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DRAFT 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))

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(*) 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 mentioned 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, creating strong and lasting links and promoting understanding between people and institutions;
- 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+ as member or associated countries;
- I. whereas, as a consequence of Brexit, EU citizens studying in the UK can no longer benefit from ‘home fees’, but have to pay higher international student fees, making it prohibitively expensive for the vast majority of them;
- 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)

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

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 the freedom of movement has benefited all segments of the cultural and creative sectors, including the audiovisual sector, festivals, touring companies, bands, orchestras, 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 in accordance with Article 1(1), point (n) and paragraph 3;
- 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-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, European Solidarity Corps and Horizon Europe once more;
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

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).

particular the lack of available information on administrative requirements, and the unprecedented administrative burden on the UK's and Member States' consulates and administrations;

Education

4. Underlines the enormous benefits of the Erasmus+ programme not only for students, but also for teachers, vocational education and training (VET) students, adult learners, young people, administrative staff and society as a whole, which cannot be measured by the size of its financial envelope;
5. 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 skills for students, teachers and administrative staff, the contribution to diversity on campuses and in schools, and its contribution to broadening its participants' outlooks and opportunities;
6. Welcomes the remarks made by Minister for Europe Leo Docherty acknowledging that participation in Erasmus+ had been 'very beneficial' for the UK⁴;
7. 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 of the total body of foreign students in the UK;
8. 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;
9. 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;
10. 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;
11. Welcomes the new possibility to dedicate 20 % of the Heading 2 budget of the Erasmus+ 2021-2027 programme to outgoing international mobility outside the 33 countries participating fully in Erasmus+; notes, however, that this part cannot be dedicated entirely to one specific country, and does not replace the missed opportunities resulting from the UK's withdrawal from the Erasmus+ programme;

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.

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.

12. 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;
13. Welcomes the work currently being undertaken by the Scottish Government to create a similar programme, covering both incoming and outgoing mobility;
14. 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;
15. 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 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 China and India⁹, which contribute to their financial stability;
16. Notes that eight UK universities belong to the world's top 100 Universities according to the Shanghai ranking¹⁰; notes that the end of cooperation projects between these universities and EU universities is detrimental to research and academic excellence in Europe;
17. Notes that 11 UK Universities are partners in alliances through the European Universities initiative; regrets that these cooperation projects will end when the first-generation alliances expire (at the end of 2024);
18. 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;
19. Is concerned about the negative effects of this situation 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; notes that research cooperation between universities in Europe is instrumental in this regard;
20. Notes that the TCA allows the UK to opt to participate in the Horizon Europe

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

⁹ HESA, [Where do HE students come from?](#), 2023.

¹⁰ Shanghai Jiao Tong University, [Academic Ranking of World Universities](#), 2022.

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;

21. 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;
22. Recalls that Directive 2005/36/EC¹¹ on the recognition of professional qualifications no longer applies to the UK and regrets that the TCA does not contain provisions to enable 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;
23. 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

24. Recalls the importance of the cultural 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 economy¹²; notes that the cultural industries are considered a central element of the UK's 'soft power' and wider global influence¹³;
25. Underlines that 96 % of British artists were against the UK's withdrawal from the EU¹⁴;
26. 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;
27. Notes that the Creative Europe programme was not replaced by any other programme dedicated to culture to support artists in the UK;
28. 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 created by the application of the CITES Regulations for artists travelling with certain types of musical instruments;

¹¹ [Directive 2005/36/EC of 7 September 2005 on the recognition of professional qualifications](#) (OJ L 255, 30.9.2005, p. 22).

¹² 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.

¹³ 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.

¹⁴ Creative Industries Federation, op. cit.

29. Notes that the plethora of migration rules, including different visa and work-permit systems in each of the EU Member States, as well as VAT rules for merchandising, rules on cabotage and cross-border trade for specialist hauliers 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;
30. Stresses that streamlining visa 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 arrangements should be part of a future EU framework for artists and cultural professionals;
31. 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;

Youth

32. Regrets the absence of any provisions relating to youth, youth exchanges and projects in the TCA;
33. Stresses the importance of international youth projects, which enable young people to broaden their horizons, while creating an appetite for discovering other cultures that has lifelong benefits;
34. Is concerned that almost none of the youth projects previously funded by Erasmus+ involving school-age children are now being funded through the UK Government's Turing scheme;¹⁵
35. Notes that school trips are hindered by the new migration rules, the need for schools to pay for a visa for every student; therefore, asks the UK Government and the Member States to create a youth group travel scheme for young people under 18;

Sport

36. 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;
37. Notes that the UK sport sector no longer relies on the Court of Justice ruling in the Bosman case of 15 December 1995¹⁶, 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

¹⁵ House of Lords - European Affairs Committee, [The future UK-EU relationship - Fourth Report of Session 2022–23](#), 29 April 2023.

¹⁶ Judgment of the Court of 15 December 1995, C-415/93 - *Union royale belge des sociétés de football association and Others v Bosman and Others*, ECLI:EU:C:1995:463.

transfer deals;

38. 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;
39. 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;
40. 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.