



7.6.2018

OPINION

of the Committee on Culture and Education

for the Committee on Budgets

on the mandate for the trilogue on the 2019 draft budget
(2018/2024(BUD))

Rapporteur for opinion: Morten Løkkegaard

PA_NonLeg

SUGGESTIONS

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

1. Points out that programmes in the fields of education, youth, culture and citizenship remain vital means to increase awareness of our shared European identity across the board;
2. Recalls, *inter alia* in the light of its 30th anniversary celebrations, that Erasmus+ remains the main programme for promoting youth mobility, as demonstrated by the volume of applications received, which exceeds the funding available; deeply regrets that the funding levels proposed for the Erasmus+ programme in the 2019 draft budget fall well below Parliament's expectations and merely reflect the fact that Erasmus+ funding levels are now reaching their peak for the current multiannual financial framework (MFF), failing to provide even the remaining top-up funding for the programme under the MFF revision; insists on the need for enhanced funding, in particular with regard to continuous training and the youth sector, including non-formal education, and to ensure greater participation by vulnerable groups, particularly young people with disabilities; reiterates its call for Erasmus+ funding to be tripled in the next MFF, given the popularity of the programme and, at the same time, its capacity to build a European sense of belonging and enhance the job prospects of young Erasmus+ participants;
3. Stipulates, moreover, the need to provide what is currently termed the European Solidarity Corps, presently under negotiation, with its own budget line and its own resources, composed of the previous European Voluntary Service funds under Erasmus+ and further funds coming exclusively from unallocated margins;
4. Stresses the value of Creative Europe in supporting the Union's audiovisual and cultural sectors; insists that funding levels should match the ambitions of the programme, in particular in the case of the culture sub-programme, which is chronically underfinanced and which consequently has difficulty in achieving satisfactory success rates, frustrating the expectations of candidates; stresses that low success rates are symptomatic of inadequate levels of financing, which do not correspond to the ambitious goals of the programme; considers that a reinforcement of the cross-sectoral strand of the Creative Europe programme could provide a way for the Commission to scale up efforts to tackle fake news, both through enhanced media literacy work and by fostering sectoral dialogue; believes, finally, that the exploitation of synergies between the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) and the Cultural and Creative Sector Guarantee Facility should continue, including to enable the cultural and creative industries to fully express their dual value in protecting and highlighting European cultural and linguistic diversity, and supporting quality job creation, generating sustainable growth and driving innovation and production; insists that a substantial financial contribution should be made from EFSI to investment in education, training and research, and that appropriate support should be given to the cultural and creative sectors; stresses that tailored, sector-specific support is essential to ensure that the cultural and creative sectors benefit from EFSI loans;
5. Takes note of the interest aroused by the launch of the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018; calls, therefore, for the governance actions and instruments linked to the European

Year of Cultural Heritage to continue beyond 2018, including with the help of dedicated funding under other multi-annual programmes, such as the research, external action, cohesion and Erasmus+ programmes and initiatives to digitise cultural heritage, and inclusion in the Digital Education Action Plan;

6. Urges the Commission to conduct a full-scale review – to be provided to Parliament – of all activities under the ‘multimedia actions’ line to ensure that they deliver on their core aims and that the next MFF strikes the right funding balance across actions; recalls that the ‘multimedia actions’ line was established to fund the provision of general information to citizens on operations concerning the Union, for the purpose of increasing the visibility of the work of the Union institutions, the decisions taken and the stages in the construction of Europe; urges the Commission, therefore, to fund current activities under this line that serve other purposes through other appropriate budget lines; calls for extra funding in 2019 to secure the work of Euranet Plus for the remainder of the MFF; insists, however, that the network’s current ‘hand-to-mouth’ existence is unsustainable and calls for a long-term financing basis in the next MFF;
7. Notes the success of the Preparatory Action entitled ‘Subtitling European cultural television content throughout Europe’, which is currently being implemented by ARTE Europe and will no longer be eligible for EU budget support after 2018; underlines that this project enables European cultural content to be broadcast in five (soon to be six) EU languages, thereby reaching some 70 % of EU citizens in their mother tongue via various media platforms; believes that the project has been exceptionally well received by its audience and makes an important contribution to improving cross-border access to European cultural content and promoting intercultural exchange; urges the Commission, therefore, to continue support for multilingual access to quality programmes for a large number of EU citizens by incorporating the subtitling initiative into an existing programme or budget line, for example under Creative Europe;
8. Calls, in the light of the serious deterioration of the situation of press and media freedom in Europe, for the existence of the Centre for Media Pluralism and Media Freedom (CMPF) in Florence and the European Centre for Press and Media Freedom (ECPMF) in Leipzig to be safeguarded for the remainder of the MFF and for additional funding to be made available for this purpose in 2019; notes that these centres complement each other perfectly in their activities and urges the Commission to guarantee them a long-term financing basis in the next MFF to enable them to develop as independently as possible as effective European instruments to safeguard media freedom and media pluralism and provide journalists in hazardous situations with tailor-made assistance and support;
9. Emphasises the value of Europe for Citizens in enhancing citizens’ understanding of the Union and fostering a sense of citizenship, as well as in terms of the operational support it provides to European civil society organisations, which play a key role in the Union and require targeted financial assistance; reaffirms its commitment to better funding levels for the programme, using all available means to increase the project success rate in 2019, the year of the European Parliament elections, and beyond, ensuring a proper funding level; recalls that, in the 2018 budget and despite Parliament’s opposition, the Commission reduced the Europe for Citizens budget by EUR 740 000 vis-à-vis the financial programming figure to boost the European Citizens’ Initiative (ECI); deplores the fact, therefore, that according to the January 2018 financial programming update issued by the

Commission, a further EUR 2.5 million (EUR 1.1 million in 2019 and EUR 1.4 million in 2020) will be taken from Europe for Citizens to fund the revamped ECI, which, the update states, is provided for in the proposal for the new ECI Regulation; notes that neither the proposal itself nor the accompanying legislative financial statement make reference to any budgetary impact on the Europe for Citizens programme; recalls that Parliament must be in possession of all the facts when examining proposed legislation and reminds the Commission of its obligation to disclose those facts; stresses its commitment to an effective, properly resourced Europe for Citizens programme, its resolute opposition to the proposed budget reduction and its intention to reverse those cuts in the 2019 and 2020 budgetary procedures;

10. Urges the Commission to improve synergies between cultural and education programmes and funding available through other programmes and instruments, notably the European Structural and Investment (ESI) Funds, EFSI and Horizon 2020; recalls, in this connection, that culture- and education-related projects have accounted for at least EUR 11 billion in the 2007-2013 and 2014-2020 European Regional Development Fund programming periods;
11. Stresses the key role of the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) in combating youth unemployment; stresses the need for YEI funding that adequately matches the goals established and for enhanced synergies between the YEI, the European Social Fund and Member States' national budgets;
12. Calls on the Commission to provide adequate budget funding to raise the profile of the 2019 European Parliament elections and increase the effectiveness of media coverage thereof, in particular to promote knowledge of the 'Spitzenkandidaten', the candidates for the Commission presidency;
13. Points to the potential of Pilot Projects and Preparatory Actions as means to test out measures in Union policy areas and introduce new innovative initiatives that could become long-term Union measures;
14. Recalls that the UK's withdrawal from the Union poses particularly acute challenges for the European Schools, especially given the size of the English-language section (around 21 % of all pupils) and the prevalence of English as a second language (61 % of all pupils in the 2016-2017 school year); welcomes the progress achieved in the negotiations to date and, notably, the provisional agreement on a transition period under which the UK would remain party to the European Schools Convention until the end of the 2020-2021 school year; notes, however, that important budgetary and educational questions remain with regard to the long-term provision of first-class English-language teaching and the continued recognition of the European Baccalaureate in the UK, notwithstanding the provisions set out in Article 120 of the draft withdrawal agreement; urges the Commission and the Board of Governors to report to the Committee on Culture and Education on its long-term plans to deal with the challenges of Brexit;
15. Welcomes the efforts made in recent years to tackle the problem of payment backlogs; points out that delays in finalising contracts between the relevant bodies and beneficiaries and late payments jeopardise the full implementation of the programmes by the Commission; points out that an increase in commitment appropriations must be accompanied by a corresponding increase in payment appropriations to ensure timely

payments;

16. Stresses the importance of inclusivity and calls for sign language interpretation to be introduced at Parliament's plenary sittings;
17. Stresses the importance of inclusion for migrants and refugees and that giving them equal access to education, training and apprenticeships in their new state of residence, and to the unique culture there, helps them to feel welcome, integrate and resettle;
18. Recognises the social value of both natural and cultural heritage and the benefit of harnessing their potential as an economic driver;
19. Stresses the importance of addressing social exclusion and including people from disadvantaged backgrounds to ensure that they have full and equal access to both culture and education.

INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

Date adopted	7.6.2018
Result of final vote	+: 19 -: 0 0: 4
Members present for the final vote	Isabella Adinolfi, Dominique Bilde, Andrea Bocskor, Nikolaos Chountis, Silvia Costa, Damian Drăghici, Angel Dzhambazki, Jill Evans, María Teresa Giménez Barbat, Petra Kammerevert, Svetoslav Hristov Malinov, Rupert Matthews, Luigi Morgano, John Procter, Sabine Verheyen, Julie Ward, Bogdan Andrzej Zdrojewski
Substitutes present for the final vote	Norbert Erdős, Sylvie Guillaume, Morten Løkkegaard, Martina Michels
Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote	John Flack, Gabriel Mato

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

19	+
ALDE	María Teresa Giménez Barbat, Morten Løkkegaard
EFDD	Isabella Adinolfi
GUE/NGL	Nikolaos Chountis, Martina Michels
PPE	Andrea Bocskor, Norbert Erdős, Svetoslav Hristov Malinov, Gabriel Mato, Sabine Verheyen, Bogdan Andrzej Zdrojewski
S&D	Silvia Costa, Damian Drăghici, Giorgos Grammatikakis, Sylvie Guillaume, Petra Kammerevert, Luigi Morgano, Julie Ward
Verts/ALE	Jill Evans

0	-

4	0
ECR	John Flack, Rupert Matthews, John Procter
ENF	Dominique Bilde

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention