a Post-Doc. from City, University of London. He has experience in entrepreneurship, management, teaching, research, development, training, consulting, certification and publishing. Besides, he is the founder and CEO of the University for Business and Technology, Institute of Enterprise Management and Engineering, Kosova Association for Quality Management, Standards, Certification and Confirmation (Quality Kosova), Kosova

Association for Control, Automation and Systems Engineering, Kosova Association for Management, Kosova Association for Accounting, Auditing and Finance, Kosova Innovation Park, and Kosova Robot Soccer Team. His teaching experience includes Vienna University of Technology, Danube University Krems, University for Business and Technology, University of Prishtina. In his career, Edmond was awarded Excellence Award in Teaching – International Engineering Management, Best Student Award, Leadership Excellence Award for Education, Science and Technology, Ambassador for Peace, and was Personality of Year in Kosovo.



Isam A. Abu Zaid
General Manager at Nablus Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Palestine

Isam Abu Zaid has been a Junior Accountant and Projects Accounting Manager at Modern Zahra Central Air Conditioning Company, Saudi Arabia. He has also worked as Financial Manager at Mohammad Tawfiq Attari Contracting Group and as Financial and Administrative Director at Saud Geo Group, Saudi Arabia up to 2014. These experiences enriched him with more skills in manufacturing and production fields, in addition to the full awareness of administration matters. He has been General Manager of Nablus Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NCCI), Palestine since 2014.

MODERATOR



Robert Manchin
Culture Action Europe, Belgium

Robert Manchin is the President of Europa Nova, a think tank and consulting organisation and a Distinguished Senior Scholar at the University of Pannonia Koszeg Knowledge Center. Previously, Manchin was Senior Vice President of the Gallup Organisation, Princeton and Chairman and Managing Director of Gallup Europe. During his career, he played as a professional musician at the Hungarian State Philharmonic Orchestra, was visiting professor at various universities in the US and Europe, and briefly elected as Director of the Institute of Sociology at the Hungarian Academy of Science. For a decade, he was President of the Hungarian Tobacco-Free Association. With Elemér Hankiss, he established and co-directed the non-profit company Reinventing Hungary. In November 2015, he was elected president of the largest European cultural policy organization, Culture Action Europe.

CULTURE AND CREATIVITY



Mateja Demšič
Head of the Department for Culture of the City of Ljubljana, Slovenia

Before taking up the present post, Mateja headed the Office for Youth in the Municipality of Ljubljana, composed of the Department of Pre-school Education, Education and Sport.



Slaven Tolj
Artistic Director – ECOC Rijeka 2020 and Director of the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Arts, Croatia

Multimedia artist from Dubrovnik, Slaven achieved international recognition for his installations, body art and performances presenting distinct political and social-cultural criticism. The beginning of his work as an artist was determined by his experiences of the Yugoslav War, the Siege of Dubrovnik by the Yugoslav Army in the 1991–92, as well as the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia. In late 1990s, Slaven gradually extended the scope of his art, incorporating themes and issues related to political transformation and the emergence of multiculturalism and globalisation. He has also been involved in organisational and curatorial activities. He is one of the founders of Art Workshop Lazareti in Dubrovnik – a key contemporary art institution in Croatia. In 2005, he was the commissioner of the Croatian pavilion at the Venice Biennale.



Žarko Sakan
CEO, New Moment Balkans, Serbia

After studying in London and Rome, Žarko started his career at S Team Bates Saatchi & Saatchi Advertising Balkans, working in Sofia, Ljubljana and Belgrade. Since 2003, he has been working in New Moment, almost in all positions. Since 2010, he leads the company New Moment Balkans, which operates in 9 markets in the region. Ambassador of the Golden Drum Festival for Serbia. Participant of numerous expert meetings in Europe and the world. Awarded at the world's leading creativity festivals, among others Cannes Titanium Lion (2013), Cannes Silver and Bronze (2015), Epica Gold, Epica Silver, CEE Creative Agency of the Year Golden Drum (2013), PR Agency of the Year in Serbia 2015, awards at Moscow Festival, UEPS, Golden Drum. In 2017, New Moment won 5 Cannes Lions, biggest achievement until today.



Diego Marani
**Policy Officer at the External Action Service,
European Commission**

Diego Marani has been working for the EU since 1985, first at the Council of Ministers, then at the Commission in DG Culture. He has been an advisor to the Italian Minister for Culture and is now a policy coordinator for cultural diplomacy at the EEAS. Diego Marani is also a writer and a columnist. His novels have been translated in numerous languages.

MODERATOR



Blaž Peršin

Director of Museum and Galleries of the City of Ljubljana, Slovenia

Blaž Peršin was Director of the Ljubljana Regional Unit of the Cultural Heritage Protection Office and Head of the Department of Culture at the Municipality of Ljubljana. In 2006, he became Director of the City Museum of Ljubljana and in 2010, Director of the new institution of the Museum and Galleries of the City of Ljubljana. In 1999, he obtained a European diploma as Project Cultural Manager. He was active in organising exhibitions, some of which he also curated. In the field of performing arts, he participated in the organisation of Exodos and Mladi Levi festivals, and the foundation of KUD Trnovo. He also took part in the Muzeum group projects as a producer and musician in individual performances. As a lecturer, he participated in various international conferences and round tables, in the fields of heritage, arts and urban culture, and cultural policy.

DIGITAL CREATIVITY



Veronika Tasić Vušurović

Digital Serbia

Veronika has been advising leading companies for almost 10 years. Her primary topics include corporate and business strategy, sales and marketing, and strategy operationalisation. She is particularly excited with assignments in which companies aim to understand their relation with clients and improve the overall client experience. Veronika has advised a number of banking, insurance and telecommunication leaders in Serbia and South East Europe. She has also worked extensively with clients in manufacturing, retailing, transportation and other industries. Prior to joining PWC Consulting as a manager, Veronika worked for A. T. Kearney, specialising in strategic consultancy. Her 10 years of business consulting are complemented with 5 years of non-profit consulting, working with lead UN agencies and the Government of Serbia. Veronika is currently director of the executive office of a private non-profit organisation Digital Serbia Initiative, aiming to build and strengthen all parts of a successful digital and high-tech innovation ecosystem.



Sanjin Osmanbašić

Spark, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Sanjin is Managing Director of Spark Business park – an advanced digital acceleration platform dedicated to regional start-ups. As a developer with experience in creative industries, he promotes new technologies and encourages the development of B&H creative ecosystem. When he is not managing the company, Sanjin loves to travel the world. In short, he is an activist, a futurist and a firm optimist.



Michela Magaš

EU Innovator of the year 2017, Innovation Luminary Award for Creative Innovation in 2016, Croatia/UK

Michela is the founder of Music Tech Fest, a global community platform of over 5,000 creative innovators and scientific researchers that provides a test case for innovation in areas as diverse as neuroscience, forestry and microcomputing. In 2000, together with Peter Russel-Clarke, Michela co-founded Stromatolite Design Innovation Lab, developing future concepts for a series of international clients including Apple, Nike and Nokia. She was Scientific Director of MIREs, a European Commission-funded project investigating the future of music technology. Her work has received the art-meets-science NEM art award twice: for Songlines (Barcelona 2010) and Synaesthesia (Istanbul 2012) and has been included in the Future of British Innovation at the Science Museum during the London 2012 Olympics.



Taoufik Aboudia

CEO, Emerging Business Factory, Morocco

Taoufik Aboudia is the co-founder of Emerging Business Factory (EBF), the first private IT and media incubator in the region and one of the key partners of the Marrakech Creative Interiors Cluster. The EBF incubator is nestled in a former textile factory among the industrial and creative enterprises of Marrakech in the Sidi Ghanem industrial district. This space in the heart of the industrial district of Marrakech has been refurbished to accommodate an IT and media incubator, the first of its kind in the region and Morocco.

MODERATOR



Jurij Krpan

Architect and curator, Galerija Kapelica, Slovenia

Jurij Krpan is art director at Galerija Kapelica in Ljubljana since 1995. He studied at Ljubljana School of Architecture from which he graduated in 1995. His 3A Institute has put on independent exhibitions and participated at architecture festivals in the region, Italy and Portugal. At the initiative of the University Student Organisation he has established the Kapelica Gallery that he still manages today. In 2003, he was the Commissioner of the Slovenian Pavilion at the 50th Venice Biennale. From 2004, he has been director of the art department at the Biennial of Young Artists from Europe and Mediterranean (Brussels), where he has assisted in improving the Biennial's artistic level. In 2006, he curated U3 – the 5th Triennial of Contemporary Slovenian Art in Modern Art Gallery in Ljubljana. From 2006 to 2010, he led the Cosinus art project in Brussels. In his architectural research projects, he focuses on the semantics of the artistic production of buildings, while in his gallerist activity he explores the meaning of artworks and their tactical impact on contemporary society.

PRESENTATION OF THE WESTERN BALKANS CULTURE AND CREATIVITY NETWORK AND THE DECLARATION OF GOODWILL



Doris Pack

Former Chair of the European Committee on Culture and Education in the European Parliament

Doris Pack is a former MEP and a long-serving European and German politician. As an EU lawmaker with the European Peoples Party (EPP) group (1989–2014), she chaired the European Parliament Committee on Culture and Education and the Delegation for Relations with South-East Europe. She worked at the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality and on the Committee on Foreign Affairs. Among her many achievements and recognitions, Doris is considered as the conceiver and founder of the European Parliament's LUX Prize. She is currently the President of EPP Women, chair of the Franco-German Foundation for Cultural Cooperation, President of the European Children's Book Fair Association, member of the ZDF Television Council, President of the Saar Adult Education Association, Vice-President of the European Movement on the Saar. Beside all that, she is Chairwoman of the Advisory Board of the Soul for Europe initiative.



Aleksandar Peković

Culture and Creative Network, Serbia

Aleksandar Peković graduated at the Department of Film and Television Production of the Faculty of Dramatic Arts in Belgrade. He was author and director of projects in the field of culture and creative industries in Serbia and the wider region – Montenegro, Slovenia, Italy, and Director of the European Capital of Culture project Belgrade 2020 and Herceg Novi 2021, working on opening possibilities for third countries to participate in the ECoC project. Aleksandar is also a member of the Board of Directors of the Miami International Art Connection, former Deputy Secretary for Culture of the City of Belgrade, former Chairman of the October Salon (famed international contemporary art show in Belgrade), former Head of the music production department of the Serbian Broadcasting Corporation, former lecturer at the Faculty of Philology and Art (FILUM) at the University of Kragujevac. In addition to being an author, producer and editor of several editions, publications and TV documentaries, Aleksandar is a winner of several domestic and international awards.

CREATIVITY AS A TOOL FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION

High level political forum



Karl Erjavec
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Slovenia

Karl Erjavec is the President of the Democratic Party of Pensioners of Slovenia. In 2011, he was Deputy Chair of the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia; previously he served as Minister of the Environment and Spatial Planning, Chair of the Informal Meeting of NATO Defence Ministers in Portorož, Slovenia, Minister of Defence, and State Secretary at the Ministry of Justice. He started his career in 1995 as Director of the Expert Service and later Head of the Office of the Human Rights Ombudsman. Mr Erjavec holds a Bachelor's Degree in Law and is the author of a variety of articles on the protection of basic human rights, the functioning of the judicial system and security issues. He regularly lectures at various professional seminars and conferences in Slovenia and abroad.



H.E. Igor Crnadak
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina

From 1992 to 2001, Mr Crnadak was the editor of BIG Radio, and correspondent of the Voice of America for a year. He is a co-founder of the Branko company, in which he had leading positions between 2001 and 2005. During this period, he was also adviser for economic issues in Fabrika Duvana Banja Luka. From 2005 to 2007, he was Executive Director of PDP, and later Deputy Defence Minister for two years. After completing this mandate, he worked in Branko commercial sector and was Secretary-General of the PDP from 2011 to 2015. Appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs in 2015.



Jorge Borrego
Secretary-General ad interim of the Union for the Mediterranean

Jorge Borrego is Senior Deputy Secretary-General at the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean and, in this capacity, has been appointed Acting Secretary-General as of 1 March 2018. Before joining the Secretariat, between 2010 and 2015 Jorge Borrego was General Manager of Redes Energéticas Nacionais (REN), heading International Affairs and supervising Labour Relations. He was appointed Deputy Secretary-General for Energy and Climate Action in 2016. Mr Borrego was executive member of the Board of Galpower, SA. (Business Unit of Galpenergia for Power Generation and Commercialisation) in two terms, while previously performing several directorate responsibilities within Galpenergia. Mr Borrego is Portuguese, holds a degree in Mechanical Engineering and is a Senior Member and Energy Specialist of the Portuguese Engineers' College.



Tibor Navracsics
EU Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport

Mr Navracsics holds a degree in law and a higher degree as judge. He also received a PhD in political science. He is a lawyer and a politician who served as Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade from June to September 2014. Between 2010 and 2014, he served as Minister of Administration and Justice. He is a member of the Fidesz party and currently the European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport. Navracsics's field of research are comparative politics and internal politics in the European Union. Speaking both Serbian and Croatian, he wrote a number of analyses relating to the former Yugoslavia.



Etjen Xhafaj
Deputy Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Albania

Mr Xhafaj holds a Master's Degree in Public Administration from the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, USA, and BA in International Economics from Schiller International University, Paris, France. His work experiences include being Research Fellow with the Center for International Development at Harvard Kennedy School of Government (while studying for MPA), Director of the Minister's Cabinet, Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Entrepreneurship, and earlier columnist at Albanian Daily News (Politics, Economics and Current Events). Mr Xhafaj co-wrote the study on the development of the Albanian democracy over the transition period, in collaboration with the National Democracy Institute and representatives from left wing parties from Eastern Europe.



Ivan Ivanišević
**Director-General of the Directorate for Multilateral Relations,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Montenegro**

Mr Ivan Ivanišević joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Montenegro in 2004. Before this assignment he briefly served as a diplomat in Ljubljana during the opening of the very first Embassy of Montenegro following its declaration of independence (2006). During his posting at the Permanent Mission of Montenegro to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg (2007–2011), he performed various duties (Deputy Special Envoy of the Government of Montenegro in charge of Montenegro's accession to the Council of Europe, Deputy Head of Mission, First Secretary and finally Chargé d'Affaires). He also served as Minister Counsellor at the Embassy of Montenegro to the Republic of Serbia (2016–2017). Mr Ivanišević graduated from the Faculty of Law in Podgorica and extended his education at the Diplomatic Academy Gavro Vuković, in specialist courses at the Diplomatic Academy in Vienna and at the Netherlands Institute for International Relations Clingendael in The Hague.



Gazmend Turdiu
**Deputy Secretary-General and Head of Programme Department,
Regional Cooperation Council, Albania**

Mr Turdiu took office as Head of Programme Department at the Secretariat of the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) in 2013. In 2014, he was appointed Deputy Secretary-General of RCC. He joined the diplomatic service of Albania in May 1992 and held several positions in Albania and abroad. At the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

Mr Turdiu has held the positions of the Director of the Department for Euro Atlantic Cooperation, Director of the Department of Europe, Director General for Legal and Consular Affairs, and Secretary-General. He was Ambassador of Albania in Bern and Berlin. Mr Turdiu holds a Civil Engineering Degree from the University of Tirana.

MODERATOR



Matej Marn

Political Director/Director-General for Common Foreign and Security Policy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Slovenia

Matej Marn has been Director-General for Common Foreign and Security Policy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia since October 2016. Previously, he was Chargé d’Affaires and Deputy Permanent Representative at the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Slovenia to the United Nations. At the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he has served as Political Director, Head of the Common Foreign and Security Policy Department, Head of CFSP and Policy Planning Department, Acting Director-General for Global and Multilateral Affairs, Acting Head of the Global Challenges Department, Head of the European Union Department and Deputy Political Director, Head of the Minister’s Office, Head of the Office of the State Secretary, and Third Secretary at the Department for Neighbouring States.



Igor Jagodic

Chef, Strelec Restaurant - Kaval Group, Slovenia

After completing the Secondary School for Catering and Tourism and the Vocational College for Catering and Tourism Bled, he began his professional career as an apprentice at the Protocol Services of the Republic Of Slovenia (JGZ Brdo). He soon discovered the immense creative potential of his chosen profession. His career brought him to Hotel Lev, later to Hotel Astoria, Grand Hotel Toplice and Vila Bled. Since 2012, he has been the chef at the Strelec Restaurant in Ljubljana Castle. Igor Jagodic frequently attends various courses and expert training both at home and abroad. In 2010, he worked for three weeks at the well-known Noma restaurant in Copenhagen, where he was inspired by chef Rene Redzepi and his philosophy of creating modern dishes from local ingredients.

Presentation of the Museum of Architecture and Design and the Creativity Centre



Matevž Čelik Vidmar
Director, Museum of Architecture and Design, Slovenia

Since 2010, Matevž Čelik Vidmar has been Director of the Museum of Architecture and Design (MAO) in Ljubljana. After graduating from the Faculty of Architecture in Ljubljana, he started working as an independent architect. He is the author of a residential building in Lesce in Gorenjska, nominated for the 2003 Plečnik Medal, and was later awarded the Luigi Cosenza Silver Plate, an award for young architects of Europe. In 2004 and 2005, Matevž Čelik realised several projects for the regulation of public spaces in Bled, and in 2006 he successfully participated in the competitions for the upgrading of the City of Maribor and the competition for the residential neighbourhood Metaxourgeio in Athens. Matevž publishes in professional publications, the most important being Hiše (Ljubljana), Oris (Zagreb), Portfolyo (Istanbul), Domus (Milan) and JA+U (Tokyo). He argues that the quality of architecture depends on the social, economic and cultural context.



Anja Zorko
Head of Creativity Centre and Deputy Director of the Museum of Architecture and Design (MAO)

Anja Zorko has been actively engaged in cultural and creative fields and their connections with the business sector for more than fifteen years. She acquired international experience and education as the Slovenian finalist of the 2009 International Young Design Entrepreneur, organised by the British Council. She completed a post-graduate training course in cultural management at City, University of London and a training course at the Bureau of European Design Associations in Barcelona, and has participated in numerous international projects of the Museum of Architecture and Design, including Future Architecture Platform, Biennial of Design, Silent Revolutions, Small and Smart: Expressions of Contemporary Slovenian Architecture in Film, Project Architecture, etc. She has been a visiting lecturer at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design since 2013.

REGIONAL PLATFORMS OF COOPERATION FOR CULTURAL AND CREATIVE SECTORS



Marlen Bakalli
Project Manager, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

Marlen Bakalli started his professional career in the private sector as a brand manager at the age of 23. A year later, he became an entrepreneur in the watch industry in France. This successful experience made him aware of the challenges that entrepreneurs face when engaging themselves in new ventures. Subsequently, he continued in the private sector as marketing director before venturing again in company creation with emphasis on branding and sales. In September 2009, he was fielded in Ethiopia for 3 and a half years as a marketing expert for UNIDO,

intervening in the upgrading of the leather industry. Since 2013, he is the creative industries focal point in UNIDO and manages projects in the fields of woman entrepreneurship, vocational training, livelihood diversification and poverty alleviation.

Pierre Omran
Ministry of Industry, Lebanon



Nacera Haddad
Vice President, Forum des Chefs d'Entreprise (FCE), Algeria

Nacera Haddad is Vice President of the FCE Forum of Business Executives and independent expert and Director of the INCOSYN consulting firm. She has more than 20 years of experience in project management in industrial strategy and management of consulting missions in the development industry. She acts as institutional support, coordinator and director of advisory and support missions to economic reforms and the development of SMEs, as well as in the public and private industrial sectors (social and solidarity economy and entrepreneurship).

Chaouki Benabbas
Vice-rector, University of Mentouri Brothers, Constantine, Algeria

Adel Tawileh
Chairman, Garment Design & Training Services Center (GSC), Jordan

Moderated by **Mohammed Elrazzaz**

REGIONAL CREATIVE FORCES



Maja Lalić
Mikser Belgrade, Serbia

Maja Lalić graduated in architecture in Belgrade and later moved to New York. She obtained a Master's Degree at the prestigious Columbia University and then worked at Kramer's Studio. Maja, founder of the cultural organisation Mikser, brought the world's renowned designers to Serbia and thus changed the aesthetic awareness of the Serbs. Mikser is a multidisciplinary platform that encourages the development of the creative economy in the country and the region and fosters dialogue between contemporary global tendencies and domestic and regional practices.



Login Kočiški
Password Production, Macedonia

Promoter, football player, A&R manager, father, event/party organiser, bambus drinker, label manager, booking agent, publisher, fan of the Metalski Zavod Tito basketball team, Login has been active in the music industry for the last 20 years. He set up the record label and artist management agency Lithium Records, working with the most famous Macedonian artists. When his wife did not allow him to name his

son Password, he re-branded the company name into Password Production. He is the founder and director of the biggest Macedonian music festivals Taksirat, D festival, Pivolend, Green Beach Festival and Aqua Park Festival. Login has been a promoter of more than a thousand local, regional and international concerts, weddings and funerals and has worked as a production manager and “mother” or godfather of the biggest regional festivals.



Dijana Vučinić
DVARP; Kotor APSS, Montenegro

Studied architecture at the University of Montenegro and in New York. While working on her Master thesis, she focused on the urban conditions in the developing touristic areas on the Montenegrin coast and in mountain resorts. She is a practicing architect and has recently started an interdisciplinary architectural and design practice DVARP – Dijana Vučinić Architectural Research and Practice, conceiving projects that range from urban design to residential buildings and from theater stage design to education on architecture and urban planning. The projects bring structures and spaces that reveal complex process of final answers and critical thinking. In 2011, Dijana founded Kotor APSS – the Architecture Prison Summer School, a research platform dealing with the ongoing problems in urban planning and architecture in Montenegro. The school focuses on urban development and planning problems and on architecture design and space research under the pressure and demands of tourism and rapid development. Dijana writes for various Montenegrin periodicals and online publications.



Luka Piškorič
Poligon Creative Centre, Slovenia

Luka Piškorič has been working in the creative industries and cultural field for the past 20 years, starting as one of the Slovenian internet pioneers and later collaborating on multidisciplinary profit and non-profit projects engaging creative forces from various fields of creative industries and culture. After working for eight years in advertising and digital marketing, in 2006 he co-founded Memo Institut, the first specialised Slovenian qualitative market research agency. He is the co-founder and Managing Director of Poligon, institute for the development of creative industries and co-founder of the Slovenia Coworking and Slovenia Crowdfunding initiatives.



Maja Vardjan
Biennial of Design, Museum of Architecture and Design, Slovenia

Maja Vardjan is an architect and a curator. She works as a curator for design and architecture at the Museum of Architecture and Design (MAO) in Ljubljana, where she has participated in the creation of several exhibitions. She is the author of articles and the editor of numerous catalogues and publications in the field of architecture and design. She is credited with major changes and great success of the Ljubljana Biennial of Design. Together with Jan Boelen and Cvetka Požar, she co-curated the 24th Biennial of Design, BIO 50. In honour of BIO's 50th anniversary, the team have managed to change the focus and the direction of Europe's oldest design biennial, influencing the traditional thinking behind and the perception of international biennials' role today.



Dina Seisah

JO! By Creative Jordan – resilience through creativity, Jordan

After obtaining a Bachelor's Degree in Foreign Languages (Italian, English) at the University of Jordan in 2005, in 2006 Dina Seisah became Head of Programmes & Promotion at the Garment Design & Training Services Center (GSC), located in Amman, Jordan. As Head of the company she is responsible for planning, developing and monitoring all the programmes, including training courses, fashion events, workshops, seminars, conferences and all marketing activities, as well as the preparation of companies to participate in international fairs and exhibitions.

MODERATOR



Marko Maršičević

Founder, Marsh Production, Serbia

Graduated from the Faculty of Dramatic Arts – Department of Theater and Radio Production in Belgrade. Twenty-seven years of professional experience in creative industries, span across the former Yugoslavia region. Marko's portfolio boasts hundreds of advertisements and events, as well as more than 30 festivals and 14 political campaigns throughout the region. As a freelancer, he has worked for different media outlets – Radio B92, Vreme, Saatchi & Saatchi and others. He was a partner at Mechanical Duck Creative Production and New Moment – New Ideas Company. Vice-president of the organisational committee of Belgrade 2020 and Communications Director of Herceg Novi 2021 – two European Capital of Culture candidate cities; involved in the defining of new rules for third countries to participate in the ECoC project. He was a member of the Belgrade City Assembly. Founder of Marsh Creative Production, a specialised event-production company and co-founder of Marsh Open Space, a unique and innovative multipurpose hub in Belgrade, specifically designed for diverse micro-events and group co-working.



Darko Brlek

Director and Artistic Director of the Ljubljana Festival, Slovenia

Darko Brlek is Director-General and Artistic Director of the Ljubljana Festival. In 1991, he became the youngest director of the Slovenian National Theatre Opera and Ballet in Ljubljana. A year later, he became the youngest artistic director of the Ljubljana Festival, eventually taking over as Executive Director of the country's most important cultural festival in 1995. He was among the founders of the Cultural Chamber of Slovenia and has served as chairman of the Council for Culture of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia. He is currently the President of the Expert Council of the Slovene National Theatre Maribor and a council member of Avditorij Portorož. He also participates in various international bodies. After becoming the Vice President of the European Festivals Association (EFA) in 1997, he served as its President from 2005 to 2017. At present, he is the President of the Festival Academy, an EFA initiative for young festival managers.