



2022/2188(INI)

7.9.2023

OPINION

of the Committee on Culture and Education

for the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on International Trade

on the implementation report on the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (2022/2188(INI))

Rapporteur for opinion (*): Laurence Farreng

(*) Associated committee – Rule 57 of the Rules of Procedure

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Culture and Education calls on the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on International Trade, as the committees responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into their motion for a resolution:

- A. whereas the cultural and creative sectors are not included in the Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA);
- B. whereas the TCA mentions the term ‘education’ only in relation to cybersecurity and the need to educate citizens on related challenges;
- C. whereas freedom of movement is a core European value and one of the fundamental freedoms enshrined in the European Treaties; whereas freedom of movement between the UK and the EU is no longer available to citizens of the UK and the EU since Brexit; whereas EU citizens can stay in the UK without a visa for up to six months a year and UK citizens can stay in the EU for up to 90 days within a 180-day period;
- D. whereas the UK unilaterally decided not to be a part of the Erasmus+ 2021-2027 programme, covering the education, youth and sport sectors; whereas UK institutions can still be associated with Erasmus Mundus and the Jean Monnet activities;
- E. whereas Erasmus+ is not just a mobility programme, but a powerful tool for exchanging knowledge, fostering academic cooperation, supporting individual development, creating strong and lasting links and promoting understanding between people from different cultural backgrounds, institutions and their members, as well as a wide range of stakeholders and their organisations and networks, contributing to the development of policies and practices;
- F. whereas the UK chose not to associate to the Horizon Europe programme 2021-2027, which covers research and innovation; whereas the TCA leaves open the possibility of the UK’s participating in Horizon Europe;
- G. whereas the UK was one of the most popular destinations for Erasmus+ participants up until the Brexit referendum;
- H. whereas non-EU countries can join Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps as associated countries;
- I. whereas, as a consequence of Brexit, EU citizens studying in the UK are no longer entitled to ‘home fees’, but have to pay higher international student fees, making it prohibitively expensive for the vast majority of them, especially penalising young students from socially disadvantaged backgrounds;
- J. whereas youth and school exchanges have been severely affected by Brexit; whereas research conducted by organisations representing the travel industry has found that the number of students sent to the UK by European operators that organise school trips and

other educational, cultural or sport-related group travel was 83 % lower in 2022 than in 2019, the last pre-COVID-19 pandemic year before the TCA came into force¹;

- K. whereas the UK decided not to be a part of the European Solidarity Corps (ESC) programme 2021-2027, covering volunteering and youth engagement;
- L. whereas the UK chose not to be a part of the Creative Europe programme 2021-2027, covering the cultural and creative sectors;
- M. whereas almost one out of two Creative Europe projects had at least one British partner in the 2014-2020 programming period²;
- N. whereas freedom of movement has benefited all segments of the cultural and creative sectors, including the audiovisual sector, festivals, touring companies, bands, orchestras and dance and theatre companies, both from the EU and the UK;
- O. whereas the UK remains a party to the European Convention on Transfrontier Television, and audiovisual works originating in the UK are considered ‘European works’ for the purposes of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive³ (AVMSD) in accordance with Article 1(1), point (n) and paragraph 3; whereas the UK implemented the AVMSD during the transition period as this legislation fell within the scope of retained EU law;
- P. whereas the TCA applies a cultural exception, excluding audiovisual services from its scope;
- Q. whereas the Windsor agreement is a significant step towards easing relations between the UK and the EU and has created a context in which opportunities for further cooperation may be explored;
- R. whereas the UK and the EU share many of the same values in the fields of culture and education, notably freedom of academia and freedom of the arts;
- S. whereas the war in Ukraine has shown that the UK remains strongly connected to the EU, with clear historical, geographical and cultural ties;

General remarks

1. Deeply regrets the unilateral, political decision of the UK Government not to participate in the Erasmus+, Creative Europe and European Solidarity Corps programmes, despite the openness shown by the EU negotiating team; is convinced that this decision leads to a lose-lose outcome, depriving people and organisations in the EU and in the UK of life-

¹ House of Lords – European Affairs Committee, [The future UK-EU relationship – Fourth Report of Session 2022-23](#), 29 April 2023.

² House of Commons – Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee, [The potential impact of Brexit on the creative industries, tourism and the digital single market – Second Report of Session 2017-19](#), 25 January 2018.

³ [Directive 2010/13/EU of 10 March 2010 on the coordination of certain provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action in Member States concerning the provision of audiovisual media services \(Audiovisual Media Services Directive\)](#) (OJ L 95, 15.4.2010, p. 1).

changing opportunities through exchange and cooperation projects;

2. Notes that numerous education, culture and youth stakeholders, both in the EU and the UK, are calling for the UK to be associated with Erasmus+, Creative Europe, the European Solidarity Corps and Horizon Europe once more; calls for the issue to be addressed in different political contexts and for practical, intermediary solutions to be explored to mitigate the loss of opportunities; underlines that, should the UK wish to re-associate with EU programmes, its financial contribution should be fair and ensure the inclusiveness and diversity of participants in the programmes;
3. Acknowledges the excessive bureaucracy created by the withdrawal of the UK from the EU; notes with concern the uncertainties and difficulties created for students, teachers, artists and cultural professionals willing to learn, teach, perform and work in the UK, in particular the lack of available information on administrative requirements, and the unprecedented administrative burden on the UK's and Member States' consulates and administrations;
4. Notes with satisfaction that numerous EU and UK education, youth and cultural institutions and organisations continue their relations on a bilateral basis despite the lack of funding and increased administrative burden and obstacles; is concerned that not all organisations may be able to afford the additional human resources required to maintain or pursue those connections;

Education

5. Underlines the significant benefits of the Erasmus+ programme not only for higher education students, vocational education and training (VET) students, adult learners and young people, but also for teachers, academics, researchers, administrative staff and generally for educational institutions and society as a whole, which cannot be measured by the size of its financial envelope;
6. Regrets the narrowness of the 'value for money' approach adopted by the UK Government regarding Erasmus+, which disregards the numerous benefits in terms of exchange of knowledge and transferrable skills for students, teachers and administrative staff, the contribution of the programme to diversity on campuses and in educational institutions, increased mutual understanding, a reduction in prejudice and discrimination, exposure of UK learners and teachers to their fellow Europeans, and its contribution to broadening participants' perspectives and opportunities, as well as to improving their employability;
7. Welcomes the remarks made by Minister for Europe Leo Docherty acknowledging that participation in Erasmus+ had been 'very beneficial' for the UK⁴;
8. Notes that at the time of the EU referendum in 2016, as many as 5 % of students in the UK were EU citizens from the other 27 Member States⁵, making them an important part

⁴ House of Lords – European Affairs Committee, [Corrected oral evidence: The future UK-EU relationship](#), 7 March 2023.

⁵ Corbett, A. and Hantrais, L., *Higher education and research in the Brexit policy process*, 2023.

of the total body of foreign students in the UK;

9. Notes that some Erasmus+ projects from the 2014-2020 programming period, in which UK organisations were participating, were still ongoing in May 2023, making it difficult to properly assess the full impact of the UK's withdrawal from the Erasmus+ programme;
10. Notes the creation of the Turing scheme by the UK Government; regrets, however, that this programme only covers outgoing student mobility, and does not cover the youth and sport sectors⁶; notes that the Turing scheme, which applies the UK Government's 'value for money' approach, cannot therefore be seen as an equivalent replacement for Erasmus+; underlines the importance of staff mobility currently not covered by the Turing scheme;
11. Acknowledges that concerns expressed by UK stakeholders about the operation of the Turing scheme in comparison to Erasmus+ include the absence of provisions to support staff mobility, limited funding for non-university exchanges and the need to resubmit funding bids on an annual basis⁷;
12. Welcomes the new possibility for Erasmus+ mobility grant beneficiaries to dedicate 20 % of the grant funding to outgoing international mobility outside the 33 Erasmus+ programme countries; notes, however, that this share cannot be dedicated entirely to one specific partner country, and manifestly does not replace the missed opportunities resulting from the UK's withdrawal from the Erasmus+ programme;
13. Welcomes the creation of the Taith programme by the Welsh Government, covering both incoming and outgoing mobility; notes that this programme, like the Turing scheme, does not cover the sport sector, but it does support mobility actions for sports teams;
14. Welcomes the work currently being undertaken by the Scottish Government to create a similar programme, covering both incoming and outgoing mobility; invites the Scottish Government to consider covering, through its programme, the same areas of education and training, youth and sport as Erasmus+;
15. Welcomes the decision of the Irish Government to fund Erasmus+ mobility for students from universities in Northern Ireland, irrespective of their nationality, by enrolling them in Irish universities for the duration of their exchange; takes note of the work currently being undertaken by the Irish Government to develop a similar scheme for VET students;
16. Is concerned by the significant drop in the number of EU students studying at UK universities, which fell by as much as 50 % in the case of first year students between 2020-2021 and 2021-2022, in contrast to student numbers from other regions⁸; underlines that this situation is clearly linked to the UK's withdrawal from the

⁶ UK Government, [Turing scheme website](#).

⁷ House of Lords – European Affairs Committee, [The future UK-EU relationship – Fourth Report of Session 2022-23](#), 29 April 2023.

⁸ Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), [Chart 6 – First year non-UK domiciled students by domicile 2006/07 to 2021/22](#), 2023.

Erasmus+ programme, the end of equal treatment rules for tuition fees and scholarships for EU students and the difficulty of obtaining a student visa; notes that European students contributed to diversity across a broad range of subjects, whereas non-EU international students tend to be more concentrated in particular subject areas such as engineering and business; notes that UK universities welcome an increasing number of foreign students, notably from India and China^{9, 10}, which contribute to their financial stability;

17. Notes that many UK universities can be considered among the best in the world¹¹; notes that the end of cooperation projects between these universities and EU universities is detrimental to research and academic excellence in Europe;
18. Notes that 11 UK universities are partners in alliances through the European Universities initiative; regrets that their participation will end when the first-generation alliances expire (at the end of 2024); notes that UK universities are allowed to be part of European Universities alliances, but can no longer be included in the governance structure, which de facto relegates them to the status of second-class partner; encourages their continued partnership through the European Universities initiative;
19. Notes that the numerous partnerships that UK universities had with their EU counterparts through the Erasmus+ programme have to be re-negotiated bilaterally one by one, posing the risk that some smaller universities will be excluded;
20. Expresses concern regarding the negative effects the ongoing situation has on issues related to European sovereignty, as all European countries, whether they belong to the EU bloc or not, must be able to compete, particularly with China and the US, in strategic areas such as industrial innovation, digitalisation, clean energy solutions and space capabilities; reiterates that research cooperation between universities in Europe, especially in the fields of science and innovation, is instrumental in this regard;
21. Notes that the TCA allows the UK to opt to participate in the Horizon Europe programme; recalls that education and research are both integral parts of academic cooperation and that synergies between Horizon Europe and Erasmus+ are a key dimension of the 2021-2027 programme generation; encourages the Erasmus+ and Horizon Europe programmes being considered a package;
22. Highlights that all interested neighbouring and like-minded countries, including the UK, are welcome to seek association with the Erasmus+ programme and thus contribute to European education systems; regrets that the UK is not participating in the initiatives and measures designed to establish a genuine European Education Area by 2025, further denting cooperation;
23. Recalls that Directive 2005/36/EC¹² on the recognition of professional qualifications no longer applies to the UK and regrets that the TCA does not contain provisions to enable

⁹ HESA, *Where do HE students come from?*, 2023.

¹⁰ [Report of the Intelligence and Security Committee of the UK Parliament on China.](#)

¹¹ The Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2023.

¹² [Directive 2005/36/EC of 7 September 2005 on the recognition of professional qualifications](#) (OJ L 255, 30.9.2005, p. 22).

the mutual recognition of professional qualifications; urges the UK and the Commission to continue their dialogue with a view to establishing an effective framework for the mutual recognition of professional qualifications; reiterates that the mutual recognition of professional qualifications is beneficial to both the UK and the EU;

24. Underlines that the UK continues to participate in the European Higher Education Area ('Bologna process'); urges the UK, the Commission and the Member States to continue their work towards full mutual recognition of academic qualifications;

Culture

25. Recalls the importance of the cultural sectors and industries in the UK, which contributed GBP 109 billion to the UK economy in 2021 (i.e. as much as 5.6 % of the UK economy), with one in 11 jobs being in the creative economy¹³; notes that the cultural sectors and industries are considered a central element of the UK's 'soft power' and wider global influence¹⁴; underlines the inherent value of culture, which promotes the enrichment of societies and brings people closer together;
26. Underlines that 96 % of British artists were against the UK's withdrawal from the EU¹⁵;
27. Deeply regrets the absence of any provisions linked to culture and the cultural and creative sectors in the TCA, making it de facto a 'No Deal Brexit' for both EU and UK artists and the whole cultural sector;
28. Notes that the Creative Europe programme was not replaced by any other programme dedicated to culture to support artists in the UK;
29. Encourages strengthening cooperation between EU and UK artists and other professionals in the cultural and creative sectors and industries, as well as safeguarding their labour rights; notes that numerous UK cultural organisations have continued to be connected after Brexit through their partnerships with European cultural networks, professional associations and trade federations; expresses concern that in the medium term the sustainability of these relationships is at great risk and that the adverse effects of the UK's exit from the Creative Europe programme will increase;
30. Is concerned by the excessive bureaucracy created by the UK's withdrawal from the EU for UK artists wanting to tour in the EU and European artists wanting to tour in the UK, as illustrated by the administrative obstacles that have resulted from the application of the CITES Regulations for artists travelling with musical instruments containing elements of protected species; calls for creating dedicated mechanisms to facilitate artists' mobility and to reduce their bureaucratic burden;
31. Notes that the plethora of migration rules, including different visa and work-permit systems in each of the EU Member States, as well as customs and VAT rules for merchandising, rules on cabotage and cross-border trade for specialist hauliers

¹³ Creative Industries Federation, [*Brexit Report: The impact of leaving the EU on the UK's arts, creative industries and cultural education – and what should be done*](#), 2016.

¹⁴ House of Commons - Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee, [*The potential impact of Brexit on the creative industries, tourism and the digital single market – Second Report of Session 2017-19*](#), 25 January 2018.

¹⁵ Creative Industries Federation, op. cit.

transporting merchandising and stage decor between the UK and the EU, are making it difficult and expensive for emerging and independent UK artists to tour in the EU or participate in European festivals; notes that EU artists are also affected by similar issues when touring in the UK;³². Stresses that streamlining visa and work arrangements is in the interest of the cultural and creative sectors in both the EU and the UK and urges both parties to work towards an agreement; believes that these visa and work arrangements should be part of a future EU framework for artists and cultural professionals;

33. Notes the concern expressed by some British stakeholders from the cultural sector on the future regulatory environment for cultural and media services in the UK and the dismantling of the Union *acquis* in this policy area;
34. Regrets that the number of EU citizens working in the cultural and creative sectors and industries in the UK has dropped since Brexit¹⁶;

Youth

35. Regrets the absence of any provisions relating to youth, youth exchanges and projects, youth dialogue and volunteering in the TCA;
36. Stresses the importance of international youth projects and volunteering, which enable young people to broaden their horizons, while creating an appetite for discovering other cultures that has lifelong benefits;
37. Is concerned that almost none of the youth projects previously funded by Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps involving school-age children are now being funded through the UK Government's Turing scheme;
38. Notes with regret the absence of organisations specifically representing young people among the UK civil society organisations selected to participate in the TCA Civil Society Forum;
39. Notes that school trips and youth mobility are hindered by the new migration rules and the need for schools to pay for a visa for every student; asks the UK Government and the Member States, therefore, to create a youth group travel scheme for young people under 18;
40. Notes that the 'au pair' industry has been severely affected by Brexit and the UK's new immigration's rules^{17, 18}; regrets that au pairs from the EU cannot benefit from the Youth Mobility Scheme visa as au pairs from selected countries outside the EU can¹⁹; underlines the loss this represents in terms of skills and cultural and linguistic exchanges for young European and UK children;

¹⁶ The Compendium of Cultural Policies, UK Office for National Statistics.

¹⁷ <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-06-02/uk-government-killed-au-pair-industry-leaving-british-parents-desperate>.

¹⁸ UK Government website 'Employing someone to work in your home', <https://www.gov.uk/au-pairs-employment-law/au-pairs>.

¹⁹ UK Government website 'Youth Mobility Scheme visa', <https://www.gov.uk/youth-mobility/eligibility>.

41. Highlights that all interested neighbouring and like-minded countries, including the UK, are welcome to seek association with the European Solidarity Corps programme, which fosters volunteering opportunities and collaboration between young people across Europe;

Sport

42. Regrets the absence of any provisions linked to capacity-building of grassroots and professional organisations, partnerships and exchanges in the fields of sports and esports in the TCA, which negatively affects the sport sector in both the EU and the UK;
43. Notes that the UK sport sector no longer relies on the Court of Justice ruling in the Bosman case of 15 December 1995²⁰, which allowed for the free movement of players and athletes within the EU; notes with concern that this situation adversely affects the participation of EU athletes in UK teams or professional competitions by potentially limiting their number; is worried that it could be detrimental to the functioning of the transfer system and to EU players and EU clubs which rely on the funds deriving from transfer deals;
44. Highlights that since Brexit EU players and athletes need a work permit to play in the UK, as was previously the case only for non-EU players, hindering their ability to compete on the other side of the Channel; underlines the importance of better cooperation between the EU and the UK in this regard;
45. Notes that UK athletes are now subject to Schengen rules, which can lead to difficulties in the case of competitions taking place in various European countries in a short period of time;
46. Notes that the Turing programme replacing the Erasmus+ programme does not have a part dedicated to sport, creating a gap with regard to sport cooperation projects; is worried that this will be detrimental to grassroots sports.

²⁰ Judgment of the Court of Justice of 15 December 1995 in Case C-415/93, *Union royale belge des sociétés de football association and Others v Bosman and Others*, ECLI:EU:C:1995:463.

INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

Rule 58 – Joint committee procedure Date announced in plenary	15.12.2022
Date adopted	7.9.2023
Result of final vote	+: 28 –: 2 0: 1
Members present for the final vote	Asim Ademov, Christine Anderson, Andrea Bocskor, Ilana Cicurel, Laurence Farreng, Tomasz Frankowski, Catherine Griset, Sylvie Guillaume, Hannes Heide, Irena Joveva, Niyazi Kizilyürek, Predrag Fred Matić, Martina Michels, Niklas Nienass, Diana Riba i Giner, Monica Semedo, Michaela Šojdrová, Sabine Verheyen, Maria Walsh, Milan Zver
Substitutes present for the final vote	Isabella Adinolfi, Ibán García Del Blanco, Chiara Gemma, Marcel Kolaja, Alessandro Panza
Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote	Clara Aguilera, Vilija Blinkevičiūtė, Delara Burkhardt, Margarita de la Pisa Carrión, Angel Dzhambazki, Niclas Herbst

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

28	+
ECR	Angel Dzhambazki, Chiara Gemma, Margarita de la Pisa Carrión
NI	Andrea Bocskor
PPE	Asim Ademov, Isabella Adinolfi, Tomasz Frankowski, Niclas Herbst, Michaela Šojdrová, Sabine Verheyen, Maria Walsh, Milan Zver
Renew	Ilana Cicurel, Laurence Farreng, Irena Joveva, Monica Semedo
S&D	Clara Aguilera, Vilija Blinkevičiūtė, Delara Burkhardt, Ibán García Del Blanco, Sylvie Guillaume, Hannes Heide, Predrag Fred Matić
The Left	Niyazi Kizilyürek, Martina Michels
Verts/ALE	Marcel Kolaja, Niklas Nienass, Diana Riba i Giner

2	-
ID	Christine Anderson, Catherine Griset

1	0
ID	Alessandro Panza

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention