



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



KÜTAHYA  
CITY OF CRAFTS AND FOLK ART

• Designated  
• UNESCO Creative City  
• in 2017

2019

# ANNUAL REPORT



**Kütahya the City of Crafts and Folk Arts**



**UNESCO  
Creative City Kütahya**

Prepared by:  
T.C. Kütahya Belediyesi

[www.kutahyacreativecity.com](http://www.kutahyacreativecity.com)  
[etudproje@kutahya.bel.tr](mailto:etudproje@kutahya.bel.tr)



# CONTENTS

**1.**

Letter from Mayor

04

**3.**

Kütahya and  
The Network

07

**2.**

Executive Summary

06



**4.**

Major Initiatives

08

**5.**

City Collaborations

10

**6.**

Activities at  
the Local Level

12

**7.**

Social Media  
& Website  
& Promotional Video

14



## THE LETTER FROM THE MAYOR

Kütahya with a history of more than seven thousand years has been home to numerous civilisations and is regarded as a capital of culture, art and “çini” crafts. The secrets of fire and earth has been reserved in Kütahya for centuries, since the Seljukian and Ottoman periods. The untouched and magical culture of the city has been waiting to be uncovered even by its own residents.

The çini products of Kütahya are referred to as the blossoms of fire. Such art and crafts work having been produced for centuries was also the main theme of the first labour agreement in history between çini workshop employers and employees in 1776. The famous Ottoman explorer, Evliya Çelebi, stated in his masterpiece, Book of Travel, that vases, cups, bowls and pots produced in

Kütahya are simply unparalleled. Along with various ceramic and porcelain factories, there are more than 500 çini workshops in this heaven of ceramics. Çini products each of which are painted, thrown and baked by women become priceless souvenirs for tourists from all around the world. Additionally, the interiors and exteriors of new mosques and masjids (prayer rooms) are ornamented with çini products, as well.

Kütahya is a prosperous and beautiful city with a rich historical, cultural and artistic background as well as abundant natural, thermal and underground resources. One of the vital steps that we have taken to promote the riches of Kütahya has been our membership application for UNESCO Creative Cities Network. The success of our application process which we have initiated with high hopes and a huge effort has been critical for us.

Kütahya renown for its çini and çini culture has been designated as a creative city in the field of Crafts and Folk Arts in UNESCO Creative Cities Network in 2017. We are grateful for all the cities having supported us in this process. Within the scope of UN’s 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, Kütahya has a chance to demonstrate its role as a sustainable city of culture. The UN Agenda’s objectives, goals and actions will provide an invaluable guide for Creative City Kütahya to overcome challenges and achieve new successes.

It is undeniable that çini is crucial for Kütahya; however, it is also important to promote other crafts and folk arts in the city. We have an obligation to move Kütahya forwards with all of its riches in relation to crafts and folk arts. We also are to turn this into a wholistic process with high added value for all of our people who provide enormous efforts for the crafts and folk arts in our city.

Moreover, becoming a member of the network has brought new responsibilities for Kütahya. Ever since the designation as a creative city, Kütahya has made a great progress for its goals and to fulfil its commitments. This whole process is merely a starting point for Kütahya rather than a goal to reach. In view of accomplishing these and enhancing Kütahya's capacity as a creative city in a sustainable, there is a huge responsibility for all the local actors in the city.

Our municipality has established UNESCO Creative Cities Network Unit with experts in their fields in order to develop new projects and to keep up with the agenda of the network. The Creative Kütahya logo has been displayed in various public institutions to raise awareness for the network.

The use of the Creative Kütahya logo is under the supervision of our UCCN Unit to ensure its use in non-profit organizations.

Furthermore, some of the historical townhouses owned by the municipality has been allocated to artisans so that they can continue their works in more convenient workspaces. Also, we have upped our efforts to bring more national and international project funds to Kütahya.

Kütahya continues to be the first and only city from Turkey in the field of crafts and folk arts in the network where the number of members has increased to 246 and those in the crafts and folk arts field has risen to 49.

We would like to take a more active role in the organization of the Network as the coordinator or a vice-coordinator. I would also like to express our intention to host the 2021 Annual Subnetwork conference in our city. Together we will continue to do our best for our city and the network.

Best Regards,

*Prof. Dr. Alim Işık*  
*The Mayor of Kütahya*



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Kütahya is a city with a historical background of more than seven thousand years and it has been home to numerous civilizations throughout history. Thanks to its deep cultural roots, the tradition of ceramic-tile making or “Çini” art in Kütahya has been known around the world, as well. The city has been globally known thanks to the artistic value and material quality of its famous Çini and ceramic products.

In view of preserving and enhancing such vital cultural traditions of Kütahya, a series of initiatives have been undertaken by Kütahya Municipality under the guidance of the vision and values of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network, of which the city has been the first member from Turkey in the field of Crafts and Folk Arts since 2017. This annual report outlines such initiatives and activities conducted in Kütahya to contribute towards the sustainable development of the city through its creativity and cultural background.

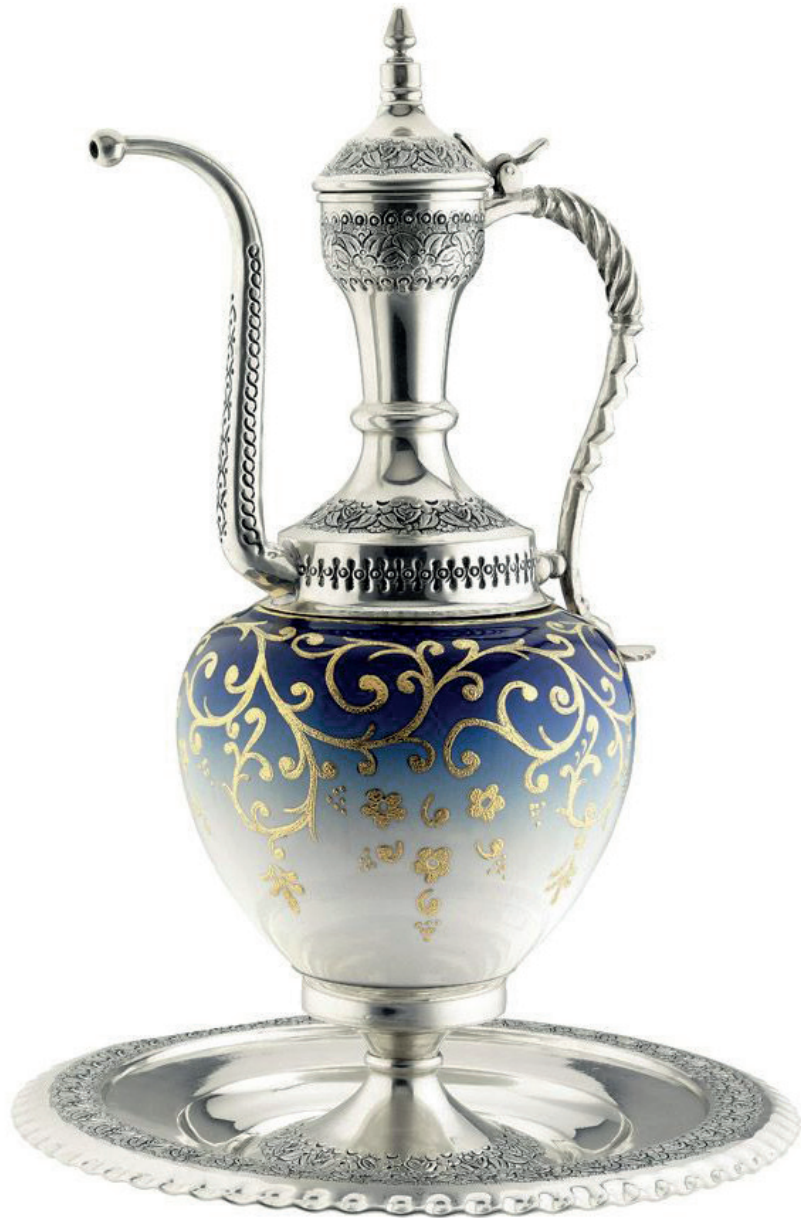
With more, nearly 1000 active çini workshops, the tradition of çini is still predominant in the cultural and industrial ecosystem of Kütahya. The cultural traces of çini making can be observed in not only production of tableware items like bowls, jugs, vases and plates but also as outer design items in architectural areas in the form of glazed tiles, siding, as well as in the craft of diamond point engraving for traditional clothes.

The rich creative and cultural climate of Kütahya has always relied upon its people. Currently there are; 3 living human treasures (UNESCO intangible cultural heritage) which have been officially registered by UCCN and under the scope of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 54 artists of ceramic-making; 7 ceramists, 5 decorators, 5 hand turning gear artists, 2 serigraphs, 1 calligraphist, 3 minstrels, 1 needlepoint artist, 2 lapidaries, 2 illumination artists, 1 glitter wrap artist, 1 sandal artist, 1 ragdoll artist, 6 baglama artists, 2 baglama making artists, 1 watering artist, 2 wood carving artists, 1 wooden ship artist and 6 embroidering artists were officially registered by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

In short, this annual report provides brief information as to the major initiatives, city collaborations and activities that have been conducted in 2019 in relation with Kütahya’s commitments as a member of UCCN. With the priceless help of local partners, Kütahya Municipality has been doing its best to solidify Kütahya’s place in the network as an active member and to achieve sustainable development through creativity and cultural capacity by exploiting the benefits of being a member of the network.



## THE NETWORK AND KÜTAHYA



In Turkey, Kütahya was elected as the first city in the field of “Crafts and Folk Arts”. This status helped Kütahya to preserve its well-known cultural and traditional value named “Çini” within the scope of UCCN at the official level.

Being a city of crafts and folk arts, sustainable development of Kütahya depends upon the enhancement of its cultural and creative ecosystem. In this regard, UCCN provides a unique and critical opportunity as a hub to guide the city in this challenge. The recognition of the traditional crafts and folk arts of the city by the network members has also given international exposure for the traditional crafts in Kütahya, particularly the çini tradition.

In addition, the network has also been instrumental for the promotion of local artists, artisans and craftpeople at not only national but also international level. Through encouragement and promotion of individual and collaborative efforts by these people and with the help and cooperation of other member cities in the network, Kütahya aims at carrying its traditional crafts and values to the future.

Thanks to the events that had been organised, people of international cities have shown amazement at the beauty of the local “Çini” art, which has been gradually turning the city into a touristic attraction. It also improved the perception of artists and artisans and urged them to develop new patterns and designs of ceramic and çini to ensure its sustainability as a vibrant member of the network.

## UPCOMING PROJECT: IMPROVING DIGITALIZATION AND CREATIVITY ECOSYSTEM IN KUTAHYA AS A MEMBER OF UCCN



Cities depending on their deep cultural heritage and historical roots for socioeconomical development of their population has to go through a certain transformation to keep up with the technological developments and the ever-changing nature of creative industries. The creative ecosystem in Kütahya has been in a similar situation in recent years. To address the digitalization related problems of the ecosystem and solidify Kütahya's place in the UNESCO Creative Cities Network, the key local institutions, Kütahya Municipality, Zafer Development Agency, Kütahya Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Kütahya Chamber of Ceramists, Photographers, Crafts and Artisans have come together to develop the project with a budget of 3.7 million Euros.

The operation aims at contributing to the digitalization of traditional çini making craft through a Digital Hub where not only SME's, entrepreneurs, artisans and craftspeople can develop new designs, patterns and forms, but traditional forms of çini making will be digitalised and preserved. The Digital Hub will also provide a platform for artists, craftspeople and designers from other member cities of the UCCN to collaborate through art, crafts and design.

The EU funded operation is expected to start its activities in 2021.





## TOWN TWINNING: KÜTAHYA AND PECS (2019 – 2020)

### Strengthening Cooperation Through Culture and Creativity

The socioeconomic structures of Kütahya and Pecs both depend on their cultural heritage and creative industries. Additionally, the fact that Pecs and Kütahya have crossed paths during crucial times in history have brought these two cities together within the context of culture and creativity.

The EU funded (715.085 €) project has provided an invaluable opportunity for artisans, craftspeople and other people in creative industries, especially women and the young, to share ideas and brainstorm on how to improve collaboration and how to overcome the challenges the cities have endured to enhance their creative ecosystems.

Numerous roundtable discussions, workshops, study visits and mobility actions have been conducted within the scope of the project. As a result of the shared wisdom throughout all these events, cultural and creativity strategies of both cities have been developed to shine light on future actions to further develop the creative ecosystems in both cities.

## CITY COLLABORATIONS

- March 2019 - an event was organised by Euroasia Art, Culture, Literature and Science Federation within the scope of Azerbaijan Culture Art Events. 50 artworks of çini, lining, painting, miniature, marbling art and graphic design were displayed in the city of Baku.
- 5th May 2019, Kütahya Governorship, Kütahya Municipality and Kütahya Chamber of Commerce and Industry participated in **Our Cultural Heritage from Tradition to Future - Intangible Heritage Presentation Days** which was held in Ankara.
- 10 - 15th June 2019, our mayor Prof. Dr. Alim IŞIK, Director of Culture and Social Affairs Mehmet ZENCİ and Zafer Development Agency Expert Utku ÇİL participated in **UNESCO Creative Cities Network 13th Annual Meeting** held in the City of Fabriano in Italy.
- 3rd September 2019, meetings were organized to plan for 2020 activities in relations to crafts and folk arts with the cooperation of İstanbul Beyoğlu Deputy Mayor Mehmet ERDOĞAN.
- 12th September 2019, **UNESCO Creative Cities Network Executive Process Evaluation Meeting** was performed.
- 17th September 2019, Urban Development Consultancy Committee was established and had its first meeting to discuss the potential actions for sustainable development of Kütahya.
- 25 - 28th September, our city Kütahya was introduced into **“BİLDEF 4th Bursa Anatolian Days”** which was held in Atatürk Congress and Culture Center. High level representatives from Kütahya Governorship, Kütahya Municipality and Kütahya Chamber of Commerce and Industry attended the event.



- 6 - 8th November 2019, Kütahya Municipality participated in “**YAPEX Restoration Fair**” which was held in Antalya to introduce our city.
- 7 - 10th November 2019, “**Çini Fest**” was organized by Kütahya Chamber of Ceramists, Photographers, Crafts and Artisans to introduce history and cultural values of our city at İzmir Alsancak Train Station, in İzmir.
- 14 - 17th November 2019, Kütahya Governorship, Kütahya Municipality and Kütahya Chamber of Commerce and Industry participated in “**Travel Expo Ankara Tourism Fair**” which was held in Ankara.
- 19th November 2019, meetings were performed for year of 2020 activities in crafts and folk arts with the cooperation of Turkey Confederation of Artists and Artisans Chairman Bendeve PALANDÖKEN.
- 17 - 24th November 2019, under the scope of Culture and Art Events in Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus City of Nicosia, an exhibition was displayed in the field of illumination, miniature, lining and embroidery by community members.
- 28th November and 1st December 2019, **12th Aegean Region Provinces Presentation Fair** was held in Ankara.



## ACTIVITIES AT LOCAL LEVEL

In this context section, major and minor steps will be shown which are conductively performed by Kütahya Municipality in the name of UCCN. Thanks to these steps, Kütahya attended to the important activities to represent its very deep cultural and historical roots.

### Majors:

1. “**Çiniköy**” - January 3 - Republic of Turkey Ministry of Environment and Urban Planning supported to establish for introducing crafts and folk arts of Kütahya.
2. “**Kütahya Creative Women Cooperative**” - February - Will be found to gather women under the roof of cooperative to provide them officially registered works and social insurance.
3. “**Municipality and University are Hand-in-Hand to the Beautiful Future for Kütahya**” **Project** - February 27 (the Project in progress) - Development of work area for disadvantaged women, young people to make an instution in the field of ceramic, crafts and folk arts.
4. In the month of February, an exhibition was performed with the 82 pieces of modern and traditional artworks of padishah portraits.



## Minors:

1. Çini Workshop - March 22, fundamental educations were provided about çini shaping for students and instructors from Spain, Latvia, Romania and Bulgaria.
2. Çini Exhibition - April 16 and 19 - The exhibition was shown in the field of texture-taint, spot-line, illumination-shade.
3. Kütahya Fine Arts Vocational School Traditional End-Year Exhibition - May 21 and 31
4. Oil Painting Exhibition - With the cooperation of Dumlupınar University Faculty of Fine Arts and Fine Arts High School students and instructors an exhibition was performed in the branch of oil-painting with 50 pieces of artworks.
5. On August 3, a meeting was performed to raise awareness for çini and handcrafts in the branch of Crafts and Folk Arts.
6. On November 8, “Children Touching to Mud” workshow was exhibited called “Feel the Art” and Traditional Clothes Patterned with Çini Fashion Show.
7. On November 10, in the memory of death anniversary of Great Leader Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, a çini exhibition was initiated themed as Atatürk.



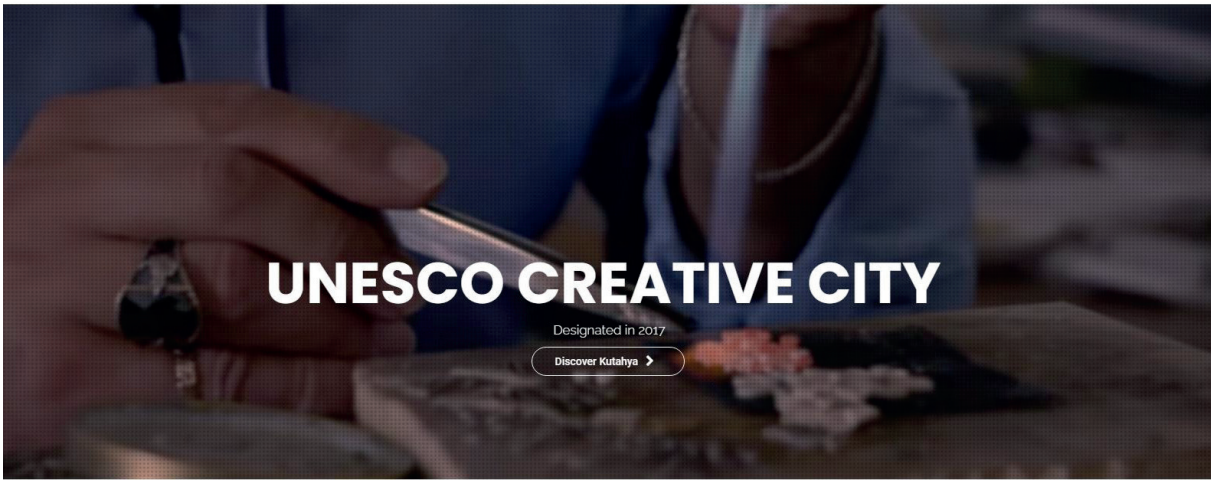
# SOCIAL MEDIA & WEBSITES & PROMOTIONAL VIDEO

You may basically have a contact to see activities now and in the future about our municipality from internet addresses given below to learn information whereof our Kütahya which is the city is currently saving its position as artisanship and folk arts in UNESCO Creative Cities Network and having activities now and for future:

**Website:** <http://kutahyacreativecity.com/>



Kütahya ▾ Events ▾ El Sanatları ▾ UCCN ▾ Konum İletişim TR EN FR



## Social Media:



**kutahyacreative**



**KutahyaCreative**



**kutahyacreative**

## Promotional Video:





United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



**KÜTAHYA**  
CITY OF CRAFTS AND FOLK ART

• Designated  
• UNESCO Creative City  
• in 2017

