Basic information

2017/2255(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
Structural and financial barriers in the access to culture **Subject** 4.45.02 Cultural programmes and actions, assistance 4.45.08 Cultural and artistic activities, books and reading, arts	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
CULT Culture and Education	ZDROJEWSKI Bogdan Andrzej (PPE)	19/09/2017
	Shadow rapporteur RODRIGUES Liliana (S&D) DZHAMBAZKI Angel (ECR) DIACONU Mircea (ALDE) MICHELS Martina (GUE/NGL) TRÜPEL Helga (Verts/ALE) ADINOLFI Isabella (EFDD) BILDE Dominique (ENF)	

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Education, Youth, Sport and Culture	NAVRACSICS Tibor

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
14/12/2017	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
25/04/2018	Vote in committee		
14/05/2018	Committee report tabled for plenary	A8-0169/2018	Summary
13/06/2018	Debate in Parliament		
14/06/2018	Decision by Parliament	T8-0262/2018	Summary
14/06/2018	Results of vote in Parliament		

14/06/2018	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2017/2255(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 55
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	CULT/8/11550

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE615.438	01/02/2018	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE619.123	06/03/2018	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A8-0169/2018	14/05/2018	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T8-0262/2018	14/06/2018	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2018)567	13/11/2018	

Structural and financial barriers in the access to culture

2017/2255(INI) - 14/06/2018 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 583 votes to 49, with 7 abstentions, a resolution on the structural and financial barriers in the access to culture.

Members stressed that they recognised **access to culture as a fundamental right of all citizens**, in accordance with Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which recognises participation in cultural life as one of the fundamental human rights. Around 8.4 million people are employed in the EU's cultural sector (accounting for 3.7 % of the total workforce). The potential of this sector in terms of economic growth is still only incompletely realised.

Access to and participation in culture: Parliament stressed the importance of an active and accessible cultural sector for the development of an inclusive society and for a strengthened common core of universal values and a more active European citizenship.

Recalling the importance of the Union's role in promoting and facilitating better coordination of cultural policies at all levels, it called on the Member States, and on the Union within its sphere of competence, to develop and implement the necessary specific measures in order to **guarantee access to and participation in cultural life**.

Members suggested that aspects related to cultural participation should be integrated into other policy areas such as educational, social, economic, regional, foreign, digital and media policies. They also recommended that Member States develop a **cultural action strategy** aimed at children and young people.

Financial barriers: financial barriers still prevent citizens, especially those belonging to the most disadvantaged groups, from fully enjoying their fundamental right to participate in cultural life and access to culture.

Members considered that **public funding** remains an indispensable instrument for supporting cultural activities in the EU. They, therefore, called on the Commission and the Member States, within their respective spheres of competence, to devote an appropriate part of their budgets to public support for culture and to strengthen synergies with the ERDF and other cultural support funds, including programmes facilitating research and innovation.

The private sector plays a key role that is complementary to public investment. Member States should consider implementing legislative measures that provide for a tax credit for contributions of money by private entities to support culture. Tax incentives for private sponsorship may reduce the financing gap in the cultural industries.

Parliament recommended that Member States and regions take measures to target **specific audiences**, including students, large families and the elderly, in order to remove financial barriers to access to culture. It also stressed that the introduction of reduced VAT rates cannot replace direct subsidies and called for **better coordination of national cultural policies and the VAT rates** applied as a tool for stimulating participation in culture.

Educational barriers and challenges: the **educational level** is one of the most important factors having a significant impact on the level of participation in culture. The lack of interest is one of the most frequently mentioned barriers to cultural participation among respondents to Eurostat and Eurobarometer surveys.

Parliament stressed, in this context, that **supporting demand**, understood as building interest and understanding of culture through formal, non-formal and informal education, should be a priority task in terms of increasing access to and participation in culture.

It called for:

- steps to be taken towards the greater integration of cultural and artistic education into school curricula, in both formal and informal education;
- the adoption of measures to ensure more widespread access to cultural institutions and to develop a comprehensive European strategy concerning access to public spaces, particularly relating to culture in the urban built environment, as in the cases of museums, theatres, cinemas, libraries, concert halls, etc;
- the promotion of the creation of **study or internship grants** for students related to state or private educational networks, in cultural or cultural management institutions;
- the mainstreaming of the European Student Card and that free access to EU cultural institutions should be added to its benefits.

Structural barriers: drawing attention to the often lower cultural participation rates among the **rural population**, Parliament highlighted the role of small local cultural centres, transport infrastructure and support for sustainable cultural tourism in facilitating access to cultural institutions.

Members called for:

- increased efforts and investments in order to develop a sustainable and long-term **cultural tourism** policy, as well as greater investment in access to culture for the outermost, mountain and remote regions;
- the guarantee for a cultural offer that is **accessible to everyone**, with specific measures for certain population groups, such as children and young people, the elderly, disabled people or migrants, among others and the need for greater investment in the implementation of the universal touch reading and writing code (the Braille system).

Digital barriers and challenges: convinced that digital tools can help to overcome barriers to access to culture caused by factors including unfavourable geographical location, disability, social background, language and lack of time or financial resources, Parliament suggested that **digital education** should form part of the learning process from an early age, so as to develop adequate knowledge and skills. It recommended that the Commission draw up a consistent digital strategy aimed at cultural infrastructures and activities in order to strengthen their capacities.

Lastly, the digitisation and online accessibility of cultural material in Europe should be implemented on a basis of full respect for **creators and intellectual property rights**. Members considered that intellectual property rights should not hamper the general public goal of increasing access to, and favouring the dissemination of, creative content, information and knowledge. They also insisted further on the urgent need to settle a secure digital environment enabling artists and creators to be duly remunerated for their work, and to ensure a fair remuneration for cross-border access.

Structural and financial barriers in the access to culture

2017/2255(INI) - 14/05/2018 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Culture and Education adopted an own-initiative report by Bogdan Andrzej ZDROJEWSKI (EPP, PL) on structural and financial barriers in the access to culture.
This report provides a cross-sectoral analysis of **existing obstacles to cultural access and participation**. It concerns not only structural and financial barriers to access, but also social and digital barriers, and by far the most important problem of educational barriers.
Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognises participation in cultural life as one of the fundamental human rights. This right is enshrined in the Faro Convention which recognises the right to participate in cultural life. Around **8.4 million people** are employed in the EU's cultural sector (accounting for 3.7 % of the total workforce).
Access to and participation in culture: while recalling the vital role of an active and accessible cultural sector for the development of an inclusive democratic society, the report stressed that promoting and improving access to culture was **one of the main political priorities**. Member States and the European Union are called on, within the sphere of their competences, to develop and implement the specific measures in order to **guarantee access to and participation in cultural life**.

Members recalled the importance of the EU's role in promoting and facilitating better coordination of cultural policies at all levels with a view to developing a comprehensive and effective policy to promote access to and participation in culture, and to frame culture as an **essential element of the European integration project**.

They stressed the importance of coordinating cultural policy with **other policy areas** such as education, social, economic, regional, foreign, digital and media policies. They also recommended that Member States develop a cultural action strategy aimed at children and young people.

Financial barriers: Members considered that **public funding** plays a fundamental role in ensuring a vibrant cultural scene and remains an indispensable instrument for supporting cultural activities in the EU. They, therefore, called on the Commission and the Member States, within their respective spheres of competence, to devote an appropriate part of their budgets to public support for culture and to strengthen synergies with the ERDF and other cultural support funds, including programmes facilitating research and innovation.

The private sector plays a key role that is complementary to public investment. Member States should consider implementing legislative measures that provide for a **tax credit** for contributions of money by private entities to support culture. Tax incentives for private sponsorship may reduce the financing gap in the cultural industries.

The report recommended that Member States and regions take measures to target specific audiences, including students, large families and the elderly, in order to remove financial barriers to access to culture. It also stressed that the introduction of reduced VAT rates cannot replace direct subsidies and called for **better coordination of national cultural policies and the VAT rates applied** as a tool for stimulating participation in culture.

Educational barriers and challenges: the report stressed that **educational level** is one of the most important factors having a significant impact on the level of participation in culture. The lack of interest is one of the most frequently mentioned barriers to cultural participation among respondents to Eurostat and Eurobarometer surveys. Members stressed, in this context, that **supporting demand**, understood as building interest and understanding of culture through formal, non-formal and informal education, should be a priority task in terms of increasing access to and participation in culture.

Member States are called on to take steps towards the greater integration of cultural and artistic education into school curricula, in both formal and informal education.

Moreover, the Commission and the Member States to adopt measures to ensure more widespread access to cultural institutions and to develop a **comprehensive European strategy** concerning access to public spaces, particularly relating to culture in the urban built environment, as in the cases of museums, theatres, cinemas, libraries, concert halls, etc.

Members recommended the mainstreaming of the **European Student Card** and that free access to EU cultural institutions should be added to its benefits.

Structural barriers: drawing attention to the often lower cultural participation rates among the **rural population**, the report highlighted the role of small local cultural centres, transport infrastructure and support for sustainable cultural tourism in facilitating access to cultural institutions.

Members called for increased efforts and investments in order to develop a sustainable and long-term **cultural tourism** policy, as well as greater investment in access to culture for the outermost, mountain and remote regions, in order to create decentralised cultural opportunities.

They called on Member States and the cultural institutions that depend on them to ensure a cultural offer that is **accessible to everyone**, with specific measures for certain population groups, such as children and young people, the elderly, disabled people or migrants, among others and stressed the need for greater investment in the implementation of the universal touch reading and writing code (the Braille system).

Digital barriers and challenges: convinced that digital tools can help to overcome barriers to access to culture caused by factors including unfavourable geographical location, disability, social background, language and lack of time or financial resources, the report suggested that **digital education** should form part of the learning process from an early age, so as to develop adequate knowledge and skills.

Members recommended that the Commission draw up a consistent digital strategy aimed at cultural infrastructures and activities in order to strengthen their capacities.

Lastly, the digitisation and online accessibility of cultural material in Europe should be implemented on a basis of full respect for **creators and intellectual property rights**. Members considered that intellectual property rights should not hamper the general public goal of increasing access to, and favouring the dissemination of, creative content, information and knowledge. They also insisted further on the urgent need to settle a secure digital environment enabling artists and creators to be duly remunerated for their work, and to ensure a fair remuneration for cross-border access.