

Newsletter

Committee meetings of 29 June and 11 July 2017

Presentation of the priorities of the Estonian presidency

Exchange of views

Members of the CULT Committee discussed with the Estonian Minister of Education and Research, Ms Mailis Reps, and the Minister of Culture, Mr Indrek Saar, the priorities of the Estonian presidency in their respective areas of responsibility.

Ms Reps highlighted the main priorities of the incoming Estonian presidency in the field of youth and education and stressed the important role that both areas will play during the presidency. In the field of youth, the priorities of the Estonian presidency include smart youth work to harnesses technological developments, strong support for youth volunteering through active participation with the new European Solidarity Corps and continued talks for drafting the new Youth Strategy initiated by the Maltese presidency. In the field of education, Ms Reps focused on the need to reduce youth unemployment by expanding the provision of high-quality education and traineeships, designing new measures for youth in order to broaden their skill sets and improve their competitiveness on the labour market and the universal accessibility of high-quality education that encompasses lifelong learning across all areas.

Mr Saar spoke to the Committee concerning the Estonian presidency priorities in the field of culture, audiovisual affairs and sports. Here the priorities include fully harnessing the progress and possibilities of a digital Europe through the updating of the Audio-Visual Media Services Directive (AVMSD) and improving access to culture and cultural heritage digitally. With regards to the field of sport, Mr. Saar also highlighted the importance of the role that athletic coaches can play in society.

Both Ms Reps and Mr Saar stressed the need for close cooperation between the Estonian presidency and the CULT Committee to achieve their priorities. The Committee thanked Ms Reps and Mr Saar for providing them with a detailed overview and stressed their support for the Estonian presidency's ambitious priorities. During the discussion, the issue of the need to increase the funding for the Erasmus+ programme was raised, and Members reminded the ministers that this was a top priority for the CULT Committee. The ministers supported the Committee on this and stressed their desire to make the Erasmus+ programme as visible and successful as possible.



Future of the Erasmus+ programme

Adoption of draft motion of resolution

A motion for resolution on the 'Future of Erasmus+' was adopted by a large majority of the CULT Members. The resolution presented by the Chair on behalf of the Committee, calls on all the Member States, the Commission and relevant stakeholders to generate stronger and more visible support for Erasmus+ in view of the upcoming MFF negotiations. The approved text stresses that Erasmus+ should be aimed at all young people. In order to achieve this goal and to unlock the full potential of the programme, the resolution calls for significant additional funding which should be reflected in an increase of the available budget.

Moreover, CULT Members regret that the low success rate of some Erasmus+ projects, limited grants and high demand for programme participation could jeopardise the success of Erasmus+ as a flagship EU programme. The Erasmus+ programme is considered to promote active citizenship, civic education, intercultural understanding and to develop a sense of European identity; all education and training and formal and non-formal learning mobility activities financed by Erasmus+ should also increase young people's awareness of the added value of European cooperation in the field of education and encourage them to engage with European issues.

This draft motion for resolution also represents a milestone in the long preparation period before the next MFF. Along with the motion for resolution, an oral question will be tabled for the September 2017 plenary sitting.

General budget 2018

CULT budgetary amendments and opinion on the 2018 budget (Morten LØKKEGAARD, ALDE)

The Committee gave strong backing both to the CULT opinion on the 2018 budget and the amendments tabled to the budget itself. The Committee supported inclusion of the 50 million EUR top-up for Erasmus+ in 2018 under the MFF revision with the money split between the 'education and training' (12 million EUR) and the 'youth' budget lines. It also called for more clarity on both the funding and policy aims of the European Solidarity Corps. The Committee proposed budget increases both to Creative Europe (MEDIA and Culture) and Europe for Citizens and spelled out - under the Culture sub-programme - that 7 million EUR is to be set aside for the 2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage. In addition to a series of amendments to the existing CULT budget lines, the Committee also tabled a number of proposals for pilot projects and preparatory actions. CULT PPPA proposals fared particularly well in the Commission's assessment, with 13 receiving an A grade and 3 a B. The Rapporteur and Shadows will now work to ensure CULT priorities are taken forward in the Budget Committee.

[Procedure file](#)

Copyright in the Digital Single Market

Adoption of draft opinion (Marc JOULAUD, EPP)

The opinion was adopted with a relatively comfortable majority. All compromise amendments passed.

The proposed Directive seeks to modernise several aspects of EU copyright law to bring it into line with the realities of the digital age. The opinion pursues that same aim - to ensure that the legal framework governing copyright is fit for purpose - and to balance the legitimate interests of rightholders and consumers.

Specifically, the opinion addresses the following key aspects:

- It maintains the **three mandatory exceptions** put forward by the Commission (on text and data mining, illustration for teaching and preservation), clarifying in a few places the scope of the exceptions. It extends the teaching exception so that it applies to non-formal education providers provided they are certified in the Member State in which they are established.
- Building on the InfoSoc exceptions, it introduces a specific **voluntary exception on content generated by users**. Member States may provide for an exception for natural persons to make non-commercial online use of short quotations and extracts from copyrighted works for criticism, review, illustration, caricature, parody or pastiche.
- It retains the thrust of the Commission approach on **out-of-commerce works**, with one or two clarifications and simplifications.
- It beefs up Article 10 to ensure that it properly supports the **availability of audiovisual works**.
- It supports the essence of the Commission approach on **press publishers' related rights**, though reduces the term of protection from 20 to 8 years. It states unequivocally that legitimate private and non-commercial use is unaffected by the new rights and stipulates that Member States may provide that a fair share of revenue goes to journalists.
- It fleshes out the **"value gap" provisions in Article 13** by clarifying when information society services are obliged to conclude licensing agreements with requesting rightholders and when they must take measures to prevent the illegal availability of copyright-protected content. It backs this up with a number of provisions to support consumer access to legitimate content (information on exceptions, a complaints and redress mechanism, data protection safeguards etc) and rightholders' relationship with information society services (e.g. dispute settlement).
- It strengthens the **provisions governing creators' remuneration** by enhancing transparency obligations, introducing an unwaivable right to fair remuneration and enabling authors/performers to initiate dispute settlement procedures through a collective action or via a collective organisation.

The CULT Committee is associated under Rule 53+, meaning the Rapporteur will now defend the CULT position in JURI shadows meetings.

[Procedure file](#)

Structured dialogue with Commissioner Ansip

Exchange of views

Commission Vice-President Ansip began by highlighting the excellent cooperation between the Parliament and Commission on the whole panoply of files under the Digital Single Market Strategy and expressed the hope that this would continue as new proposals come on stream.

With regard to existing files, he devoted considerable attention to the copyright package, welcoming in particular the long-overdue agreement on the Marrakesh Treaty legislation, which will open up access to cultural content for the blind and visually impaired. He emphasised again the thrust of the Commission approach - to close the value gap by ensuring that creators are fairly remunerated, to give press publishers related rights akin to those enjoyed by phonogram producers to help safeguard quality journalism and counter 'fake news' and to provide for a series of targeted and balanced copyright exceptions.

He also emphasised efforts to allow citizens to enjoy access to legally-acquired copyrighted content across borders through the portability regulation and to enhance cross-border commerce through the geo-blocking regulation. Looking to the future, Vice-President Ansip announced initiatives on cybersecurity, the data economy and on online platforms, where he stressed the need for clear and uniform regulatory conditions to apply for businesses operating online and offline. With regard to platforms, he also stressed the need to guard against hate speech and misinformation and insisted that, for platforms, trust is a key ingredient, meaning that they have their own interest in getting things right. Finally, he highlighted the importance of digital skills for the society and labour force of tomorrow.

Members raised a number of questions revolving around, for example, the core value of the territoriality principle, the question of fake news and the need to do more to protect children online.

EU Citizenship Report 2017

Consideration of draft opinion (Krystyna ŁYBACKA, S&D)



The Rapporteur highlighted the role of education, training, culture and sport in promoting citizenship rights, active citizenship and solidarity, as well as in strengthening EU values. In particular, some important EU programmes already contribute to the above objectives. According to the Rapporteur, continuous efforts are needed to increase EU citizens' awareness of their rights. Cooperation of educational institutions in raising awareness among young people also calls for a common European framework for learning EU at school. Culture and art also strengthen citizens' sense of belonging to the Union and stimulate intercultural dialogue. Ms Łybacka welcomed the Commission's intention to enhance citizens' political engagement in democratic life promoting citizens' dialogue, EU legislation and the right to vote in local and EP elections and invited Member States to promote active citizenship by implementing the EU Working Plan for Youth 2016-2018. Finally, the Rapporteur expressed the need to ensure that citizens with disabilities can fully enjoy their EU citizenship rights.

- [Procedure file](#)

- Amendments deadline: 13 July at 11.00

- Committee vote: 10 October 2017

Revision of Regulation on the Citizens' initiative

Consideration of draft opinion (Angel DZHAMBAZKI, ECR)



According to the Rapporteur, the revision of the Regulation on the citizen's initiative (ECI) should be part of the EU commitment to increase democratic legitimacy in the EU through enhanced citizens' involvement and participation. Mr Dzhambazki pointed out that five years after it was created a number of shortcomings have been identified in the way the ECI operates. Only 3 initiatives out of 51 applications have been discussed by the college of Commissioners, after having passed 1 million signatures. An excess of administrative burdens and the imminent Brexit have brought about calls for important reforms to be made to the ECI. The Rapporteur recommends lowering the minimum number of Member States that citizens must come from and also lowering the minimum age for eligibility to support a proposed initiative to 16 years. This should encourage more youth participation. Moreover, due to the various linguistic and cultural difficulties that come with organising Europe-wide campaigning and the differences in national procedures it has been suggested that the period of time given for collecting supporting statements should be raised to 18 months.

- [Procedure file](#)

- Amendments deadline: 13 July at 16.00

- Committee vote: 9 November 2017

European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 - Exchange of views (29 June 2017)

At its meeting on 29 June, the CULT Committee heard the Commission reporting on the preparations for the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 (EYCH), including an overview of the planned usage of the Year's preparation budget, the communication strategy and the launch of the Year.

Members were provided with an overview of the Commission's planned usage for the €1 million earmarked for the preparation of the EYCH. This includes €500,000 being invested in Communication for the Year. Plans have also been made to create a logo for the Year, a banner on the Berlaymont building and website (as part of a wider social-media strategy). Members were informed that the remaining part of the budget will be devoted to supporting administrative expense such as those linked to organising meetings with national coordinators and stakeholders. The Commission also provided the Committee with more practical details concerning the launch of the Year which will happen in Milan in December 2017 and in Sophia in January 2018, stressing the importance of the EP's active involvement in putting the EYCH into practice.

The CULT Members appreciated that many of the issues that had been raised following the first meeting of national coordinators in April had been clarified and underlined the need for a regular exchange of information between Parliament and Commission for the successful implementation of the Year. Further practical issues were raised concerning when a visual identity would be created for the EYCH, and most Members agreed that in order for the Year to have a long-term impact, the message needed to be put out there as soon as possible. It was also noted that a bottom-up strategy for the Year will only work if people were better informed on a grass roots level of the events.

Teaching common values in Europe

Study presentation (29 June 2017)

Mr Wiel Veugelers from the University of Humanistic Studies, Utrecht, presented the study 'Teaching common values in Europe'. This study explores the way in which common values, in particular those of democracy and tolerance, are taught in Europe and addressed by EU Member States official curricula for students in secondary education.

The study highlights a failure of Member States to strongly implement the teaching of common values (TCV) in their curriculum instruments and supporting measures. This has resulted in poor practice with regards to TCV and Member States tend to differ in the extent to which they steer TCV policy. The report also stresses the need for Member States to focus on democracy as a process of deliberation and consensus building in TCV. As it stands, strong education practices that relate to these components of democracy are scarce.

The study recommends that the EU and Member States take responsibility to bridge the gaps between policy and concrete practice with the regards to TCV. Focusing on education policy and TCV on a European level will better facilitate the exchange of best practices between Member States and promote the TCVs more generally.

There was a broad consensus amongst Members on the importance of TCVs, and the Committee appreciated the study providing a comprehensive picture of a complex issue. Members were keen to learn more about how individual countries performed in the study and the examples of best practice in implementing TCVs into national curriculums and teaching methods. Questions were also raised as to whether or not the study could have been more ambitious in its definitions of common values and its understanding of democracy. However, Members agreed with the importance of the values of tolerance and democracy to help Europe face the challenges of today.

[Study](#)

European identity - Study presentation

Mr Markus J. Prutsch presented the findings of his in-house research study 'European Identity'. Seeking to examine the concept, challenges and prospects of 'collective identity' in a European context, the study acknowledges the complex nature of collective identities in general and a common 'European identity' in particular. On that basis, the study critically assesses the potential of cultural and political approaches to foster allegiances with a supranational body politic such as the European Union. Particular attention is paid to the role of history and historical remembrance, as well as that of bottom-up initiatives aimed at active civic engagement, in strengthening a European sense of belonging.

In his engaging presentation, Mr Prutsch focused on the key results and the recommendations derived from them:

- Recognising identity to be an elusive and intrinsically constructivist concept;
- Acknowledging collective identity as being central to any body politic;
- Weighing chances and limits of national identity-building patterns being transferred to a supranational level;
- Recognising the need for European identity to be *both* political *and* cultural;
- Revising existing identity policies with a view to strengthening bottom-up approaches;
- Defining history as a focal point of identity struggles, yet also a potential nucleus for a European identity;
- Fostering a civic 'European culture of remembering';
- Acknowledging the central role of education.

Members agreed on the fundamental importance of European identity growing 'from below', as stressed in the study, and were keen to learn more about the author's assessment of situational identity, the relation between a European sense of belonging and support for the EU, as well as the potential contribution of the recently opened House of European History to a European identity as envisioned in the study.

[Study](#)

Further reading

- [Working Group on modernisation of Higher Education \(until 2018\)](#)
- [Finland's 'education miracle' and the lessons we can learn](#)
- [The Internet of Things will power the Fourth Industrial Revolution](#)
- [Towards a human-centered model of economic growth](#)
- [Robocalypse Now? Central Bankers Argue Whether Automation Will Kill Jobs](#)

The next committee meeting:
Monday, 4 September 2017 at 15.00-18.30

Useful links

- [CULT Committee website](#)
- [Meeting documents](#)
- [Calendar of meetings](#)
- [Events](#)
- [Policy Department Publications in the EP](#)
- [European Parliament - Think Thank](#)
- [DG EAC Newsletter](#)
- [The Estonian Presidency of the Council](#)

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