**Follow up to the European Parliament non-legislative resolution of 14 June 2018 on
structural and financial barriers in the access to culture**

**2017/2255 (INI)**

1. **Rapporteurs*:*** Bogdan ZDROJEWSKI (EPP / PL)
2. **EP reference number**: A8-0169/2018 / P8\_TA-PROV(2018)0262
3. **Date of adoption of the resolution:** 14 June 2018
4. **Subject:** Structural and financial barriers in the access to culture
5. **Competent Parliamentary Committee**: Committee for Education and Culture (CULT)
6. **Brief analysis/assessment of the resolution and requests made in it:**

Citing the fundamental importance of an active and accessible cultural sector for the development of an inclusive democratic society, the rapporteur stresses the need to foster and improve access to culture as one of the main priorities on the political agenda, and calls for cultural access and participation to be mainstreamed into other policy areas. The resolution refers to cultural access and participation in general terms, identifying financial, educational, structural and digital barriers. It calls on Member States to ratify and sign the Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro Convention) (which recognizes the right to participate in cultural life), to develop a cultural action strategy aimed at young people, to provide for a tax credit for private entities to support culture, and to propose more coherent taxation policy for artists and cultural workers spending a short time abroad. The resolution also asks Member States and the Commission, within their respective spheres of competence, to develop and implement specific measures to guarantee access to and participation in cultural life, to devote an appropriate amount of budget to culture, to continue to work towards the integration of people with disabilities through culture, to develop a strategy concerning access to public spaces, to foster the mobility of artists, to draw up a digital strategy and to develop innovative approaches to audience development.

1. **Response to requests and overview of action taken, or intended to be taken, by the Commission:**

***Widening access to and participation in cultural life and cultural institutions (paragraphs 3, 47 and 53)***

The main specific measure undertaken by the Commission, within the remit of its competences to encourage cooperation and support and supplement Member States’ actions, is to host Member State expert groups under the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) with a view to sharing best practices, making policy recommendations and drafting reports which are disseminated among Member States and stakeholders. The Commission has also developed a structured dialogue with culture sector stakeholders, known as "Voices of Culture". Relevant topics and reports under the OMC and "Voices of Culture" include: promoting access to culture via digital means; promoting reading in the digital environment; intercultural dialogue in the context of the migratory and refugee crisis; participatory governance of cultural heritage; fostering the contribution of culture to social inclusion; and using culture in shared public spaces to promote intercultural dialogue and bring communities together.

In terms of funding, “improv[ing] access to cultural and creative works in the Union and beyond, with a particular focus on children, young people, people with disabilities and under-represented groups” constitutes one of the specific objectives of the Creative Europe programme (Regulation No 1295/2013)[[1]](#footnote-1). Accessibility features for target audiences are among the award criteria for projects applying under Creative Europe.

Looking ahead, in its proposals for a New European Agenda for Culture (the New Agenda) (COM(2018) 267) and the future Creative Europe programme (COM(2018) 366), the Commission sets out complementary policy and funding proposals to improve access to and participation in public life. The first priority of the New Agenda is harnessing the power of culture for social inclusion.

***Increasing public support and strengthening synergies (paragraphs 15 and 16)***

The current Creative Europe programme aims to reduce the barriers in access to culture by, *inter alia*, funding the transnational circulation of cultural and creative works as well as the circulation of artists. In the context of access to finance for the cultural and creative sectors, the Creative Europe programme earmarked EUR 121 million for a financial mechanism insuring financial intermediaries (such as banks) against losses when offering financing to cultural and creative sectors. The programme is expected to create EUR 600 million in loans and other financial products through a catalyst effect.

On 30 May 2018, the Commission put forward an ambitious proposal for the future Creative Europe programme 2021-2027 which provides a more flexible framework to support Europe’s cultural and creative sectors with a strengthened budget. Indeed, with a proposed 30% budgetary increase, the Commission intends to reinforce the programme in general, introduce targeted support to specific sectors, support the mobility of cultural and creative operators, and strengthen the presence of the European Union cultural and creative sectors on the world scene.

The proposal stipulates that the programme will be consistent with and complementary to other Union instruments proposed for the period 2021-2027, in particular Erasmus, the European Social Fund Plus, the European Regional Development Fund, Horizon Europe, Digital Europe, the Rights and Values programme, the InvestEU programme as well as the external financing instruments. Based on the Treaty's mainstreaming provision and the new political approach based on cultural crossovers, as set out in the New European Agenda for Culture, the programme aims at developing synergies with education and youth policies, employment and social policies, regional, urban and rural policies, the Single Market and external action policies. To give an example, within the policy objective “Europe closer to citizens” in the Commission proposal on Cohesion Policy post-2020, culture and cultural heritage can play a role in promoting citizens’ participation, education and heritage-based participatory processes in cities and regions, thus promoting new models of multi-stakeholder governance. Furthermore, within the Urban Agenda for the EU, a specific Partnership on culture and cultural heritage will be established soon.

***Adding to the European Student Card free access to European Union cultural institutions (paragraph 35)***

The main objective of the European Student Card is to enable students to identify themselves in a trusted manner and to offer a new user-friendly way to exchange and store information on a person's academic records. The European Student Card will simplify and improve student mobility across Europe. It will allow for an electronic connection of higher education institutions’ information systems so that the students’ personal and academic data can be transferred prior to their arrival in the host institution, making their access to all campus facilities (such as library, transport, accommodation) easier. Without replacing national cards, the European Student Card will enable students to have access to cultural activities organised by the campus and possibly to cultural institutions, on equal footing with national students.

***Developing a comprehensive European strategy concerning access to public spaces, particularly relating to culture in the urban-built environment (paragraph 47)***

The topic of the use of and access to public spaces and culture in urban-built environment is being tackled by a number of projects carried out under the current Creative Europe programme. Notable examples include peer-learning projects (such as Culture for Cities and Regions, European Creative Hubs Network) and European networks, whose activities touch upon the issue of culture in the urban-built environment and access to public spaces (like Trans-Europe Halles, the European Network of Cultural Centres (ENCC), the European Route of Industrial Heritage (ERIH) and Future for Religious Heritage (FRH)). In addition, a considerable number of successful examples of urban regeneration and use of public space for culture can be found within the context of the European Capitals of Culture Action[[2]](#footnote-2).

Moreover, the 2018 Creative Europe Work programme[[3]](#footnote-3) foresees the launch of a EUR 1.5 million call for proposals for cultural and creative spaces and cities. This action will address creative hubs, which have recently and rapidly developed in urban areas in numerous cities throughout the Union. A creative hub is an infrastructure or venue that uses a part of its leasable or available space (often re-adapting previously empty or unused areas or buildings) for networking and the organisational and business development of cultural and creative sectors. Apart from creative hubs, the action aims to provide support to stakeholders in particular at the local level, including local, municipal and regional authorities.

***Mobility of European artists and artists from third countries (paragraph 59)***

The Commission recognises that cooperation between cultural operators and artists is a key aspect of inter-cultural dialogue, while mobility is an invaluable instrument for establishing lasting ties and promoting the European Union in partner countries. This is reflected by the Commission’s new pilot scheme for artist mobility financed under the current Creative Europe programme. This scheme is also included in the Commission's proposal for a future Creative Europe programme post-2020. In addition, in its proposal for a New European Agenda for Culture the Commission aims to further encourage the mobility of professionals in the cultural and creative sectors and to remove remaining obstacles to their mobility. Through this New Agenda, the Commission also seeks to promote culture more effectively as a vector of identity and cohesion, a driver of socio-economic development, and a factor directly nurturing peaceful relations through people-to-people contacts.

***Drawing up a consistent digital strategy aimed at cultural infrastructures and activities, including cultural heritage (paragraphs 63 and 68)***

The Commission intends to support the cultural and creative sectors in overcoming the challenges generated by the digital transformation and globalisation and help them make better use of the opportunities provided by the digital shift through the #Digital4Culture strategy and its related initiatives.

In the field of cultural heritage, the #Digital4Culture strategy, mainly covering 2018-2020, includes:

* Ensuring broad and more democratic access to culture through actions such as Europeana (Europe's digital platform for cultural heritage), the MEDIA programme and policy such as the Commission Recommendation of 27 October 2011 on the digitisation and online accessibility of cultural material and digital preservation (2011/711/EU). In line with the Council Conclusions of 31 May 2016 on the role of Europeana for the digital access, visibility and use of European cultural heritage, the Commission launched an independent evaluation of Europeana to provide orientations for its mid- and long-term development as regards strengthening the core platform, refocusing activities to meet the needs of the cultural heritage community, and ensuring the transition of the online platform to smart content, thus empowering the cultural heritage community through digital culture innovation hubs/labs. The Commission adopted the evaluation report suggesting a way forward on 6 September 2018; the report has been transmitted to the Council and the European Parliament.
* Promotion, marketing, and valorisation of cultural heritage though different Europeana activities such as Europeana Collections, Europeana Campaigns and the Europeana Network Association but also through the creation of a network of competence centres across the European Union to safeguard knowledge of endangered heritage monuments through large-scale digitisation.
* Digital production and distribution in the age of convergence by supporting cultural institutions to undertake and leverage the digital transformation through the MEDIA programme. Also, the digital culture projects supported under Horizon 2020 have so far focused on digital tools that innovate the cultural heritage ecosystem and leverage 3D modelling to increase access to and understanding of cultural assets and to enhance collaboration and efficiency of European public and cultural spaces, such as museums or archeological sites.
* Skilling and nurturing talents through the MEDIA programme.
* Providing critical thinking notably through media literacy actions against online disinformation as mentioned in the Commission Communication "Tackling online disinformation: a European approach" (COM(2018) 236).
* Accessing finance in the context of Creative Europe.
* International cooperation by highlighting the Union's soft power through initiatives such as Europeana, involvement in the European Year of Cultural Heritage or the European Capitals of Culture, which act as key ambassadors for Europe bringing together digital cultural items from our diverse heritage and living up to the European Union motto "*In varietate Concordia*" ("United in diversity").

More generally, the Commission proposes to focus on 1) Europeana: an enabler of digital transformation for cultural heritage to implement the vision post-2020 under the new Digital programme; 2) digitisation centres for monuments and sites to connect digitisation centres across the European Union to foster an ecosystem for preserving cultural heritage monuments and sites to ensure their accessibility for the future; 3) digital Creative & Innovation Hubs to provide one-stop shops for the cultural and creative industries; 4) enhancing the availability and visibility of European Union films through the creation of an online directory of European films and the "EU Film Week"; and 5) new mentoring schemes for audio-visual professionals to strengthen digital skills and to use digital technology as a tool for delivering the mentoring. These #Digital4Culture actions are presented more in depth in the Commission Communication: A New European Agenda for Culture and the Staff Working Document (SWD(2018) 167) accompanying it.

The proposal for a Regulation on online transmissions and retransmissions of television and radio programmes (COM(2016) 594) aims at facilitating the clearance of rights for certain broadcasters' online and retransmission services in order to give European citizens a wider choice of television and radio programmes from different Member States. The proposed Directive on copyright in the Digital Single Market (COM(2016) 593) will also contribute to facilitate access to cultural content online and to strengthen the position of the creative industries in the digital environment. It gives wider opportunities to use copyright-protected content for education, research and cultural heritage, to reinforce the position of right holders in the online environment, and to provide more transparency to authors and performers regarding the exploitation of their works.

***Innovative approaches to audience development and audience involvement (paragraph 66)***

The Commission values the importance of audience development. Through its proposal for a future Creative Europe programme 2021-2027, the Commission intends to offer opportunities for operators to develop innovative European trans-border initiatives, both technologically and artistically with a view to exchanging, co-creating, co-producing and distributing European works and making them accessible to a wide and diverse audience. Its goal is also to allow testing new business models enabling creators to make the best use of digital technology for creation and audience development.

1. Regulation (EU) No 1295/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing the Creative Europe Programme (2014 to 2020) and repealing Decisions No 1718/2006/EC, No 1855/2006/EC and No 1041/2009/EC (OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p.221) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Decision No 445/2014/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 establishing a Union action for the European Capitals of Culture for the years 2020 to 2033 and repealing Decision No 1622/2006/EC (OJ L 132, 3.5.2014, p. 1) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. C(2017 )6002 of 6 September 2017 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)