New European agenda for culture

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The European Parliament adopted by 484 votes to 111, with 41 abstentions, a resolution on the new European agenda for culture.

Europe’s creative and cultural sectors are the EU’s strongest assets, they represent 4.2 % of the EU’s GDP, create 8.4 million jobs, equal to 3.7 % of total employment in the EU, and are economically resilient, even in times of crisis.

Members welcomed the new agenda for culture, stressing that it represents an opportunity to adopt a comprehensive and coherent policy for culture at European level. They highlighted the role of culture and the cultural and creative sectors (CCSs) as a driving force in pursuing the objectives of cohesion policy and social inclusion across the Union, and called for this to be taken into account in the assignment of structural and cohesion funding.

Members called on the Commission to:

- set up a single **EU portal** dedicated to cultural heritage, bringing together information from all the EU programmes funding cultural heritage;
- develop new approaches to **systematic data collection** for all cultural and creative sectors and to ensure that effective statistical codes and more qualitative indicators are used;
- introduce **EU scoreboards** to measure cultural and media pluralism, to develop indicators and to monitor freedom of artistic expression at European level;
- reinforce the visibility of **European cinema** in Europe and on a global scale, through promoting the development of European platforms providing access to licensed EU films.

Concerning the priorities of the new agenda, Members welcomed the choice to structure them around three dimensions: social, economic and external, as well as the inclusion of a sector specific approach.

Cultural and artistic dimension: recognising the intrinsic value of free cultural, artistic and creative expression, Parliament called on the Commission to ensure that European festivals are supported, to consider designating a European cultural personality of the year and to encourage cultural diversity, the integration of migrants and the quality of citizenship.

Social aspects: Parliament welcomed the Commission’s intention to introduce a dedicated action on **mobility** within Creative Europe, but underlined that this requires an appropriate budget and simplified administrative procedures in order to avoid obstacles, such as those linked to visas, in particular those from third countries. It also called on the Commission to put in place a single portal containing information on all available residency programmes and mobility opportunities.

The resolution called for a guarantee of the right of creative and artistic workers to fair remuneration, contractual agreements and working conditions. It pointed to the project-based, precarious and atypical employment of cultural workers in Europe and called on the Member States, therefore, to adopt comprehensive measures in order to reduce the grey area through harmonisation and improve the contractual conditions of artists and creators across the EU and on a European scale, with respect to collective representation, social security and direct and indirect taxation.

Economic aspects: Parliament regretted that, despite the EU added value of cultural investment, Creative Europe merely represents 0.15 % of the overall EU budget, of which only 31 % is earmarked for culture.

It called for the budget to be **doubled** for the new Creative Europe programme and for it to be made more accessible for smaller organisations. It stressed that the Commission and the Member States should contribute to the development of **cultural organisations** by providing stable, reliable and sustained financial support.

While welcoming the Commission's intention to present an action plan for cultural heritage, Members recalled that new initiatives should be financed by a **new budget** from new sources and not via a reallocation of existing funds.

Members also underlined the importance of facilitating and streamlining access to **Creative Europe for small cultural operators and SMEs**. They stressed the need to introduce a dedicated strand reserved for these operators and businesses, in particular those from areas affected by natural disasters.

Underlining the crossover impact of culture, the resolution called on the Commission and the Member States to report on how much funding is allocated to culture across all funding programmes and ensure that it amounts to at least 1 % of the next MFF.

The Commission is called on to develop a '**one-stop shop**' portal listing all existing EU funding instruments in a user-friendly, comprehensive, innovative and efficient manner, with clear application guidelines and assistance.

External aspects: Members called on the Commission to report regularly to Parliament on the implementation of the strategy for international cultural relations and to increase resources for EU delegations for cultural promotion initiatives and projects, also in collaboration with the European Union National Institutes for Culture (EUNIC).

They also supported the Council initiative to draw up a **comprehensive approach to international cultural relations** and called for the creation of cultural focal points in all EU delegations, the appropriate training of officials and the involvement of local and grassroots actors, civil society and international cultural networks, including in the preparatory action on European Houses for culture.

Parliament reiterated its request for the Commission and the European External Action Service to report on the state of implementation of international cultural relations every two years.