

New Report on Europe's High-End Sector Shows €986 Billion Economic Engine Powerhouse Driving Jobs, Tourism & Craftsmanship

Projected global high-end & luxury market growth expected to reach €2 trillion by 2030; ECCIA's aims policy recommendations at EU amidst emerging geopolitical headwinds

EMBARGOED UNTIL 05:00 GMT/06:00 CET 2 JULY 2025

Brussels 2 July 2025 – Latest figures released by the European Cultural and Creative Industries Alliance (ECCIA) show that Europe's high-end and luxury sector represents **5% of Europe's GDP**. The sector continues to drive economic growth, preserve cultural heritage, and champion excellence well beyond the continent. The new report, developed with the technical collaboration of Bain & Company for ECCIA, also indicates that the sector's global leader status with **70% global market share** is "clouded" due to external challenges such as tariffs and emerging global trade uncertainty. The sector, which the latest figures show employs 2 million people throughout Europe, is grappling with attracting and retaining the next generation of skilled artisans.

"European luxury goods continue to dominate global markets, with the latest figures demonstrating a strong performance over the past five years and a solid position for growth within the global high-end and luxury market - rooted in the sector's unique resilience and its ability to adapt and seize opportunities in emerging markets," said Claudia D'Arpizio of Bain & Company. "While these new findings show that the sector accounts for **11.5% of total European exports**, high-end and luxury goods are much more than economic drivers. The brands, through their products and experiences, also represent the ultimate expression of the soft power Europe wields through its creativity, innovation, and craftsmanship - Europe's unique 'artisanal intelligence.' This sector is a creative powerhouse that invests up to **5% of revenues in education and training**, and up to **3% in sustainability** and innovation which contribute to social prosperity, cultural preservation, and economic growth across Europe's clusters of excellence."

The latest findings suggest that the sector's success story faces challenges as the world looks to an uncertain future. Escalating geopolitical tensions, rising tariffs, and protectionist trade policies, especially between the US and China which make up 35-45% of the global revenues for the sector, inject unwanted uncertainty.

"It's tempting to assume that this the sector is shock-proof from some of the economic turbulence we've been seeing. While luxury stocks perform by 4 to 6 times over the broader market in Italy or France, we are sensitive to the some of the warning signs," said Michael Ward, President of ECCIA. "European high-end and luxury brands supported **2 million jobs in 2024**, with **160,000 new jobs created since 2019**, outpacing broader EU labour market growth. Tariff measures threaten to disrupt global demand, drive up costs, and force companies to reconsider supply chains as we focus on profitability and call for greater stability."

Europe's high-end and luxury sector is a powerhouse on the global stage. The sector's impact extends beyond economic impact with 40% of international travelers citing luxury shopping as a key reason for visiting. Leading brands invest up to 3% of annual revenues in sustainability and up to 5% in education and training. While the latest report's findings suggest that the global luxury market has the **potential to double by 2030**, smart and urgent policy support is needed to safeguard one of Europe's cultural and economic treasures.

The full report, executive summary and infographic can be downloaded [here](#).

Note to Editors:

Although the Bain findings reveal sustained global competitiveness and optimistic growth prospects, European high-end cultural and creative industries face significant challenges due to geopolitical tensions and trade disputes in key markets, such as the USA and China.

Outlined below are *ECCIA's five EU policy recommendations* to support the sector's long-term sustainable growth and its ability to continue to support the European economy and reputation.

1. Strengthen intellectual property rights (IPR) and combat counterfeiting

- Enhance the enforcement of the Digital Services Act (DSA): The effective implementation of the DSA depends on the European Commission's commitment to rigorously enforcing its provisions by:
 - Allocating sufficient financial and human resources;
 - Conducting an implementation review;
 - Proactively removing counterfeit products and clarifying the rollout of the trusted flagger mechanism.
- Introduce specific anti-counterfeiting legislation: Implement binding measures to address the gaps left by the DSA:
 - Enforce traceability across the entire value chain by mandating a "Know Your Business Customer" obligation for all intermediaries, not just online marketplaces.
 - Require all intermediaries to take proactive, reasonable, and proportionate measures to prevent the appearance of counterfeit goods.
 - Ensure platforms implement measures to prevent the reappearance of illegal products following removal.

2. Preserve consumer trust and experience

- Combat unauthorised sales: Strengthen the EU's legislative framework to help brands enforce their selective distribution networks against unauthorised distributors, protecting brand image and investments while ensuring consumer safety.
- Support our tailored distribution networks: Maintain high-end industries' ability to select authorised sellers based on qualitative criteria to preserve craftsmanship and the excellence of our customer service.

3. Promote sustainability in high-end goods and services

- Industry-specific consultation: Involve industry representatives in the preparation of Green Deal secondary legislation to address the specific needs of our sector, particularly for ecodesign and circular economy requirements.
- Implementation delays: Ensure a minimum of 36 months for compliance with new legal obligations, in line with the industry's product cycle (design to retail).
- Ensure a level playing field: Apply Green Deal standards equally to all companies operating in the EU market and prevent new measures from undermining European companies' global competitiveness.

4. Support craftsmanship and skills development

- Address the skills gap: Launch EU-level and Member State initiatives to develop a workforce skilled in craftsmanship, engineering, and technical production for high-end industries.
- Introduce a European Maître d'Art title: Recognise and promote creative and technical expertise essential for preserving high-quality craftsmanship.

5. Enhance trade and tourism

- Prioritise diplomatic solutions to trade disputes: European high-end and luxury brands face significant challenges from escalating geopolitical tensions, rising tariffs, and protectionist trade policies, particularly in the US and China (two key markets contributing 35-40% of revenues). Proactive strategies such as market diversification, engagement with emerging economies, and advocacy for favourable trade agreements are essential to safeguarding resilience and mitigating risks to profitability and global competitiveness.

- Promote Free Trade Agreements (FTAs): Support FTAs that ensure reciprocal market access, reduce barriers to trade, and combat counterfeiting and parallel trade.
- Visa facilitation: Simplify procedures for obtaining EU visas and encourage VAT-free shopping for non-EU tourists to enhance the EU's appeal as a destination for high-end shopping and tourism.

Retaliatory measures, including tariffs and non-tariff barriers, threaten the industry's ability to maintain competitive access to these crucial export destinations. The increasing protectionist rhetoric could further strain the industry, which relies heavily on open markets. Furthermore, our production cannot be relocated, as our business model and appeal are rooted in Europe's cultural heritage and expertise.

About ECCIA:

The European Cultural and Creative Industries Alliance (ECCIA), established in 2010, is composed of seven European cultural and creative industries organisations - Altagamma (Italy), Circulo Fortuny (Spain), Comité Colbert (France), Gustaf III Kommitté (Sweden), Laurel (Portugal), Meisterkreis (Germany) and Walpole (UK) - who between them represent 750 brands and cultural institutions. Based on art, culture and creativity, our work is underpinned by continuous innovation, a relentless focus on quality, highly skilled employment and strong exports abroad. Our members strive for the highest quality in all they do, from products and services all the way to the experience offered to consumers.

For more information on ECCIA please visit eccia.eu

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