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OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Council conclusions on supporting young artists and cultural and creative professionals in starting their careers

Delegations will find attached the abovementioned Conclusions, approved by the Council (Education, Youth, Culture and Sport) at its meeting on 13 May 2025.

Council conclusions on supporting young artists and cultural and creative professionals in starting their careers

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

HAVING REGARD TO:

1. The intrinsic value of culture as a common good, artistic freedom and cultural diversity, as well as the role of the cultural and creative sectors in the socio-economic development of Europe and the strengthening of the European identity, the sense of community and the principles of democracy;
2. The fact that artists and cultural and creative professionals are an engine of creativity and innovation, embodying cultural values, promoting Europe's social and economic cohesion, enhancing the prosperity, diversity and inclusiveness of our democratic societies, and acting as sustainable enablers for local and regional development;
3. The role of young artists and cultural and creative professionals in making the cultural sector more resilient and more sustainable;
4. The critical contribution made by young artists and cultural and creative professionals to cultural diversity, with their fresh creative approaches and innovative concepts, as well as to maintaining and promoting international peace and security¹;
5. The fact that there is no clear definition of 'young artists' or 'young cultural and creative professionals' in EU law or in the legal systems of the Member States²;

¹ UN Pact for the Future, as adopted by UNGA at the Summit of the Future on 22 September 2024.

² The terms used in this document are further explained in the Annex, under 'Definitions'.

6. The fact that, regardless of their role or status as employees or self-employed persons, and irrespective of gender inequality and other types of inequality, the social and professional situation of young artists and cultural and creative professionals is – depending on the artistic area concerned – often marked by precarity, intermittent work and an unpredictable income, a weak position vis-à-vis contractors, and insufficient or no access to social security;
7. The fact that young artists and cultural and creative professionals entering the labour market often have limited knowledge in relation to entrepreneurship, economics, accounting, legal frameworks (including copyright and other intellectual property rights), access to finance and awareness of social security;
8. The fact that young artists and cultural and creative professionals, despite their artistic education, often do not find quality work in the cultural and creative sectors (CCS), or are obliged to seek additional ways of earning a livelihood;
9. The role of public and private cultural institutions in creating employment opportunities, including by providing information on employment and mentoring, etc. for young artists and cultural and creative professionals;
10. The need for initiatives to support young artists and cultural and creative professionals who are starting out in their professions, and for a more systematic approach to supporting such individuals;

11. The fact that young artists and cultural and creative professionals are generally considered to be low paid, and must be fairly and adequately remunerated in such a way as to reflect their education, real competences and professional experience³;
12. The low public recognition of the importance and nature of work relating to the cultural and creative sectors and the complexity of the creative process;

INVITES MEMBER STATES, AT THE APPROPRIATE LEVEL, TO:

13. Recognise the unique characteristics of the artistic professions and their challenging working conditions, including obstacles in relation to disability and gender, as well as socially and racially-based obstacles, the need to identify such professions as a source of livelihood, and the need for due respect for copyright and related rights as well as other intellectual property rights accorded to artists and cultural and creative professionals in connection with the results of their professional activities;
14. Recognise the importance of mental health and the challenges that young artists and cultural and creative professionals might face, and encourage the development of appropriate support measures;
15. Consider developing or improving adequate social security and social rights for young artists and cultural and creative professionals;

³ European Parliament Resolution of 21 November 2023 with recommendations to the Commission on an EU framework for the social and professional situation of artists and workers in the cultural and creative sectors (2023/2051(INL)).

16. Seek to develop, where relevant, content in arts education, to facilitate that young people acquire all the necessary competences in the cultural and creative sectors and learn about important subjects such as employment opportunities; entrepreneurship; fair practice; copyright and the broader intellectual property framework; digital and technological tools, including artificial intelligence (AI) - both its potential uses and its possible risks; legal rights and obligations; social security; the fight against sexual and gender-based violence, and more broadly, the fight against all forms of discrimination; promotion and marketing; building an online presence; and creating relationships with digital audiences;
17. Encourage stakeholders dealing with arts education to formulate projects to be supported under the EU's Erasmus+ programme for the education and skills development of young artists and cultural and creative professionals;
18. Encourage stakeholders dealing with arts education to further develop and strengthen the role played by their careers offices or similar institutions, or – where relevant – to encourage cooperation between career supervisors and cultural institutions operating in EU countries;
19. Continue to support the presence of young artists and cultural and creative professionals in the CCS, by providing information on the Creative Europe Programme and other relevant European programmes and initiatives, including Cohesion Policy funds;

20. Promote and facilitate, where appropriate, informal and non-formal forms of learning for everyone (e.g. through amateur arts), and lifelong learning for young artists and cultural and creative professionals (e.g. through workshops and artistic residencies), in order to stimulate their development and equip them with the know-how and skills necessary to launch their careers;
21. Consider developing and promoting existing multidisciplinary networks of cooperation between artists and cultural and creative professionals working in various CCS, together with representatives of public administration, business, industry and academia, including in outermost and disadvantaged regions as well as in overseas countries and territories;
22. Support the debuts and outcomes of creative and artistic activity in various CCS and increase the visibility of young artists and cultural and creative professionals who are starting out in their careers, in both traditional and new fields, *inter alia* by creating dedicated programmes;
23. Consider promoting and developing effective support systems and incentive schemes for private patronage, targeted at young artists and cultural and creative professionals as an underrepresented group in the labour market, ensuring the integration of fair principles as regards adequate remuneration and working conditions in funding strategies;

24. Maintain and further develop scholarship programmes for young artists and cultural and creative professionals;
25. Consider developing and promoting existing instruments or creating new ones (e.g. in the form of a web portal/guide/newsletter) dedicated to useful information, best practices and news about the labour market for young artists and cultural and creative professionals, and developing knowledge about the employment of young artists and cultural and creative professionals, including those with disabilities and those with fewer opportunities;
26. Consider supporting and facilitating initiatives that involve a direct connection between established and young artists and cultural and creative professionals, such as dedicated matchmaking sessions, networking events or mentorship programmes to help bridge the gap between education and employment in the CCS;
27. Maintain their updated contributions to the CreativesUnite map on working conditions in the CCS and actions, including those applicable to Ukrainian artists⁴ ;

⁴ <https://creativesunite.eu/>.

INVITES THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION AND MEMBER STATES, AT THE APPROPRIATE LEVELS AND IN THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS OF COMPETENCE, TO:

28. In line with discussions in the Council and the European Parliament, promote appropriate conditions for the social and professional situation of young artists and cultural and creative professionals as a key issue within a future EU strategic framework for culture, the next EU Work Plan for Culture, as well as an ongoing dialogue with European social partners and stakeholders;
29. Encourage young artists and cultural and creative professionals to participate in existing programmes such as Creative Europe (including Culture Moves Europe), Erasmus+, Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs and Horizon Europe. In addition, where applicable, create incentives to enable young artists and cultural and creative professionals to exchange best practices and gain experience in the EU Member States and other countries participating in those programmes. To that end, initiatives that provide cross-information sessions or shared communication platforms between the national contact points of Erasmus+, Creative Europe and Horizon Europe should be encouraged;
30. Further promote the Creative Europe Programme, including Culture Moves Europe mobility action and other initiatives, allowing young artists and cultural and creative professionals to take part in individual cultural mobility projects and residencies in all Creative Europe countries and possibly beyond, which may help them to develop and deepen international professional relationships;

31. Encourage projects involving research into the situation of young artists and cultural and creative professionals starting out in the labour market, having regard to labour legislation, taxation and social protection;
32. Promote the added value of social dialogue as a tool for improving the working conditions of young artists and cultural and creative professionals at national and EU level, and support action building on work already accomplished at EU level concerning mobility, taxation (including VAT), social security, safety and health at work, the provision of information and other issues relating to artists and cultural and creative professionals, as well as promote the exchange of know-how and best practices in the CCS;
33. While fully respecting their autonomy, recommend that cultural institutions and collective boards promote the participation of young artists and cultural and creative professionals in the decision-making process;
34. Consider including data on young artists and cultural and creative professionals in public statistics, where appropriate and without imposing an excessive administrative burden;
35. In order to improve the skills relevance of education and training programmes, promote – where appropriate – regular and comparable pan-European graduate tracking systems based on the pan-European experience of the ‘Eurograduate’ pilot project;
36. Facilitate and support the cross-border portability of competences in the CCS;

37. Consider supporting the creation and expansion of high-quality traineeships for young artists and cultural and creative professionals, as well as cultural and creative exchanges facilitated via the relevant European programmes and initiatives, including the Cohesion Funds, which can help to share best practices and link education, training and youth organisations with those in the CCS;
38. Continue supporting, where appropriate, the cultural dimension of the Erasmus+ Programme, which has supported the mobility and cooperation projects of higher education institutions in arts and culture, opened up opportunities for young people to discover and engage with culture, and allowed thousands of institutions and associations working in cultural heritage to develop their educational programmes;
39. Consider supporting young artists and cultural and creative professionals with limited opportunities, such as those belonging to minorities or from third countries associated with the Creative Europe Programme, at-risk and displaced artists coming to the EU, to help them improve their earning situation and increase their competitiveness in the labour market (through initiatives such as artistic residencies, legal advice, courses, training and funds for the promotion of creativity);
40. Use and further develop existing platforms for the presentation of best practices⁵ that exist in the Member States in order to make young artists and cultural and creative professionals more visible;
41. Take stock of the implementation of these conclusions by 2029;

⁵ e.g. European Platforms for the promotion of emerging artists (2021-2023): <https://culture.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe/creative-europe-culture-strand/european-platforms>; The Artists Development Programme (ADP) financed by the EIB Institute: <https://institute.eib.org/whatwedo/arts/artists-residencies/>.

INVITES THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION TO:

42. Consider mapping the existing definitions of young artists and cultural and creative professionals across the Member States, thereby allowing the comparison of data between countries and different areas/fields;
43. Building on the success of the Creative Europe Programme, further promote initiatives generally devoted to young artists and cultural and creative professionals;
44. Attempt to simplify the application processes for EU funding in order to reduce the administrative burden for young artists and cultural and creative professionals;
45. Consider developing possibilities for young artists and cultural and creative professionals in existing European programmes and relevant future policies;
46. Further develop Creative Europe co-funded existing thematic networks for artists and cultural and creative professionals working in various CCS⁶, and with a view to unlocking the potential of young artists and cultural and creative professionals starting their careers;
47. Continue to encourage research in this field, including cross-cutting research; conduct analysis linking culture with various scientific and economic fields; and consider the creation of EU-funded interdisciplinary research networks, with a specific focus on young artists and creative professionals, to explore the links between cultural and creative activities and science, technology, economics, social innovation and health.

⁶ European networks: <https://culture.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe/creative-europeculture-strand/european-networks>.

Definitions:

For the purpose of these conclusions:

- *Young artists and cultural and creative professionals* are considered to be those aged between 18-30, as well as emerging artists and cultural and creative professionals of any age, who are starting their careers;
- *Cultural and creative sectors (CCS)* means all sectors⁷:
 - a) whose activities, many of which have potential to generate innovation and jobs, in particular from intellectual property:
 - i) are based on cultural values and artistic and other individual or collective creative expressions; and
 - ii) include the development, creation, production, dissemination and preservation of goods and services which embody cultural, artistic or other creative expressions, as well as related functions such as education or management;
 - b) irrespective of:
 - iii) whether the activities of those sectors are market-oriented or non-market-oriented;
 - iv) the type of structure that carries out those activities; and
 - v) how that structure is financed.

Those sectors include, *inter alia*, architecture, archives, libraries and museums, artistic crafts, audiovisual (including film, television, video games and multimedia), tangible and intangible cultural heritage, design (including fashion design), festivals, music, literature, performing arts (including theatre and dance), books and publishing, radio, and visual arts.

⁷ With particular emphasis on those mentioned in Article 2(1) of Regulation (EU) 2021/818 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 establishing the Creative Europe Programme (2021 to 2027) and repealing Regulation (EU) No1295/2013.

References:

- Council resolution on the EU work plan for culture 2023-2026 (2022/C 466/01);
- Council conclusions on access of young people to culture (OJ C 326, 3.12.2010, p. 2);
- Council conclusions on fostering the creative and innovative potential of young people (OJ C 169, 15.6.2012, p. 1);
- Council conclusions on young creative generations (2019/C 189/06);
- Council conclusions on young people and the Future of Work (2019/C 189/05);
- Council conclusions on the recovery, resilience and sustainability of the cultural and creative sectors (2021/C 209/03);
- Council conclusions on reinforcing intercultural exchanges through the mobility of artists and cultural and creative professionals, and through multilingualism in the digital era (2022/C 160/07);
- Council conclusions on at-risk and displaced artists (2023/C 185/09);
- Council conclusions on improving and fostering access to culture (C/2024/7446);

- Regulation (EU) 2021/818 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 establishing the Creative Europe Programme (2021 to 2027) and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1295/2013;
- European Parliament resolution of 20 October 2021 on the situation of artists and the cultural recovery in the EU (2020/2261(INI));
- European Parliament resolution of 21 November 2023 with recommendations to the Commission on an EU framework for the social and professional situation of artists and workers in the cultural and creative sectors (2023/2051(INI));
- The OMC report on the Status and Working Conditions of Artists and Cultural and Creative Professionals: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/01fafa79-1a13-11ee-806b-01aa75ed71a1/language-en> ;
- Voices of Culture report ‘Youth, Mental health and Culture’, 2023;
- Artists’ working conditions platform on CreativesUnite, incorporating and updating the results of the OMC group’s survey and findings: <https://creativesunite.eu/work-condition/>;
- UNESCO Convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions (2005);
- Eurograduate Pilot Project: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/51f88c2e-a671-11ea-bb7a-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>;
- Porto Santo Charter ‘Culture and the promotion of Democracy: Towards a European Cultural Citizenship’ (2021);
- Recommendation Concerning the Status of the Artist, UNESCO 1980;

- Empowering creativity: implementing the UNESCO 1980 Recommendation; 5th global consultation 2023;
 - Defending Creative Voices: Artists in emergencies, Learning from the safety of journalists, UNESCO 2023;
 - European Commission Guidelines on collective agreements by solo self-employed people;
 - Council Recommendation of 13 May 2024 ‘Europe on the Move’ – learning mobility opportunities for everyone (Europa.eu);
 - The UNESCO Framework for Culture and Arts Education, 2024.
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