

# **Discharge 2022: European Commission**

## **OPINION of the Committee on Culture and Education (CULT/9/12749)**

**Rapporteur: Romeo FRANZ (Greens)**

### **Final compromise proposals**

*(version 14 December 2023)*

#### **CA 1 on paragraph 1 and 1a (new)**

Covers: AM 1 Renew, AM 3 Rapp

Falls: AM 2 Slabakov

1. Welcomes the Commission's and the European Education and Culture Executive Agency's (EACEA) efforts to adapt Erasmus+, the European Solidarity Corps and Creative Europe to a changing reality, for instance by reviewing upwards individual support rates for grants to safeguard their inclusive character, extending application deadlines and project duration, and a voluntary refocusing of activities on Ukraine, *and expects more efforts to further reinforce inclusion measures and support to facilitate the participation of vulnerable groups (AM 1)*;

*1 a. Notes that, despite a challenging context created by long-lasting effects of the pandemic (AM 3), the impact of rising inflation and energy prices on beneficiaries and Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, the Erasmus+ programme could in 2022 fully resume its long-standing mission to support transnational learning mobility, with the number of mobilities supported comparable to pre-pandemic years (AM 3);*

#### **CA 2 on paragraph 2c (new) and 3 - Financing**

Covers: AM 4 part 2 Negrescu, AM 8 Negrescu, AM 12 Rapp, AM 31 Pollak

Falls: AM 10 Bocskor+, AM 13 Slabakov

*2c. Reaffirms the need for increasing further the budgetary envelopes of the EU's youth, cultural and educational programmes (AM 8), in particular to increase the outreach to and involvement of young people, artists and professionals with fewer opportunities (AM 31) and to support citizenship education (AM 4 part 2); in this respect, requests the Commission to continue cooperating closely with the Member States (AM 31);*

3. Reiterates its concern about the strongly backloaded budget profile of Erasmus+; welcomes the extra EUR 35 million awarded to Erasmus+ in 2022 due to the Parliament's insistence, *which is helping to reinforce support to pupils, students, teachers and qualified staff fleeing from Ukraine (AM 12)*;

#### **CA 3 on paragraph 3a (new) - administrative simplification**

Covers: AM 5 Renew, AM 16 Rapp, AM 22 Kammerevert

**3a.** *Notes with regret that the procedures to apply for EU funding under those programmes are often still too burdensome and create obstacles for potential beneficiaries (AM 5); urges the Commission to (EPP) simplify the application process for Erasmus+ applicants and make it less time-consuming in order to ensure that small and volunteer-based organisations can also successfully apply for funding (EPP)(AM 22); acknowledges that new measures, notably the extension of the accreditation scheme to the Erasmus+ programme's main sectors, have simplified access to funding for mobility activities (AM 16);*

#### **CA 4 on paragraph 4 and 4a - possible abuse**

Covers: AM 19 Kammerevert, AM 20 Rapp, AM 21 Renew  
Falls: AM 18

**4.** *Requests **OLAF (Rapp)** to carry out **a thorough investigation (AM 21)** on the possible misuse of EU funds through Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps by networks of associations that present false projects, **with the aim of verifying recent reports on this matter by some national agencies, measuring the scale and importance of such cases of fraud, and analysing (EPP) their treatment by competent authorities in the Member States (AM 20);***

**4a.** ***Calls on the Commission to make proposals to strengthen trust in the newly established accreditation mechanisms by ensuring that applicants continue to fully respect European values even after their accreditation (AM 19);***

#### **CA 5 on paragraph 4b (new) - Digitalisation**

Covers: AM 4 part 1, AM 14 Negrescu

**4b.** ***Recalls the need for EU funded measures to bridge the digital gap in education and lifelong learning; calls on the Commission to provide an assessment of the Member States' Recovery and Resilience plans related to this topic; asks the Commission to assess and actively support the recommendations made by the Parliament related to a minimum 10% allocation for education, 2% for the cultural sector and 20% for digital transformation within the RRF plans; regrets that the EU budget does not adequately support the ethical use of artificial intelligence and robotics in the education and cultural sectors (AM 4 part 1);***

#### **CA 6 on paragraph 5, 5a (new) and 5b (new) - Creative Europe**

Covers: AM 24 Renew, AM 25 Rapp, AM 26 Rapp, AM 27 Renew

**5.** ***Notes the continued frontloading of the Creative Europe budget in 2022 for mitigating the persisting impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the cultural and creative sectors; **notes that, thanks to this frontloading, a higher number of European cultural cooperation projects could be selected in 2022 than ever before (AM 25); is, however, concerned that the*****

*frontloading of 2021 and 2022 may lead to a shortage of funding from 2023 (Rapp) and deplores that the programme as a whole remains underfinanced in relation to the objectives to be achieved, notably given its high subscription rate (AM 24);*

*5 a. Welcomes the recent introduction of ‘cascade funding’ as a means to optimise Creative Europe’s reach, especially to small organisations; invites the Commission to further develop such schemes in all programmes of relevance to the sector (AM 27);*

*5 b. Welcomes the fact that almost all proposals submitted in the Media Strand are requested to provide a strategy to improve the industry’s greening measures; urges the Commission, building on these promising results and the recommendations of a 2022 study on greening Creative Europe, to push ahead more strongly (AM 26); calls on the Commission to assess the practical implementation of the greening policy in EU programmes such as Erasmus+ and Creative Europe with a view to improving its effectiveness, for instance with regard to the current policy on sustainable travel modalities (Rapp);*

#### **CA 7 on paragraph 8 - IT tools**

Covers: AM 32 Negrescu, AM 33 Negrescu

*8. Notes with concern the persisting challenges in 2022 with the e-Grant tools for beneficiaries of calls managed by the EACEA; strongly urges the Commission and EACEA to address these IT issues once and for all to avoid repercussions on target achievement, **to reduce the risk of errors and to simplify procedures (AM 32); believes that a more efficient and accessible IT infrastructure would also facilitate small beneficiaries’ access to programme resources (AM 33);***

*8 a. Stresses that Erasmus+, the European Solidarity Corps and Creative Europe should focus even more on implementing the inclusion priority, in order to better reach local authorities from small, rural or remote communities, SMEs and NGOs working with vulnerable groups (AM 33);*

#### **CA 8 on paragraph 9a (new) - Synergies and coordination**

Covers: AM 11 Renew, AM 38 Negrescu

*9 a. Emphasises the need for a stronger coordination between the different actors implementing education, youth and culture actions and the different programmes (AM 38), as well as for better communication on those synergies (AM 11);*

#### **CA 9 on paragraph 9b (new) - PPPAs**

Covers: AM 37 Kammerevert, AM 39 Renew

*9 a. Calls for a joint assessment of the current process of selecting pilot projects and preparatory actions, with a view to enhancing the effectiveness, efficiency and fairness of*

*the preassessment procedure for the purpose of maximising their full potential for advancing innovative policy ideas (AM 37, AM 39);*