



2017/2255(INI)

1.2.2018

DRAFT REPORT

on structural and financial barriers to access to culture
(2017/2255(INI))

Committee on Culture and Education

Rapporteur: Bogdan Andrzej Zdrojewski

CONTENTS

	Page
MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION	3
EXPLANATORY STATEMENT	10

MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

on structural and financial barriers to access to culture (2017/2255(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its resolution of 12 May 2011 on unlocking the potential of cultural and creative industries¹,
- having regard to its resolution of 12 September 2013 on promoting the European cultural and creative sectors as sources of economic growth and jobs²,
- having regard to its resolution of 30 November 2016 on a coherent EU policy for cultural and creative industries³,
- having regard to its resolution of 10 April 2008 on cultural industries in Europe⁴,
- having regard to its resolution of 7 June 2007 on the social status of artists⁵,
- having regard to its resolution of 12 May 2011 on the cultural dimensions of the EU's external actions⁶,
- having regard to its resolution of 20 February 2004 on the role of schools and school education in maximising access to culture⁷,
- having regard to its resolution of 19 January 2016 entitled 'Towards a Digital Single Market Act'⁸,
- having regard to its resolution of 8 September 2015 towards an integrated approach to cultural heritage for Europe⁹,
- having regard to its resolution of 19 January 2016 on the role of intercultural dialogue, cultural diversity and education in promoting EU fundamental values¹⁰,
- having regard to its resolution of 10 April 2008 on a European agenda for culture in a globalising world¹¹,
- having regard to its resolution of 12 September 2013 on promoting the European

¹ OJ C 377 E, 7.12.2012, p. 142.

² OJ C 93, 9.3.2016, p. 95.

³ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2016)0486.

⁴ OJ C 247 E, 15.10.2009, p. 25.

⁵ OJ C 125 E, 22.5.2008, p. 223.

⁶ OJ C 377 E, 7.12.2012, p. 135.

⁷ OJ C 98 E, 23.4.2004, p. 179.

⁸ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2016)0009.

⁹ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2015)0293.

¹⁰ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2016)0005.

¹¹ OJ C 247 E, 15.10.2009, p. 32.

- cultural and creative sectors as sources of economic growth and jobs¹,
- having regard to its resolution of 13 December 2016 on a coherent EU policy for cultural and creative industries²,
 - having regard to its resolution of 10 April 2008 on cultural industries in Europe³,
 - having regard to its resolution of 5 May 2010 on the communication ‘Europeana – the next steps’⁴,
 - having regard to its resolution of 25 October 2011 on mobility and inclusion of people with disabilities and the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020⁵,
 - having regard to its resolution of 2 March 2017 on the implementation of 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/EC⁶,
 - having regard to the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, adopted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) on 20 October 2005,
 - having regard to the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro Convention) of 2005,
 - having regard to 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/EC⁷,
 - having regard to the Council resolution of 16 November 2007 on a European Agenda for Culture,
 - having regard to the Council conclusions of 23 December 2014 on a Work Plan for Culture (2015-2018)⁸,
 - having regard to the EU Work Plan for Culture for the period 2015-2018,
 - having regard to the Council conclusions of 27 May 2015 on cultural and creative crossovers to stimulate innovation, economic sustainability and social inclusion,
 - having regard to the Council conclusions of 31 May 2016 on the role of Europeana for

¹ OJ C 93, 9.3.2016, p. 95.

² Texts adopted, P8_TA(2016)0486.

³ OJ C 247 E, 15.10.2009, p. 25.

⁴ OJ C 81 E, 15.3.2011, p. 16.

⁵ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2011)0453.

⁶ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2017)0062.

⁷ OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 221.

⁸ OJ C 463, 23.12.2014, p. 4.

the digital access, visibility and use of European cultural heritage.

- having regard to the Council resolution of 6 May 2003 on accessibility of cultural infrastructure and cultural activities for people with disabilities,
 - having regard to the Joint communication of 8 June 2016 to the European Parliament and the Council entitled ‘Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations’ (JOIN(2016)0029),
 - having regard to the Commission report on the implementation of the European Agenda for Culture (COM(2010)0390),
 - having regard to the Commission Green Paper of 27 April 2010 entitled ‘Unlocking the potential of cultural and creative industries’ (COM(2010)0183),
 - having regard to the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on a European Year of Cultural Heritage (2018) (COM(2016)0543),
 - having regard to the Commission communication of 26 September 2012 entitled ‘Promoting cultural and creative sectors for growth and jobs in the EU’ (COM(2012)0537),
 - having regard to the Commission communication of 18 December 2012 on content in the Digital Single Market (COM(2012)0789),
 - having regard to the Commission communication of 26 September 2012 entitled ‘Towards an integrated approach to cultural heritage for Europe’ (COM(2014)0477),
 - having regard to the 2012 report by the working group of the EU Member States’ experts on access to culture,
 - having regard to the results of Eurobarometer surveys No 399 ‘Cultural access and participation’ and No 466 ‘Cultural heritage’,
 - having regard to the results of Eurostat statistical surveys (Culture statistics) for 2016,
 - having regard to Rule 52 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Culture and Education (A8-0000/2018),
- A. whereas Article 27 of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that ‘Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits’;
- B. whereas the constitutions of most EU Member States directly or indirectly refer to culture and access to it;
- C. whereas the authorities at national or regional level remain the main bodies responsible for cultural policies in the EU, in accordance with the subsidiarity principle;

- D. whereas the Parliament and Council Recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning includes cultural awareness and expression among the basic competences necessary for personal fulfilment and development, active citizenship, social inclusion and employment¹;
- E. whereas the Work Plan for Culture (2015-2018)² identifies accessible and inclusive culture and the promotion of cultural diversity as priorities;
- F. whereas the report of the working group of the EU Member States' experts on access to culture³ defines access in terms of enabling new audiences to benefit from the available cultural offer, thus reaching new audiences (or consumers) and bringing them closer to cultural heritage and other cultural resources;
- G. whereas digital technologies have changed the way people access, produce and use cultural content;
- H. whereas Europeana, which was launched in 2008, has become a common European cultural project that facilitates digital access to Europe's cultural heritage;
- I. whereas one of the specific objectives of the Creative Europe programme is to reach new audiences and improve 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;
- J. whereas there are initiatives at Community level and in the Member States aimed at providing better access to cultural infrastructure and cultural activities for people with disabilities;
- K. whereas the development of reliable, comparable and up-to-date cultural statistics, which are the basis of sound cultural policy-making, is one of the cross-cutting priorities of the Work Plan for Culture 2015-2018;

Cultural access and participation

1. Stresses that it recognises access to culture as a fundamental right of all citizens, in accordance with Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which recognises participation in cultural life as one of the fundamental human rights;
2. Stresses the undeniable importance of an active and accessible cultural sector for the development of an inclusive society and the strengthening of active European citizenship;
3. Recalls the importance of the EU's role in promoting and facilitating better coordination of cultural policies at all levels; notes that only then will it be possible for operators across the EU to develop a comprehensive and effective policy to promote access to culture and participation in culture, and to frame culture as an essential element of the

¹ Adopted on 18 December 2006.

² Adopted by the Council in December 2014.

³ Report entitled 'Policies and good practices in the public arts and cultural institutions to promote better access to and wider participation in culture', October 2012.

European integration project;

4. Considers the area of access to culture and cultural participation as a cross-cutting issue, and therefore stresses the importance of coordinating cultural policy with other policy areas such as education, social, regional, foreign, digital and media policies;
5. Recognises the promotion and improvement of access to culture as one of the priorities on the political agenda and calls for the mainstreaming of accessibility and cultural participation aspects into other policy areas, as this will not only make a positive contribution to those policy areas, but also have an impact on cross-sectoral and synergistic cooperation;
6. Stresses the crucial importance of implementing a policy on the basis of reliable data, with the help of wide-ranging research and knowledge on barriers to access to culture, participation in culture and, in particular, the effectiveness of the audience development strategies being implemented;

Financial barriers

7. Stresses that public funding remains a key instrument for financing cultural activities; Calls therefore on the Commission and the Member States, within their respective spheres of competence, to devote a sufficient part of their budgets to public support for culture;
8. Regrets that economic downturns usually result, first and foremost, in cuts in public spending on culture;
9. Recalls that investment in the cultural and creative sectors is a means of unlocking the significant and still undervalued potential of those sectors to generate growth and jobs, and it has a direct impact on the development of new skills, digitisation, innovation and the formulation of new business models;
10. Stresses that the high price of cultural goods and services is one of the barriers to participation in culture highlighted by respondents to the Eurobarometer and Eurostat surveys¹; recommends, in this context, actions targeting specific audiences with the aim of removing financial barriers to access;
11. Stresses the role that appropriate fiscal policies for the cultural and creative sectors can play in enhancing access to culture and participation in culture; notes, however, that indirect support for cultural heritage through the introduction of reduced VAT rates cannot replace direct subsidies; calls for better coordination of national cultural policies and of VAT rates used as a tool to stimulate cultural participation;
12. Welcomes the proposal to amend the VAT Directive, which would allow Member States to apply the same VAT rate to e-publications and printed publications; considers that the distinction between VAT rates applied to physical and electronic publications is anachronistic and unsustainable in the digital age; calls on the Council to adopt the Commission's proposal on this matter without undue delay;

¹ Eurobarometer 399.

Educational barriers and challenges

13. Stresses that the level of education is one of the most important factors having a significant impact on the level of participation in culture; stresses that a higher level of education translates into a higher level of participation in cultural events¹;
14. Notes that the lack of interest is one of the most frequently stated barriers to cultural participation among respondents to Eurostat and Eurobarometer surveys²; stresses, in this context, that the supporting demand, understood as building interest and understanding of culture through education, should be a priority task in terms of increasing access to culture and participation in culture;
15. Recalls the fundamental role of schools as a key platform for bringing young people into contact with culture and shaping cultural needs and competences; calls on the Member States to take steps towards the greater integration of cultural and artistic education into school curricula;
16. Stresses the role of local cultural centres and libraries as key actors in overcoming barriers to accessing and participating in culture;
17. Recommends the development of a coherent strategy for supporting educational projects proposed by cultural institutions; stresses that these projects are tools supporting and building awareness and cultural competences, thus serving as a starting point for the long-term involvement of the public in cultural activities;

Structural barriers

18. Draws attention to the lower cultural participation rates among the rural population, which are structurally conditioned³; draws attention, in this context, to the role of small local cultural centres, transport infrastructure and support for cultural tourism in facilitating access to cultural institutions;
19. Notes the need for further action to improve access to cultural infrastructure, cultural activities and media for people with disabilities; calls on the Member States and the Commission, within their respective spheres of competence, to continue to work towards the integration of people with disabilities through culture and efforts to remove existing barriers;
20. Points out the need to remove obstacles to the mobility of artists and cultural professionals; stresses the impact of these activities on expanding Europe's cultural offer;

Digital barriers and challenges

21. Is convinced that digital tools make it possible to overcome barriers to access to culture caused by factors such as the following: unfavourable geographical location, disability,

¹ Eurostat Culture statistics 2016 edition, pp.116-136 and Eurostat (data from 2015 – EU Survey on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC)).

² Eurobarometer 399, Eurostat (data from 2015 EU Survey on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC)).

³ Eurostat (data from 2015 EU Survey on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC)).

social background, language and lack of time or financial resources; points out that digital tools can also be a tool for overcoming social or mental barriers;

22. Notes the problem of digital exclusion and stresses the need to combat it; recalls, in this context, that digitisation requires cultural and educational institutions and the recipients themselves to acquire new skills and knowledge; stresses, in particular, the need to build capacity for the use of new digital technologies in cultural institutions and to adapt them to the challenges of technological change;
23. Stresses that the digitisation and online accessibility of cultural material in Europe should be carried out in full respect of intellectual property rights;
24. Calls on the Commission to continue giving priority to innovative approaches to audience development and audience involvement, including through new technologies, within the framework of EU programmes, in particular the Creative Europe programme and its subsequent iterations;
25. Recognises the contribution made by Europeana and the Member States' institutions to the digitisation and accessibility of cultural content; Calls, in the context of the European Year of Cultural Heritage, for further support for the project and the promotion of public access to digital cultural heritage resources and services;
26. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Introduction

This report is the first comprehensive report by the Committee on Culture and Education dealing directly with issues affecting access to culture. The rapporteur sees the problem of access to culture as the underlying issue for cultural policy from both a national and an EU perspective, and, most importantly, as the key issue from the citizens' perspective. 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 in other policy areas.

The aim of the report is to carry out a cross-sectoral analysis of existing obstacles to cultural access and participation. **The thematic scope of the report is significantly wider than its title implies, as it concerns not only structural and financial barriers to access, but also social and digital barriers, and by far the most important problem of educational barriers.** Most of the obstacles examined exist alongside each other or are closely linked, which demonstrates the complexity of the problem of cultural access and participation and underlines the rapporteur's argument that this is a cross-cutting issue and that coordination between cultural policy and other policy areas is vital.

Access to culture as a right and a value

Access to culture is one of the fundamental rights guaranteed in numerous legal documents: from the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 27 of which states that 'Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits', to the constitutions of most EU countries, which directly or indirectly refer to culture and access to it. Cultural access and participation are also considered a priority issue at EU level. The current work plan for culture for the period 2015-2018, adopted by the Council in 2014, mentions accessible and inclusive culture as its top priority.

Barriers to cultural access and participation

The rapporteur stresses that the concepts of access to and participation in culture are closely connected. He also believes that strategies for strengthening cultural access and participation should be implemented through the identification of under-represented groups and the designing and implementing of initiatives or programmes aimed at increasing their participation and removing existing barriers. In this context the rapporteur considers that it is crucial for policy-making to be based on evidence acquired through wide-ranging research and data collection on barriers in access to culture, participation in culture and audience development, and their impact at individual and social level. While appreciating the efforts of, among others, Eurostat and ESSnet Culture in the area of cultural statistics, the rapporteur reiterates the continuing vital role of up-to-date statistical and qualitative research and access to comparative data resources to enable effective monitoring and analysis of the cultural, economic and social impact of cultural policies.

The rapporteur takes the view that existing barriers to access are a starting point for developing strategies to respond to the challenges now facing cultural institutions, Member States and the local and regional authorities, which are largely responsible for shaping cultural policy in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity. The rapporteur stresses, however, the crucial role of the EU in promoting and facilitating better coordination of cultural policies at

all levels. In this context, the rapporteur welcomes the actions taken under the open method of coordination (OMC), which is the primary working method for cooperation between Member States on cultural policy. In the context of this report, the rapporteur emphasises the value of the report drawn up using the open method of coordination by the working group of the EU Member States' experts on access to culture.¹

Financial barriers

The rapporteur points out that financial considerations are consistently one of the major barriers to cultural access and participation. He notes that the high price of cultural goods and services is the second barrier to participation in culture expressed by respondents in the Eurobarometer 399 special survey on cultural access and participation. Financial considerations were given as reasons for not going to concerts (25%), the cinema (22%), the theatre (20%) and opera, ballet and dance performances (14%).² In this context, **the rapporteur stresses that the basic instrument for funding cultural activities remains public support** and calls, therefore, on the Commission and the Member States, in accordance with their respective competences, to allocate a sufficient share of their budgets to public funding for culture. The rapporteur calls for access to be supported through reduced ticket prices for specific groups, but shares the view that in order for these measures to be fully effective in terms of increasing participation they should be included within a broader strategy and closely coordinated with national cultural policies. Similarly, in the case of tax policy, while recognising its undeniable potential to indirectly stimulate increased cultural participation and access, the rapporteur points out that the introduction of reduced VAT rates cannot replace direct subsidies, and calls for better coordination of national cultural policies and the VAT rates applied as a tool for stimulating participation in culture.

Educational barriers and challenges

The rapporteur ultimately takes the view that today it is not supply but demand which is more important for participation in culture. In this context, recent Eurostat data on participation in culture, which shows that nearly 40% of non-participation in cultural activities in the EU was motivated by a lack of interest, is particularly worrying.³ The rapporteur considers these figures to be symptomatic of the educational barriers and challenges facing us in terms of cultural participation. **The rapporteur considers education level to be one of the most important factors affecting not only the level, but also, and primarily, the quality of cultural participation.** He strongly believes also that supporting demand, i.e. building interest in and understanding of culture through education, is a priority task for increasing cultural access and participation. He stresses, in this context, the fundamental role of schools in shaping cultural needs and competences, as well as the essential role of local cultural centres and libraries in overcoming barriers to cultural access and participation.

Structural barriers

As regards structural barriers, the rapporteur would first of all draw attention to a barrier that can be defined as geographical, which is the distance from centres of cultural life, such as theatres, museums, libraries, cultural centres and cinemas. Eurobarometer 399 reveals that people living in rural areas or far from large urban centres are much less likely to participate in cultural life, first of all because of a lack of cultural activities on offer and only

¹ Report entitled 'Policies and good practices in the public arts and cultural institutions to promote better access to and wider participation in culture', October 2012.

² Eurobarometer 399

³ Eurostat (data from 2015 EU Survey on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC)).

subsequently because of the cost. Interestingly, the lack of interest in culture among people living in rural areas and small towns is comparable (38% and 37% respectively), and is not that different from the figure for people living in big cities (32%).¹ In this context, the rapporteur stresses the importance of improving transport infrastructure and support for cultural tourism to facilitate access to cultural institutions. The rapporteur is also aware of the challenges facing us in terms of improving access to cultural infrastructure, cultural activities and the media for people with disabilities. He also points out that we do not have sufficient data on access to cultural institutions for people with disabilities. Neither Eurobarometer 345 on accessibility in the broad sense nor Eurobarometer 399 attempted to give detailed consideration to these aspects. From the point of view of broadening the cultural offer, it is important to highlight the existing obstacles to mobility for cultural artists and professionals themselves in Europe.

Digital barriers and challenges

The rapporteur, stressing the importance of direct contact with culture, considers digitisation and online access to cultural content to be essential to enabling wider access to culture and knowledge. He also points out that the use of new technologies for cultural purposes makes it possible to reach out to new, hard-to-reach or non-traditional audiences. In this context, it is worth recalling that new forms of cultural access and participation online have been developed, partly as a result of the increased number of households with internet access, noting that between 2010 and 2015 the proportion of EU households with internet access rose from 70% to 83%.² The rapporteur points out, however, that this significant increase also indirectly highlights the problem of digital exclusion, which is also an obstacle to cultural access and participation. In this context, the rapporteur points out that digitisation requires cultural and educational institutions and the recipients themselves to acquire new skills and knowledge. In particular, the rapporteur would draw attention to the need to develop the potential of new technologies and digital opportunities in cultural institutions and to adapt them to the challenges posed by technological change. **Finally, in the context of all activities connected with the digitisation and online availability of cultural material, the rapporteur stresses the need for full respect for the rights of creators, while striving to achieve the broadest possible access to cultural content.**

Conclusions

The rapporteur considers the identification and diagnosis of the barriers outlined above to be crucial to the process of increasing cultural access and participation. While recognising the importance of creativity and innovation as inherent aspects of culture, the rapporteur highlights the need to facilitate the artistic activities of artists themselves, and to provide citizens with access to the output of the cultural and creative sectors. The rapporteur strongly emphasises the cross-cutting nature of cultural issues and their impact on other areas of social life, including the importance of culture for economic growth. In this context the rapporteur specifically recognises the need for Member State governments to ensure adequate education of artists and the public and to protect the artistic infrastructure and tangible cultural heritage. Achieving the objectives outlined will, in the long term, enable the proper development of an inclusive society and the strengthening of active European citizenship.

¹ Eurobarometer 399.

² Eurostat Culture statistics 2016 edition.