European Commission report on Creative Europe Programme

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Creative Europe, the European Union’s programme dedicated to supporting the cultural, creative and audiovisual sectors, has achieved a full decade of activity. On 17 December, the European Commission published a report presenting the results of the evaluation of the Creative Europe 2014-2020 Programme and the mid-term evaluation of the Creative Europe 2021-2027 Programme, highlighting both achievements and challenges.

Funding is divided into three strands to support different needs: media (audiovisual and video games), culture (all other cultural and creative sectors) and cross-sectoral (including news media).

The Commission reports that the media strand has successfully contributed to safeguarding cultural diversity and strengthening competitiveness. The evaluation revealed that films and series supported by it could be viewed, on average, in 9.5 more EU countries on TV, 6.6 more in cinemas and 3.2 more on video-on-demand than comparable non-supported works.

The media strand has also driven collaboration measures to foster cultural diversity. The share of supported works involving collaborations between low-capacity and high-capacity countries increased from less than 5% between 2014 and 2020 to around 30% between 2021 and 2023. Support for works in lesser used languages also increased from 25% to 32% over the same period. While observing progress, the Commission still notes that support is still concentrated on a limited number of beneficiary countries.

The Commission also generally observes that, while the media supporthas helped shape a European ecosystem and complement national policies, it cannot in itself counter powerful market forces which are transforming the sector arising from changing consumer behaviour and technological advances.

The report therefore stresses that further efforts are needed to attract wider cross-border audiences on all platforms, in particular younger generations. Due to the innovative and dynamic nature of media markets, it will be essential to continue monitoring trends to steer the media strand so that it keeps pace with developments. With this in mind, the Commission further highlights the growing demand for video game support, recalling the importance of pursuing reflection on how best to strengthen it in the future.

In the context of the Culture strand of the programme, the Commission observes that countries with strongly established cultural and creative sectors and/or which serve as regional hubs (such as France, Italy, Germany and Belgium) tend to receive a higher amount of funding. While some countries such as Croatia, Slovenia and Serbia have started playing a more prominent role, the Commission recognises that some efforts are still needed to reach out to countries that are not sufficiently engaged with Creative Europe. The Commission further notes that risks linked to new needs have emerged, such as attacks on artistic freedom or the rise of artificial intelligence, and insists on the need to better respond to them.

It should be noted that, in the cross-sectoral strand, support for news media was launched in 2021. While the Commission mentions the funding of high-quality projects addressing key structural and technological changes and promoting media independence and pluralism as well as media literacy, it notes that only a few member states devote significant financial resources to supporting the safety of journalists or resilience and innovation in media outlets. It further stresses that support will be crucial as challenges across the EU continue to grow in areas such as media freedom and pluralism, media viability and disinformation.

These observations will support the impact assessment of AgoraEU, the successor to the Creative Europe programme proposed by the European Commission for the 2028-34 EU budget.

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https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/redirection/document/123094