



SUMMARY REPORT ///
EUROPEAN REGIONAL COOPERATION
FOR ARTS & CRAFTS
REGIO CRAFTS /// PORTUGAL

CRAFTS INNOVA — TION

INTRODUCTION

EUROPEAN REGIONAL COOPERATION FOR ARTS & CRAFTS PORTUGAL /// CASCAIS

This report provides a summary of the final documentation of the Portuguese contribution to the European project “Regional Cooperation for Crafts Development” (Regio-Crafts). The report, as well as the main documentation of the project is in 3 parts, which constitute 3 separate reports:

- Part I provides a comprehensive framework of the current situation of the arts & crafts sector in Portugal. It is divided into the following chapters: Chapter 1 – An Overview of the Crafts Sector in Portugal; Chapter 2 – Education and Training; Chapter 3 – The Market; and Chapter 4 – Support Programs for the Crafts.

- Part II is focused on the presentation, study, and transferability analysis of the best practices identified by the six project partner regions, followed by directions and recommendations for further development and national policies.

- Part III presents an action plan developed by local stakeholders of the arts & crafts sector in the region of Cascais, it includes a list of recommendations for local development and policies in regard to five main strategies for the development of the arts and crafts sector in Cascais: 1 – Entrepreneurship and Economic Aspects of the Crafts Industry; 2 – Design Strategies for Crafts Innovation; 3 – Crafts Education and Skills Transfer; 4 – Crafts Heritage and Cultural Tourism; and 5 – Marketing and Branding for Crafts.

PART I /// CHARACTERIZATION OF THE CRAFTS SECTOR IN PORTUGAL

Chapter 1 /// An Overview of the Crafts Sector in Portugal

Chapter 1 shows that, in Portugal, the crafts sector has a very specific legal definition, which is defined by law no. 41/2001 of 9 February, with amendments contained in law no. 110/2002 of 16 April, on the legal approval and statutory definition of the “Artisan and Craft Production Unit”. This is a fundamental legal instrument that clearly defines the concepts of craft, the craftsman, and the craft production unit, and details the recognition and accreditation process of both artisans and production units. As such, the “Craft Worker’s Licence” is a document, which certifies that the craftsman has the professional and technical knowledge and skills to carry out the respective work independently. In addition, recognition of the craft production unit is provided through a “Craft Production Unit Licence”, when the following conditions are met: the individual responsible for production holds a craft worker’s licence; the company employs not more than nine employees; and it develops a business activity listed in the “Directory of Crafts”. The entity responsible for the legal framework of the sector is the “Portuguese Employment and Vocational Training Institute” (IEFP), through the “Program for the Promotion of Traditional Arts and Crafts Micro-Enterprises” (PPART), which, in addition to the “Statute of Artisan and Craft Production Unit”, has already put forward a legislative proposal to establish a system of qualification and certification of traditional handmade products. This system will promote the authenticity and quality of these products, while protecting the Portuguese crafts from counterfeiting and unfair competition from similar products manufactured with low production costs in quite distinct social and labour contexts.

Chapter 2 /// Education and Training

Chapter 2 focuses on education and training in the craft sector. In that respect, crafts are one of the 39 training areas covered by the “National Qualifications System”. The importance of it is that this system applies to all kinds of education, training, and qualifications, which in this sector is significantly relevant, as it also encourages lifelong learning by promoting the validation of informal learning. Additionally important is the fact that the National Qualifications System is related to the European Qualifications Framework, which makes all national qualifications readable and recognized across Europe, promoting the mobility of workers and learners between countries. Regarding the national education system, the learning of crafts skills is limited to artistic education and vocational education, training students to develop skills that will allow them to develop artistic and entrepreneurial projects in the crafts area. At the level of secondary education, the Soares dos Reis Secondary School of Arts in Porto, and the Antonio Arroio Secondary School of Arts in Lisbon, are the most relevant and prestigious institutions contributing to the education of arts and manual skills. In the academic level of education, the prestigious Ricardo do Espírito Santo Silva Foundation hosts a range of workshops dedicated to traditional crafts, namely wood working, metal working, book binding and decoration, decorative painting, gold plating, textiles, and conservation and restoration of national and international historic heritage. In addition, the Matosinhos School of Art and Design and the School of Fine Arts and Design in Caldas da Rainha have been developing numerous projects involving the crafts sector. As for craft-specific vocational training, CEARTE (a crafts and professional training centre that incorporates the network of training enters of the IEFPP) plays a central role within the sector, whose mission is to promote professional training and the certification of skills for the general population – in particular for craft workers, while fostering innovation and the modernization of the arts & crafts sector. The centre provides continuous training and consulting for craft workers and craft production units in the following areas: “Technology”, “Design”, “Management”, “Marketing”, and “Innovation”; at the same time, it develops research studies and projects, aiming to develop new content, methodologies, and innovative tools to improve professional training for the arts & crafts sector, as well as being a major contributor to the regulation of the sector.

Chapter 3 /// The Market

The third chapter is an attempt to characterize the crafts market in Portugal. The analysis was hampered by the lack of existing studies and reports on this matter; as a result, the market characterization presented in this document is mostly based on the knowledge and experience gained by the key actors in the sector. Accordingly, the typical consumer of crafts displays the following general characteristics: he is essentially selective, aware of the social, cultural, and environmental values inherent in handmade products and local production; he seeks essentially symbolic objects with identity values; he is aware of the technical qualities of products and generally elects contemporary aesthetics. As for market distribution, the number of crafts fairs held annually throughout the country continue to increase, as they remain the main contact point for the industry and its market, and continue to be the main selling point for most craft activities. Nevertheless, in response to contemporary market tendencies and demands, other distribution channels are now being explored, namely through e-commerce platforms and directly in the craftsmen's workshops. In terms of promotion and communication strategies, the IEFP supports a number of initiatives with the purpose of promoting the sector among its stakeholders.

Chapter 4 /// Support Programs for the Craft Sector

Finally, Chapter 4 focuses on the existing programs to support business and sector development within the crafts sector. These programs and initiatives cover different areas of development, namely professional training, support to innovation projects, promotion of internships in the craftsmen's workshops, and entrepreneurship and small business incentive support programs. In Portugal, policies to support crafts activities are mainly operated by organizations linked to employment and training. In the context of EU policies aimed at regional and local development, instruments to support the sustainable development of territories were created, particularly in rural areas, where crafts activities are considered an important resource for local economies; however, there isn't a specific financing system for craft businesses. In addition, there is poor promotion and information on the existing systems, which also demand a great deal of bureaucracy, many times inaccessible to artisans.

PART II /// TRANSFERABILITY OF EUROPEAN GOOD PRACTICES TO THE CRAFTS SECTOR IN PORTUGAL

Part II of the study summarizes, analyses, and presents the good practices selected by the partner countries of the project, with the purpose of examining their possible transferability to the Portuguese context. Each of the six participating countries selected and presented two practices. Thus, we have analysed ten practices corresponding to the selections made by Latvia, Bulgaria, Spain, Greece and The Netherlands. This study was developed according to the following areas of intervention: “Training and Awareness”, “Promotion”, and “Development and Innovation”. With regard to training and awareness, we have analysed five practices, from which we point out the academic program in “Material Technology and Design” (Latvia), for it could be relevant for the Portuguese crafts sector, as there is not a formal level of academic curriculum that integrates the discipline of design aspects of craft production, in Portugal. In the area of awareness, the program “Children’s Corner” at the ethnographic complex of ETAR, in Gabrovo, Bulgaria, presents an interesting model of creating and building awareness among children, regarding the value and importance of the cultural and traditional heritage that is represented in the crafts.

With reference to the area of promotion, four practices were analysed. The “Dobele Crafts House” was created as a support institution for local craftsmen, in the region of Dobele, Latvia. The Portuguese crafts sector could learn more about this practice as its interest resides in the fact that, from conceptualization to practice, the centre develops a whole set of actions focused on the artisans interests, working permanently for the appreciation and acknowledgment of the artisan and his craft.

The exhibition of products resulting from the “Craft Design Pressure Cooker” during the DesignXPO in Leeuwarden (The Netherlands) is relevant because it contributes to the promotion of the potentialities existing in the cooperation between artisans and designers, with visible results worthwhile to be presented in a design exhibition. As it is also shown in the Portuguese practice “Meaning of Matter in Design” (see Regio-Crafts publication Creative Crafts), a practice of this nature, following the incorporation of design methods into the practice of crafts, would benefit the crafts industry.

Within the promotion area of intervention, we finally point out the “Electronic Database of Traditional Models” selected by Greece, for it presents a major interest and relevance for the sector. In our study, we have considered that any database of this nature is a very important tool, as it directly contributes to the sector’s investigation and academic research; to the development of historical, cultural, social and anthropological knowledge of traditional communities; and ultimately, to the preservation and innovation of craft productions.

Finally, the practice “Children Build their own Solar Boats with a 3D Printer” (The Netherlands) brings forth interesting questions related to the sector’s development and innovation. In our view, this practice is relevant for two main reasons: the first is that by involving children, it raises awareness and encourages young people to participate in the creative process of product production; the second reason is related to the technology used in the production of these objects: 3D printing. On the one hand, the idea that this is a technology that can enhance the toolbox of the artisan is obvious. On the other hand, one must consider whether the use of such technology in the crafts sector will not question the limits of what is meant by craft production. In this sense, it is also evident that the creative design and construction of objects using rapid prototyping cannot assume the centrality of production. Again, it should be taken into account that being a very recent technology, its use will remain experimental in order to explore its real potential and positive contributions to the craft sector.

PART III /// CRAFTS INNOVATION STRATEGIES FOR CASCAIS

In June 2014, within the Regio-Crafts project, five groups of regional stakeholders belonging to the creative industry sector from Cascais together with several regional agents and institutions, presented and discussed an action plan for the development and implementation of the “arts & crafts” in Cascais Region. The work plan consisted of five main strategies of implementation, on how the municipality of Cascais could develop the “arts & crafts” sector at a short – medium term level.

G1 /// Entrepreneurship and Economic Aspects of the Crafts Industry

For the first strategic area of “entrepreneurship and economical aspects of the crafts industry”, the Cascais stakeholders group proposes the creation of an association, to act as a disseminator of ideas through new cultural, social, and economic agents – the “Creators of Cascais Intrapreneurship” initiative; a physical space for activities regarding the generation and sharing of experience, knowledge dissemination, and the promotion of practical activities focusing on arts & crafts workshops in Cascais; the establishment of a digital platform to serve as a database of artisans, and an inventory of contemporary and traditional knowledge, as well as the material aspects of Cascais’s culture; and, the creation of an “Arts & Crafts Cascais” brand to promote the prestige of the creative work of Cascais.

The association serves to promote the individual, social, and cultural innovation of arts & crafts in Cascais, under the central theme of “Intrapreneurship”. Additionally, it aims to promote the development of projects and training targeted at facilitating the necessary tools such as repositioning the artisanal activity, ensuring the sustainability of crafts activities, developing communication strategies, and guiding brand creators.

G2 /// Design Strategies for Crafts Innovation

The objective of the Cascais stakeholder group for the second strategic area of implementation, relates to facilitation of innovation within the crafts sector in Cascais; In this context, Design, with its multidisciplinary explorative nature and methods was regarded as a relevant concept to contribute to this end.

This working group proposes the establishment of a 'taskforce' to aid in the development of coherent strategies for Cascais, comprising members of various players, agents and stakeholders, including: the administration, tourism and organizational businesses, the creative industries, the local residents, and universities.

In terms of development, and increasing the overall wealth of the region, the town should emphasize the "promotion of natural and cultural assets in Cascais' creative industries", namely, the *ocean*, and the people's connection to it; the *local soil; the history* and the relevance of stone working and masonry for the region's heritage; *agriculture*, the vineyards and Cascais's historic position as the "Granary of Rome"; as well as the experiences it has to offer – gastronomy, golf, water sports, business tourism, and cultural events.

G3 – Crafts Education and Skills Transfer

The goal of the "Crafts Education and Skills Transfer" group discussion was to come up with ideas related to the dissemination and expansion of crafts knowledge. To this end, the stakeholders group proposes the establishment of an 'arts hub' of traditional crafts, functioning as a centre of promotion for new dynamics around local crafts, maintaining their heritage properties, and giving direction to their evolution, at secondary school-level equivalence.

The "IDEA Centre Arts & Crafts" is envisaged to provide *professional training* for *youths* in the field of traditional arts & crafts with the promotion of certain local aspects, and the integration of practical training sectors and local resources; as well as *adult education* in the form of short and medium-term courses aiming to increase dynamism within the industry, and helping to guide the development of skills and professional profiles of the individuals involved (including subjects like sustainability, tutorship, management, and marketing).

The facility is aimed to function as an environment of research and action, to fulfil activities such as; the development of a system to inventory and modernize intangible local heritage assets; promote the development and testing of new products; and, the monitoring implementation of new training units.

Additionally, the hub also serves to develop mechanisms of promotion and dissemination, which promote the development of crafts promotional materials; the development of teaching and learning kits, material libraries, and catalogues; and, to develop annual plans for dissemination and awareness raising actions amongst various schools.

G4 /// Crafts Heritage and Cultural Tourism

The objective of the fourth working group was to explore strategies for implementing the crafts sector in tourism. To this end, the group proposes the establishment of crafts and its legacy as a separate entity from the existing heritage and cultural tourism context – modernizing the concepts involved – to reinforce Cascais’s position in national and international cultural tourism.

The approach for the “Introduction of Crafts under the Heritage and Cultural Tourism”, is three-fold:

Firstly, updating cultural points with new initiatives; promoting local and innovative media for integration; and developing and implementation of new cultural models that integrate entrepreneurship as well as their agents and actors.

Secondly, inventorying existing heritage assets from a contemporary perspective by identifying new audiences, their interests, and levels of awareness while increasing the effectiveness of communication; and identifying future publics and the ways of reaching them.

Finally, the empowerment of existing cultural centres through the development of attractive promotion actions for the new audience; the development of innovative methods for communication; and the implementation of new models of sustainable and financially autonomous business.

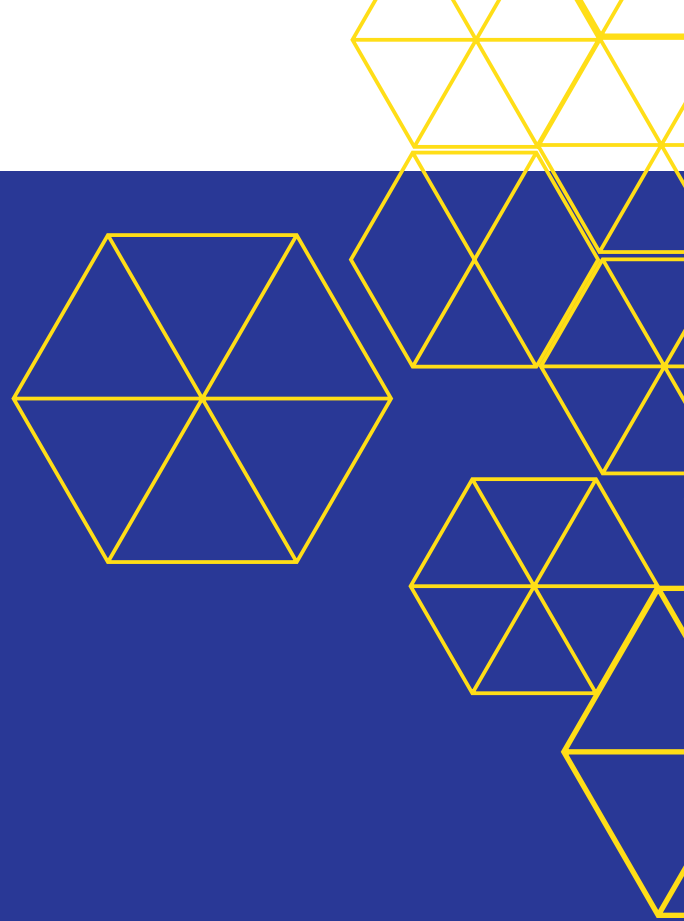
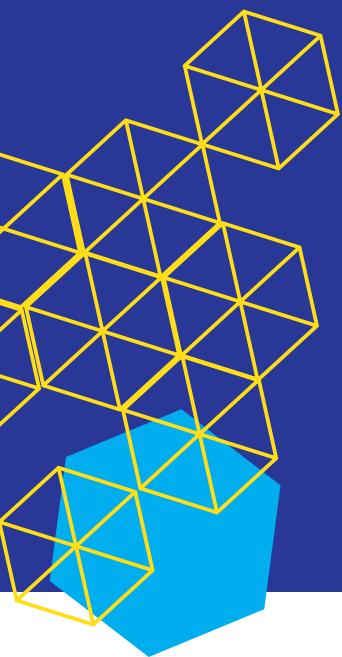
G5 /// Marketing and Branding for Crafts

The goal of the fifth stakeholder work group was to designate strategies regarding the marketing, branding and promotion of crafts. To this end, this group proposes the establishment of an artistic cooperative for cultural promotion/historical “Cascalense” (relating to Cascais), titled “Cooperative of Cascais Arts” (CCA). A new online platform for the CCA with promotional material comprising interviews with local artists, artisans, and other intellectuals related to Cascais’s culture is also deemed necessary.

The CCA should essentially facilitate the identification of the best traditional production assets, and the introduction and integration of new knowledge and technologies into them – boosting the production of artistic objects and other commercially valuable materials, while improving applicable processes and cultural dissemination.

Another important factor to note is the necessity of the establishment and maintenance of a consistent communication channel with private entities associated with the project, in addition to relevant institutional partners.

Finally, the ensuring of the implementation of a sustainable system of product sales linking the CCA to a consistent cultural tourism program is needed; not only with its historical content, but with its cultural content as well, through the involvement of visitors and consumers on digital platforms related to promotion and involvement.



PARTNER_

susdesign[®]



PROMOTER_

CASCAIS