

Newsletter

Committee meeting
19 April 2021

Exchange of views with Commissioner Thierry Breton



In the framework of its structured dialogue with the Commission, the Committee held an exchange of views with the Commissioner for Internal Market, Thierry Breton. As a preliminary remark, the Commissioner expressed his support for the actors in the cultural and creative sectors and industries, who remain deeply impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

With regard to the audiovisual sector, Commissioner Breton stressed that the Commission would provide support to ensure the digital transition through an action plan and a strategic roadmap. Financial support would also be provided for the production and distribution of European works. The importance of developing and strengthening key skills for people working in the audiovisual sector was then highlighted. After having briefly addressed the issue of the financing of Euronews, Commissioner Breton then recalled the importance of the future Digital Services Act (DSA) and Digital Markets Act (DMA) and the role of regulating platforms as gatekeepers, which would complement existing legal instruments,

such as the AVMSD and the Copyright Directive. Reiterating the crucial importance of media freedom and independence for democracy, he went on to present the Commission's objectives of its Democracy and Media Action Plans, published in December 2020. Commissioner Breton finally highlighted the need to set up a European Media Freedom Act, which would complement the current legislation in force and would guarantee media freedom and pluralism in the Union.

In the subsequent discussion, an intense exchange took place with Members on a wide range of topics, including media freedom, support to cultural and creative sectors and industries (CCSI) during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Digital Services Act, the Digital Markets Act and the forthcoming Commission's proposal on a European Media Freedom Act. The latter met both with interest and scepticism, given uncertainty about its concrete implementation. As previously, the Commission's approach regarding Euronews and Euranet+ was criticised by several Members for not being coherent and in particular for not reflecting the network character of Euranet+.



Presentation of a Study on “Disinformation and Science”



The morning of 19 April commenced with a presentation by Mr György Csepeli (ELTE, Budapest) and Ms Ramona Velea (ISIG, Gorizia) on the main findings of their study “Disinformation and Science - An investigation into gullibility of false science news in central European countries”. This study was commissioned by the European Parliament’s Panel for the Future of Science and Technology (STOA) as part of its European Science-Media Hub (ESMH), to explore the public understanding of scientific topics and to address the damaging impact of disinformation and “junk science”.

The study examines the phenomenon of (scientific) “fake news”, its impact on social trust, and types of media consumption among university students in Austria, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Hungary, Northern Italy and Slovakia. In addition, it makes several recommendations to address the

increasing tendency to believe in unreliable scientific statements, an issue that has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The proposals include enhancing levels of public trust in science, encouraging fact-checking skills amongst social media users, and actively supporting credible sources in scientific communication to combat disinformation.

The ensuing discussion with CULT Members focused on the following elements:

- Phenomenon of declining trust in science more generally, partly also due to flawed science communication;
- Different strategies to address “fake news”;
- The challenges and opportunities of teaching “digital” and “media literacy” to young people;
- The potential “subtle” influence of disinformation and fake news – including those that have been exposed as such – on the perception of science in the long run;
- Possible technological tools to detect (scientific) fake news.

Exchange of views on Europe’s media in the digital decade



The CULT Committee held an exchange of views on the draft report “Europe’s Media in the Digital Decade: An Action Plan to Support Recovery and Transformation” in May.

In her presentation, the Rapporteur, Ms Dace Melbarde (ECR) underlined that cultural, linguistic, social, and political diversity of the media and audiovisual sector are crucial for safeguarding and promoting Europe’s essential democratic values. According to the Rapporteur, the sector is also a

great source of innovation and revenue-generating activities. However, the Rapporteur believes that the high level of fragmentation in the European market, amplified by the consequences of the pandemic, acts as a barrier to reaching the full potential of the media and audiovisual sectors.

Considering the huge disruptive effects of the “all digital” approach, especially as a result of various global online platforms, the Rapporteur calls for comprehensive news media and audiovisual policies, encompassing legislative and financial support initiatives.

In addition, the rapporteur emphasised that the competitive European audiovisual sector is a strong vector through which cultural diversity can be promoted and Europe’s presence in highly

innovative and competitive markets for content can be secured. Therefore, she called for strong and coordinated financial support throughout all the available EU programmes and financial instruments. She also suggested to build upon the highly successful Creative Europe's MEDIA sub-programme, and the creation of a permanent NEWS media fund, established in a manner that would fully respect editorial independence and ensure equality.

In their interventions, the CULT Members strongly supported the media and audiovisual sectors,

highlighting them as essential pillars of our democracy and valuable economic assets. They all agreed on the need to develop independent, European, and diversified media platforms and to fight fake news and "news desertification". Furthermore, CULT Members called on the Commission and the Member States to work together on defending copyright and the international competitiveness of European content through the development of dedicated platforms.

Votes

Citizens' dialogues and citizens' participation in EU decision-making

Adoption of draft report

(Irena JOVEVA, Renew)

On 19 April, Irena Joveva's (Renew) opinion on "Citizens' dialogues and citizens' participation in EU decision-making" was almost unanimously adopted (26 in favour/1 abstention/1 against) by the CULT Committee.

The opinion explores methods to promote further engagement with EU citizens in the policy- and decision-making processes at EU level and underlines the need to improve all channels of communication and secure equal access and possibilities for citizens to understand and influence EU decision making, with a particular focus on those with fewer opportunities. The CULT Committee's opinion encourages EU citizens to actively use all the instruments at their disposal (e.g., right to petitions, Citizens initiative, etc.), but also encourages awareness raising and information activities, as well as strengthened engagement between the EU institutions and citizens, in particular with a view to the upcoming Conference on the Future of Europe. In their opinion, CULT Committee Members also encourage the further development of citizenship and civic education and emphasise the independence of diversified media as a crucial tool in the fight against misinformation, disinformation, and fake news – serious threats to our democratic societies.



[Procedure file](#)

Policy Department Research

Recently finished projects

Concomitant expertise for CULT reports:

INI report on *The situation of artists and the cultural recovery in the EU*:

- Background analysis on [The situation of artists and the cultural recovery in the EU](#):

INI report on *The European Education Area: a shared holistic approach to education, skills and competences*:

- Study on [Making the European Education Area a reality: state of affairs, challenges and prospects](#);
- Study on [Towards a European Education – Critical Perspectives on Challenges Ahead](#);

- Briefing on *The European Education Area seen by the Member States of the European Union - Synthesis of a survey conducted amongst Member States' representatives.* (internal)
- Briefing on *The European Education Area: bibliographical review* (internal).

INI report on *Shaping Digital Education policy*:

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

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 *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](#).



Other studies:

[Cultural and Creative Sectors in post-COVID-19 Europe – Crisis effects and policy recommendations.](#)

Selection of forthcoming projects

Concomitant expertise for CULT reports:

INI report on *The situation of artists and the cultural recovery in the EU*:

- Policy Recommendations Briefing on *The situation of artists and the cultural recovery in the EU* (expected April 2021).

INI report on *Europe's Media in the Digital Decade: An Action Plan to Support Recovery and Transformation*:

- Background analysis on *Europe's Media in the Digital Decade: An Action Plan to Support Recovery and Transformation (news media sector)* (expected April 2021);
- Thematic briefing on *Europe's Media in the Digital Decade: An Action Plan to Support Recovery and Transformation (news media sector): Media Pluralism and Media Freedom* (expected May 2021);
- Policy Recommendations Briefing on *Europe's Media in the Digital Decade: An Action Plan to Support Recovery and Transformation (news media sector)* (expected May 2021).

INI report on *The European Education Area: a shared holistic approach to education, skills and competences*:

- Briefing on *Approaches of the Council and the Commission to the European Education Area: strategic priorities and quantitative objectives* (expected April 2021).

Other studies:

- *EU sports policy: assessment and possible ways forward* (expected May 2021);
- *Education and Youth in post-COVID-19 Europe – Crisis effects and policy recommendations* (expected May 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: 10 May 2021

Useful links

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">) CULT Committee website) Meeting documents) Calendar of meetings | <ul style="list-style-type: none">) Policy Department Publications in the EP) European Parliament - Think Thank) The Portuguese Presidency of the Council |
|---|---|

About the editor

European Parliament
 Directorate General for Internal Policies of the Union
 Secretariat of the Committee on Culture and Education

Subscription

To subscribe: [CULT Homepage](#)



Disclaimer: The items contained herein are drafted by the secretariat of the Committee on Culture and Education of the European Parliament and are provided for general information purposes only. The opinions expressed in this document are the sole responsibility of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official position of the European Parliament. This document may contain links to websites that are created and maintained by other organisations. The secretariat does not necessarily endorse the view(s) expressed on these websites.

© European Union.