

Newsletter

Committee meeting 16 May and 7 June 2018

Europe for Citizens

Mid-term evaluation by the Commission

The key point of the CULT meeting of 7 June was the discussion on the new "Rights and Values" programme, the successor of the Europe for Citizens (EfC) programme for which CULT is currently responsible. In her introduction, the Chair welcomed the fact that the legal base of the new proposal would now allow the EP to participate in the decision-making process through the ordinary legislative procedure, in contrast to the current programme.

The Commission, represented by Ms Cygan, Director in DG HOME, began its presentation by recalling a few key conclusions from the mid-term evaluation of the EfC that was published in April. She stressed the positive impact of the EfC, which reaches an average of 3 million citizens per year directly, and one million more indirectly. She went on to describe the architecture of the new Rights and Values programme – a merger between the former Rights, Equality and Citizenship and the EfC programmes - and explained that this was meant to improve the synergy and complementary between the programmes and to increase their visibility. She repeatedly underlined that nothing of the former EfC programme had been given up and that a continuation of its activities was guaranteed. She also expressed her satisfaction that a budgetary cut could be avoided.

The CULT Rapporteur (Sylvie Guillaume, S&D), welcomed the choice of a legal base allowing for co-decision, but regretted that only a very slight increase of the budget was proposed. She also deplored the disappearance of the notion of "citizenship" from the title of the programme. Further points of discussion were the loss of identity of the EfC programme and the risk of confusion induced by the merger with another programme and the role of contact points.

ESIF and culture, education, youth and sport

Presentation of a study requested by CULT Committee

On 7 June, Mike Coyne, from the Centre for Strategy & Evaluation Services, presented a study on "ESIF and culture, education, youth & sport – the use of European Structural and Investment Funds in the policy areas of the Committee on Culture and Education", managed by Policy Department B. He focused on the following key conclusions of the study:



- The contribution of education and training, culture, sport and youth to regional economic and social development should be better promoted by the European Commission and the European Parliament
- Greater flexibility in ESIF support for education and training, culture, sport and youth is required
- A broad theme 'strengthening human resources as a key enabler of economic and social development', with specific reference to the roles of education and training, culture and sport with special provision for young people, should be proposed by the CULT committee for the next programming period
- Incorporating this theme into programme planning should be an ex-ante condition of all ESIF thematic objectives
- Appropriate monitoring procedures should be put in place by EU and national authorities to allow for better analysis of the role and impact of ESIF-funded education and training, culture and youth programmes

Members agreed on the need to further promote and monitor ESIF-funded programmes related to education and training, culture and youth programmes in the next cycle of ESIF programming.

[Study on ESIF](#)



Import of cultural goods

Adoption of draft opinion (Rapporteur: Santiago FISAS AYXELA, S&D)

and 1 abstention.

[Procedure file](#)



2019 budget - Mandate for Trilogue

Adoption of draft opinion (Rapporteur: Morten LOKKEGAARD, ALDE)

The committee overwhelmingly (19 in favour, 0 against and 4 abstentions) backed this draft opinion (lead committee: BUDG), which sets out the CULT Committee's key messages going into the 2019 budgetary procedure. The committee expresses disappointment at the proposed budget for Erasmus+ in 2019, which simply matches programmed funding levels, and argues for a tripling of funds for the next generation of the programme. It also backs extra funding for Creative Europe, continued and sustainable funding for Euranet Plus and longer-term financing solutions for the ongoing preparatory actions on the sub-titling of cultural content and on press and media freedom. On Europe for Citizens, it opposes the planned cuts for 2019 to support the new European Citizens' Initiative. Finally, it calls for better cross-programme synergies for programmes funding education and culture and more targeted support through EFSI for the educational and cultural and creative sectors.

[Procedure file](#)



Boosting growth and cohesion in EU border regions

Consideration of draft opinion (Rapporteur: Theodoros ZAGORAKIS, EPP)

The Rapporteur presented this draft opinion (lead committee: REGI), which underlines the importance of cross-border cooperation in the fields of education, culture and sports as a key to strengthening mutual understanding and trust and boosting economic growth in border regions, which often suffer from uneven economic development and inadequate social cohesion. A lively discussion followed in which Members underlined their desire for a greater focus on culture, education and sports in the future programming period of the "Interreg" programme and its cross-border cooperation component.

[Procedure file](#)

• Amendments deadline: 22 May 2018 at 17:00

• Committee vote: 19 June 2018



Employment and social policies of the euro area

Consideration of draft opinion (Rapporteur: Nikolaos CHOUNTIS, GUE/NGL)

In his draft opinion (lead committee: EMPL), the Rapporteur argues that the European Semester logic has driven down investment in education and ultimately failed to deliver socioeconomic convergence among Member States, with some euro area countries seeing more and more socially marginalised people and involuntary migration of their highly skilled workers (the brain drain). The opinion therefore calls for more spending on education, a greater focus on equal opportunities and lifelong learning possibilities and for education as a means of broader personal development rather than being exclusively labour market-linked. In the subsequent debate, Members stressed the value of EU instruments like the Youth Employment Initiative and Youth Guarantee to help support education, training and job opportunities for young people. Some argued for a more explicit focus on the education dimension of the newly adopted European Pillar of Social Rights and greater flexibility within the Stability and Growth Pact to promote investment in education.

[Procedure file](#)

• Amendments deadline: 12 June 2018 at 11:00

• Committee vote: 11 July 2018



The situation in Hungary

Adoption of draft opinion (Rapporteur: Petra KAMMEREVERT, S&D)

This draft opinion (lead committee: LIBE), adopted on 16 May, captured attention since it is conceived as a first step towards triggering the preventive mechanism of Article 7(1) TEU. The opinion reflects clearly the position of the Rapporteur and tries to establish a balance between acknowledging progress and voicing criticism. It nevertheless states unambiguously that the situation in terms of higher education, Roma education, media freedom and pluralism and NGOs in Hungary represents a clear risk of a serious breach of the values enshrined in Article 2 of the TEU and therefore warrants the triggering of the Article 7 procedure in order to uphold the EU's common values and to guarantee the rule of law. The opinion was adopted with 13 votes in favour, 4 against and 8 abstentions, which shows how divided the CULT committee is on this issue.

[Procedure file](#)

Creative Europe

Mid-term evaluation by the Commission

On 16 May, the European Commission presented the results of the mid-term review of the Creative Europe programme. The evaluation confirmed that the programme's objectives are relevant to the main challenges of the sector but more needs to be done to fully reap the opportunities offered by the digital shift. Moreover, the programme is seen to be woefully underfunded in relation to its objectives. The presentation was followed by a lively discussion with Members concentrating mainly on potential improvements for the new generation of the programme.

Implementation of EYCH

Exchange of views with the Commission

On 16 May, the Committee had an exchange of views with the Commission on the implementation of the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 (EYCH 2018). Mr Michel Magnier, Director at DG EAC responsible for culture policies, and Ms Catherine Magnant, Head of the Commission's EYCH 2018 Task Force, provided an overview of the various initiatives that have already been launched both at national and European level, presented the plans for the remainder of the Year, and outlined ideas on how to guarantee the Year's long-term legacy beyond 2018. The presentation met with great interest from CULT Members, who expressed their satisfaction with how the EYCH has been implemented so far, yet also stressed the importance of ensuring that the new-found enthusiasm as regards culture and cultural heritage does not dwindle once the year formally comes to an end. Some criticism was expressed by the Chair and some other Members with regard to the perceived insufficient communication efforts by the EP surrounding the EYCH.

The next committee meeting: 18-19 June 2018

Useful links

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

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