

---

INDONESIA

# Country Overview

Cultural Cities Profile  
East Asia

# Contents

<b>Indonesia in numbers</b>	<b>1</b>
<hr/>	
<b>Snapshot</b>	<b>2</b>
<hr/>	
Economy	2
Culture and creative industries in Indonesia	3
Artistic, cultural and creative industries	4
<b>City Headlines</b>	<b>6</b>
<hr/>	

# Special Thanks

Commissioned by the British Council, the research was led by Dr. Tom Fleming, director, Tom Fleming Creative Consultancy (TFCC); Nana Yu-I Lee, senior researcher, TFCC; Chris Joynes, consultant researcher, TFCC. The Indonesia research teams were led by Dwinita Larasati at ICCN, with support from Arianti Ayu Puspita. The CIPG research team were Anesthesia Novianda, Ferzya Farhan and Muhammad Rinaldi Camil. The Tanahindie research team was led by Anwar Rachman, and included Muhaimin Zulhair, Fitriani A Dalay, Fauzan Al Ayyuby, Aziziah Diah Aprilya Wilda Yanti Salam, Ade Awaluddin Firman, Ruth Onduko, and Rafsanjani. ICCN's key city informants were: for Surabaya: Hafsoh Mubarak; for Malang: Vicky Arief; for Makassar: Ashari Ramadhan; for Ambon: Ronny Lopies; for Jayapura: Murda; for Bandung: Galih Sedayu; for Yogyakarta: Greg Wuryanto; for Semarang: Akhmad 'Adin' Khoridin; for Surakarta: Liliek Setiawan; for Aceh: Zulhadi Usman.

The **British Council** builds connections, understanding and trust between people in the UK and other countries through arts and culture, education and the English language. <https://www.britishcouncil.org/>

**Tom Fleming Creative Consultancy** is the leading international consultancy for culture and the creative economy. We offer research, strategy and policy leadership across the creative, cultural and arts sectors. We offer technical expertise, strategic thinking and the tools to position creativity to the heart of society. With offices in London and Porto and associates in 12 countries, we are an international agency operating in every region. <http://tfconsultancy.co.uk/>

**Indonesia Creative Cities Network** (ICCN) is a hub organisation for cross-communities forum, connecting 200+ cities/regencies from all over Indonesia that are committed to implement the 10 Principles of Indonesia Creative Cities that was declared in 2015. ICCN published the White Book of Indonesia Creative Cities (2017) that adapts the 10 Principles to the Indonesian government's KPI, and is developing a dashboard of Creative Cities Index as a tool for local governments to make policies/ regulations based on the real time creative economy data of their respective regions. <https://iccn.or.id/>

**Centre for Innovation Policy and Governance** (CIPG) is a research-based advisory group which aspires to excel in the area of innovation, policy and governance. Considered to be among the first research-based advisory groups, CIPG grows to be an open-minded and multicultural think tank with keen interest in building Indonesian research capacities across many sectors. <https://cipg.or.id/en/>

**Tanahindie** was established in 1999, composed of personnel from various backgrounds (researchers, authors, advocates, craftspeople, lecturers, students, social workers, and housewives). Exploring urban social development from the perspective of arts and culture, the organisation's activities include research, seminars, exhibitions, reviews, and publication. <https://tanahindie.org/>

# Indonesia in numbers





## Indonesia's national strategic objectives and activities

Key strategic objectives for the development of Indonesia's cultural industries include:

- Unifying all regional assets and unlocking creative potential to achieve a strong creative economy
- Creating a conducive climate for the development of creative industries
- Building public awareness and appreciation of all aspects related to the creative economy
- Building public awareness and appreciation of intellectual property rights, including legal protection against copyright
- Designing and implementing strategies to position Indonesia and its cities on the global creative economy map

## Snapshot

Indonesia is a huge and diverse country of over 261 million people spread across over 17 thousand islands. It is the world's 4th most populous country as well as the most populous Muslim-majority country. Java, the world's most populous island, contains more than half of the country's population. Indonesia has 34 provinces, 5 of which have special devolved status. Jakarta, the country's capital, is one of the biggest urban areas in the world.

Indonesia has been an important region for trade since the 7th century, gradually absorbing foreign cultural, religious and political models from Chinese and Indian dynasties, and Muslim and European powers. Indonesia also experienced a long period of Dutch colonialism, as well as Portuguese, French and British rule. Indonesia achieved independence from The Netherlands in 1949.

The country consists of hundreds of distinct native ethnic and linguistic groups, the largest being Javanese. Since independence, a shared identity has been developed based on a national language, the celebration of ethnic diversity, support for religious pluralism within a Muslim-majority population, and a historical narrative of colonialist resistance.

The country's Muslim identity, combined with the explicit recognition of ethnic diversity, plays a key role in influencing creative practice across a range of sectors. In particular, Indonesia is a regional leader for Islamic fashion and religious tourism, and a multitude of festivals, performance and fine arts revolve around the celebration, exploration and representation of localised or ethnic traditions.

## Economy

Indonesia has a mixed economy in which both the private sector and government play significant roles. As of 2018, it is the world's 16th largest economy by nominal GDP. From an economy based largely on agriculture, a process of industrialisation and urbanisation began in the late 1960s and accelerated in the 1980s and 1990s. Services are the economy's largest sector and account for 43.6% of GDP (2017) and 47.1% of the labour force, followed by industry (39.3% GDP / 21.7% labour force) and agriculture (13.1% GDP / 31.1% labour force). GDP per capita is US\$4,038.

Tourism contributed around US\$28.2 billion to GDP in 2017. In the same year, Indonesia received over 14 million international visitors, a growth of 21.8% on 2016.

## Culture and social development

Within Indonesia, the model of locally-based 'community' collectives closely links cultural and artistic activities with social activism.

The community style of cultural collectives, working across sectors including film, literature, music, arts, design and technology, frequently emerge as a result of a localised DIY activism, or from within student groups and higher education institutions.

In addition to supporting and enabling creative practice, many 'communities' also seek to work to address local issues of concern, to advocate for cultural activity and support, or to engage with the public and local communities.



## Culture and creative industries in Indonesia

Over the last two decades, Indonesia has shown huge growth in its cultural and creative industries, driven largely by a substantial population of young, digitally-literate and entrepreneurially-minded producers and consumers.

At city level, a key driver for Indonesia's creative development is the new movement of creative hubs and networks. Commencing in the early 2000s, these institutions are now recognised for their important roles as safe spaces for diverse cultural expression, as vital enablers for collaboration and innovation, and as facilities for nurturing those new businesses and creative enterprises that are seen as central to the development of flourishing local creative economies. Now crystallised in the Indonesian Creative Cities Network (ICCN), these largely independent institutions are increasingly leading the representation of Indonesia's contemporary cultural activities at a global level.

Through such hubs, craft, design, visual arts and fashion grew as areas for creative innovation and as key markers of cultural identity among the young. This then combined with the process of urban digital connectivity, which generated platforms and channels for creative content production and diversified the sources of creation. The scale of the domestic market meant that Indonesian start-ups were capable of sustaining small-scale creative initiatives which could operate successfully without needing to export their products or services.

This process started in 1997, when the financial crisis led to a wave of informal business development. Many people responded by setting up their own micro-firms, including in key creative sub-sectors. This pro-active model of creative entrepreneurship continues to operate, for example, through the widespread semi-formal independent local-brand 'distro' outlets, community-run hubs, workshops and studio spaces. Their activities and outputs are supported and sustained by a similar upsurge in home-grown digital firms, meeting the demands of a digitally-literate and connected population for goods, creative services and cultural experiences accessed and paid for on-line.

While beginning from largely independent and semi-formal roots, this aspect of Indonesia's creative economy is growing in strategic importance and profile, gaining increasing levels of state-sponsored support from central government and municipal authorities. In particular, the establishment of BEKRAF has made a major difference in the levels of energy and investment afforded to the creative economy, and has clearly made an impact in building a national conversation on the role and value of creativity. More directly, through the formal development of city-level cultural strategies and policies, it is boosting skills and resource capacity and enabling local clusters to develop and grow.

## Artistic, cultural and creative industries

The Opus Creative Economy Forecast, commissioned in 2019, showed growth in Indonesia's creative industries of over 5% for each sector, with the highest annual growth in product design (20%), crafts (15%), film/animation/video (20%) and fashion (18%).

### Digital creativity

**Digital creativity is a significant source of investment for both government and the private sector.** Across Indonesia, national and regional awareness of the potential of the digital economy has led to multiple strategies for investment and support, driven in particular by the national Smart Cities programme.

The exponential growth of the grass-roots digital economy is represented by the many SME digital enterprises and start-ups to be found in most metropolitan cities. Recognition of the potential value of this growth sector is seen in national-level strategies such as the state-supported DiLo city incubator hubs, as well as a broad range of localised initiatives centring around commercial co-working spaces designed to provide facilities, resources and networking support.

### Contemporary art

**With a young, globally connected and increasingly urbanised generation of creatives, Indonesia is home to an internationally recognised contemporary art scene.** Fostered by the 'communities' model of collective and collaborative working, a broad range of regional studios, galleries, and workspaces are providing young Indonesian artists with both the facilities and also the environments in which to cultivate their practices.

Additionally, increased levels of digital and online connectivity is providing both artists and audiences with forums through which to access and promote their work. Ranging across fine art and sculpture, street and urban culture, traditional forms and contemporary social themes, Indonesia's contemporary art scene is a vibrant, discursive and multi-disciplinary world.

### Fashion

**Drawing on a range of cultural reference points, Indonesia is home to a growing fashion industry with widespread regional influence.** Encouraged by the demands of a young, style-literate consumer group and enabled by the country's long-standing manufacturing base, young designers and brands are growing in impact.

With styles taking in high-end glamour, urban and streetwear, Islamic fashions and contemporary Batik, many fashion designers are emerging from communities and SMEs as city-based or regional influencers, whose products then receive wider exposure through online stores and digitally-curated collections.

### Cultural heritage and tourism

**Indonesia's diverse cultural heritage occupies a central role within the creative economies of many cities, acting as a catalyst for regional creativity and cultural identity.** With unique and distinctive traditions of architecture, musical and theatrical performance, textiles and costume, as well as regional languages and literature, many of Indonesia's regional centres are particularly invested in both the preservation and continued development of particular forms and practices.

The most visible and distinctive of these include Gamelan, Wayang Puppetry, Ludruk theatre, courtly dance, mask-carving and Batik textiles, many of which contribute directly to the creative economy through heritage-based cultural tourism. At regional level, well-established institutions and initiatives for the preservation and promotion of these traditions interact with the advocacy of stakeholder-led community groups, who see them as key forms of social and creative expression.

Many cities in Indonesia also act as centres for Islamic tourism which, in addition to heritage, also places particular value on associated creative industries including fashion and cuisine.

# Cultural Cities Research 2021 Indonesia



● Capital City / Special Region

● Super Priority Destination

● UNESCO Creative Cities

● In 3T (*Terdepan, Terluar, Tertinggal* /  
Frontier, Outermost, Least Developed)  
Region



# City Headlines

## CITY AT A GLANCE

## IN NUMBERS

**Jakarta**, the nation's megacity capital and international hub for cultural organisations, emerging centre for contemporary design and fashion.

- **Population:** 11.06m
- **GRDP per capita:** USD\$19.030
- **City cultural status:** Indonesian Creative Cities Network (ICCN); ASEAN
- **Key cultural activities:** Advertising, Architecture, Software and entertaining games, Handicrafts, Design, Film, Publishing, Fashion, Performing Arts, Fine Arts, Photography, Television and Radio, Cultural Tourism

With many cultural activities and events framed by its entrepreneurial spirit, **Bandung** has a creative community of cultural and technological start-ups working across the city with support from local government.

- **Population:** 3m (70% under 40)
- **GRDP per capita:** USD\$4350
- **City cultural status:** UNESCO Creative Cities Network, City of Design
- **Key cultural activities:** Fashion, Music, Film, Gaming, Animation, Digital Application development, and Tourism

As Indonesia's only monarchy, **Yogyakarta** is home to Java's courtly arts traditions, which also supports a broad range of creativity across contemporary cultural sectors, with a strong festival sector.

- **Population:** 431,940
- **GRDP per capita:** USD\$6000
- **City cultural status:** Indonesian City of Heritage
- **Key cultural activities:** Cultural Tourism; Traditional Performing Arts and Handicrafts; Fine Art, Dance, Music, Cuisine

Distinctive as the only province in Indonesia to apply Islamic law (shari'a), **Aceh** city promotes a unique model of Islamic tourism through its cultural heritage of mosques, monuments and halal cuisine.

- **Population:** 265,111
- **GRDP per capita:** USD\$4870
- **City cultural status:** Tropical Rainforest of Sumatra; Indonesian Creative Cities Network (ICCN); UNESCO Tsunami Heritage;
- **Key cultural activities:** Cultural Heritage and Preservation, Cultural Tourism, Cuisine

Known for its well-established traditional musical heritage and associated activities, **Ambon** City occupies two-fifths of Ambon Island, part of the Maluku Islands group.

- **Population:** 384,172
- **City cultural status:** UNESCO Creative Cities Network City of Music, ASEAN Cultural Creatives Cities for Sustainable Development, Indonesian Creative Cities Network
- **Key cultural activities:** Music, Cultural Heritage and Preservation, Cultural and Ecological Tourism

The capital of Bali province, **Denpasar** is a dynamic multicultural city and the international centre for contemporary Balinese culture.

- **Population:** 947,100
- **GRDP per capita:** USD\$4160
- **City cultural status:** World Heritage City;
- **Key cultural activities:** Cultural and Ecological Tourism; Traditional Handicrafts; Traditional Performing Arts; Cultural Heritage Preservation and Management; Music; Graphic Design; Fashion

Located on the border with Papua New Guinea, **Jayapura** is one of the easternmost cities in Indonesia. A centre for Papuan culture, it is also known for a burgeoning urban street culture.

- **Population:** 75,000
- **GRDP per capita:** USD\$7650
- **City cultural status:** Natural and ecological reserves;
- **Key cultural activities:** Ecological and Cultural Tourism; Cultural Heritage Preservation and Management; Traditional Performing Arts, Handicrafts and Cuisine; Urban street culture: hip-hop, music, dance; Film-making

**Labuan Bajo**, a small town located within the Komodo archipelago of 264 islands, is the gateway to Komodo National Park.

- **Population:** 7000 in Labuan Bajo, 51,905 in Komodo District
- **GRDP per capita:** USD\$849
- **City cultural status:** UNESCO World Heritage Site and Biosphere Reserve
- **Key cultural activities:** Cultural and Ecological Tourism; Traditional Handicrafts; Traditional Performing Arts; Cultural Heritage and Environmental Preservation and Management;

A centre for Javanese culture and a leading ecological city, **Malang**'s universities and communities also encourage digital creativity and innovation.

- **Population:** 870,730
- **GRDP per capita:** USD\$5910
- **City cultural status:** Indonesian Creative City for Digital Creativity;
- **Key cultural activities:** Digital Creativity; Traditional Handicrafts; Traditional Performing Arts; Film; Cuisine

**Makassar** is the largest city in Eastern Indonesia, home to active community-led literary and music scenes, an international writers' festival and the Makassar Biennale.

- **Population:** 1.5m
- **GRDP per capita:** USD\$8270
- **City cultural status:** Japan Association of Smart Cities in ASEAN (JASCA); ASEAN Smart Cities Network (ASCN)
- **Key cultural activities:** Literature; Music; Traditional and Contemporary Arts;

The third largest city in Indonesia, **Medan's** young ethnically diverse population is known for their creativity in culinary, crafts, fashion, music and performing arts.

- **Population:** 2.28m
- **GRDP per capita:** USD\$7490
- **City cultural status:** Indonesian Creative Cities Network; Gelar Melayu Serumpun (GEMES), a network to bring together allied ethnic Melayu cultural arts
- **Key cultural activities:** Cuisine, Crafts, Fashion, Music & Performing Arts

**Semerang's** strong tradition of community activism is mobilising civic support for cultural preservation and urban renewal through arts and culture.

- **Population:** 1.8m
- **GRDP per capita:** USD\$7500
- **City cultural status:** Applicant for UNESCO World Heritage Site: Semarang Old Town
- **Key cultural activities:** Cultural Tourism; Cultural Heritage Preservation and Management; Urban Development; Fashion

**Surabaya** is Indonesia's second-largest city, a commercial hub led by a city authority invested in developing the cultural economy.

- **Population:** 2.9m
- **GRDP per capita:** USD\$14,180
- **City cultural status:** UNESCO Learning City;
- **Key cultural activities:** Digital creativity; Cuisine; Film; Fine Art; Crafts

**Surakarta's** history and heritage form the basis of its cultural life, which draws on Javanese traditions of dance, music, crafts and batik.

- **Population:** 519,160
- **GRDP per capita:** USD\$6540
- **City cultural status:** World Heritage City
- **Key cultural activities:** Cultural Heritage Preservation and Management; Traditional Handicrafts; Traditional Performing Arts; Textiles; Cuisine; Cultural Tourism

 **British Council Indonesia**

 **@idBritish @idBritishArts**

 **@idBritish @idBritishArts**

 **[www.britishcouncil.id](http://www.britishcouncil.id)**