



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2014 - 2019

Committee on Culture and Education

2014/2075(DEC)

26.1.2015

OPINION

of the Committee on Culture and Education

for the Committee on Budgetary Control

on discharge in respect of the implementation of the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2013, Section III – Commission and executive agencies
(2014/2075(DEC))

Rapporteur: Fernando Maura Barandiarán

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Culture and Education calls on the Committee on Budgetary Control, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Notes that in 2013, the key priority for the DG Education and Culture (DG EAC) and the Education, Audiovisual & Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) was to prepare for the implementation of Erasmus+ and Creative Europe, the new programmes for the period of 2014–2020;
2. Welcomes the fact that in 2013, the budget execution rate for the 2007–2013 programmes, in particular Lifelong Learning (LLP), Culture, Media and Youth in Action programmes was 100%; asks to strengthen and increase the budget in the framework of the 2014 – 2020 Education and Culture programmes; is particularly worried that at the end of the year, the mismatch between the adopted commitment and payment appropriations resulted in shortage of payments (amounting in the Erasmus+ programme, for example, to a shortfall of EUR 202 million) with grave negative repercussions on the following year; is strongly concerned and also regrets that a similar situation might develop in the context of the new programmes, especially Erasmus+ and Creative Europe, which would in turn determine a dangerous loss of credibility by the Union and would undermine the citizens' trust in the Union institutions and have disastrous consequences on participants to the programmes;
3. Supports a mid-term review of the 2014–2020 MFF as a means of putting an end to the untenable situation whereby programmes which already been approved, and which are therefore being implemented, are compromised by a lack of resources and non-payment of funding by the Union;
4. Welcomes the fact that since its launch in 1987, the Erasmus programme has reached and surpassed the 3 million students benchmark; notes the sustained success this Union flagship programme – one that has contributed to European integration and the rising awareness of and sense of belonging to a common European citizenship – has enjoyed since its inception;
5. Is concerned that at a European level – as reported in the Eurobarometer Special Report 399 on cultural access and participation from 2013 – public budgets dedicated to the safeguard and promotion of cultural heritage are noticeably decreasing, as is participation in traditional cultural activities; considers therefore that the new Union instruments to support the European Agenda for Culture – such as the Creative Europe and Horizon 2020 programmes, or the Europeana cultural platform – must be strengthened;
6. Notes with satisfaction that EACEA has further streamlined its selection processes and that it executed 96 % of its payments within the contractual time limits but regrets that the treatment itself of the end reports tends to be unduly extended; recalls that any delay in payments directly affect the beneficiaries' rights thus jeopardising cultural associations and projects, creativity and the cultural civil society's diversity; encourages the EACEA to further improve its control systems but not at the expense of the beneficiaries;

7. Recalls that in 2013, DG Communication organised several activities in the context of the European Year of Citizens 2013; notes that at the same time, there was an urgent need to prepare for 2014 budget cuts in the field of European Citizenship; highlights that Europe for Citizens programme serves as a unique and direct link between the Union and its citizens in order to support actions, petitions and civil rights; considers the present funding level far too low and emphasises that the programme be implemented within its content, becoming richer of initiatives empowering the values of European Citizenship; strongly opposes to any budget cuts or any payment delay for the Europe for Citizens programme 2014–2020;
8. Welcomes the positive progress in strengthening of the cultural dimension in the European Neighbourhood Policy in 2013, including the Eastern Partnership and the Union for the Mediterranean; emphasises the importance of the Tbilisi Declaration, the document of the very first Eastern Partnership Ministerial Conference on Culture, which calls for a shared commitment to support culture as a driver for growth and stability in the region; encourages the further implementation of the Eastern Partnership Culture Programme and further promotion of the dialogue on cultural policies within the programme "Media and Culture for the Development in the Southern Mediterranean".

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

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| Date adopted | 20.1.2015 |
| Result of final vote | +: 22 -: 3 0: 0 |
| Members present for the final vote | Andrea Bocskor, Silvia Costa, Mircea Diaconu, Damian Dr ghici, Angel Dzhambazki, Petra Kammerevert, Andrew Lewer, Curzio Maltese, Fernando Maura Barandiarán, Luigi Morgano, Momchil Nekov, Helga Trüpel, Sabine Verheyen, Julie Ward, Bogdan Brunon Wenta, Bogdan Andrzej Zdrojewski, Milan Zver, Krystyna Łybacka |
| Substitutes present for the final vote | Therese Comodini Cachia, Marc Joulaud, Ilhan Kyuchyuk, Emma McClarkin, Liadh Ní Riada, Michel Reimon, Monika Smolková |