

**CREATIVE  
AND  
INCLUSIVE  
FINLAND**

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KREATIVA DELAKTIGA FINLAND

# **ENHANCING CREATIVE EXPERTISE AND INCLUSION FOR YOUNG**

Regional structural funds projects 2014–2016

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The background of the image consists of a dark blue field filled with intricate, wavy, concentric lines that resemble a fingerprint or a topographical map. The lines are a lighter shade of blue and create a sense of depth and movement.

**Structural funds  
projects supporting  
creative and inclusive  
regional development**



# 1

## Structural funds projects supporting creative and inclusive regional development

The funding path for creative expertise and skills for inclusion is multifarious. The EU structural funds are only one, albeit significant, part of it. During the programme period 2014–2020 the structural funds in Finland had a budget of 2.7 million euro, made up of European Union and national state funding. The question of how much of this funding goes into supporting creative industries and skills for inclusion, and what kind of contents the related projects entail, is by no means irrelevant.

This report focuses on structural funds projects that received funding in 2014–2016. [The structural funds](#) offer financing for the equitable development of regions and employment. The funding is part of European Union regional and structural policies with the objective of increasing economic and social cohesion and decreasing regional differences in the level of development. The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) supports the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises and promotes the generation and utilisation of new information and skills as well the development of low-carbon economy. The objectives of the European Social Fund (ESF) are to facilitate employment and the functioning of the labour market, to improve skills and professional competencies and to enhance social inclusion.

This report centres on the contents: what is done, where and by whom. It serves as a complementary viewpoint to the administrative financial monitoring carried out by the structural funds. So being, the report does not pay attention to indicators traditionally applied in project monitoring or to the programmatic strategies to which the projects are bound. Instead, we examine in what fields and through what kinds of measures the structural funds endeavour to support creative expertise and skills for inclusion throughout Finland and how the used funding is proportionally divided between the regions and fields of activity.

The report is part of the regional network development work carried out by [Creative and Inclusive Finland](#), the umbrella over ESF-funded projects with the purpose of promoting and developing ESF-funded projects in the realms of creative expertise and skills for inclusion, offering crosscutting and novel perspectives to the enhancement of creative industries and skills for inclusion.







# **Description of data**



# 2

## Description of data

The analysis was focused on the ESF and ERDF projects that had received a funding decision in 2014–2016. All the data applied in this study are open data. Serving as the source of these data was the [Structural Funds Database](#), which produces continuously updated, public information on structural funds projects.

The analysis covers the funding decisions made until the end of 2016, during the first three years of the seven-year programme period. Some of the projects had already been concluded and with some the practical operations hadn't yet begun at the time when the study was conducted. The funding sums are calculated based on the allocated, not the actually spent, funds. The data do not cover national projects or subprojects.

The definition used in this study for creative expertise is broad. The categorisation is based on the perspective of intangible value added and the report [Kulttuurin satelliittitilinpito](#) (Culture Satellite Accounts) published by the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture. The scope of creative expertise thus covers a wide range of projects, including, for example, those carried out in the fields of sports and leisure. Of the cross-cutting projects, for example projects focused on business skills or the development of business platforms, only

those where measures were especially targeted at creative expertise were included in the analysis.


In the realm of skills for inclusion the analysis covers projects targeted at young people and connected by an approach to culture, sports or the youth sector with the aim of preventing social exclusion. The projects in the social and health sector especially targeted at young people who already suffer from social exclusion were left out of the scope of the study, as well as projects that were focused on the internal or collaborative development of public institutions, such as schools.

Structural funds financing is always supplementary by nature. The (euro) figures presented in this report represent the EU and state subsidy shares granted to the projects. They cover 10–80 % of the total costs of the projects. The required amount of private financing and financing from national matching funds is dependent of e.g. the contents, location and implementer of the project. For example, the maximum share of support granted for the operations, revitalisation, growth and competitiveness of businesses is 50 %, and 10–35 % for investments. The projects are also required to have a self-financing share from the implementing organisation.

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**Creative expertise in  
regional structural  
funds projects**



# 3

## Creative expertise in regional structural funds projects

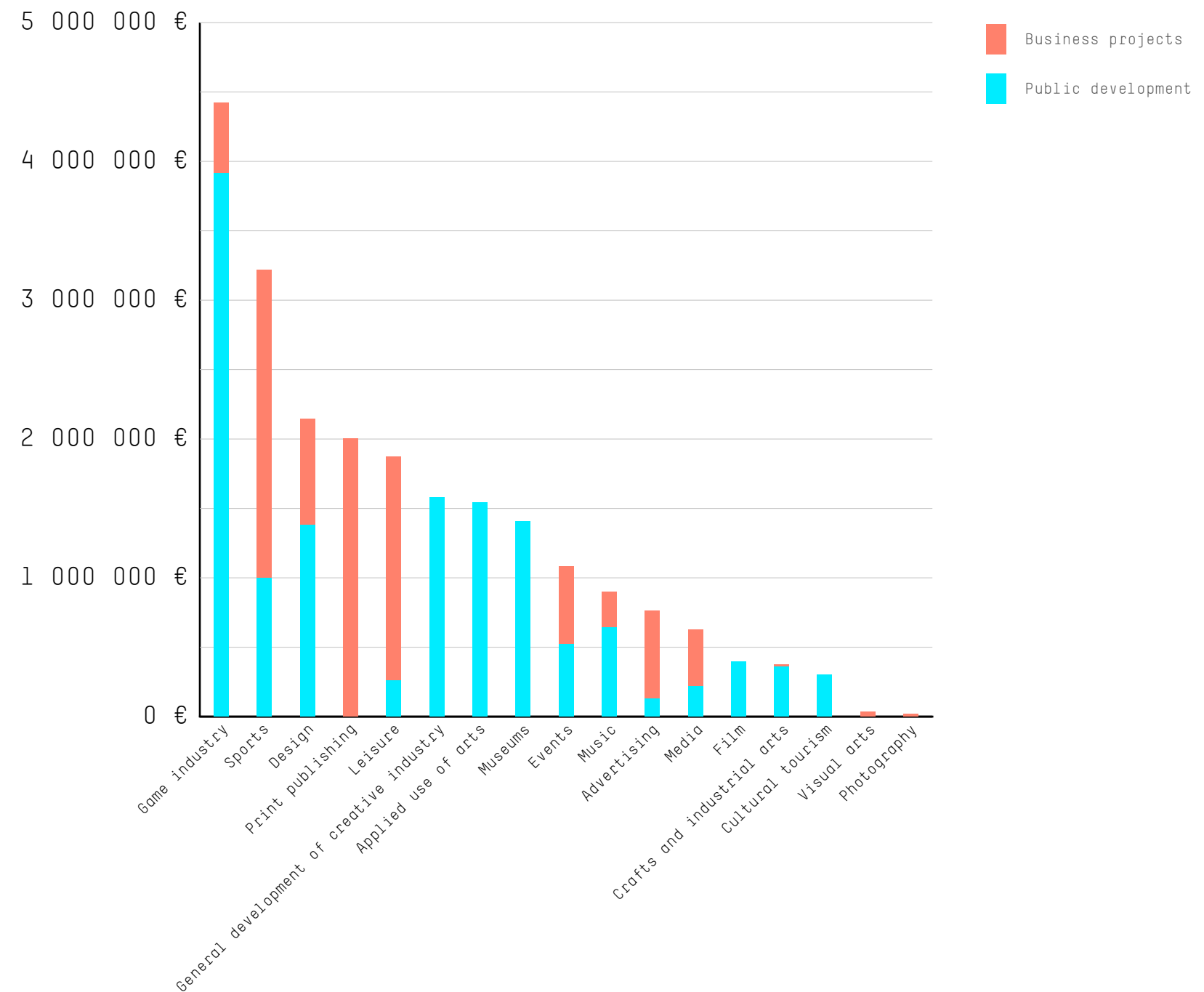
### 22.7 million euro into creative expertise

During the first three years of the programme period nearly 3 400 regional projects had received funding. The total amount of EU and national structural funds financing they had received was over 524 million euro.

Of the overall financing allocated from the structural funds, the average share for creative expertise was 4.4 % on the average, equalling 22.7 million euro. This share is on par with, for example, the share allocated to tourism projects. Around 27 million euro, i.e. 5.1 %, of the funding allocated during the first three years, were targeted at the development of tourism. Tourism is, in other words, a slightly bigger operative area in the development projects supported through structural funds.

The largest share of funding in the entire sphere of creative expertise, one fifth, went to the game industry.

**FIGURE 1:** EU and state funding granted to regional structural funds projects on creative expertise in 2014–2016, by field of activity.





## Regional investments in creative expertise vary considerably

There are notable differences between the regions. The top recipients of funding for creative expertise were the regions of Kymenlaakso, Päijänne Tavastia and Lapland. In these regions the share for creative expertise projects ranges between 8 and 10 percent. The funding share falls under two percent in the regions of Central Ostrobothnia, Southern Ostrobothnia, Pirkanmaa and Uusimaa.

Lapland invests a large amount of its structural funds appropriations in creative industries, but so do also the smaller recipients, Kymenlaakso and Päijänne Tavastia. This is more strongly due to regional development strategies and strengths than regional resources. Still, there are surprises, too. The strong emphasis on education in creative skills in Northern Savonia is not reflected in the number of development projects focused on creative industries in the region. The reputation of Southern Ostrobothnia as a tenacious developer of creative industries is not reflected in the funding decisions for the region in this programme period.

At the level on individual regions, the actors' own dynamics, choices of funding instrument and efforts in the previous programme periods create temporal fluctuations in the project field. There are many other funding instruments available for regional development than the ones examined in this study.<sup>1</sup> The regions make choices between the available funding instruments – whether they are regional, national or international – to find the ones that best match their needs. Correspondingly, with business projects it is a question of seeking ways into public or private funding systems at regional, national or international level. This is one reason for the regional differences.

Another reason lies in the objective of structural funding to serve in a supplementary function towards better equality between regions and people. In smaller and more remote areas the projects support

**TABLE 1: Amount of funding for creative expertise projects by region and share of structural funding in the region.**

	AMOUNT OF STRUCTURAL FUNDS FINANCING FOR CREATIVE EXPERTISE €	SHARE OF STRUCTURAL FUNDS FINANCING IN THE REGION
Central Finland	690 770	2,7 %
Central Ostrobothnia	207 670	1,2 %
Kainuu	1 553 935	4,9 %
Kymenlaakso	1 431 070	10,3 %
Lapland	4 842 310	8,2 %
Northern Ostrobothnia	2 252 937	2,6 %
Northern Savonia	1 459 014	2,2 %
North Karelia	2 935 224	5,8 %
Ostrobothnia	458 816	5,1 %
Pirkanmaa	333 893	1,9 %
Päijänne Tavastia	901 482	8,6 %
Satakunta	318 785	2,5 %
Southern Ostrobothnia	184 045	1,9 %
Southern Savonia	2 945 111	6,4 %
South Karelia	475 723	4,0 %
Southwest Finland	1 001 294	6,4 %
Tavastia Proper	279 510	4,4 %
Uusimaa	411 733	1,7 %
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22 683 320</b>	<b>4,4 %</b>

the kind of activities that in larger cities are maintained through market conditions or as basic state and municipal functions. In centres of growth, such as the Uusimaa and Pirkanmaa regions, there is very little structural funds financing available. These regions benefit in turn from the public and private infrastructure and markets that concentrate in bigger cities.

Regardless of the reasoning behind the regional differences, one of the findings of this study is that the strategic status of creative expertise in development efforts is not carved in stone. Creative expertise needs a new boost at regional level.

<sup>1</sup> Development projects centred on regional creative industries are also supported by other EU instruments (European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and Leader, Interreg, ENI), national development programme funding (e.g. regional innovations and experiments, the INKA Innovative Cities programme, project funding from Arts Promotion Centre Finland) and funding from foundations and the private sector. Available to business development projects is public funding through the CreMa and CreaDemo grants aimed especially at creative industries and the funding instruments of e.g. Finnvera and Tekes – the Finnish Funding Agency for Innovation, alongside private financiers, such as banks, investors and crowd funding.



## Creative expertise projects support both competitiveness and employment

Supporting creative expertise serves a wide range of objectives. The goal is, on the one hand, to increase regional competitiveness and support skills and business in the creative field and, on the other hand, to produce equal wellbeing, balance social differences and generate employment in the field. Of the public creative expertise projects two thirds are targeted at increasing competitiveness through the European Regional Development Fund and one third at supporting working life, employment and equal opportunities through the European Social Fund.

The objectives of developing competitiveness and supporting employment complement each other. There is also flexibility in the available instruments. For example, the Game Brewery incubator model is supported regionally through ERDF funding and ESF funding, or a combination both. Projects are also sectioned and targeted to suit the objectives of the different funding instruments.

Creative expertise itself has an instrumental role in the regional structural funds projects. The projects assisted through the structural funds support economic growth and wellbeing, which in turn can be achieved through creative expertise. In this respect, structural funds play a mediating role between creative expertise and its beneficiaries.

**TABLE 2: Public creative expertise projects by field of activity, excluding leisure and sports projects.**

	ERDF €	ESF €	TOTAL €
Game industry	2 809 869	1 105 913	3 915 782
General development of creative industry	898 186	680 989	1 579 175
Applied use of arts	704 664	835 424	1 540 088
Museums	1 249 791	155 757	1 405 548
Design	1 130 513	250 422	1 380 935
Music	65 758	574 465	640 223
Events	285 890	236 868	522 758
Film	396 102		396 102
Crafts and industrial arts	162 578	198 636	361 214
Cultural travel	303 209		303 209
Media	219 719		219 719
Advertising		128 000	128 000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8 226 279</b>	<b>4 166 474</b>	<b>12 392 753</b>

**Supporting creative expertise serves a wide range of objectives. The goal is, on the one hand, to increase regional competitiveness and support skills and business in the creative field and, on the other hand, to produce equal wellbeing, balance social differences and generate employment in the field.**



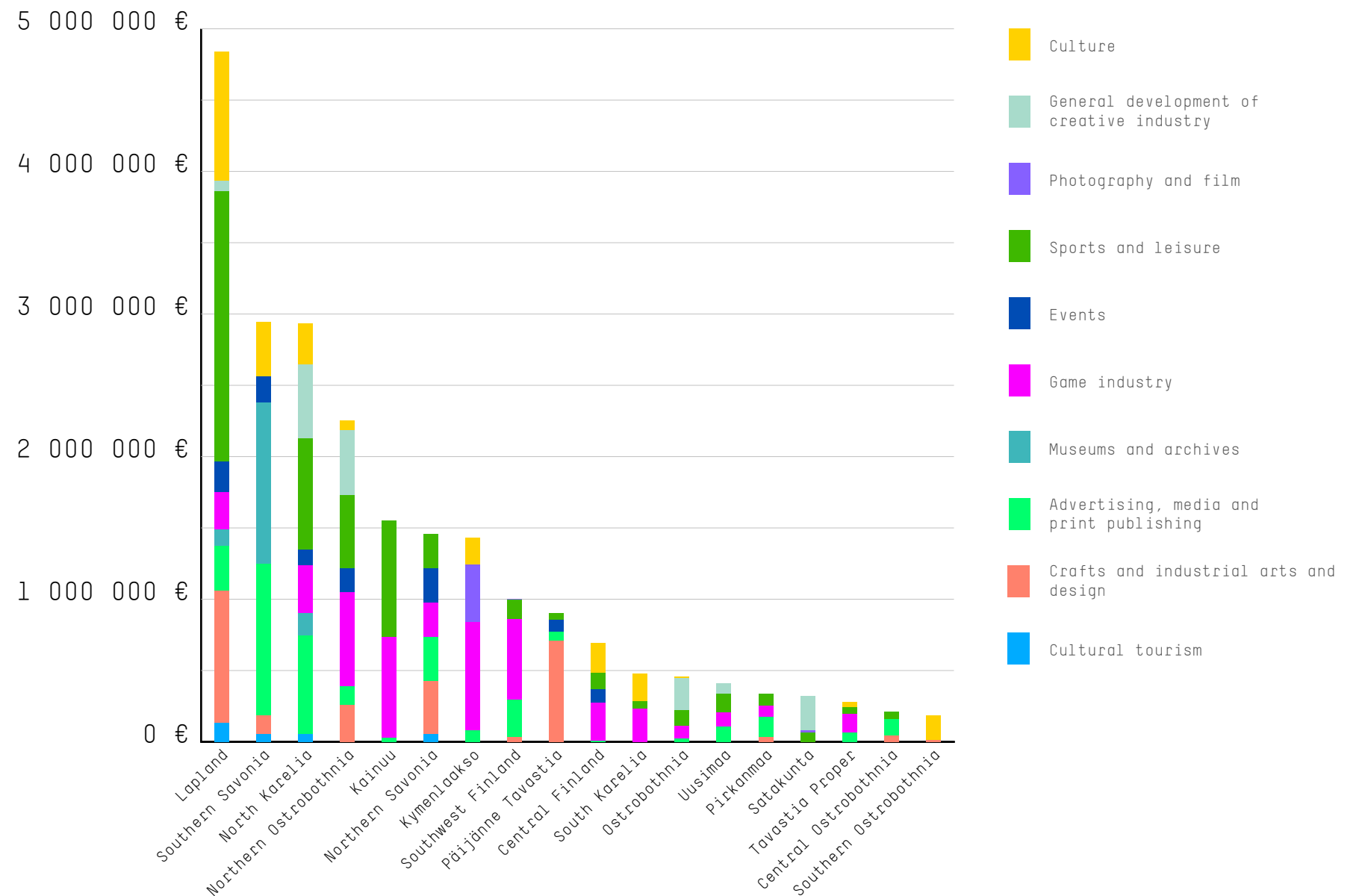
## Regions profile themselves by developing creative expertise

There are clear regional emphases in the work towards developing creative expertise. There isn't a single field of activity that is being developed in all the regions of Finland through structural funds projects. The popularity of the game industry is apparent: there are development projects focused on this field in nearly all the regions. The regions that support it most strongly are Kymenlaakso and Kainuu. The most extensively and evenly supported fields of activity are advertising, media and print publishing, apart from sports and leisure.

The regional emphases often means that projects are often clustered, usually around the same theme. Based on the studied data, the project clusters often make up a continuum of measures: in the forms of projects on developing an operating model or business and innovation platforms, projects to enhance skills and business development projects. Among the creative expertise project clusters are e.g. the project cluster formed around the archive information system of the digital cluster in Mikkeli, the digital cluster of sports and coaching projects in Kainuu and the projects centred on design in Päijänne Tavastia.

A good project cluster is not the mission of an individual actor, but instead, it supports the similarly oriented efforts of several regional actors. Clustering is, for the most part, a welcome phenomenon as it supports the effectiveness and continuity of projects, and supporting project clusters built around regional special expertise is well worthwhile. Their chances of creating effective and sustainable development are better than those of individual projects.

FIGURE 2: Project funding for creative expertise by region and field of activity.





### Creative expertise projects are smaller than the average

The scale of creative expertise projects varies to a considerable degree. As much as 1.5 million euro of the five million euro allocated to sports and leisure have been invested in only three [adventure and indoor activity parks](#) located in northern Finland. A similar infrastructure bias exists in the advertising, media and print publishing fields, where investments in equipment have taken two thirds of the 3.4 million-euro pot of support for the subfields. Of that sum as much as 960 000 euro are bound to an investment in a single [print publishing line](#).

Still, the clearest backdrop for viewing the status and mutual order of the different fields of activity is the absolute number of projects.

A large number (48) of the projects are sports and leisure projects. 35 of the projects are centred on the game industry. In comparison, there are around twenty projects on music and the arts financed through the regional structural funds, and only four development projects focused on film and photography in the entire country. The number is low and it goes to show that the development of creative expertise is not, with the exception of the game industry, given a very significant role in the overall development of regions.

In projects aimed at the increasing intangible assets machines aren't bought, land isn't mowed, concrete isn't cast, as is the case in, for instance, the field of tourism. Compared to creative expertise, the projects in the field of tourism are clearly bigger. On the average, creative expertise projects are nearly 40 % smaller than projects centred on tourism – 107 000 euro vs. 173 000 euro. In comparison to all the projects financed through the structural funds, the difference is 15 %. The size of the projects does not hence aptly explain the relative status of creative expertise. Funding has been granted from the structural funds to nearly 160 projects in the field of tourism.

**TABLE 3: Creative expertise project funding, number of projects and average project size by field of activity.**

	NUMBER OF PROJECTS	TOTAL FUNDING €	AVERAGE PROJECT SIZE €
Applied use of arts	8	1 540 088	192 511
Museums	8	1 405 548	175 694
Print publishing	12	2 002 790	166 899
General development of creative industry	10	1 579 175	157 918
Leisure	13	1 874 846	144 219
Film	3	400 112	133 371
Game industry	35	4 421 912	126 340
Crafts and industrial arts	4	374 874	93 719
Sports	35	3 217 888	91 940
Events	12	1 080 908	90 076
Design	24	2 144 945	89 373
Music	11	898 448	81 677
Cultural tourism	4	303 209	75 802
Advertising	16	761 543	47 596
Media	14	625 589	44 685
Visual arts	1	33 330	33 330
Photography	1	18 115	18 115
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>22 683 320</b>	<b>107 504</b>

The clearest backdrop for viewing the status and mutual order of the different fields of activity is the absolute number of projects.

40%

On the average, creative expertise projects are nearly 40 % smaller than projects centred on tourism.



### The development of businesses and communities is unevenly divided between different fields of creative industry

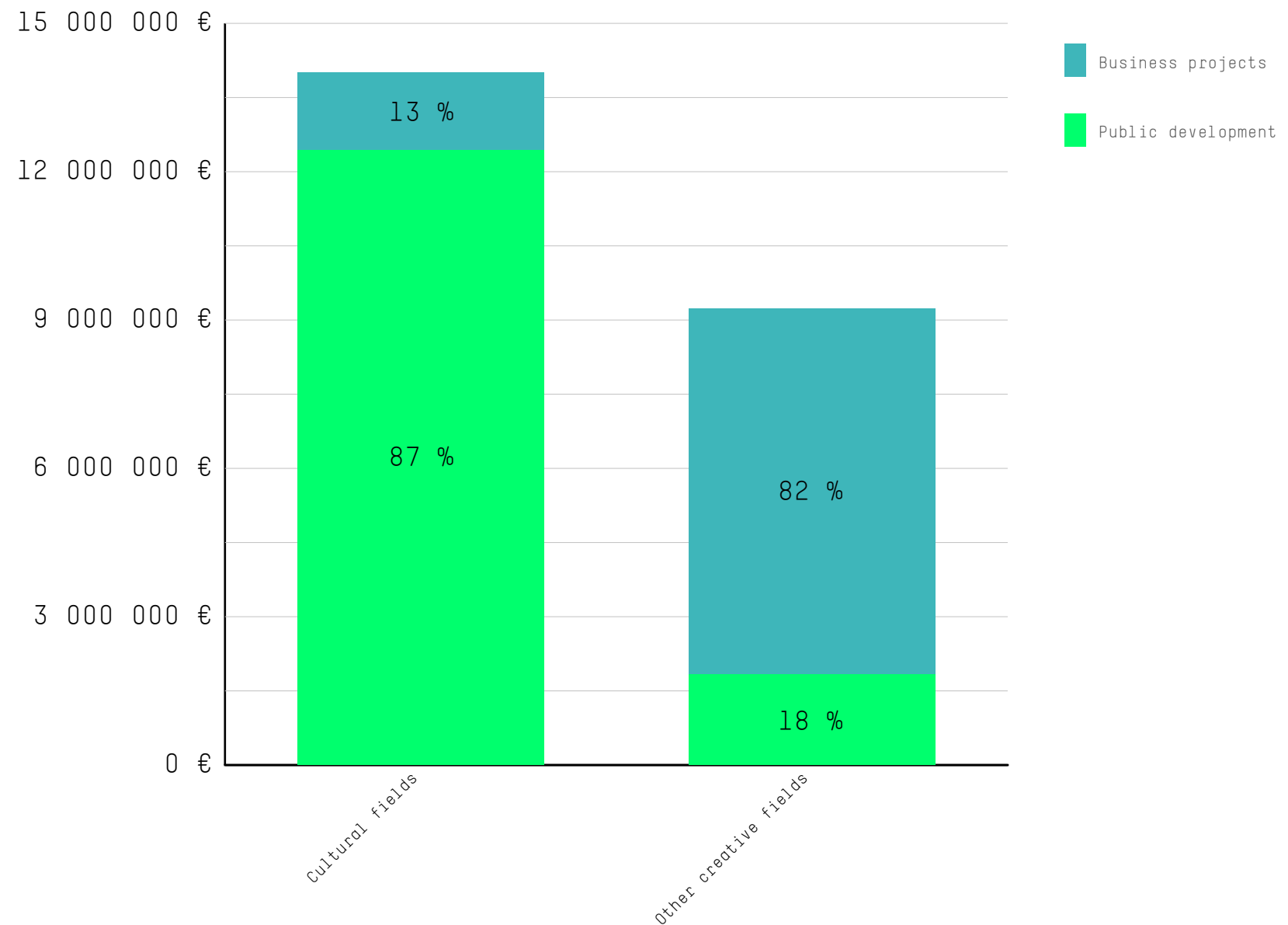
Nearly three out of five of the creative expertise structural funds projects are business projects. The differences between the different fields of activity are however considerable. The business projects centre mostly on sports, leisure, print publishing and marketing and advertising. There are 78 business projects in these fields and the average funding size for them is a little under 90 000 euro.

Here there is an obvious discrepancy. There are only 42 business projects centred on culture, design, crafts and industrial art, museums and archives, the game industry and film and photography, even though the total funding for these subfields is clearly higher. The average amount of funding for a business project is 50 000 euro.

The differences between the fields can likely be explained by demand and supply. The businesses' own drive to grow and actively seek financing creates a demand also for structural funds financing. The supply, in turn, is stimulated by the amount of available structural funds financing, its terms and awareness of it, the activeness of the funding mediators, such as business developers, and the financiers' preferences. It is probable that strongly culture-oriented fields of activity face challenges in one or more of these areas.

**Nearly three out of five of the creative expertise structural funds projects are business projects. The differences between the different fields of activity are however considerable.**

**FIGURE 3: Division of public and business projects between culture-oriented and other fields of cultural expertise.**





### Public creative expertise projects are in the hands of universities

Institutions of higher education are at the core of public development projects centred on creative expertise. One fourth of the projects are coordinated by universities of applied sciences, and another fourth by universities. Regional development companies are responsible for one fourth of the projects. The other main project implementers are a fragmented group of municipalities, vocational schools, associations and other development organisations.

The projects implemented by universities of applied sciences are very evenly divided among the schools. The prominence of universities is largely due to the active role of the University of Lapland, which alone hosts ten projects on creative expertise. The other universities have coordinated single projects. The projects coordinated by development companies are distributed evenly, with the exceptions of Cursor in the Kotka region (Kymenlaakso) with five projects and the Miksei company in Mikkeli (Southern Savonia) with four projects.

Competencies in project work and the resources of institutions of higher education provide them with a strong foundation for applying for funding. Looking at the main implementer alone of course doesn't reveal what kind of networks of content the projects involve. From the viewpoint of the development of content in creative expertise, one should concurrently pay attention to collaboration between actors of different sizes and types. The collaboration needs to also include people with a strong knowledge of the content but who are not necessary actively engaged in the world of project organisation and funding.

**TABLE 4: Main implementers of public creative expertise projects, only separate projects.**

	PROJECTS
University of applied sciences	21
University	19
Development company	18
Municipality	8
Vocational schools	5
Technology centre	5
Association	4
Business platform	2
Other public actor	1
Company	1
Open adult education	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>85</b>

50%

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**Contents of  
creative expertise  
projects**



# 4

## Contents of creative expertise projects

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### Media, advertising and marketing: printing presses with two million euro

3.4 million euro of the funding were allocated to media, advertising and marketing projects. The projects were relatively evenly distributed throughout Finland. They were characterised by a strong emphasis on business: only 2 of the 42 projects were public development projects.

The volume of the field does not give a realistic picture of the emphases on the different fields of activity in the development of creative expertise. Investments in digital printing equipment in the print publishing industry lapped up a lion's share (nearly two million euro) of the total project funding.

There were many interesting projects to be found in this group from the viewpoint of the development of creative industries. Due to their instrumental nature, the fields of advertising, marketing and



See  
projects  
on the map

media are well connected with other areas of creative expertise. The projects have developed, for example, [digital concepts](#) and [content services](#) in children's culture, [digital platforms](#) for experience production and a [fan marketing platform](#) for sports clubs. There is much new, creative and innovative development occurring in the fields of media, advertising and marketing.

### Design, crafts and industrial art: cutting across sectoral borders

Design stands out as the field at the core of creative expertise for which crossing sectoral boundaries comes most naturally. Of the business projects, we have categorised in this study as design projects those that mention design as the central source of market value in their production. The share of design, crafts and industrial arts of the creative expertise projects is around ten per cent; 2.5 million euro.



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There are altogether 28 design projects in Finland's regions, slightly under one third of which are business projects. The business projects include both export-led projects carried out by traditional businesses to, for example, [promote export in furniture](#), and innovative, new-generation design companies, companies that produce anything from customised [jewellery](#) made of customers' photos to [plywood decorations](#).

The biggest of the public development projects is the Arctic Design cluster based in the University of Lapland. The university's projects focused on [preparatory studies](#), [development](#), [infrastructure](#), [internalisation](#) and [content](#) and the [Master's Degree programme](#) have received nearly 700 000 euro in funding. Another strong design cluster is to be found in and around the city of Lahti (Päijänne Tavastia).

There are many other public development projects that support [business expertise in design compa-](#)



#### 4 Contents of creative expertise projects

nies and [design service networks](#) or [prototype and testing platforms](#) in educational institutions. The projects in the area of crafts and industrial arts are more dispersed and they represent a more traditional artisan approach.

### Museum and archives: Business and employment from archive materials

The structural funds financing for the museum and archive field has nearly entirely gone to projects within the Digital Mikkeli cluster. The project cluster, which is a strategic spearhead for the city of Mikkeli, includes projects seeking to build up [business based on digital archives](#), more general projects for the [development of digital business](#) and [digital business management](#) and [business platform projects](#). The projects are divided between a university of applied sciences, a university and a development company. With its six projects, the cluster receives 1.1 million of the 1.4 million euro granted to the field at large.

The projects in Southern Savonia are complemented by a project in North Karelia seeking to create [employment through the digitalisation of information](#) accumulated in museums and a project in Lapland for developing a [mobile application centred on tourism](#) which partly involves museums.

Much of the content in the museum and archives field has room and a need for new, innovative approaches that would expand and optimise its use in practice. Reforms within the museum field create



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space for collaboration with other creative fields and tourism.

### Cultural projects support businesses, knowledge and revenue generation

Projects in the fields of music, applied use of arts and visual arts reflect an emphasis on the development of revenue generation and expertise that supports it. This approach isn't only characteristic of the business projects but also of the public development projects in the field.

The business-oriented projects develop internationalisation both in [contents](#) and [equipment](#). One of the business projects in this group is centred on developing [music software](#). In the field of visual arts there is one business project, on the [development of a university-based analysis service](#). The total funding for the six business projects is 290 000 euro.

In the public projects support is directed through twenty projects to [music entrepreneurship](#) and [professional skills](#), a Master's degree programme in [applied sound expression](#) and [applied visual arts](#), [nature photography](#) and the applied use of arts in [tourism](#) and the [care sector](#).

2 200 000 €

The total funding for the public projects in the field of culture is 2.2 million euro.



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### Event production and cultural tourism – new and old, private and public

The projects in the fields of event production and cultural tourism are divided evenly between public and business projects. Their total funding is 1.4 million euro. The contents of the projects can correspondingly be divided in half: half of the projects represent a more traditional approach based on the activation of events, the other half is centred on the development of event production as a professional field.

The public projects work towards developing the events supply in [Koillismaa](#), [Lapland](#) and [Northern Ostrobothnia](#), as well as around the [Tahko resort in Northern Savonia](#). The total funding for these projects is 550 000 euro.

Eight of the business projects involve event platforms and [mobile event services](#) but also [equipment investments](#) by event organisers, [technology](#) and [consulting expertise](#). The total funding for these projects is 560 000 euro.

The structural funds data do not provide as such a clear picture in the case of development of cultural tourism. Cultural tourism plays a major part in the extensive [tourism projects in Southern Savonia](#), but it remains unclear what the share directed into culture by these projects is. The two general tourism development projects in Southern Savonia are excluded in this analysis from the figures under the category of cultural tourism. There are two projects



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## 4 Contents of creative expertise projects

that can be categorised strictly as cultural tourism projects, the Arctic Ceramic Centre and a project for [promoting tourism around the Finnish Orthodox culture](#).

### General development of creative expertise

Eleven public projects are devoted to the general development of creative expertise. Their total funding is 1.6 million euro.

Projects focused on the general development of creative industry, basic work on creative expertise, are still being carried out throughout the country. There are six projects of this kind, based in e.g. the cities of [Oulu](#), [Joensuu](#) and [Vaasa](#). Some are solely targeted at the development of creative industries, in some creative expertise features as one, although specifically named, focal area among the others. Among the more sharply targeted initiatives is a project for developing lifestyle companies aimed at [premium markets](#), funded in the region of Uusimaa.

The opportunities for carrying out these two project types, general development and sharper segment development, differ throughout the country. Outside Uusimaa, the region of Finland's capital, it is impossible to put together regional development projects centred on narrow segments as there simply aren't enough target companies to go around. Projects of this kind are in fact naturally better suited for implementation at national level. The regional projects have however the strength of being more easily



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accessible. The linkage between national and regional projects is consequently important in helping both general and segment development projects to find their target groups in different parts of the country.

The other structural funds projects in the category of general development of creative expertise centre on e.g. building [connections between education in the field and employment](#), [a living lab](#), [stimulating the transformation of non-professional activities into business activities](#) and [promoting services provided at a distance in the area of cultural and music education](#).

### Every respectable region invests in the development of game industry

If there is one top theme in the development of creative fields it is the game industry. The 4.4- million-euro funding pot for the game industry has for the most part gone into large-scale public investments in education in the field and in the development of business platforms. Northern Ostrobothnia, Kymenlaakso and Kainuu stand out as the most active regions in the field.

The most extensive public project in the game industry is centred on general platform development. The work is carried out both at regional level and using the national [Game Brewery](#) incubator model.

The more specifically targeted structural funds projects have involved e.g. the development of [serious games](#), [the development of a snack product game application](#) and [renewable energy](#).



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The business projects are more evenly distributed throughout the country. The projects are small on the average. The total funding for the fourteen projects is 500 000 euro. The support is targeted at, among other things, [internalisation](#) and [collaboration with international networks](#) through a group of game development companies, the [creation of new products and operating models](#) and the [development of health games](#), but also at the [refinement of the services and expertise](#) of a company that specialises in developing the game industry with an entrepreneurial approach.

Game development, as it seems, is developing into a market-led industry where company development is at least partly becoming a business of its own.

### Film and photography included with a small share

The development of film industry does not appear to be in the foreground of this programme period. There are two projects directly focused on film: [Villilä Networks](#), which has been developing a production platform based in Satakunta, and the [South East Finland Film Commission](#).

There are two business projects in these fields: a project centred on the production methods of [photo painting](#) and a project [exploring sales and profit sharing models](#) in the context of documentaries. The total funding for these projects is 22 000 euro.



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## Sports and leisure: a world of its own

Sports and leisure make up a field that strongly differs from the fields of creative expertise that are culture-oriented. This is also evident in the context of development through structural funds. The supply of sports and leisure projects and the division of actors are clearly different, compared to core creative industries. The total funding for the entire field is 5.1 million euro, more than e.g. that for all the projects funded in the game industry.

The business projects get a lion's share of the pot. 3.8 million euro are used in the structural funds sports and leisure projects for the development of companies' business strategies and products. The operations cover a wide range from product development on gym equipment, roller skis and electric formulas to the commercial development of skiing map services, sports testing and monitoring applications and coaching methods.

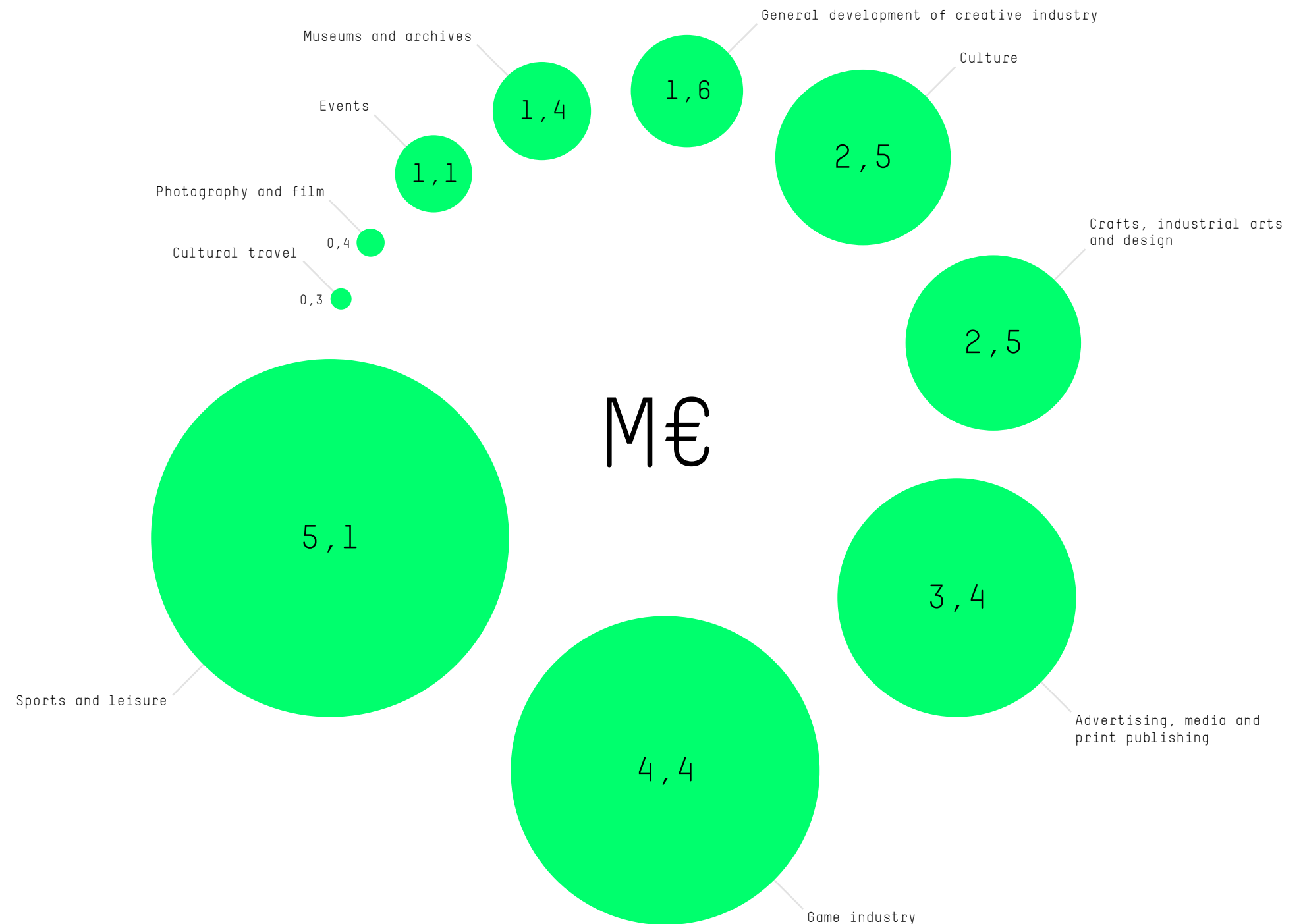
Featured high in the leisure project funding are e.g. infrastructure investments in adventure parks.

Two features that notably characterise the public sports and leisure projects are expertise intensity and networks based on content rather than regional collaboration. For example, the sports and coaching expertise centred at the University of Jyväskylä (Central Finland) has been linked in with the strong regional ecosystem in Kainuu and Kuusamo (Northern Ostrobothnia).



See projects on the map

FIGURE 5: EU and state funding per field.







**Skills for inclusion is  
just a small slice of the  
ESF funding pie**



# 5

## Skills for inclusion is just a small slice of the ESF funding pie

### Skills for inclusion projects searching for content-led instruments

In this report we have compiled under the theme of skills for inclusion culture, art, sports and organisational projects that involve young people. In other words, young people are viewed explicitly through the framework of youth and not from the perspective of education, sickness or hardship. The aims of the skills for inclusion approach are to prevent social exclusion and keep young people in the education pipeline, so the scope of activities is difficult to delineate both when categorising the projects and in real life. The projects make up a long continuum where boundaries are drawn only by strategic definitions.

The ESF projects concerned with young people are mostly service counselling, educational counselling and employment projects. Consistently, the projects targeted at young people are focused on the development of educational, social and counselling services and helping young people to navigate within this service sector. A central means to help young people is effective coordination and creating better operating models in the public sector.

The total funding for the 21 skills for inclusion projects is 3.3 million euro. Both the number of projects and the funding take up a very small slice of the total ESF funding for projects targeted at young people.

The regional projects are distributed very unevenly. The strongest region in this context is Northern Savonia where there are five skills for inclusion projects. There are seven regions where there are no projects in this realm. In most of these regions regional measures have however been undertaken as part of national skills for inclusion schemes, which are not included in the numbers and funding sums of the regionally funded projects examined in this study.

Efforts to enhance inclusion through culture, sports or youth work have held a very small role in the field of preventing social exclusion among young people. Culture, sports and youth work are naturally included in the contents of other projects targeted at young people, but only scarcely do they have an independent role in the projects. If there has been a wish to shift the emphasis of promoting welfare and inclusion among young people away from the public sector and towards civil society, it is not manifested in any way in regional project funding.

**TABLE 5: Skills for inclusion projects by region.**

	PROJECTS
Central Finland	2
Lapland	3
Northern Savonia	5
North Karelia	1
Pirkanmaa	1
Satakunta	1
Southern Ostrobothnia	1
Southern Savonia	2
South Karelia	1
Tavastia Proper	2
Uusimaa	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21</b>



## Skills for inclusion projects: diversity in both contents and scale

The contents of skills for inclusion projects extend over a wide range and no singular project type can be defined to characterise this realm. Of the strongly practical projects, the [Joensuu Rock Academy](#) (North Karelia) supports young people interested in the music field and the professionalization of young musicians through band activities, business contacts and small group activities. The [Takuulla yhdessä!](#) project, which has received 50 000 € in funding, in turn organises workshops for young people applying the TAKUULLA and VOIMALA models for empowerment and wellbeing.

In the projects where operating models are being developed the perspective is clearly broader and more systemic. The [Jobi \(Bringing NGO services into the ecosystem of wellbeing – employment and inclusion for young people\)](#) project endeavours to make voluntary work more attractive and accessible to young people, supported by 300 000 € from structural funds. The [SOPPI \(Service innovations that enhance social inclusion in sports club work\)](#) project, which has also received 300 000 euro in funding, in turn engages young people in the development of third-sector service production and service knowhow.

But the number of skills for inclusion projects funded from the structural funds is in the end so low that no far-reaching conclusions can be made of their status. The traditional sectors of culture,



See projects on the map

sports and youth work rely on strong basic work that is not dependent on project funding. Still, project funding could offer possibilities to support, for example, connections between creative expertise and skills for inclusion and to launch new culture, sports and youth work initiatives outside the domain of basic services. This alternative has clearly been made use of in Northern Savonia.

There are also vast white areas on the project map. This calls for reflection as to the underlying reasons and consequent impacts.

## Project implementers in skills for inclusion

The third sector plays a strong role in skills for inclusion projects. One third of the funded projects in this realm are third-sector projects. The associations that implement them are relatively large and well established. As the management of ESF projects requires strong skills in project work and a sufficient level of administration, structural funds funding doesn't serve as the primary source of financing for small associations.

Universities of applied sciences, which tend to have an active and strong role in the project world at large, are the main implementers in six projects, one of them carried out by a university and two by a company. With the others the main implementer is the city, municipality or some other public actor.

**TABLE 6: Implementers of skills for inclusion projects.**

Association	8
University of applied sciences	6
Municipality or city	3
Company	2
Other public actor	1
University	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21</b>





# Conclusions



# 6

## Conclusions

An investigation into regional structural funds projects offers an updated picture of how creative expertise and skills for inclusion are promoted in the different regions of Finland. Structural funds have thus far been an important development instrument explicitly in those regions that are in the most fragile position in terms of population, location, business activity and also wellbeing.

The main purpose of this report was to overview project funding in the realms of creative expertise and skills for inclusion. In the background lies not only the objective of identifying the status of projects in these areas but also the aim of bringing into attention differences, even equalities, between the regions. Language, with Swedish and Sámi as minority languages in Finland, also comes into play here. Based on the data, the project world is principally Finnish-speaking. In the realm of creative expertise there was one Swedish-language business project, of the skills for inclusion projects none was Swedish-speaking. In the creative expertise projects aimed at Sámi-speaking parts of the country the titles in some cases appear in Sámi but the application language was Finnish.

A separately conducted analysis is likely to grow old fast. Thus it would benefit research if the structural funds and other public databases were developed to enable continuous and cross-referenceable follow-up. As yet, this not the case. The categorisation data of the structural funds database do not at present serve the needs of field-specific or thematic monitoring and analysis. In this report the projects have been manually categorised based on the project title and description or, with the business projects, by looking up the companies' business area at public websites. The method is by no means fast or agile. Improving the usability of existing data that have already been defined as public would help all the actors in monitoring funding and maintaining transparency.

The importance of updated information is now timelier than ever; the ongoing regional administration reforms call for vision and understanding on how and where development investments are targeted, whether speaking of creative expertise or enhancing skills for inclusion among young people. Both these realms are fragmented and easily overshadowed by stronger development emphases. Hopefully this report will help regional actors argue in favour of creative expertise and skills for inclusion in their respective regions.

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# CREATIVE AND INCLUSIVE FINLAND

LUOVA JA OSALLISTAVA SUOMI  
KREATIVA DELAKTIGA FINLAND

2017



Leverage from  
the EU  
2014–2020