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CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN THE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN CREATIVE ECONOMY: INSIGHTS FROM EXPERT INTERVIEWS

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ABSTRACT. The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into the creative economy, together with its potential transformative effects on creative industries, represents a burgeoning and rapidly evolving area of research. This article aims at contributing to the ongoing debate by analyzing the latest and most relevant literature and providing fresh insights from experts in the field of creative industries. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with five Lithuanian experts selected through purposive sampling based on their engagement in public discussions on AI-related risks and opportunities. This study draws on expert interviews in order to identify problems and opportunities, provide suggestions, and build a theoretical framework for future research on the impact of AI on the creative economy. The findings reveal the significant role of AI in creative industries such as music, advertising, journalism, and design: experts agree that while AI expands creative possibilities, it also raises concerns about originality, quality, and market dynamics. Experts further highlight the potential of AI to globalize local creative industries but warn of risks like job displacement, declining artistic uniqueness, and ethical challenges in authorship and copyright. The economic value of AI-generated works remains open to debate, particularly due to unresolved copyright issues, extending to whether AI prompters should be recognized as authors. Regulatory frameworks, especially within the EU, are still evolving, with experts emphasizing the need for clearer guidelines and transparency regarding AI-generated content. Finally, this study underscores the necessity of balanced regulations, ethical considerations, and adaptive strategies.

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O33, Q55, Z11

Keywords: creative economy, artificial intelligence, creative industries, digital media, technology, expert interviews

Introduction

The creative economy is experiencing significant growth and development, driven by digitization and advancements in digital technologies. Various studies at international level testify the relevance of the creative sector to economic growth. According to a report issued by UNCTAD - United Nation Conference on Trade and Development (2022) – the sector of the creative economy is experiencing continuous and rapid growth and is among the fastest-expanding industries worldwide; meanwhile, the General Assembly of the United Nations (2023) calls for the promotion of the creative economy as a key factor to implement a sustainable development.

For what concerns the Lithuanian context, in which this research is conducted, the Lithuania Progress Strategy “Lithuania 2050” approved by the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania (Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas) in 2023, recognizes the development of scientific, technological, and creative potential as a priority. Furthermore, it underlines the important share the sector of creative industries plays in the national economy. Indeed, digitalization can bring fresh opportunities for the creative economy and enhance the accessibility of cultural and creative goods to society.

As stated by the World Economic Forum (2018), three digital technologies are currently having a deep impact on the creative economy: Artificial Intelligence (hereinafter referred to as AI), virtual/augmented reality, and blockchain. This study specifically focuses on Generative AI, which can be defined as “the class of AI models that emulate the structure and characteristics of input data in order to generate derived synthetic content. This can include images, videos, audio, text, and other digital content” (Federal Register, 2023). The impact of Generative AI on the cultural and creative industries sector is the subject of a study commissioned by the European Commission (2022). The results highlight the opportunities and challenges that the application of AI entails for each individual sector across the cultural and creative industries. In particular, the findings underline that the integration of AI in the creative industries brings value throughout all phases of the production of creative goods, from creation to distribution. Such beneficial effects are especially true for small businesses and freelancer creators, as AI integration (1) allows resources to be allocated in a more efficient way; (2) acts as a support in the decision-making process; (3) allows new forms of communication and interaction with audience; and (4) is a source of inspiration for creators (European Commission, 2022). Nonetheless, despite its promising prospects, there remains a critical need to address the challenges posed by AI integration, including ethical concerns, workforce displacement and the preservation of human creativity.

The integration of AI into the creative economy, together with its potential transformative effects on creative industries, represents a burgeoning and rapidly evolving area of research. This article aims at contributing to the ongoing debate by analyzing the latest and most relevant literature and providing fresh insights from experts in the field of creative industries. It also aims at elucidating what opportunities and challenges AI can bring within the creative economy.

To achieve this aim, a literature review is carried out, followed by qualitative interviews with experts. The in-depth insights thus gathered will assist in identifying problems and opportunities, in providing suggestions and in building a theoretical framework for future research on the impact of artificial intelligence on creative economy. Methodologically, this study employs a qualitative approach to capture the nuanced perspectives of experts dealing with AI on a daily basis.

The article is structured as follows: Section 1 analyzes the most relevant scientific literature on technologies in general, and on artificial intelligence in particular, in the context

of creative economy; the methods and design underpinning the empirical research are illustrated in Section 2; findings are provided in Section 3 and commented in Section 4 (Discussions). Section 5 (Conclusions) sums up the key findings and outlines future research paths.

1. Literature review

1.1. *The concept of creative economy*

Creative economy is a concept developed by John Howkins in his seminal work *The Creative Economy: How People Make Money from Ideas* (2001). Here, Howkins identifies fifteen creative sectors: advertising, architecture, art, crafts, design, fashion, film, music, performing arts, publishing, research and development, toys and games, software, television and radio, video games. His list builds upon, and extends, one previously compiled by the UK Department for Culture, Media and Sport. Creative economy aims, among other things, at fostering creativity, knowledge convergence and scientific innovation so as to generate new markets and job opportunities; it embodies the shift from industrial (based on labour and capital) to post-industrial (based on creative ideas, innovation and technologies) economic relationships (Sung, 2015). It can, by all means, be considered one of the key pillars on which the complex theory of the creative society (Kačerauskas, 2014) is based. According to Levickaitė and Reimeris (2011), the theory of creative economy, understood in a broad sense, encompasses other concepts, such as the seven economic properties of the Creative Industries (Caves, 2002), the creative class (Florida, 2002), the creative city (Landry, 2000) and the creative identities (Hartley, 2005).

In the last decade, scholars have been analyzing the interconnection between the creative economy and sustainable development (Fazlagić and Skikiewicz, 2019; Štreimikienė and Kačerauskas, 2020), the pursuit of an appropriate policy for a creative economy influenced by digital media and new technologies (Doyle, 2016; Roshchik et al., 2022), the role played by the creative economy in the development (Kim, 2017) and/or restoration (Moiseienko, 2022) of States, the human creative capital as a growth factor of the creative economy (Kuznetsova et al., 2022; Oliinyk et al., 2024), the relationship between creative economy and universities (Moreton, 2018), the survival of traditional crafts in the contemporary creative economy (Friel, 2020; Tutar et al., 2024), the intersection of entrepreneurship, innovation and creative economy (Gigauri and Bogacz-Wojtanowska, 2022; Gouvea et al., 2020) and the issues faced by small and medium enterprises in creative economy (Rosyadi et al., 2020).

1.2. *Technologies in creative economy*

The role of technologies in the context of creative economy and creative society is analyzed by Kačerauskas (2015). As the rapid growth of creative industries worldwide is driven by both technological and economic factors (Devkota et al., 2022; Levickaitė and Reimeris, 2011), it follows that technologies (particularly ICTs) are a vital component of the creative economy. According to Kačerauskas (2012), three aspects have to be taken into account when analyzing the relationship between technologies and the creative economy: 1) any economic relation has to be considered a form of social technology, i.e. a technology that promotes interactions among individuals or groups in a given society, and aims at facing social challenges; 2) digital technologies (especially AI) continuously reshape the creative industries, on which the creative economy is indeed based; 3) technologies permit and facilitate consumption, which boosts the demand for new creative products and guarantees economic growth.

The intersection of creative economy and technologies is also acknowledged by Florida (2002). He introduces the so-called 3T (technology, talent and tolerance) approach, affirming that technologies are a key factor in the development and growth of the creative economy. Technologies, especially digital ones, are interconnected with the creative economy insofar as they allow digitization and, as a consequence, enhance new forms of distribution of goods; promote the emergence of new markets and business models as well as new forms of networking and co-working (Ndou et al., 2019). The digitization of creative products has contributed to the lowering of production costs: producing a creative digital product indeed costs much less than in the past and explains the spread of the so-called user-generated content (often of low quality) and the phenomenon of “prosumerism” (Doyle, 2016), whereby the distance, both physical and conceptual, between producers/creators and consumers is reduced. While on the one hand this phenomenon actually increases creative possibilities, on the other hand it devalues creative activity as such. Innovations and technological progress have also led to a change in the structure of creative work, which is nowadays increasingly flexible and mediated by the latest technologies (Majid et al., 2022; Popiel, 2017).

The impact of the latest digital technologies – AI, augmented and virtual reality, blockchain – on the creative economy is the subject of a research conducted by the World Economic Forum (WEF, 2018). As each technology has its own specific development process, the WEF recognizes that it is too early to precisely measure the impact of the aforementioned technologies on the creative economy. Nonetheless, concerning the role of artificial intelligence in this particular economic sector, the study concludes that AI empowers creators to gain insights into their audience’s preferences and offers users content that matches their tastes (WEF, 2018). Knowing users’ preferences in advance, however, risks encouraging creators to produce standardized mass products in order to please the audience. In addition, when social media platforms offer users contents that fit their taste, they could make it more difficult for them to discover something new and original, thus thwarting the development of their cultural and creative taste. Both aspects may represent a threat to creativity.

1.3. Artificial Intelligence in the creative economy

This section will briefly present twenty of the most relevant articles (listed in Table 1), on the impact of artificial intelligence in creative economy. All the articles are indexed in Web of Science database in the fields of Social Sciences and Humanities. The objective here is to discover research trends concerning this topic as a preliminary step to properly formulate the questions for the expert interviews. The articles have been collected and selected as follows: 1) two combinations of keywords (“artificial intelligence” AND “creative economy”; “artificial intelligence” AND “creative industries”) were used; 2) only articles and review articles published in 2015–2025 were included; 3) only articles in the fields of Social Sciences and Humanities were taken into account.

RECENT ISSUES IN SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH

Table 1. 20 of the most relevant articles on artificial intelligence in creative economy (Web of Science)

Article	Sector of Creative Economy	Opportunities	Challenges
Anantrasirichai & Bull, 2022	N/A	Augment (but not replace) human creativity	Fakes, bias
Andrews & Hawcroft, 2024	Cultural and creative industries	Intersection art/AI	Artists and artistic practice underrepresented in cultural policy
Azzarelli et al., 2025	Video production	Assist camera-based tasks during the media production process	AI actors, AI pornographic content, intellectual property
Birchnell & Elliott, 2018	Music	Improvements in audio post-production	Possible impact on employment
Chowdhury et al., 2022	Creative industries	Positive impact on business performance	Possible impact on employment
de Seta et al., 2024	Creative industries	Synthesize different kinds of content: text, images, sounds.	Misinformation, intellectual property
Derda, 2023	Audio-visual media production	Positive changes in the structure of production process	Data collection, inclusiveness of the production process
Drott, 2021	Music	Commercial exploitation of AI-produced music	To whom belongs copyrights related to AI-produced music?
Erickson, 2024	Creative industries	A tool for co-creation rather than a replacement for human creativity	Commercialization challenges, legal uncertainties
Feher & Katona, 2021	Cultural and creative industries, media	Creativity as an aspect of Socio-Cultural AI	Fakes, bias, risk of superintelligence
Kretschmer et al., 2022	N/A	Generate creative outputs	Is an AI copyright and patent protection necessary?
Liang, 2022	Digital and creative products	Possible use for evaluating aesthetic value of creative products	N/A
Öztaş & Arda, 2025	Creative industries	Enhance productivity and democratize creative production	Alienate creators, devalue traditional notions of talent and professionalism
Qin & Lin, 2021	Cultural industry	Development of cultural industry and enterprises	N/A
Smithies et al., 2022	Software, R&D	Remember users' inputs and data	Implication for the production pipeline of immersive products
Tigre Moura & Maw, 2020	Music	Enhance music composition and production	Negative perception of AI-produced music
Veale & Pérez y Pérez, 2020	Software	Computers: both tools and creators	Algorithmization of human-level creativity
Vermeulen & Psenner, 2022	N/A	It encourages a structural change toward more creative work	Regional disparities
Zhao & Zhang, 2023	Cultural and creative industries	Positive impact on the ecology of art	Limits of AI capabilities, discrimination, data protection
Zong et al., 2025	Cultural and creative industries	Enhance the digital marketing capabilities of small and middle creative enterprises	N/A

Source: own compilation based on Web of Science

The remarkable capacity to generate new content from existing data based on user prompts has sparked growing interest in generative AI for diverse creative applications, such as generating “text, images, videos, sound, music, or speech that are at times indistinguishable

from human-generated content” (de Seta et al., 2024: 3). Table 1 shows that AI is now applied in different domains of the creative industries, particularly in video production (Azzarelli et al., 2025) and music industry (Birtchnell & Elliott, 2018, Drott, 2021, Tigre Moura & Maw, 2020). In this last sector, AI-based tools are used in composition, production (Tigre Moura & Maw, 2020), post-production (Birtchnell & Elliott, 2018) and commercial exploitation of musical pieces (Drott, 2021). It must be stressed, however, that most of these articles do not focus on a single specific sector, but rather deal with the creative economy in a broad sense. Artificial intelligence increases creative possibilities but does not replace human creativity (Anantrasirichai & Bull, 2022); instead, it encourages collaboration between humans and machines for creative purposes (Veale & Pérez y Pérez, 2020). Such collaboration, in turn, gives impetus to the development of cultural and creative industries (Qin & Lin, 2021), guarantees improvements in the market performance of creative enterprises (Chowdhury et al., 2022; Kaczorowska-Spychalska et al., 2024), and can be applied to judge the aesthetic value of creative output (Liang, 2022). Furthermore, the use of AI-based tools has given rise to a structural change in the very process of producing creative works: the classic production process, based on script and development (pre-production – production – post-production – publishing), has, in fact, been expanded by a new phase: that of the collection, analysis and application of consumer data, which permeates all the other phases of the production process (Derda, 2023). Finally, the application of AI-based tools for solving difficult or time-consuming tasks allows a transition from routinized work to non-routinized (creative) work (Vermeulen & Psenner, 2022; Kurki et al., 2024). AI plays a crucial role in enhancing the digital marketing capabilities and internationalization of small and middle creative enterprises, giving them a competitive advantage by leveraging internal and external knowledge, optimizing operational intelligence, and fostering value-chain innovation (Zong et al., 2025). Nonetheless, enterprises operating in creative industries may see AI as a tool for co-creation rather than a replacement for human creativity. This path implies that such enterprises embrace an experimental and iterative approach that fosters new creative possibilities while also introducing commercialization challenges and legal uncertainties (Erickson, 2024). In this context, cultural policy should not only continue investing in the creative industries but also refine its language to: (1) better recognize the role of artistic practice in AI innovation; (2) ensure alignment between the arts and technological development; (3) acknowledge, at the same time, artists and cultural institutions as key contributors to cross-disciplinary creative ecosystems and critical technology discourse (Andrews & Hawcroft, 2024).

Indeed, the relationship between generative AI and creative work is complex and ambiguous. On the one hand, AI enhances productivity and democratizes creative production; on the other hand, it alienates creators, devalues traditional notions of talent and professionalism, and transforms social collaboration into human-machine interaction, ultimately reinforcing market-driven efficiency while raising concerns about the erosion of social engagement and collective creative processes (Öztaş & Arda, 2025).

The opportunities linked to the application of AI in the economic sector of creativity are, obviously, accompanied by several challenges and concerns. The spread of fake content produced by AI, algorithmic biases (Anantrasirichai & Bull, 2022; Feher & Katona, 2021) and the possible negative impact on employment (Chowdhury et al., 2022; Birtchnell & Elliott, 2018) are some of the ethical aspects addressed by the articles here considered. Another aspect that is highlighted is data protection. Regarding this issue, one can raise the question of whether the data on which large language models (LLMs) have been trained are free or protected by copyright. On the other hand, if the capability of AI-based tools to remember the inputs and data provided by the user facilitates their use (Smithies et al., 2022), it is also true that all this poses problems concerning data protection (Zhao & Zhang, 2023; Derda, 2023). Furthermore,

in order to evaluate the economic weight that creative outputs produced by AI can have on the market, it would be desirable to gauge the perception that consumers have of these same products (Tigre Moura & Maw, 2020). Finally, if these products are placed on the market and consumed by users, who should the copyright derived from their exploitation belong to (Kretschmer et al., 2022; Drott, 2021)? How will the relationship between creator and AI look like in the context of creative economy (Veale & Pérez y Pérez, 2020)?

In the next section, the methodological approach applied in this qualitative research (expert interviews) will be described.

2. Methodological approach

For what concerns the methodological approach, it was decided to proceed with expert interviews as it is an efficient method of gathering data (Bogner et al., 2009), especially if the research object is relatively new and requires complex methodologies and approaches, as is the case with AI. As the name suggests, expert interviews are interviews where the participant is considered to be an expert, that is, a professional or specialist who possesses exclusive knowledge and experience in a particular field (Gaižauskaitė & Valavičienė, 2016). Von Soest (2022) identifies four different applications of the expert interview: assessment, aggregation, anticipation and affirmation. In the context of this research, expert interview is applied seeking *assessment* (experts' judgement on the impact of AI on creative economy) and *anticipation* (experts' predictions of long-term growth and consequences of a progressive AI integration in the sector of creative economy). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with five Lithuanian experts (Table 2) operating in various fields of creative industries and having an expertise in the field of AI as analysts or creators. The questions posed are reported in full in the Interview Guide in Appendix A. It should be noted that the sequence and number of questions were adjusted in each interview to accommodate the specific context and dynamics of the conversation.

Experts were selected through a purposive non-probability sampling among professionals who lead a discussion on the risks and possibilities related to the use of AI in the Lithuanian public sphere through articles in the national press or participation in public debates or talk shows. Constructing a solid sample is a common issue in qualitative research, depending on “the question being asked, the data being gathered, the analysis in progress, and the resources you have to support the study” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016: 101). Researchers recommend to sample until saturation or redundancy are reached in experts' answers (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). In this research a certain point of saturation was reached after five interviews, as no new insights were added by new participants.

Although the limited sample size might be criticized on the grounds that it does not allow for generalizability, it is important to emphasize that expert interviews are meant to gather fresh and qualitatively relevant information, especially in areas that are still largely underexplored (Bogner et al., 2009). Still, an attempt was made to integrate both “internal” (making decisions) and “external” (analyzing decisions) experts, as suggested by von Soest (2022). Prior to being interviewed, all the experts were made aware that the interviews were aimed at collecting qualitative data for a scientific article on AI in creative economy.

The interviews were conducted on a one-to-one basis and were limited to 45 mins per interviewer. The interviews were conducted in Lithuanian. The interview excerpts used in this article were translated from Lithuanian into English by the author.

Table 2. Overview of the experts

Expert code	Gender	Organization	Function	Expertise in the field	Date of the interview	Format of the interview
E1	Male	Lithuanian Neighbouring Rights Association AGATA	Head of the Licensing Department	E1 studies the commercial impact of AI on the music market	30/04/2024	Virtual meeting
E2	Female	Programma "Kurk Lietuvai" (Create Lithuania)	Project Manager	E2 formulates cultural policies related to AI and the protection of intellectual property	06/05/2024	In writing (via email)
E3	Male	A EYE - Image Synthesis Lab	AI Operator	E3 conducts trainings on the application of AI for creative purposes	15/05/2024	In presence
E4	Male	CEE Attorneys	Expert in intellectual property and IT law	E4 studies the impact of AI on employment, intellectual property and legal responsibility	21/05/2024	Virtual meeting
E5	Female	Lithuanian Photographers Association	Artist	E5 analyzes the impact of AI on creators' intellectual property and earning opportunities	20/05/2024	In presence

Source: own compilation

3. Results

This section provides an analysis of the experts' insights, thematically organized according to the topics discussed during the interviews.

Technologies impacting creative economy

Experts agree AI is the new technology that currently exerts the most significant influence on the creative economy, surpassing virtual and augmented reality and blockchain. It is acknowledged that "AI complements the other mentioned technologies" (E2) and "has experienced rapid development in recent years, significantly transforming the way we work" (E3). However, the impact of virtual and augmented reality may increase in the future. As E1 states, "it will depend on the devices themselves [...] if they become cheaper, this will lead to mass utilization," particularly given that "the EU has allocated significant project funds until

2027, and all creative industries are working towards digitizing their products [...] by adapting them to augmented or virtual reality” (E1).

Despite this potential, not all experts share the same perspective on virtual and augmented reality. Some believe “it will just be a niche, with its own fans and enthusiasts, especially in video games, but I don’t think it will impact creative industries as a whole” (E3). As for blockchain, experts note that this technology is not yet widely developed or applied within the creative economy. E4 suggests that “Blockchain technology could be applied in the creative economy to ensure authorship and rights ownership [...], but I see the complexity of its use compared to AI use” (E4).

AI in Lithuanian creative industries

The application of AI in Lithuanian creative industries is most prominently observed in the music sector. In 2024, “the first Lithuanian album [...] entirely produced by AI was published” (E1). Nonetheless, one expert casts doubt on the success of this experiment: “Will it be in demand? Well, personally I listened to it and my personal opinion is that it will not” (E1). AI is also extensively used in advertising, as it streamlines production, making it “simpler, faster, cheaper” (E5). However, accurately measuring the application of AI in specific creative sectors remains challenging due to a lack of precise data and a resistance to accepting AI-produced creative outputs. As E2 notes: “It must be understood that there are still various stigmas, taboos and fear of admitting that AI was used in the creative process. There are those who fear that this confession could tarnish the creator’s name. Others may not reveal it on purpose.”

Other experts highlight the use of AI in journalism, book writing, and illustration (E1, E5), as well as in generating text for commissioned articles (E3), although they do not provide concrete examples.

Opportunities and challenges of AI on creative economy

Experts concur that AI significantly expands creative possibilities, enabling creators to achieve results they never previously imagined. One expert (E5) revealed her use of AI to illustrate her dreams: “It was my great desire since when I was a child [...], now I can provide a description of my dream and here it is. Sometimes the results are so precise, so accurate.” AI tools, being accessible across national borders, allow local developers to offer high-quality products and services to global customers. As E2 affirms: “AI makes it possible to create products for different markets, different countries, and in different languages. Therefore, it could lead to the attraction of foreign investments, which would strengthen the local creative economy.” Moreover, delegating complex and time-consuming tasks to AI enhances productivity (E3).

Opinions among experts vary regarding the quality of AI-produced creative outputs. Some acknowledge that “AI tools that can now be accessed and used for creative purposes are capable of generating high-quality results, while the quality of human-only creation may vary” (E4). Others note a decline in the quality of AI-generated outputs as these tools become more widely accessible: “Even project managers think they don’t need graphic designers: they have an image generated by AI, upload it to *Canva*, insert a text and the work is done” (E3). This trend is observable in creative communication across various social media platforms.

Not all experts view global competition as a challenge, however; E1, for instance, sees opportunities: “Competition always encourages improvement. Let’s use AI, let’s use it carefully, and then demand will regulate everything.” Another issue pertains to the manner in

which AI is trained, whether from open data or data protected by copyright and neighboring rights: “I wouldn’t be surprised to hear that AI is trained through *YouTube* content, however it is not fair if authors did not provide any permission to exploit their content” (E1).

The ability of AI-based tools to enable individuals without a creative or artistic background to produce creative works is perceived as a threat by E5. Drawing from her experience with stock photography providers, she underscores the ease and speed with which ideas and works are copied: “people who absolutely do not know how to take pictures or draw, can very easily copy someone else’s text and create their own pictures [...]. As a photographer, you have a studio with good equipment, you have a lot of knowledge and this allows you to compete, because not everyone can do as you do. Now, on the contrary, it seems that you have no advantages, because anyone can copy your texts and ideas. In about a week, you can see hundreds or even thousands of clones of the picture you published” (E5).

Economic value of AI creative works

Regarding the economic value of AI-produced works, it is plausible to assume that, particularly in the music industry, AI could potentially analyze contemporary musical successes and devise a formula for creating hits (E1). This capability would enable the prompter, whether a producer or performer, to publish content with a high likelihood of success and consequently generate revenue. However, when evaluating the economic value of a creative work, E3 emphasizes the importance of focusing on the work itself rather than the tool used in its creation: “So far, everyone is skeptical, but I think that in the future AI will be just another tool for creating visual arts. [...] But I don’t think the tool should dictate the economic or artistic value of the work” (E3).

The economic value of AI-generated creative works also hinges on whether AI can be recognized as a copyright holder. For instance, “in the United States of America, works created with AI are considered non-copyrightable; in the European Union or in China, it is assumed that only a human can be recognized as the author, even when it comes to works created with the help of AI” (E4). Additionally, the economic value of a creative product can derive from its uniqueness, originality, and scarcity. Nonetheless, experts sharply disagree regarding the capability of AI to produce works of economic and creative value: according to E4 “There is a good chance that similar content will be available to different creators if they formulate the prompt in a similar way,” which would diminish the economic and artistic value of such works. Conversely, E5, drawing on her daily experience with AI tools for creative purposes, contends that “If you write an analogous prompt and send it a second time, you will not get the same result.”

Furthermore, the widespread availability and accessibility of AI tools in a global economic competition could diminish the advantage of creators over their counterparts in countries with cheaper labor: “If the quality of the product will be similar, then the customer, given the choice, will always choose the cheaper product. A Lithuanian employer can also choose an employee from any corner of the world, even when developing a product for the Lithuanian market” (E2).

E5 acknowledges that AI-generated creative works have already established their presence in the market, despite some initial skepticism: “Take the works of photographer Jan Peterson. They are original and express a specific and unique style. Others can try to copy him, but nobody will acknowledge their value” (E5). Despite the proliferation of clones and fakes, it appears that the author’s style and poetics remain a crucial determinant of the economic (and artistic) value of AI-generated creative works.

Regulations and ethics of AI in creative industries

Experts were queried about their views on the efficacy of the “AI Act” adopted by the European Union in addressing the challenges that AI poses to the creative economy. While acknowledging its theoretical and regulatory significance, some experts asked for more concrete actions, such as developing a tool capable of scanning and identifying copyrighted works used in AI-generated outputs (E1).

While the AI Act primarily addresses data protection and security issues (e.g., national security, cross-border security, healthcare security), it does not specifically prioritize the impact of AI on the creative economy and industries. Nevertheless, the AI Act provides at least general guidelines for the development of platforms and tools (E4).

In the context of Lithuania, the Radio and Television Commission, responsible for monitoring and sanctioning the illegal dissemination of copyrighted digital content, could oversee the control of copyrighted material used by AI in creative production, as proposed by E1. In this way, issues of plagiarism would be addressed. The transparency requirements of the AI Act compel AI companies to disclose the copyrighted content used in their training datasets; however, concerns persist that AI companies may not fully disclose all relevant information: “comprehensive lists may not be provided, leaving authors unaware of the use of their content in AI training” (E2).

Current AI regulation is criticized for lacking clarity and effectiveness. Experts cite the controversial “opt-out” mechanism and the challenges in implementing transparency measures such as tagging AI-generated content. On this latter issue, E2 claims that “Even *OpenAI* gave up on the idea of creating a tool to recognize AI-generated content, because it turned out to be too unreliable”.

The experts also address issues regarding the determination of authors, as well as the allocation of royalties. According to E1, “the prompter is the author whom royalties should be recognized to”. Nonetheless, according to the Terms of Use – which must be accepted by all users in order to use any platform – the AI platforms own certain rights or licenses related to the content creators generate through them. E4 raises concerns about potential monetization of such content in the future: “If they now allow the use of that content for both commercial and non-commercial purposes, won’t those platforms start charging for all uses?”. To this day no existing tool is able to recognize if human-produced works are used in creative outputs generated by AI, “like *Shazam* does for songs” (E1). Hence the suggestion of tagging digital creative works, specifying whether they are produced by humans, AI or a combination of both: “The tag/label “Made by human, not AI” will become a guarantee of quality as “Ecological”, “Handmade”, “Made in Lithuania” and so on” (E2). Other ethical issues are related to data protection and ownership, as platforms may be intrusive and exploit images and voices of famous people (E5).

Impact on employment

Opinions among experts vary regarding the impact of AI on employment in creative industries. E2 predicts that human creativity will increasingly be seen as a luxury, with AI primarily affecting creators of fast consumption goods who choose not to integrate AI into their processes. Others express apprehension about potential job displacement by AI. E5, for instance, voices concern: “I’m afraid that the day will come when I, as an intermediary, will not be needed anymore”.

E3, who works in advertising and design, has a more optimistic view on the matter: “I have yet to see AI reduce the need for designers. In my experience, people are learning to use

these tools to enhance their work efficiency. Nonetheless, human oversight and management of AI-generated output remain essential. I cannot envision AI creating anything of significant value without human intervention”.

Far from displacing jobs, AI will create new ones, according to E4: “In all sectors, including the creative industry, there will be a demand for individuals who understand the legal implications of AI”. Adaptability and a willingness to learn how to effectively utilize artificial intelligence are crucial for maintaining competitiveness.

Relationship between creators and AI in the context of creative economy

AI is widely regarded as an assistant, a co-worker (“Sometimes I catch myself communicating with it as if it were a colleague”, E5) and a source of inspiration, enhancing creative possibilities and facilitating the realization of creators’ ideas. However, creators should learn how to work with it properly, as “AI so far cannot do your work for you (unless you’re satisfied with low-value content)” (E2). Therefore, it is crucial for creators to learn how to communicate with AI in order to achieve the best creative result: “AI is nothing without a good prompt. [...] I have seen prompts as long as an A4 sheet” (E1). Creators are fully responsible for the quality of the final output: “Without human touch you cannot publish it: you need to process it through your human filter first. We’ve never published any AI content that was not subsequently modified by us” (E3). Despite the increase in creative possibilities, excessive and exclusive use of AI for creative goals risks making creative work repetitive and routinized, that is, anti-creative: “I ask *ChatGPT* to produce a prompt for *Midjourney*, then I give the task to *Midjourney*, then I modify the picture produced by *Midjourney* with *Photoshop*, then back to *ChatGPT* for the title and keywords, and then I finally upload my work to stock photography providers with whom I work [...] Sometimes I feel that my work is just clicking and controlling that the process is ongoing” (E5).

4. Discussion

Placement of research among other studies

This study is part of a line of research that analyzes the impact of AI on various aspects of society through a qualitative methodology consisting of expert interviews. It can be mentioned, among other studies, the role of AI in translation and translation studies (Khasawneh & Raja Al-Amrat, 2023), the application of AI programs in filmmaking education (Yang et al., 2023), the challenges that AI brings to intellectual property (Ubaydullaeva, 2023), ethical issues of AI related to the notion of responsibility (Akbari Ghatar et al., 2023), failure in business firms’ AI projects (Schlegel et al., 2023). However, despite applying the same methodological approach, this research differs from the aforementioned studies as its aim is to investigate the role and influence of AI on the creative economy.

Limitations of the study

As regards the literature review, the search was carried out using fairly general keywords (such as “creative economy”, “creative industries”). If more specific keywords inherent to particular sectors of the creative industries had been used, the results would have been more concrete. Nonetheless, broad keywords were favored over specific ones, as this research aimed to examine the creative economy as a whole rather than focusing on individual

sectors. Regarding the expert interviews, the questions were intentionally kept open and general both because of the exploratory nature of the study, and because the phenomenon remains challenging to measure due to a lack of data and suitable methodological approaches but also due to the fast-changing AI environment and the pace of technological innovation. This approach allowed experts to identify what they perceived as the most important and urgent aspects to address. A robust and intriguing finding was the emergence of a certain distance and contradiction between the reflections of experts who actively use AI in their work and those who study the phenomenon with a more theoretical approach. Finally, different formats for administering the interviews (written or oral, conducted in person or remotely) were offered, with the aim of adapting to the needs and commitments of the selected experts. This diversity in interview formats makes a coherent and uniform analysis of the collected data rather challenging to attain.

Further research

Future research should explore the long-term impact of AI integration on the creative economy, particularly focusing on how different sectors of the creative industries adapt and evolve. Moreover, comparative studies between countries with varying levels of AI adoption can provide deeper insights into global trends and challenges. Finally, longitudinal studies examining the economic value and market acceptance of AI-created works overtime could further elucidate the sustainability of AI-driven creative industries.

Conclusions

Through expert interviews, this study aimed at shedding light on how AI is transforming the creative economy. The experts unanimously agree that AI, among other digital technologies, exerts the most significant impact on the creative economy, as it facilitates new forms of content creation, enhances productivity, and opens global markets to local creators. However, it also raises concerns about ethical issues, job displacement, legal and copyright issues, and the potential decrease of human creativity.

In Lithuanian creative industries, the influence of AI is notably prominent in music production and advertising. The rapid development of AI technologies has led to varied opinions about the acceptance and quality of AI-generated works. Some experts emphasize that AI high-quality tools can enhance creativity, while others worry about the erosion of traditional artistic skills and the proliferation of low-quality, mass-produced content.

The economic value of AI-generated works remains a contentious topic. While AI can potentially create marketable content with high success rates, the lack of clear copyright laws (*who is the author?*) complicates the economic dynamics. One expert in the sample suggests that the prompter, or the person directing the AI, should be recognized as the author, yet not everybody seems to agree and things are still in a state of flux.

The regulatory landscape, especially in the European Union, is evolving to address the challenges posed by AI. The AI Act aims at ensuring transparency and data protection, but its effectiveness in specifically addressing the creative economy's needs is still under scrutiny. Experts call for more concrete measures, such as tools to identify the use of copyrighted works in AI-generated content to better protect the creators' rights.

Ethically, the use of AI in creative processes requires careful consideration regarding data ownership and the protection of human creativity. The relationship between creators and AI should be symbiotic, with AI serving as an assistant that enhances rather than replacing

human creativity. Proper training and ethical guidelines will be crucial in navigating this relationship.

In conclusion, while AI offers remarkable possibilities for innovation and efficiency in the creative economy, it also poses significant challenges that must be carefully managed. The future of AI in creative industries will hinge on balanced regulatory frameworks, ethical practices, and the continuous adaptation of creators to harness the full potential of AI while maintaining the essence of human creativity.

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Appendix A. Interview Guide

1. Among artificial intelligence, virtual reality/augmented reality and blockchain, which technology do you believe currently has or will have the greatest impact on the creative economy? Please explain your reasoning.
2. In which sectors of the creative industries in Lithuania is AI currently applied the most? Could you provide specific examples?
3. What do you consider the most significant positive impact of artificial intelligence on the creative economy?
4. What negative effects or challenges do you believe AI poses for the creative economy?
5. How would you assess the economic value of works created with the assistance of artificial intelligence?
6. Do you think the current EU regulation (AI Act) is adequate to manage the potential negative consequences of AI use in the creative economy? Why or why not?
7. What strategies or initiatives do you believe are necessary to mitigate the potential negative consequences of AI in the creative economy?
8. What ethical considerations should be taken into account when implementing artificial intelligence technologies in the creative industries?
9. How do you think AI will impact employment and job opportunities within the creative industries?
10. How do you envision the relationship between creators and artificial intelligence evolving in the context of the creative economy?