MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Commission
pursuant to Rule 132(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the cultural recovery of Europe
(2020/2708(RSP))

Alexis Georgoulis, Niyazi Kizilyürek
on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group
The European Parliament,

– having regard to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, in particular Article 22 thereof,

– having regard to the Commission communication of 22 May 2018 entitled ‘A New European Agenda for Culture’ (COM(2018)0267),

– having regard to its resolution of 19 June 2020 on transport and tourism in 2020 and beyond¹,


– having regard to Rule 132(2) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas culture and the cultural and creative sectors (CCSs) are an important vehicle in the fight against all forms of discrimination, including racism and xenophobia, and are a platform for freedom of expression; whereas European cultural and creative actors preserve and promote cultural and linguistic diversity in Europe, and participate in the strengthening of all aspects of solidarity and integration; whereas these actors represent an invaluable force for sustainable economic and social growth in Europe and for its peoples;

B. whereas the European CCSs account for around 4 % of the European gross domestic product (GDP) and over 7.4 million jobs in Europe, equating to 3.7 % of all employment across the EU-27; whereas the CCSs are closely interconnected and have been proven to benefit other sectors, such as tourism and transport; whereas according to the World Tourism Organization, four out of ten tourists choose their destination based on its cultural offering;

C. whereas the European CCSs have been among the most severely affected by the global COVID-19 pandemic; whereas they were already struggling before the pandemic and have been overlooked in the recovery instruments; whereas according to the Commission’s own estimates, the CCSs – which account for EUR 509 billion in value added to GDP – are likely to have lost 80 % of their turnover in the second quarter of 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 crisis and the containment measures;

D. whereas the COVID-19 outbreak and the measures necessary to halt the spread of the

¹ Texts adopted, P9_TA(2020)0169.
pandemic have severely affected the CCSs owing to the closure of cultural venues, namely cinemas, theatres, concert halls, galleries, cultural institutions, festivals, museums and music venues, thereby exacerbating the detrimental trends and economic challenges for the CCSs; whereas every effort should be made in order to safeguard and further promote the survival and development of the CCSs;

E. whereas the industries in the CCSs are an atypical sector, dominated by precarious working conditions with specific needs, atypical work, freelancing, with minimal or non-existent social security protections for artists and performers; whereas these industries vary in size and are made up of players, but are above all characterised by the preponderance of small structures (SMEs or self-employed artists and performers) and irregular incomes; whereas the number of cultural professionals and artists is growing steadily and consists largely of young people; whereas their working conditions are precarious with short-term contracts, part-time jobs and seasonal employment, and with people with university degrees holding down two or more jobs in parallel;

F. whereas the sector has shown unprecedented solidarity during the pandemic, often releasing cultural content free of charge through digital channels and contributing to the well-being of the population under lockdown;

G. whereas the availability of cultural content online did not translate into an increase in the income of rights holders and performers; whereas the digitalisation of the sector, which was accelerated by COVID-19, further cemented the dominant position of online operators and was not accompanied by the requisite transparency of licensing agreements;

H. whereas the Commission’s Recovery Plan does not offer any guarantees that the CCSs can access the emergency funding; whereas although Commissioner Gabriel’s proposal for Member States to earmark 1 % of the recovery budget for culture is a welcome step, it does not provide any legally binding guarantees for the CCSs;

I. whereas the Commission’s revised multiannual financial framework (MFF) proposal contains a 20 % cut to the European Solidarity Corps, a 13 % cut to Creative Europe and a 7 % cut to Erasmus+, compared to the Commission’s MFF proposal of 2018; whereas the European Council position of 17 July 2020 only matches the Commission’s 2018 proposal; whereas Creative Europe is the only EU programme that provides direct support to the CCSs across Europe; whereas neither the initiatives that Creative Europe is supposed to cover nor its budget provide the support required by an already oversubscribed and underfunded programme;

J. whereas the current budget proposals for the Creative Europe programme under the next MFF clearly do not live up to the expectations either of the sector or of Parliament, which has repeatedly called for a doubling of the funds compared to the 2014-2020 MFF;

K. whereas the COVID-19 pandemic will put significant long-term economic strain on the CCSs, hampering both cultural creation and diversity in the years to come;

L. whereas the CCSs will need to remain properly funded in order to facilitate the transition towards the goals enshrined in the Green Deal; whereas the transition should
not be carried out in a manner that could harm creativity; whereas the Green Deal does not provide support to cultural initiatives or other activities related to the CCS;

1. Expresses its solidarity with the artists, creators, authors, performers, publishers, their companies and other workers in the European CCSs, who have been severely affected by the global COVID-19 pandemic, and pays tribute to their work during these difficult times;

2. Calls for the EU and the Member States to support the CCSs, as they play an important role in both economic and social life and have been severely affected by the current crisis; calls on the Member States to ensure the health and safety of all cultural workers and artists in their working environment and to take the precarious working conditions in the CCSs into full account;

3. Calls on the Member States to preserve and promote collective bargaining structures for contracts, collective representation, social security and health insurance in compliance with European legislation;

4. Calls on the Commission and Member States to take action to mitigate the ever-worsening impact of the crisis on the CCSs arising from the cancellation of major festivals and cultural events, with a disastrous impact, particularly on the performing arts sector; considers it imperative to include robust support for the CCSs among the recovery interventions, including the planned economic measures;

5. Reiterates its call for the budget for Creative Europe (EUR 2.8 billion) to be doubled, as it is the core programme for reinforcing European cultural cooperation;

6. Recognises that the CCSs are characterised by a high proportion of self-employed professionals and freelancers; urges the Member States to implement measures that promote job security and fair wages in the CCSs, while ensuring a geographical balance and facilitating access to EU funds for this category of workers;

7. Strongly supports the unconditional inclusion of the CCSs in the Recovery Plan and calls for the earmarking of at least 7% of the Recovery Fund for culture, with a clear budgetary pre-allocation in the relevant programmes; urges the Member States to ensure that the Recovery Fund extends to the CCSs in their national action plans;

8. Calls on the Member States, immediately and in addition to providing grants, to integrate a replacement for the lost wages and fees of cultural producers in excess of a basic social income, calculated according to the taxed income from the year before COVID-19, into national aid funds, thereby establishing aid schemes for the self-employed comparable to the support arrangements for dependent employees and enterprises;

9. Underlines that during the lockdown many cultural heritage sites were left without supervision and without proper maintenance, suffering damage as a result, and that these sites were already vulnerable to environmental degradation, natural disasters and climate change, as well as to being illegally excavated or their artefacts being illicitly trafficked; stresses the need to protect employment in the cultural heritage sector, to support restoration professionals and heritage experts, and equip them with the
necessary means to protect European heritage sites;

10. Urges the Member States to consider the CCSs as strategic sectors of the economy, and to allocate fixed budgets associated with swift and concrete actions dedicated to the recovery and growth of the sector, which should be of benefit to all of its stakeholders; urges the Commission and the Member States to make cultural actions eligible for funding under the financial instruments supporting entrepreneurship and innovation;

11. Notes that the majority of support measures designed so far have been loan-based, an option that is not sustainable for all stakeholders in the cultural ecosystems; calls for sizeable and primarily grant-based support for CCSs in order to ensure the livelihoods of local communities; considers that the CCSs are among the most dynamic sectors of the economy, that they should substantially promote gender equality and could act as a strong catalyst for sustainable development and just transition;

12. Calls on the Commission to support artists’ exchange of practices and techniques, and to significantly promote their integration into the labour market; strongly supports the concomitant mutual recognition of artistic competences;

13. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.