

Newsletter

Committee meetings

1 October 2020

15 October 2020

26 and 27 October 2020

Presentation of the “New European Bauhaus”

Exchange of views with Commissioner Mariya Gabriel, 27 October



Commissioner Gabriel presented the “New European Bauhaus” initiative, recently announced by Commission President Ursula von der Leyen during her State of the Union speech. The Commissioner explained that the initiative will contribute to fighting climate change through an innovative exchange of science and technology with art and culture. The aim of the initiative is also to promote a sustainable lifestyle and contribute to the environmental transition with input from scientists, architects and artists. The initiative should develop through three phases: design, delivery and

dissemination. Notwithstanding the importance of the cultural side of the project, the Commissioner stressed that funding will not come from Creative Europe but mostly from the research and innovation budget.

While there was general interest in the New European Bauhaus initiative, the Chair and CULT Members from almost all political groups expressed concern at launching a new initiative when the cultural and creative sectors are struggling to receive adequate support from existing funds during the Covid-19 pandemic. They stressed that the initiative still lacks clarity and a clear added value and that funding for the New European Bauhaus should absolutely not come from existing programmes such as Creative Europe.

Moreover, the Commissioner welcomed progress negotiations on the three MFF files in the CULT Committee’s remit, Erasmus+, Creative Europe and the European Solidarity Corps, hoping for a swift final agreement.

Presentation of the Court of Auditors special report “EU investments in cultural sites”

1st October 2020

In his presentation, Mr Emmanuel Rauch highlighted several areas for improvement, pointing to the lack of focus and coordination between different EU sources of funding for cultural projects and the dearth of financial resources. The report stresses that the ERDF is a very useful framework for Member States but that investment in cultural projects is not considered as a priority. Cultural projects are only taken into account if they have socio-economic impact.

The report provides several recommendations, mostly concerning the regional funds (i.e. to include cultural heritage projects in the disasters risk plan in the Common Provisions Regulation). Mr Rauch also announced that a follow-up report will come after three years to evaluate progress made with respect to the recommendations.

In their comments and questions, CULT Members focused on the public/private funding opportunities for cultural projects, and the lack of coordination and commitment to cultural investments. The Committee unanimously adopted the report (29 votes in favour, 0 against and 0 abstentions).

Gender equality week

Exchange of views, 27 October

Gender equality is an issue cutting across agendas at local, national, European and global levels, touching not only upon culture and education policy areas but many more. The CULT Committee had an interesting and enlightening discussion centring on gender equality in STEAM education and in the media.

In the first part of the discussion, focussing on gender equality in the media, the two guests (Pamela Morinière from the International

Federation of Journalists and Cécile Gréboval from the Council of Europe) emphasised the need for active policies promoting gender equality in the media sector. These include having more women in decision-making roles, seeing a visibly equal representation of women journalists, tackling online harassment of journalists, addressing systemic issues of gender discrimination regarding pay and working conditions, and the need to increase self-regulation of the media sector. Vessela Karloukovska from the Commission commented on the Commission’s work to tackle gender discrimination, noting particularly their work to tackle the incitement of hatred on online video-sharing platforms.

In the second part of the discussion, gender equality in education and access to STEM and STEAM pathways was discussed. Two guests spoke: Nikita Sanaullah, from the European Youth Forum and Dita Formankova from the Czichas organisation. They emphasised the importance of digital education for young people, especially girls, as a crucial set of skills for work and participation in society that should not be taken for granted among young people. The need for high-quality educators in formal and non-formal settings was noted, with the benefit of having women educators in STEAM subjects stressed, so as to inspire the next generation of women to enter traditionally male-dominated fields. The importance of Arts education as part of STEAM was emphasised given its capacity to develop creativity, innovation and soft skills. The issue of losing qualified women from STEM areas was also noted, with a need to do more to allow women to return to STEM careers after career breaks. Francesca Pagnossin from the Commission commented on education as a key area of interest for the EU, specifically focussing on STEAM subjects and gender equality, which should be addressed as part of the European Education Area.

In both discussions, the context of Covid-19 was emphasised, with speakers stressing that the pandemic’s impact has hit women’s representation in the media and their access to STEAM education disproportionately hard.

Hungarian University of Theatre and Film Arts (SZFE)

Exchange of views, 27 October



The CULT Committee had a lively debate about recent developments concerning the Hungarian University of Theatre and Film Arts (SZFE), which have been widely covered in international media. The main issue of contention is a change of SZFE's governance structure and subsequent shift of decision-making powers, which has been regarded by some observers as an attempt to place SZFE under political control to determine its operations and cultural output. This led to protests by the university's students and their sympathisers, which included demonstrations and the occupation of the SZFE's premises.

In order to shed light on the possible consequences of SZFE's reorganisation, CULT invited four guest speakers. The government's point of view was presented by the responsible Minister, László György and the Chairman of the new supervisory board, Mr Attila Vidnyánszky, whereas Mr. Laszlo Upor, the former rector and Ms Hanna Milovits as a student representative spoke on behalf of the critics.

The latter criticised the introduction of changes without proper consultation of the former leadership and without its recommendations being taken into account. They deplored in particular the fact that decision-making powers on budgetary, managerial and academic matters were taken away from the democratically elected senate and given to the new board, which, they argue, undermines the University's autonomy. The Minister and the University's new leadership claimed that the reorganisation would help

modernise the SZFE, substantially increase its budget, and make it more market-oriented and open.

After the presentations, Members engaged in a discussion and asked the invited speakers a series of questions. Some of them supported the critics' views and pointed out the need to preserve and promote academic and artistic freedom as core values of the European Union.

Public Hearing "European Citizens' Initiative: "Minority Safepack"

15 October

On 15 October, the Committee on Culture and Education held, together with the Committee on Civil liberties, Justice and Home Affairs and in association with the Committee on Petitions, a public hearing on the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) entitled 'Minority Safepack – one million signatures for diversity in Europe'.

Having gathered the support of 1,123,422 signatories in 28 Member States, the organisers of this ECI presented their initiative in the presence of the European Commission, the Council of Europe, the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions.

This was the first time the CULT Committee has dealt with a Citizens' Initiative. In the Minority SafePack, there are many proposals concerning linguistic diversity and the right of minorities to use their language in several areas of public life. The issue of unique copyright rules for the EU was proposed by the ECI organisers. The initiative will be further discussed in plenary in November.



Votes

Achieving an effective policy legacy for the European Year of Cultural Heritage

Adoption of draft report
(Dace MELBARDE, ECR)



To celebrate diversity and everything we have in common, 2018 was chosen as the European Year of Cultural Heritage (EYCH) during which over 23,000 events took place. The EYCH was a bottom-up initiative, as civil society organisations advocated its establishment and played a key role in its preparation and implementation. Among its bigger achievements, the EYCH succeeded in creating the necessary momentum and bringing together public and private stakeholders, particularly non-governmental organisations (NGOs) promoting cultural heritage at local, regional or national levels and establishing a truly pan-European movement. As the report stresses, it is vital to continue building on this momentum in order to achieve an effective policy legacy for the EYCH. The report emphasises that cultural heritage is a value in its own right and calls for the need to establish a permanent platform with organised civil society at its core for cooperation and coordination on cultural heritage policies at the EU level. The report was adopted with 26 votes in favour, three abstentions and no votes against.

[Procedure file](#)

Union action for the European Capitals of Culture for the years 2020 to 2033

Adoption of draft report
(Zeljana ZOVKO, EPP)



The Committee unanimously adopted (29 votes in favour, 0 against and 0 abstentions) the report to extend the current European Capitals of Culture Rijeka (Croatia) and Galway (Ireland) until 30 April 2021, without changing their year of designation (i.e. 2020). The only modification to the Commission proposal is to acknowledge the huge human and financial investment made by those cities.

[Procedure file](#)

A new strategy for European SMEs

Adoption of draft opinion
(Victor NEGRESCU, S&D)



The opinion was backed was adopted by a large majority (28 in favour, 1 against, 1 abstention). The opinion underlines the contribution of the cultural and creative sectors and industries to the EU economy and calls for adequate, specific support, in terms of financing, skills and digitalisation.

[Procedure file](#)

Establishing an EU Strategy for Sustainable Tourism

Adoption of draft opinion

(Dace MELBARDE, ECR)



The opinion recognises that cultural tourism has significant potential to generate growth and jobs in the EU, with as many as four in ten tourists already choosing their destination based on its cultural offer. However, the competitiveness of the European tourism sectors is closely linked to its sustainability. The cultural heritage offer only recoups a minimal share of the economic value it generates, thus requiring new, alternative and stable sources of funding to continue to serve as the basis for sustainable tourism. The opinion was adopted with 26 votes in favour, 1 against and 2 abstentions.

[Procedure file](#)

A strong social Europe for Just Transition

Adoption of draft opinion

(Marcos ROS SEMPERE, S&D)



At the beginning of 2020, the European Commission published its Communication on “A strong social Europe for just transitions”. This Communication is built around the recognition that Europe currently faces three transitions: green, digital and demographic. Hence the need to adapt EU policies to preserve the European social achievements and to fight against persisting inequalities. The Communication calls for an Action Plan to implement the European Pillar of Social Rights. The CULT opinion recalls that education is an investment for the Union’s future and a key tool for the achievement of the Pillar. Moreover, it emphasises that the transition to a more environmentally sustainable society requires skilled and highly skilled workers and believes that just transition funds should include a substantial investment in all levels of education, including vocational education and training. The opinion was adopted with 25 votes in favour, 2 against and 2 abstentions.

[Procedure file](#)

Quality traineeships in the EU

Adoption of draft opinion

(Niyazi KIZILYÜREK, GUE/NGL)



Traineeships have become an important gateway through which young people enter the labour market. To facilitate access to employment, traineeships should offer good quality learning content and appropriate working conditions, and should not be a substitute for regular jobs or a precondition for a job placement. The CULT opinion stresses that all traineeships should promote inclusiveness, especially with regard to young and vulnerable people with fewer opportunities. Moreover, the opinion insists that it is crucial to ensure participation in traineeships for persons with disabilities and that gender equality in the access to traineeships must be ensured. The opinion was adopted with 23 votes in favour, 2 against and 3 abstentions.

[Procedure file](#)

General budget of the European Union for the financial year 2021

Adoption of draft opinion

(Romeo FRANZ, Greens/EFA)



The CULT Committee adopted, by a large majority, the opinion on the budget 2021 (October resolution). The opinion complements the vote on the budgetary amendments. In their opinion, the Committee requested budgetary appropriations and payments for 2021 in line with the request to triple the Erasmus+ budget and double the Creative Europe budget in the next MFF. Moreover, opinion highlights the Committee's wish to see the 'Euronews' part of the 'multimedia actions' budget placed into the reserve.

[Procedure file](#)

Promoting gender equality in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) education and careers

Adoption of draft opinion

(Christine ANDERSON, ID)



The opinion was rejected by a broad majority after all amendments tabled to this opinion were rejected as well.

[Procedure file](#)

Policy Department Research

Recently finished projects

Concomitant expertise for INI reports:

INI report on *Effective measures to 'green' Erasmus+, Creative Europe and European Solidarity Corps programmes*:

- Introductory briefing on [Effective measures to 'green' Erasmus+, Creative Europe and European Solidarity Corps programmes](#);
- Briefing on [Virtual formats versus physical mobility](#).

INI report on *Artificial intelligence in education, culture and the audiovisual sector*:

- Introductory briefing on [The use of artificial intelligence in the cultural and creative sectors](#);
- In-depth analysis on [The use of artificial intelligence in the audiovisual sector](#);
- Introductory briefing on [The use of artificial intelligence in education](#).

INI report on *Shaping Digital Education policy*:

- In-depth analysis on [Shaping digital education policy](#)

Selection of forthcoming projects

In-depth analysis:

- Towards a European Education – Critical Perspectives on Challenges Ahead (expected November 2020)
- Making the European Education Area a reality: challenges and policy options (expected February 2021)

Studies:

- EU sports policy: assessment and possible ways forward (expected January 2021)
- Education and Youth in post-COVID-19 Europe – Crisis effects and policy recommendations (expected February 2021)
- Cultural and Creative Sectors in post-COVID-19 Europe – Crisis effects and policy recommendations (expected February 2021)

Useful links and contacts:

- [Research for CULT Committee](#)
- [Supporting analysis for CULT Committee](#)
- <https://twitter.com/PolicyCULT>
- poldep-cohesion@europarl.europa.eu

The next committee meeting: 19 November 2020 (tbc)

Useful links

) [CULT Committee website](#)
) [Meeting documents](#)
) [Calendar of meetings](#)

) [Policy Department Publications in the EP](#)
) [European Parliament - Think Thank](#)
) [The German Presidency of the Council](#)

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