

Newsletter

Committee meetings 22 October and 8 November 2018



The future shape of the Erasmus+ programme

On 8 November, Members of the CULT Committee were presented with a 12-metre knitted scarf made by learners of all origins as a symbol of solidarity in Europe. The scarf was the symbolic culmination of the Boosting Individual Competences (BIC) project, which was financed as an Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership and which produced a common paper on the “*Definition of Relevant Educational Steps to Facilitate Inclusion*” (DRESFI). The paper puts forward ideas on how to meet the needs of illiterate persons, newcomers, refugees and asylum seekers in European countries. The paper is a basic tool which has been tested, evaluated and is already in use, for example in France.

The presentation was timely, coming on the back of the 22 October CULT meeting, which was devoted entirely to the Erasmus+ programme, where boosting inclusion is a central aim. The 22 October meeting began with a presentation by Mr Rimantas Šadžius the European Court of Auditors of their special report on the current Erasmus+ programme.

The report is based on an audit of Key Action 1 (mobility) only since this is where the bulk of funding is focused. The report concludes that Erasmus is a clear success story and an undeniably effective European brand. It also generates European added value in more ways than it sets out, notably through fostering multilingualism, promoting soft diplomacy and improving quality standards, for example through the Erasmus Charters. Also, critically, the report finds that learning mobility really works and that there is compelling evidence that people participating in Erasmus+ mobility activities really benefit in terms of their learning. Mr Šadžius highlighted a couple of weak points in the current programme, particularly the failure of the Student Loan Guarantee Facility, the absence of a demonstrable link between programme objectives and indicators and the burdensome procedures. The need for simplification was echoed by all Members who spoke and, as the Commission confirmed, is a guiding principle in the new programme generation.



From looking back at implementation of the current programme, the committee then cast its eye to the future with the consideration of the **draft report on the proposal for a Regulation on 'Erasmus': the Union programme for education, training, youth and sport** (Rapporteur: Milan Zver, EPP). Mr Zver's report welcomes the Commission's proposal, particularly its decision to leave intact a structure that works, to apply the key action structure to sport, to boost mobility opportunities for school pupils and to roll out Jean Monnet actions to all forms of education and training. Mr Zver also voiced his support for the three new initiatives in the proposal: European Universities, DiscoverEU and the VET Centres of Excellence. The report's proposed amendments focus on:

- Support for a tripling of the budget to deliver on the programme's enhanced ambitions and make it deliver for more people.
- Much greater prominence for inclusion measures and more transparency about which groups are being targeted with which measures, as well as a specific provision on the minimum amount of costs an Erasmus+ grant should cover.
- Parliamentary scrutiny. Explicit backing for the Commission's flexibility-driven approach to the programme provided that there is proper parliamentary scrutiny over the inevitable political priority-setting and secondary choices that entails. In other words, the work programme must be adopted via a delegated act.
- Specific measures to simplify the programme, including the European Student Card, a one-stop-shop Erasmus tool, better cooperation among national agencies and, critically, a set of indicators to assess the effectiveness of simplification efforts.
- Retention of the now well-known Erasmus+ name
- European added value. A specific article to indicate that projects must demonstrate potential European added value and can do so in a number of ways.

In the subsequent debate, Members voiced overall support for the Rapporteur's approach, particularly on the budget, inclusion measures and parliamentary oversight. However, they called for more clarity on how cross-programme synergies will work, more detail on and a more explicit learning dimension within DiscoverEU and more clarity on lifelong learning as the leitmotif underpinning the programme.

• [Procedure file](#)

• Amendments deadline: 13 November 2018

• Committee vote: 22 January 2019

Study presentation: the "Audiovisual Sector and Brexit: the Regulatory Environment"

Professor Mark Cole from the Institute of European Media Law gave a presentation of the study requested by the CULT Committee and overseen by the EP's Policy Department B. The study explores the current EU legal framework for the audiovisual sector, notably the recently adopted revised Audiovisual Media Services Directive and the various copyright rules in force, noting that EU law has been an important driving factor in shaping the sector over recent decades and that the UK has developed into the number one EU hub for AVMS providers (and indeed for the broader creative sector). Professor Cole ran through the range of existing EU-third country cooperation models – from EEA and EFTA to simple FTA and even no agreement at all – concluding that only the EEA model can readily replicate the existing conditions for the sector post-Brexit and that even no agreement at all does not remove any form of interlinkage because of WTO rules and the Council of Europe Transfrontier Television Convention (CTT).

Irrespective of the nature of EU-UK relations post-Brexit, the AVMSD quota provisions would still enable UK works to be considered 'European' because the UK is a contracting party to the CTT and, in the view of Professor Cole, many of the 2018 reforms (e.g. new rules on video-sharing platforms) are likely to determine AVMS provider behaviour irrespective of the post-Brexit rules in the UK. Nevertheless, given the fact that the CTT has not evolved since it was adopted at the end of the 1980s and that it lacks any meaningful enforcement, it is a poor substitute, as far as the UK is concerned, for the AVMSD and its country-of-origin principle. Professor Cole emphasised that the current copyright framework would be even harder to replicate because EU law and ECJ rulings have taken the legal framework so far beyond the underlying WTO and WIPO agreements. In short, any hope of finding bespoke arrangements for the audiovisual sector through a Canada-style Free Trade Agreement are likely to fail owing to the *de facto exception culturelle*, according to which cultural goods are unique and cannot be subject to ordinary trade rules.

In the lively debate that followed the presentation, Members asked more detailed questions about what is possible in the different off-the-shelf cooperation models, about the UK creative sector's interest in retaining AVMS rules and especially the country-of-origin principle, about the UK's prospective future participation in Creative Europe, about the possibility of dispensing with the *exception culturelle* in an EU-UK agreement and the risks for possible future agreements with other third countries, about the likelihood of the UK continuing to apply AVMS rules post-Brexit and about broader issues of platform liability and the right to the free flow of information. The summary of the discussion was that, despite the current uncertainty, it is clear that the UK will remain a major content production centre post-Brexit and that there is mutual benefit in trying to continue cooperation going forward.

[Study](#)

2017 discharge: Commission and Translation Centre

Consideration of draft opinions (Rapporteur: Bogdan Andrzej ZDROJEWSKI, EPP)



The Rapporteur presented his views on the discharge on both the General Budget of the European Union (Commission) and the Translation Centre for the Bodies of the EU. He welcomed the low error rate of the Erasmus+ programme, though criticised the initial decision to allocate Erasmus+ budget to the ESC through an implementing act. He pointed to the low take-up and insufficient geographical coverage of the Erasmus+ Student Loan Guarantee Facility and urged the Commission and European Investment Fund to put in place an implementation strategy to maximise the Facility's effectiveness; On this point, the Chair asked the Commission's representative whether there is a procedure to redeploy the funds not used under the Loan Guarantee Facility.

The Rapporteur also expressed concerns on the EACEA internal control shortcomings identified by an audit on the Erasmus+ and Creative Europe grant management and called on EACEA to take the necessary corrective measures. Regarding the European Schools, Members deplored that the ECA report will be presented only in early December as this might hinder the Committee's ability to scrutinise what have been a problematic case in the past. On the Translation Centre, the Rapporteur noted with appreciation the impact of the new pricing structure for the translation of documents, which delivered a saving of EUR 3.2 million for the Centre's clients in 2017. Moreover, he highlighted the need to make available to the EU institutions a new version of the IATE (InterActive Terminology for Europe) database by the end of 2018 to ensure that it keeps pace with innovation.

The draft report reintroduces an indicative breakdown of the budget to ensure that volunteering remains the core activity of the programme. In the Rapporteur's view, the in-country activities financed by the Corps should also be limited. She also firmly believes that the role of stakeholders and the European Parliament should be strengthened.

- [Procedure file - Commission](#)
- [Procedure file - Translation Centre](#)

• Amendments deadline: 16 November 2018

• Committee vote: 22 January 2019

Establishing the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument

Consideration of draft opinion (Rapporteur: María Teresa GIMÉNEZ BARBAT, ALDE)



Ms Giménez Barbat presented her draft legislative opinion on the proposed Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument for the 2021-2027 period. The Commission proposes to allocate €89.2 billion (in current prices), which would cover the majority of EU spending overseas.

The Rapporteur considers that a more prominent place in the draft Regulation should be given to education and culture, ensuring access to inclusive and equitable quality education for all, and to fostering international cultural relations through cultural diplomacy. Therefore, she believes that an indicative amount of 15% of the proposed budget should be devoted to education and culture actions.

Members agreed with the general approach laid out in the draft opinion.

- [Procedure file](#)

• Amendments deadline: 14 November 2018

• Committee vote: 3 December 2018

Further reading:

- [Preparing our youth for an inclusive and sustainable world: The OECD PISA global competence framework](#)
- [What should students learn in the 21st century?](#)
- [Why social and emotional skills matter more than ever](#)
- [Skills on the Move - Migrants in the Survey of Adult Skills](#)
- [Equity in Education Breaking Down Barriers to Social Mobility](#)
- [Seven Questions about Apprenticeships](#)

The next committee meeting: 15 November 2018 (Strasbourg)

Useful links

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

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cult-secretariat@europarl.europa.eu

