

Wolverhampton's Culture and Creative Industries Sector

April 2024



Contents

Executive Summary	3
Key Messages	3
Wolverhampton Economy	4
Culture and Creative Industries: Employment Analysis	4
Culture and Creative Industries: Enterprise Analysis	6
Culture and Creative Industries: Gross Value Added (GVA) Analysis	7
Creative and Cultural Industries Assets.....	8
Participation in Cultural Engagement	9
Creative Activity	9
Creative Event	9
Museum or Gallery	10
Library	10
Activity, Event, Museum or Gallery	11
Dance	11
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	12
The Visitor Economy	13
Accommodation	13
Visitors.....	13
Sectoral Distribution of Economic Impact.....	14
Investment	15
Appendix	16

Executive Summary

The Economic Intelligence Unit (The EIU) was commissioned by the City of Wolverhampton Council in March 2024 to provide a partial update of the BOP Consulting strategic planning for culture report from 2016. This refresh was to primarily focus on providing an update on the culture and creative industries for jobs, businesses and the value of the economy. Along with also providing insights into Wolverhampton's culture and creative industries assets, participation in cultural engagement, the visitor economy and investment.

Please note, the culture and creative industries sector encompasses activities such as design, architecture, film & TV, IT & digital among others. A variety of SIC codes have been utilised, a summary is provided in the appendix.

Key Messages

- Wolverhampton's culture and creative industries sector employs approximately **2,520 people**, across an estimated **525 enterprises providing an economic value of £149m**. Wolverhampton shows particular strengths within this sector for IT, software and computer services / computer programming, consultancy and related activities.
- Of the 525 enterprises:
 - 93.3% were classed as micro (0-9 employees)
 - 36.2% had an annual turnover of between £100,000 to £199,999.
- There are a total of **506 culture and creative assets** located in Wolverhampton. Examples include: the Grand Theatre, Civic and Wulfrun Halls, Areana Theatre and the Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton Art Gallery, the Light House Media Centre and many well-preserved historic buildings and heritage assets.
- The visitor economy in Wolverhampton bounced back to pre-pandemic levels in both value and volume terms (comparing 2022 to 2019 directly) and the latest figures show that overall **visitor numbers** for Wolverhampton increased from 7.33m in 2021 to **9.84m in 2022**. The visitor economy was worth **£406m in 2022**, up from £266m in 2021. As well as the number of full-time equivalent jobs supported by the sector was up from 2,991 in 2021 to **4,310 in 2022**.
- For cultural engagement in the last 12 months, in Wolverhampton:
 - 22.1% reported to have spent time doing a creative, artistic, theatrical or music activity or a craft.
 - 30.9% reported to have attended an event, performance or festival involving creative, artistic, dance, theatrical or music activity,
 - 22.3% had attended a museum or gallery.
 - 18.0% had used a public library service.
 - 45.2% had attended an arts event, museum or gallery or spent time doing an arts activity.
 - 16.4% had participated in dance – notably above the national proportion of 15.8%.
- Since the 2018/19 funding year, Wolverhampton has received nearly **£13.2m in investment from 145 awards**. Of which nearly, £2.8m and 23 awards were in the 2023/24 funding year.

Wolverhampton's Economy

Wolverhampton's economy is broken down into the following sectors, some "strategic" (advanced manufacturing, building technologies, business services, environmental technologies, transport technologies and visitor economy) – focused on growth - and some more "foundational" (health & wellbeing, public sector including education and retail / wholesale) – critical to employment but with a more enabling role in the economy.

The cultural sector does not fit neatly into any of the defined sectors below, but rather features activity that sits within many of these sectors, including advanced manufacturing, business services, public sector inc. education, retail, and the visitor economy.

Summary of GVA, jobs and enterprises by defined sector¹ for Wolverhampton (and percentage of total for England)²:

	GVA (£m)			Jobs			Enterprises (Snapshot)		
	2021	%	England %	2022	%	England %	2023	%	England %
Advanced Manufacturing	£974m	17.6%	11.3%	13,670	12.5%	9.9%	790	8.9%	11.7%
Building Technologies	£360m	6.5%	6.0%	4,050	3.7%	4.8%	1,150	13.0%	13.9%
Business Services	£1.3bn	23.4%	43.2%	18,515	17.0%	26.2%	2,500	28.3%	37.3%
Environmental Technologies	£134m	2.4%	2.7%	1,275	1.2%	1.1%	55	0.6%	0.5%
Health & Wellbeing	£882m	16.0%	8.4%	23,400	21.4%	15.1%	445	5.0%	5.5%
Public Sector inc. Education	£920m	16.7%	11.7%	17,000	15.6%	15.2%	225	2.5%	4.0%
Retail	£661m	12.0%	10.7%	17,500	16.0%	14.0%	1,640	18.5%	14.8%
Transport Technologies	£202m	3.7%	3.2%	8,270	7.6%	5.1%	1,380	15.6%	4.8%
Visitor Economy	£97m	1.8%	2.8%	5,550	5.1%	8.5%	660	7.5%	7.4%
Wolverhampton Total	£5.5bn			109,230			8,845		

Culture and Creative Industries: Employment Analysis

In 2022, the culture and creative industries sector employed approximately 2,520 people in Wolverhampton, accounting for 2.3% of total jobs³. Of the 2,520 employees, over a 1,000 were employed in IT, software and computer services / computer programming, consultancy and related activities.

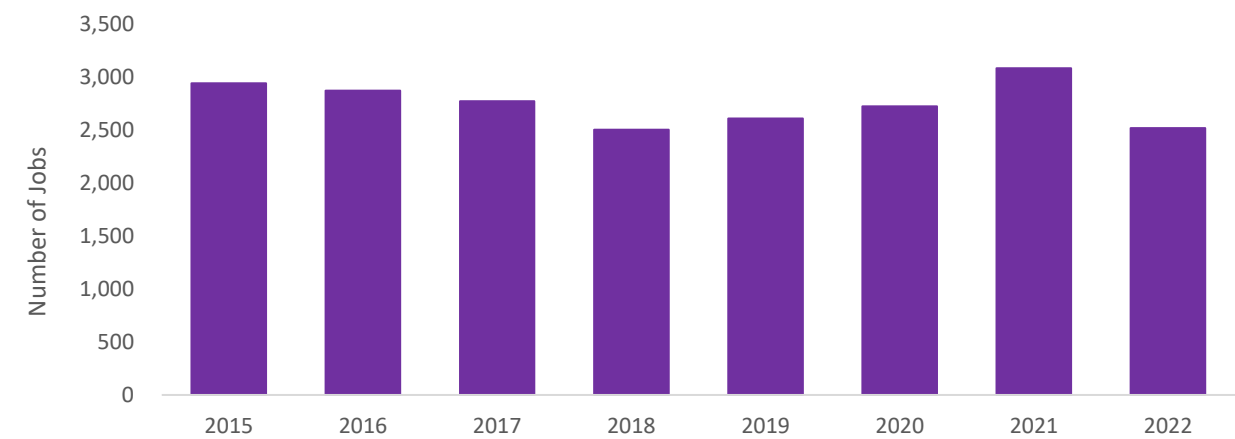
Between 2015 to 2018, there was a fall in the number of jobs in the culture and creative industries sector, this was followed by three years of consecutive increases to 2021 (to a high of 3,085). However, the latest annual change shows a decrease (-18.3%, in contrast to +5.1% for England).

¹ Shaded boxes indicator Wolverhampton has a higher proportion than the national proportion for that sector.

² Office for National Statistics (ONS), Regional gross value added (balanced) by industry: all ITL regions, released 2023, ONS, Business Register and Business Survey (BRES), released 2023, ONS, UK Business Counts, released 2023.

³ ONS, BRES, released 2023.

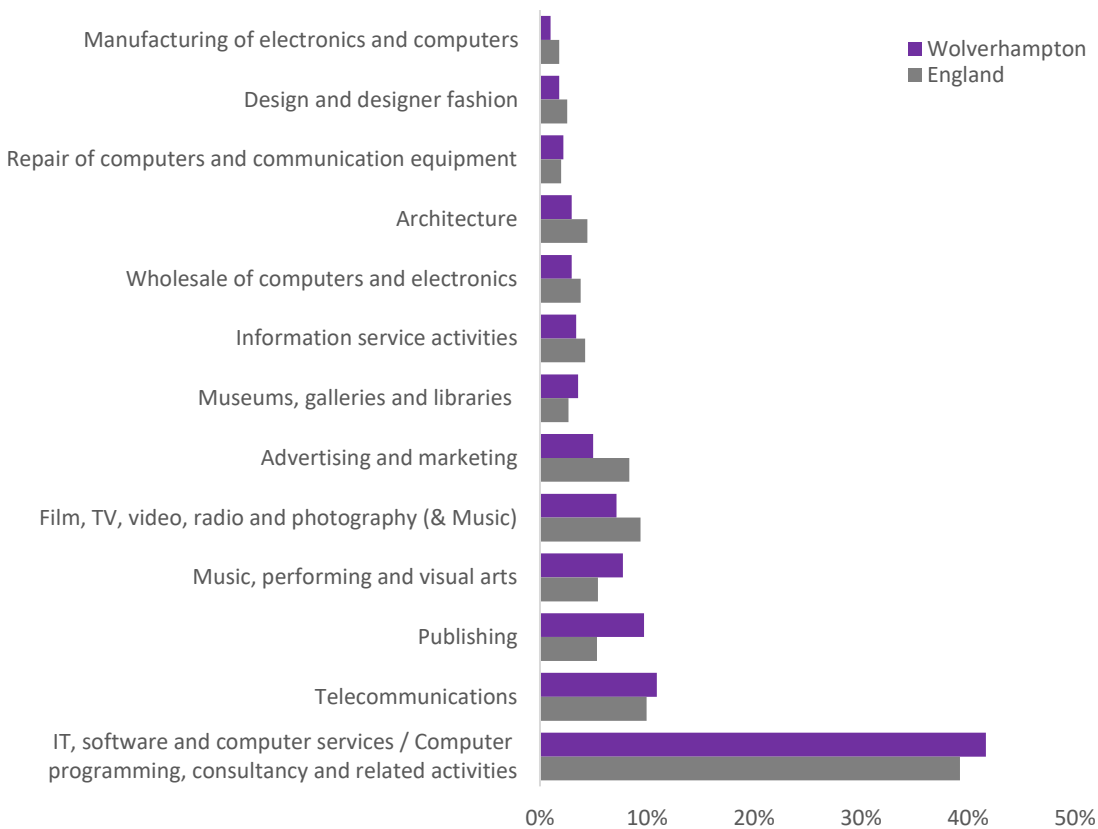
Trends in Wolverhampton’s culture and creative industries sector jobs:



For 2022, in terms of jobs within the culture and creative industries sector, Wolverhampton shows strength in:

- IT, software and computer services / computer programming, consultancy and related activities (41.7% compared to 39.3% nationally)
- Telecommunications (10.9% compared to 10.0% nationally)
- Publishing (9.7% compared to 5.3% nationally)
- Music, performing and visual arts (7.7% compared to 5.4% nationally)
- Museums, galleries and libraries (3.6% compared to 2.7% nationally)
- Repair of computers and communication equipment (2.2% compared to 2.0% nationally).

Wolverhampton and England’s job proportions in culture and creative industries by sub-sector, 2022:



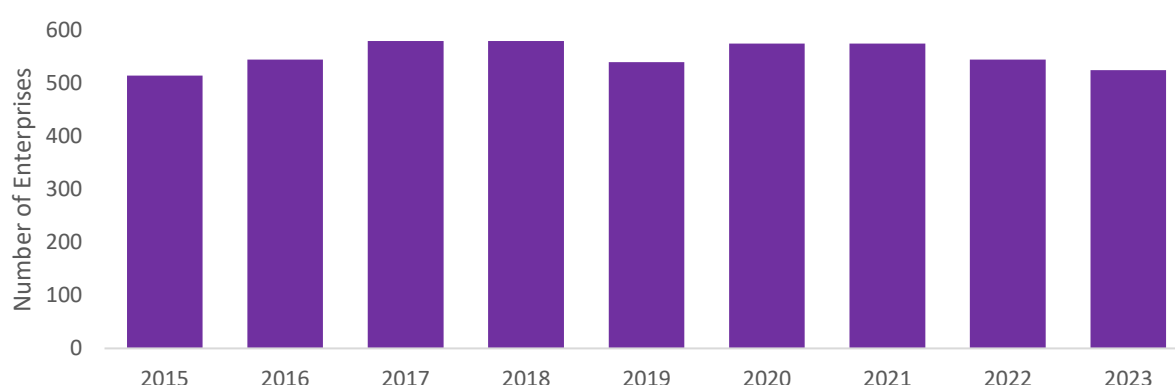
Notably, within the publishing sub-sector Wolverhampton has a high Location Quotient⁴ (LQ) for the publishing of newspapers (2.5). In the film, TV, video, radio and photography (& music) sub sector, there are high LQ's for motion picture projection activity (1.4) and retail sale of music and video recordings in specialised stores (1.7).

Culture and Creative Industries: Enterprise Analysis

Snapshot data suggests for 2023, there were approximately 525 enterprises in the culture and creative industries sector in Wolverhampton⁵. This accounted for 5.9% of total enterprises.

As seen in the following graph, there has been relatively small changes in the number of culture and creative enterprises in Wolverhampton over time. Following the national trend, there has been declines in the number of enterprises in the last two years.

Trends in Wolverhampton's culture and creative industries sector enterprises:



In 2023, approximately 490 of Wolverhampton's enterprises in the culture and creative industries sector were micro (0-9 employees), this equated to 93.3% of the total, above the national proportion of 92.5%. The remaining enterprises were classed as medium (10-49 employees).

Of the 525 enterprises, 36.2% (165) had an annual turnover of between £100,000 to £199,999 (nationally 33.3% of total). This was followed by 28.6% (130) enterprises with a turnover of between £50,000 to £99,999 (nationally 26.9% of total).

Turnover bands for enterprises in the culture and creative industries sector, 2023:

	Wolverhampton	Wolverhampton Proportion	England	England Proportion
Total	525		289,945	
£0-£49,999	80	15.2%	52,040	17.9%
£50,000-£99,999	150	28.6%	78,110	26.9%
£100,000-£199,999	190	36.2%	96,665	33.3%
£200,000-£499,999	55	10.5%	25,260	8.7%
£500,000-£999,999	25	4.8%	14,910	5.1%
£1m-£1.99m	15	2.9%	9,250	3.2%
£2m-£4.99m	10	1.9%	7,170	2.5%
£5m-£9.99m	0	0%	2,875	1.0%
£1bn-4.99bn	0	0%	2,730	0.9%
£5bn+	0	0%	925	0.3%

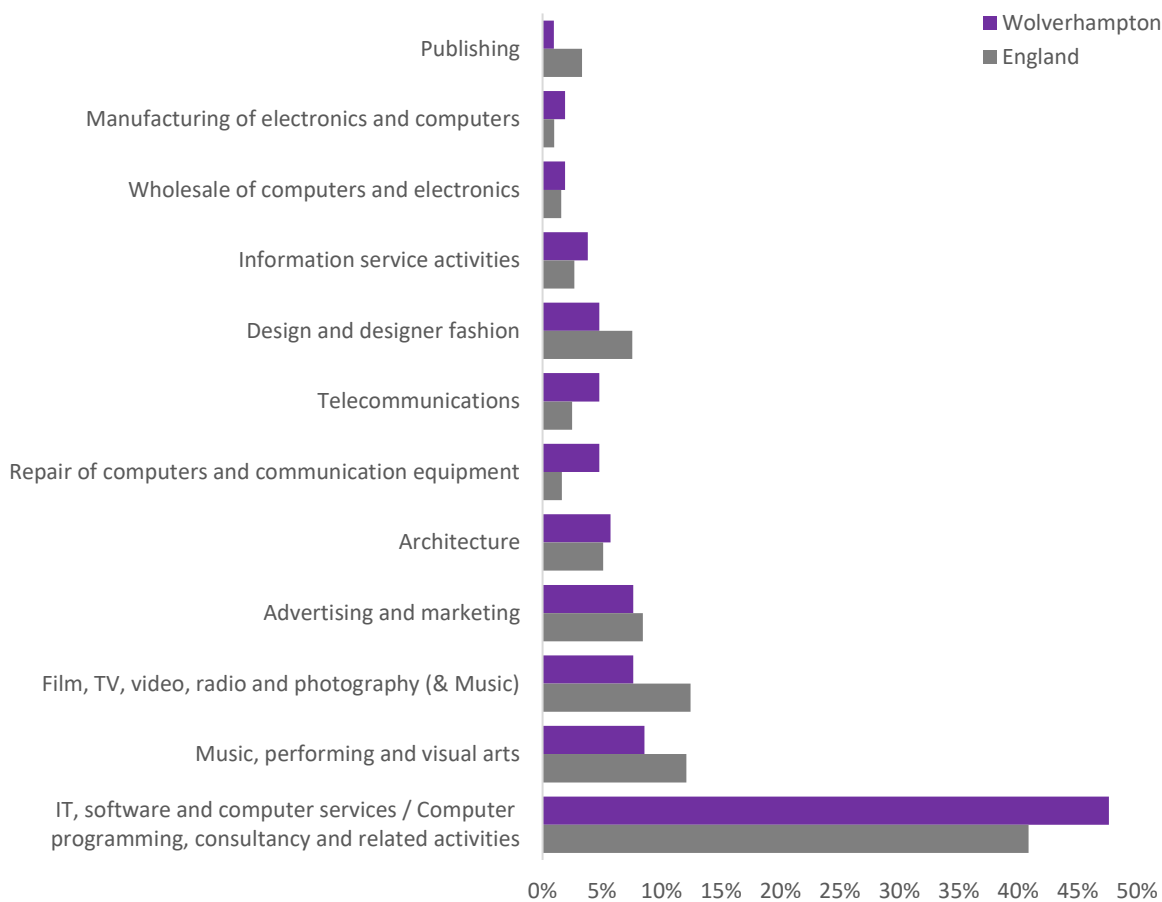
⁴ A method that measures the concentration of a particular industry in a region as compared to the nation. A value greater than 1 means that the area has a higher share of jobs in an industry, compared to the area's share of the national economy.

⁵ ONS, UK Business Counts, released 2023. Shaded boxes indicator Wolverhampton has a higher proportion than the national proportion.

For 2023, in terms of businesses within the creative and cultural sector for all enterprise sizes, Wolverhampton shows strength in:

- IT, software and computer services / computer programming, consultancy and related activities (47.6% compared to 40.9% nationally)
- Architecture (5.7% compared to 5.1% nationally)
- Repair of computers and communication equipment (4.8% compared to 1.6% nationally)
- Telecommunications (4.8% compared to 2.5% nationally)
- Information service activities (3.8% compared to 2.7% nationally)
- Wholesale of computers and electronics (1.9% compared to 1.6% nationally)
- Manufacturing of electronics and computers (1.9% compared to 1.0% nationally)

Wolverhampton and England’s proportion of enterprises in culture and creative industries by sub-sector, 2023:



Culture and Creative Industries: Gross Value Added (GVA) Analysis

For local GVA data, SIC codes are combined meaning a direct value is not available for the culture and creative industries sector. To help understand an estimated value for this sector, GVA data has been analysed by proportioning jobs and due to this only an overall figure is available.

In 2022, Wolverhampton’s culture and creative industries sector economy was worth an estimated £149m⁶.

⁶ ONS, Regional gross value added (balanced) by industry: all ITL regions, released 2023.

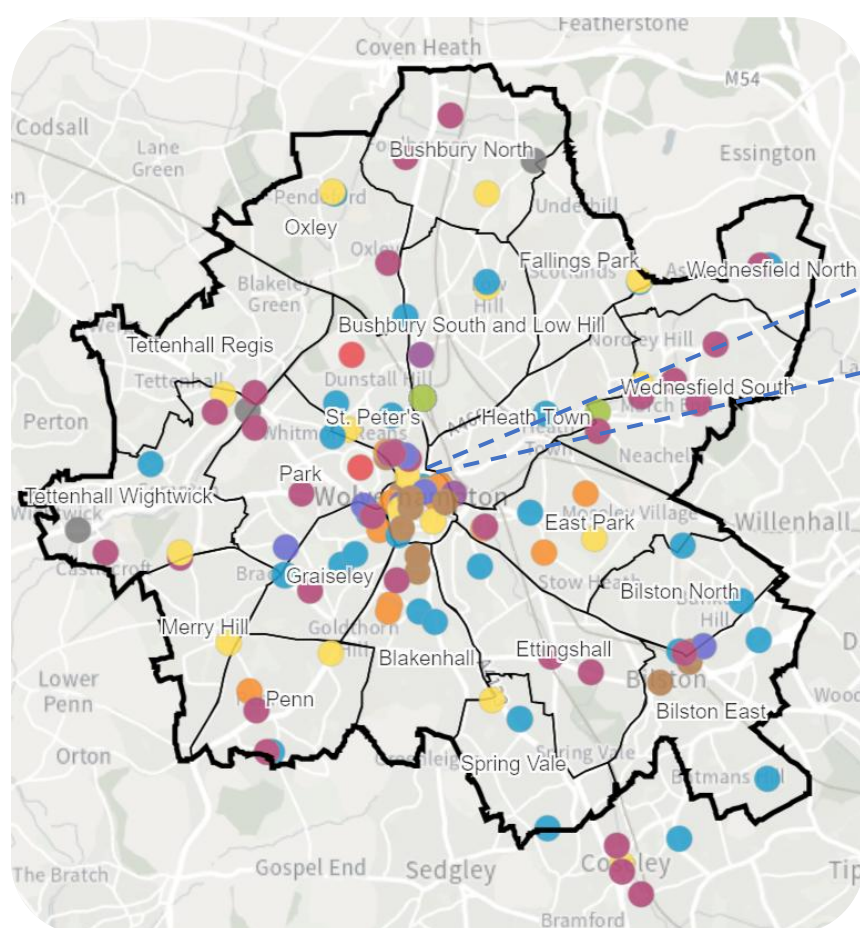
Creative and Cultural Industries Assets

Wolverhampton boasts strong art collections at the Wolverhampton Art Gallery particularly in pop art, photography and artist films.

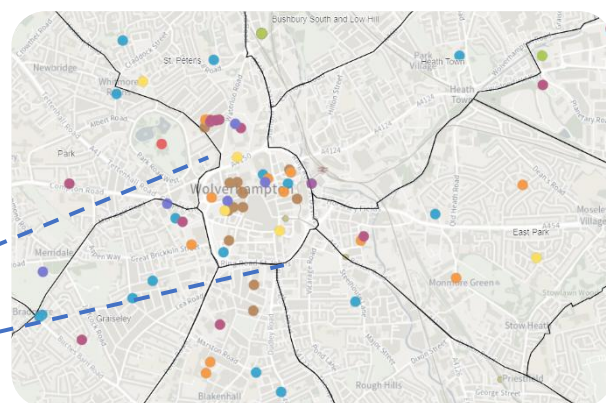
Wolverhampton is also home to vibrant performance venues across the city such as the Grand Theatre, The Halls, Arena Theatre, KK Steel Mills, Newhampton Arts Centre and the Robin 2 which each serve a distinctive audience and offer. The Halls provide the largest entertainment, events and leisure venue in the Black Country and act as a hub for live entertainment, drawing a large and loyal audience.

Wolverhampton's high number of well-preserved historic buildings and assets provide a strong sense of place and legibility within the city. Canal and river heritage also plays an important part in Wolverhampton's history and sense of place. The City of Wolverhampton Council works closely with the Canal and River trust to preserve, promote and encourage the use of those canals and riverways. The City Council also engages with local heritage groups to promote and preserve heritage assets including developing several heritage walking trails. The large collections of the City Archives, including more than 30,000 photographs is open to the public and is a rich resource for the community.

Locations of the 505 creative and cultural industries assets in Wolverhampton⁷:



Interactive version available [here](#)



- Outdoor event space
- Community-focused space
- Scheduled monument
- Creative education space
- Specialist production & rehearsal facility
- Library & archive
- Heritage & environmental attraction
- Live music venue
- Heritage at risk
- Museum & gallery
- Creative education space
- Heritage & environmental attraction

⁷ [West Midlands Cultural Infrastructure map](#)

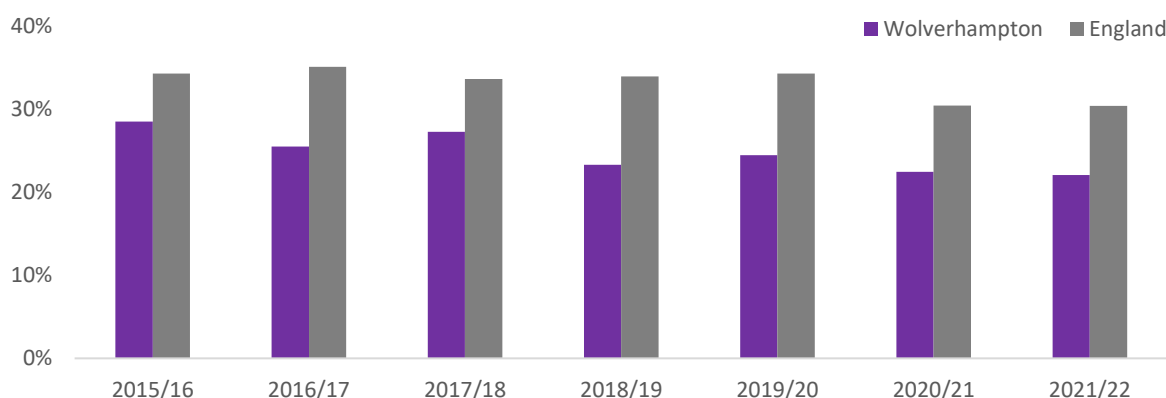
Participation in Cultural Engagement

The [Active Lives Survey](#) is a Sport England-led survey to provide insights about adults (16+) on their cultural engagement (arts participation and attendance, museums and gallery attendance, use of a public library and participation in dance activities). Analysis is based on each year ending in November.

Creative Activity

In 2021/22, 22.1% of respondents in Wolverhampton reported to have spent time in the last 12 months doing a creative, artistic, theatrical or music activity or a craft, this was below the national proportion of 30.4%. When compared to the previous year this was 0.4 percentage points (pp) lower for Wolverhampton, while nationally figures remained at the same level. As seen in the following chart, for Wolverhampton figures fluctuated between 2015/16 and 2019/20 with the latest two years having consecutive decreases. For both Wolverhampton and England, rates are lower than pre-Covid-19 levels.

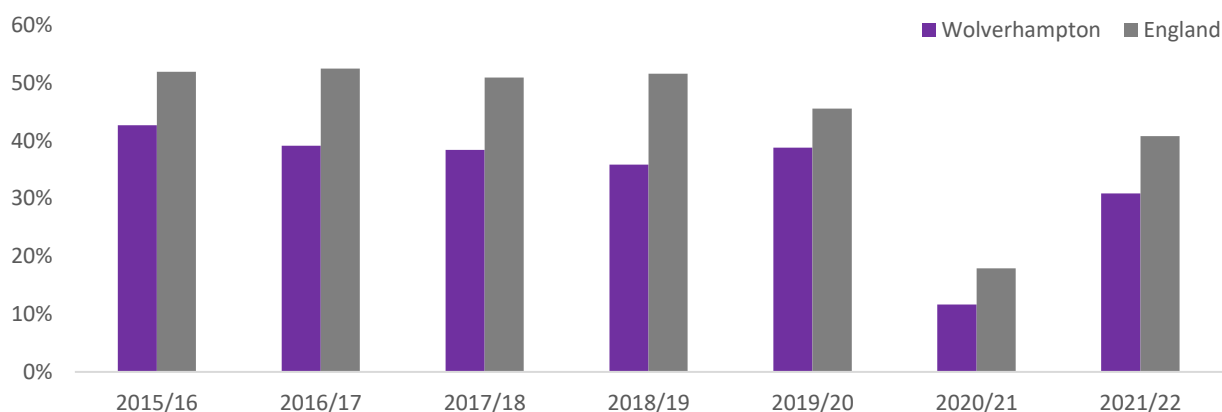
Trends in the rates of doing a creative, artistic, theatrical or music activity or a craft in the last 12 months:



Creative Event

In 2021/22, 30.9% of respondents in Wolverhampton reported to have attended an event, performance or festival involving creative, artistic, dance, theatrical or music activity in the last 12 months, below the national proportion of 40.8%. This has rebounded from the impact of Covid-19, but prior to this, trends in Wolverhampton tended to show a slow decline.

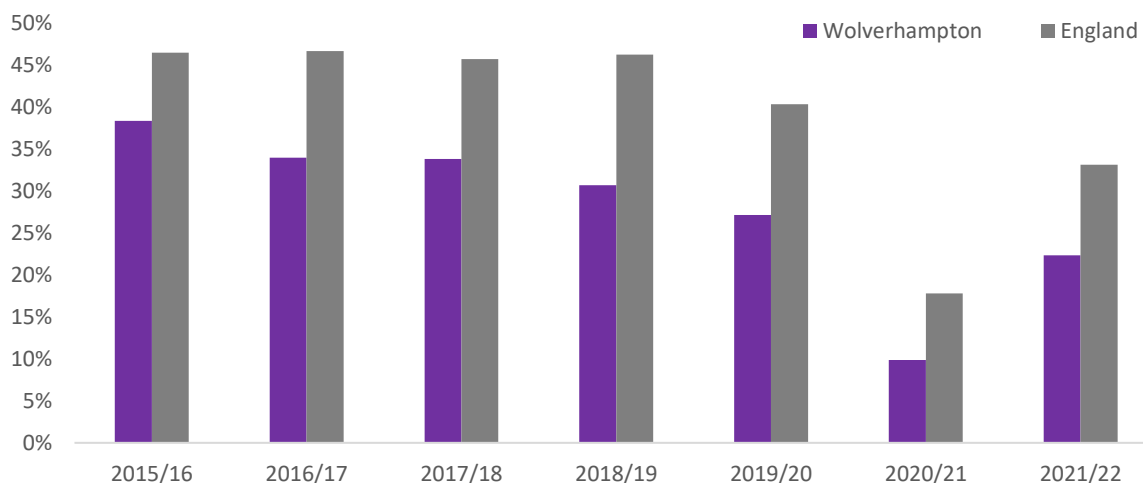
Trends in the rates of those who attended an event, performance or festival involving creative, artistic, dance, theatrical or music activity in the last 12 months:



Museum or Gallery

In 2021/22, 22.3% of respondents in Wolverhampton had attended a museum or gallery in the last 12 months, this was below the national proportion of 33.1%. Figures are on a rise from the lows of Covid-19 (Wolverhampton: 9.9% and England: 17.8%). However, prior to Covid-19 rates for Wolverhampton had been steadily declining.

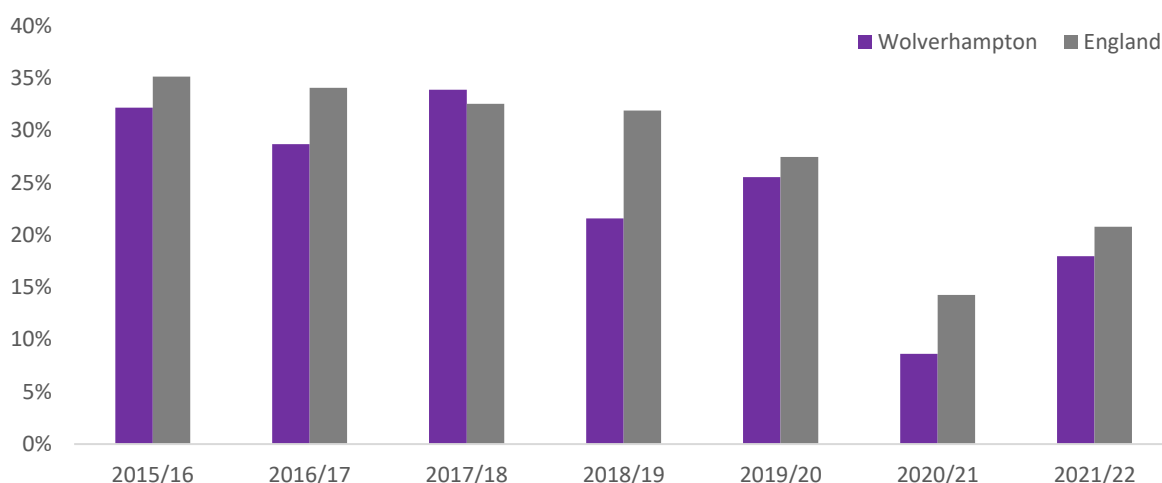
Trends in rates for attended a museum or gallery:



Library

In 2021/22, 18.0% of respondents in Wolverhampton had used a public library service, whereas the proportion was 20.8% nationally. Since 2020/21, figures increased by 9.3pp for Wolverhampton and by 6.5pp nationally. Prior to the latest change, national trends show a steady decline over time, with Wolverhampton showing fluctuating rates.

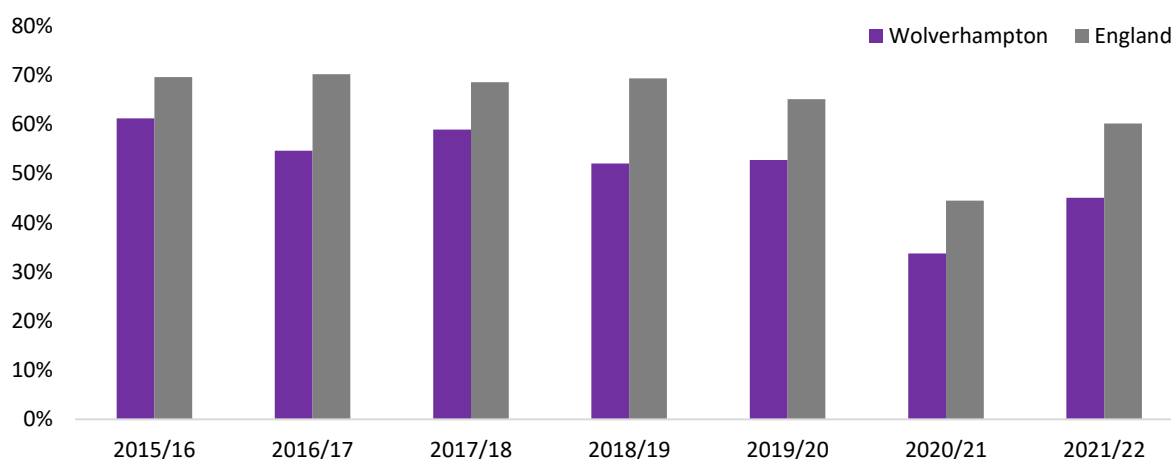
Trends in rates for library usage in the last 12 months:



Activity, Event, Museum or Gallery

In 2021/22, 45.2% of respondents in Wolverhampton had attended an arts event, museum or gallery or spent time doing an arts activity, whereas the proportion was 60.2% nationally. Since 2020/21, figures increased by 11.3pp for Wolverhampton and by 15.7pp nationally. Prior to Covid-19, trends for both national and Wolverhampton figures fluctuated.

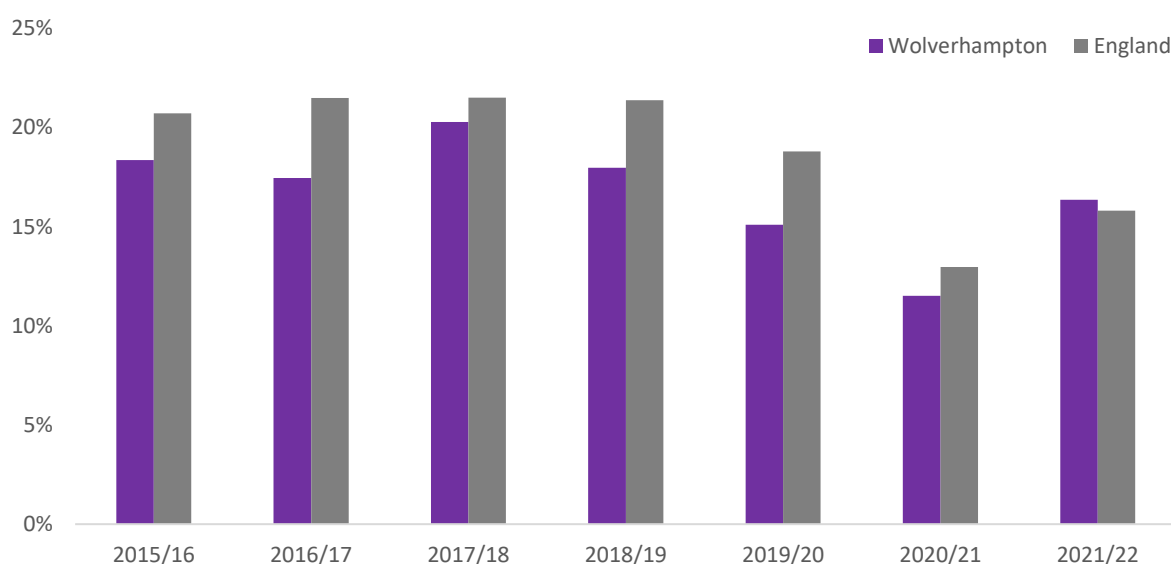
Trends in rates for those who attended an arts event, museum or gallery or spent time doing an arts activity in the last 12 months:



Dance

In 2021/22, 16.4% of respondents in Wolverhampton in the last 12 months had participated in dance, above the national proportion of 15.8%. Since 2020/21, figures increased by 4.8pp for Wolverhampton and by 2.8pp nationally.

Trends in rates for dance participation in the last 12 months:



There are data gaps for Wolverhampton in the years of 2019/20 and 2020/21 participation in creative or artistic dance. The latest year data (2021/22) shows rates were at 4.5% which matched the national proportion.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The Arts Council's 2021/22 [Diversity report](#) looks at data from the Audience Agency to show participation by age, gender, ethnicity and disability for the 2018-22 investment round. The insights are mainly at a national level with some regional breakdown. However, these insights can be used to help understand potential groups under-represented in Wolverhampton. As it is widely known that Wolverhampton is home to over 267,600 (with nearly 51% of these female) residents and is a relatively young population along with high deprivation rates and low income.

National findings for overall age revealed that 7% of audiences were aged 16-24 years old, with percentage increases progressing with each age group, peaking at 25% for individuals aged 65 years and older.

For disability, 8% of audiences were reported as disabled. Within the discipline, the highest participation for those reported with a disability was literature at 11%.

For ethnicity, 10% of audiences were Mixed, Asian/Asian British, Black/Black British or Other, by discipline, this group had the highest participation rate in visual arts at 16%. F

or gender, 64% of audiences were female, within the discipline the highest percentage of audiences that were female were in dance at 76%.

By social grade (percentage of total for each social grade), 29% were from lower, this increases to 26% for middle and 48% of audiences for the higher social grade.

For the Midlands, 13% of audiences were Mixed, Asian/Asian British, Black/Black British or Other, just behind London with 17%, with the North and Southwest both at 7%. Matching the national proportion, the Midlands also had 64% of audiences that were female. 9% of audiences identify as having a disability, these were similar figures across the regions.

Percentage of audiences by age, Midlands and England:

Age	Midlands	England
16-24 years old	9%	7%
25-34 years old	14%	12%
35-44 years old	17%	16%
45-54 years old	17%	18%
55-64 years old	20%	22%
65 years and over	23%	25%

Percentage of audiences by ethnicity, Midlands and England:

Ethnicity	Midlands	England
White	87%	89%
Mixed	3%	3%
Asian or Asian British	6%	4%
Black or Black British	3%	2%
Other	1%	1%

The Visitor Economy

By using the Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor (STEAM), a tourism economic impact model, the West Midlands Growth Company have provided insight into visitor numbers for Wolverhampton and their contributions to the local economy. The findings were reported as of June 2023.

Accommodation

In 2022, for visitors who paid for accommodation in Wolverhampton there were 26 establishments (split by 88% serviced accommodation and 12% non-serviced accommodation), which provided 3,787 beds (57% in serviced accommodation and 43% for non-serviced accommodation).

Visitors

Following the impact of Covid-19, **total visitor numbers to Wolverhampton were at nearly 159,000** in January 2021, this gradually increased each month and peaked to over 1.1m in July, this was followed by two months of declines (to just over 637,000 in September) and then two months of increases (to just over 766,000 in November) and finishing the year with nearly 448,000 visitors.

2022 was still heavily impacted with visitor numbers, starting at 447,000 in January 2022 and increasing till May (reaching nearly 1.16m) which was followed by a drop to 760,000 in June, increasing for two months (to 1.21m in August). This dropped again to 822,000 in September with a slight increase to 914,000 in October and finishing the year at 568,000.

This meant that overall visitor numbers for Wolverhampton increased from 7.33m in 2021 to **9.84m in 2022**. The visitor economy was worth **£406m in 2022**, up from £266m in 2021. As well as the number of full-time equivalent jobs supported by the sector was up from 2,991 in 2021 to 4,310 in 2022.

The latest year-on-year comparisons by type of visitor for Wolverhampton:

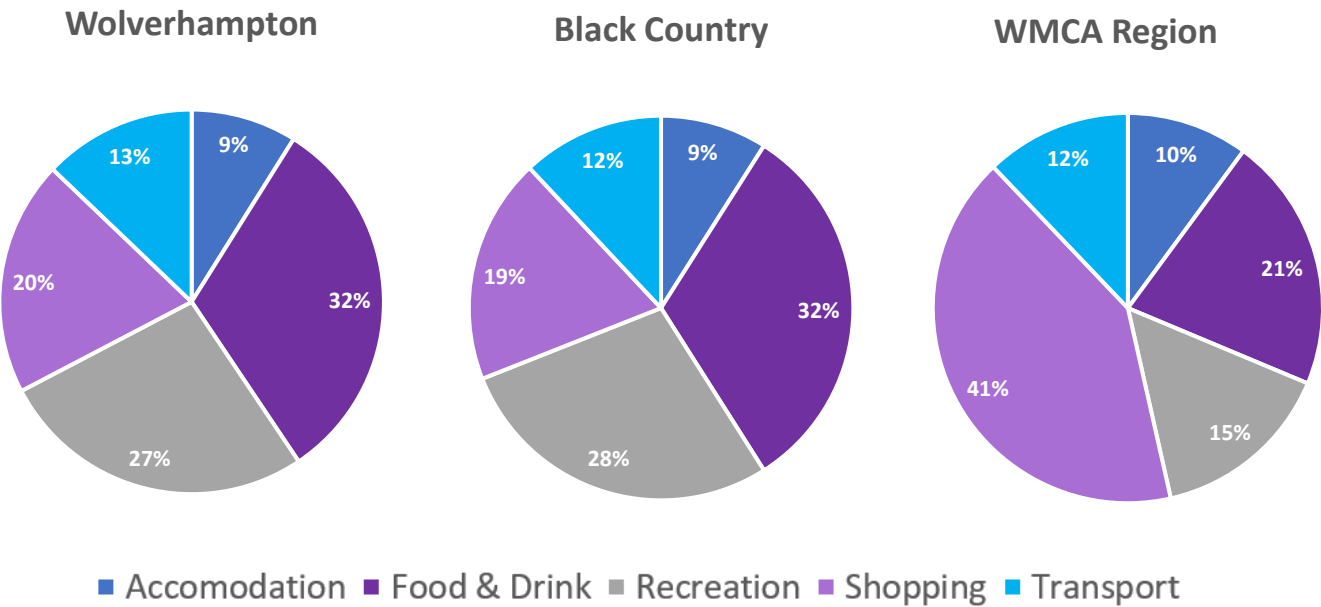
	All Staying Visitors			Day Visitors			All Visitor Types		
	2022	2021	% change	2022	2021	% change	2022	2021	% change
Visitor Days (m)	2.76	1.87	47.9%	9.1	6.84	33.1%	11.86	8.7	36.3%
Visitor Numbers (m)	0.74	0.5	49.9%	9.1	6.84	33.1%	9.84	7.33	34.2%
Direct Expenditure (£m)							£304.64	£199.06	53.0%
Economic Impact (£m)	£159.32	£71.78	122.0%	£246.67	£194.22	27.0%	£405.99	£266	52.6%
Direct Employment (FTE)	1,434	690	107.9%	1,977	1,670	18.4%	3,411	2,360	44.5%
Total Employment (FTE)							4,310	2,991	44.1%

The visitor economy in the Wolverhampton bounced back to pre-pandemic levels in both value and volume terms (comparing 2022 to 2019). Wolverhampton's visitor numbers have increased by 3.8% (Black Country +3.9%, WMCA +5.5%), economic impact increased by 21.0% (Black Country +26.5%, WMCA +7.3%) and total employment increased by 9.1% (Black Country +15.1%, WMCA -4.0%).

Sectoral Distribution of Economic Impact

For Wolverhampton, the food and drink sector accounted for the largest economic impact at 32% of the total, this matched the Black Country proportion but was above the WMCA area (21%). Conversely, accommodation had the lowest economic impact at 9%, again matching the Black Country proportion, whereas this was slightly below the WMCA area (10%).

Sectoral distribution of Economic Impact by selected geographical breakdown, 2022:



Investment

Since the 2018/19 (funding year⁸), Wolverhampton has received nearly **£13.2m in investment** from 145 awards⁹.

Of the nearly £13.2m investment, the top three areas were:

- Combined arts: £3.2m
- Music: £3.17m
- Theatre: nearly £3m

Of the 145 awards, the top three areas were:

- Visual arts: 35
- Combined arts: 23
- Music: 22

Breakdown of number of awards and investment into Wolverhampton:

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total
Total Amount Awarded	£1,108,603	£1,079,040	£4,423,860	£1,809,698	£1,965,110	£2,764,247	£13,150,558
Total Awards	19	16	55	23	20	23	145

For 2023/24 only, there were 11 awards amounting to over £1.2m for project grants, 7 awards and nearly £1.5m for regular funding and 5 awards for £55,584 in strategic funding¹⁰.

As seen in the following table, combined arts have been awarded just over £1.1m investment in 2023/24. While the largest number of total awards (at 7) was for visual arts.

Arts Council Investment into Wolverhampton by discipline, 2023/24:

	Amount Awarded	Total Awards
Combined Arts	£1,128,331	3
Dance	£250,371	2
Film	-	-
Libraries	-	-
Literature	£50,588	3
Museums	-	-
Music	£548,409	5
Not Discipline Specified	-	-
Other/Not Known	-	-
Theatre	£346,139	3
Visual Arts	£440,409	7
Total	£2,764,247	23

⁸ Based on the year in which the investment is intended to be distributed (for multi-year funds, the investment will be divided and allocated to each year of the portfolio).

⁹ Arts Council England Investment – National Investment Dashboard, as of December 2023.

¹⁰ Top funding category, project grants – National Lottery Project Grants to fund specific projects by individuals and organisation, regular funding – multi-year programmes to support creative and cultural organisations such as National Portfolio Organisations and Music Education Hubs and strategic funding – short term programmes with specific objectives over a wide range of areas or responding to risks within the sector.

Appendix

The [Department of Culture, Media and Sports](#) (DCMS) definition for creative, digital and cultural sectors was taken. However, this definition has overlapping SIC codes, to avoid double counting, SIC codes have been aligned to one group only.

Alignment of SIC codes for culture and creative industries sector analysis for employment and enterprises:

Subsector	SIC07	Description
Advertising and marketing	7021	Public relations and communication activities
	7311	Advertising agencies
	7312	Media representation
Architecture	7111	Architectural activities
Crafts	3212	Manufacture of jewellery and related articles
Design and designer fashion	7410	Specialised design activities
Film, TV, video, radio and photography (& Music)	5911	Motion picture, video and television programme production activities
	5912	Motion picture, video and television programme post-production activities
	5913	Motion picture, video and television programme distribution activities
	5914	Motion picture projection activities
	6010	Radio broadcasting
	6020	Television programming and broadcasting activities
	7420	Photographic activities
	1820	Reproduction of recorded media
	3220	Manufacture of musical instruments
	4763	Retail sale of music and video recordings in specialised stores
IT, software and computer services / Computer programming, consultancy and related activities	5821	Publishing of computer games
	5829	Other software publishing
	6201	Computer programming activities
	6202	Computer consultancy activities
	6203	Computer facilities management activities
	6209	Other information technology and computer service activities
Publishing	5811	Book publishing
	5812	Publishing of directories and mailing lists
	5813	Publishing of newspapers
	5814	Publishing of journals and periodicals
	5819	Other publishing activities
	7430	Translation and interpretation activities
Museums, galleries and libraries	9101	Library and archive activities
	9102	Museum activities
Music, performing and visual arts	5920	Sound recording and music publishing activities
	8552	Cultural education
	9001	Performing arts
	9002	Support activities to performing arts
	9003	Artistic creation
	9004	Operation of arts facilities

Subsector	SIC07	Description
Operation of historical sites and similar visitor attractions	9103	Operation of historical sites and buildings and similar visitor attractions
Manufacturing of electronics and computers	2611	Manufacture of electronic components
	2612	Manufacture of loaded electronic boards
	2620	Manufacture of computers and peripheral equipment
	2630	Manufacture of communication equipment
	2640	Manufacture of consumer electronics
	2680	Manufacture of magnetic and optical media
Wholesale of computers and electronics	4651	Wholesale of computers, computer peripheral equipment and software
	4652	Wholesale of electronic and telecommunications equipment and parts
Telecommunications	6110	Wired telecommunications activities
	6120	Wireless telecommunications activities
	6130	Satellite telecommunications activities
	6190	Other telecommunications activities
Information service activities	6311	Data processing, hosting and related activities
	6312	Web portals
	6391	News agency activities
	6399	Other information service activities not elsewhere classified
Repair of computers and communication equipment	9511	Repair of computers and peripheral equipment
	9512	Repair of communication equipment