Report adopted recommending new EU legislation on working conditions of artists and other cultural professionals

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On 24 October 2023, the European Parliament's Committee on Culture and Education (CULT) and Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL) adopted a notable Report on the social and professional situation of artists and workers in the cultural and creative sectors. Importantly, the Report requests that the European Commission submit proposals for legislative instruments establishing an EU Framework on the social and professional situation of artists and other professionals in the cultural and creative sectors (CCS). In particular, a Directive on "decent working conditions" of CCS professionals.

The 33 page Report was adopted by 43 votes to five, and three abstentions, by the CULT and EMPL committees. The Report opens by noting that the cultural and creative sectors play an "essential role" in ensuring the delivery of culture as a public good and the cultural rights of European citizens. However, the Report notes that the living and working conditions of CCS professionals can be "characterised by precariousness, instability and the intermittent nature of their work", with "unpredictable incomes, weaker bargaining power in relation to their contractual counterparts, short-term contracts, weak or no social security coverage, and a lack of access to unemployment support". In this regard, the Report deals with a number of notable issues, including the status of artists; access to social protection and decent working conditions for CCS professionals; fair remuneration, practices and funding in the CCS sector; gender equality and measures against workplace harassment and discrimination in the cultural and creative sectors; and digital challenges, including the spread of powerful generative AI systems to generate content.

Crucially, the Report calls for the creation of a legal EU framework to improve the social and professional conditions in the CCS. This would include (a) a Directive on decent working conditions for CCS professionals and the correct determination of their employment status; (b) a European platform to "improve the exchange of best practice and mutual understanding among member states to improve working and social security conditions with the involvement of social partners"; and (c) adapting EU programmes that fund artists, such as Creative Europe, to include "social conditionality to contribute to the compliance with EU, national or collective labour and social obligations".

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The European Parliament will later vote on the initiative; and the Commission will then have three months to reply by either informing the Parliament on steps it plans to take or giving reasons for any refusal to propose a legislative initiative along the lines of Parliament's request.

European Parliament, Status of the artist: improve working conditions of artists and cultural workers, 24 October 2023

https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20231023IPR08139/status-of-the-artist-improve-working-conditions-of-artists-and-cultural-workers

Committee on Employment and Social Affairs and Committee on Culture and Education, Report 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, 25 October 2023

https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/A-9-2023-0304_EN.html#_section5

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