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*Committee on Culture and Education*

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**2011/2157(INI)**

7.10.2011

## **OPINION**

of the Committee on Culture and Education

for the Committee on Foreign Affairs

on the review of the European Neighbourhood Policy  
(2011/2157(INI))

Rapporteur: Marek Henryk Migalski

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## SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Culture and Education calls on the Committee on Foreign Affairs, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Calls for an equitable distribution and alignment of the ENP financial programmes' existing funding for mobility and support of civil society, so that the Eastern and Southern arenas benefit from EU external cooperation in a balanced way which reflects the challenges they face;
2. Strongly reaffirms the connection between, on the one hand, exchange and cooperation between the EU and ENP countries in the fields of culture, education and sport and, on the other hand, the building and strengthening of an open civil society, democracy, the rule of law and the spread of fundamental freedoms and human rights; stresses that mutual cooperation in these areas constitutes an added value for both EU and ENP countries;
3. Appreciates existing EU mobility programmes and regional projects, and affirms that, in particular, the EU programmes aimed at young people have had a significant impact in terms of enhancing education and training opportunities for youth; underlines that cultural and educational exchanges or cooperation can strengthen civil society, foster democratisation and promote mutual understanding between peoples; calls, therefore, on the Member States, as far as possible, to enable the best students from ENP countries to gain access to education or training and to receive grants to study in the EU;
4. Calls, therefore, on the Commission and the Member States to open up the next generation of mobility, education and youth programmes (from 2014) to the EU's neighbouring countries, thereby enabling these countries to participate in such programmes; invites the Commission to broaden the range of mobility programmes, inter alia by including an exchange programme for civil society and social enterprise professionals; calls on the Member States to promote training (including programmes for learning the languages of neighbouring countries) and twinning initiatives for civil servants;
5. Recalls the importance of making exchange programmes reciprocal, so that young people from the EU also have the opportunity to receive education in countries participating in the ENP;
6. Stresses the added value of the Tempus IV programme in promoting cooperation and seeking to modernise the education systems of the countries adjoining the EU, and calls on the Commission to provide support for the programme with a view to the next multiannual financial framework;
7. Appreciates the impact of the Euro-Mediterranean University and indicates that this success should be publicised and that a similar initiative should be launched for the Eastern Partnership region;
8. Stresses that advantage should be taken of the educational experiences of those Member States already implementing the concept of the European Neighbourhood Policy, including initiatives such as the Centre for East European Studies in Warsaw; reminds the

EU and the Member States, in this connection, of the importance of removing obstacles to the free movement of persons, and emphasises the need to liberalise the visa regime for students and young people in Eastern Partnership countries who are eager to study in EU countries; encourages the Member States to introduce free visas for students from ENP countries;

9. Emphasises the need to enhance synergies between Youth on the Move and the ENP, in order to ensure that student mobility between the EU and neighbourhood countries can benefit from more opportunities, in the interests both of the EU and of young people from those countries, and stresses that this must go hand in hand with the promotion of such projects by the media in EU neighbourhood countries;
10. Calls on the Commission to conclude more partnership agreements with neighbouring countries in the area of mobility; points out, in this connection, that the disparity in income between inhabitants of the EU and those of the ENP countries should be taken into account, and consideration given to providing better scholarship opportunities;
11. Urges the Commission, therefore, to pay particular attention to the mobility of students, academics, researchers and businesspeople by providing sufficient resources and by enhancing and extending existing grants and implementing structured cooperation in the areas of higher education and research, promotion of inter-university exchanges and public-private research partnerships;
12. Stresses the importance of strengthening, within the ENP framework, cooperation for the development of sport in the countries concerned, in view of the educational value of sporting activities; calls on the European institutions and the Member States to work for the free movement of athletes worldwide, beginning with those from the ENP countries;
13. Considers international, regional and interregional cultural cooperation based on a genuine dialogue between cultures and including all sectors of society (cultural authorities, institutions, organisations and associations) to be essential; calls, in this regard, on the ENP countries to sign and ratify the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions;
14. Believes that fostering participation in EU cultural programmes can benefit material and non-material development in ENP countries, and that culture also plays an important role in promoting innovation, democracy, human rights, entrepreneurship and creativity; stresses, therefore, the importance of programmes such as Media Mundus and of projects run under the auspices of the Union for the Mediterranean and of the Eastern Partnership Culture Programme; endorses the Commission's intention of following up on its Special Action Culture Programme, and supports the opening-up of the next Culture Programme (2014-2020) to ENP countries;
15. Points out, also, that the procedures for submitting projects and for their evaluation and financing must be simplified to enable civil society in ENP countries clearly to identify opportunities and to seize them in complete transparency;
16. Points out, furthermore, that cultural programmes and programmes to promote mobility should also focus on the mobility of artists and those pursuing artistic studies, thereby

facilitating creative and cultural enrichment and exchange;

17. Advocates the establishment of a cultural visa for artists and other culture professionals from ENP countries; calls also on the Commission to propose a short-stay visa initiative with the aim of eliminating obstacles to mobility in the cultural sector;
18. Calls on the EEAS and the Commission to coordinate strategic deployment of the cultural aspects of external policy, incorporating culture consistently and systematically into the EU's external relations and seeking complementarities with the Member States' external cultural policies;
19. Urges an assessment of existing programmes with a view to ensuring efficient use of resources in order to meet the EU's goals and objectives; supports streamlining internal operations within the Commission in relation to the different existing programmes and projects dealing with culture and education;
20. Stresses the importance of networks of local authorities (particularly town twinnings), EU public actors and ENP beneficiary states for increasing political, economic and cultural exchange with these countries; recommends, to that end, better provision of information and better assistance for project organisers and beneficiaries of ENPI funds; encourages the creation of European platforms for the exchange of information and good practice;
21. Stresses that fundamental freedoms, such as freedom of expression and freedom of the press, along with the right to connect and communicate (online and offline), are important preconditions for cultural expression, exchanges and dialogue; urges the Commission and the Member States, therefore, to respect and promote these freedoms, including internet freedom, within and outside Europe;
22. Calls on the EEAS to promote constructive exchange with the authorities of ENP countries and with representatives of civil society, including cultural actors, in order to strengthen dialogue on human rights and fundamental freedoms and, in particular, to ensure respect for media freedom and, more generally, freedom of speech and access to information;
23. Calls on the EEAS to support politically and financially the efforts of civil society, independent media and non-governmental organisations to introduce a democratic system and the rule of law in all those countries of the ENP where fundamental freedoms and human rights are being violated;
24. Calls on the EEAS, furthermore, to condemn the increasing censorship and monitoring of the internet by repressive regimes; recognises with concern, and condemns, the process of restriction of freedom of speech and harassment of opposition in, for example, Belarus; calls on the Commission to insist consistently on the release of detained journalists from prison;
25. Emphasises the need to initiate, run and support cultural and educational programmes aimed at disseminating and promoting the basic values of participative democracy, including respect for human rights and minority rights, and notes that these programmes should be accessible to individuals as well as to cultural and educational institutions in

ENP countries;

## RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

<b>Date adopted</b>	5.10.2011
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 26 -: 0 0: 2
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Magdi Cristiano Allam, Maria Badia i Cutchet, Malika Benarab-Attou, Lothar Bisky, Jean-Marie Cavada, Santiago Fisas Ayxela, Mary Honeyball, Cătălin Sorin Ivan, Petra Kammerevert, Morten Løkkegaard, Marek Henryk Migalski, Katarína Neveďalová, Doris Pack, Chrysoula Paliadelis, Marie-Thérèse Sanchez-Schmid, Marietje Schaake, Marco Scurria, Hannu Takkula, Sampo Terho, László Tőkés, Helga Trüpel, Sabine Verheyen, Milan Zver
<b>Substitute(s) present for the final vote</b>	Heinz K. Becker, Ivo Belet, Luigi Berlinguer, Nessa Childers, Seán Kelly, Iosif Matula, Georgios Papanikolaou
<b>Substitute(s) under Rule 187(2) present for the final vote</b>	Jacky Hénin