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Education and culture: New partnerships to recognise personal development and competences

Report¹

Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media
Rapporteur: Mr Mogens Jensen, Denmark, Socialists, Democrats and Greens

A. Draft resolution²

1. The 21st century societies require people with creative and analytical thinking, critical understanding, social skills, tolerance, intercultural awareness and the ability to handle conflict. Education bears the greatest responsibility in enabling young people to acquire these essential competences as part of their personal development, democratic consciousness and employability. Access to culture, arts and culture education and participation in cultural life are crucial in achieving this result.
2. The Assembly welcomes the recent recommendation by the Council of the European Union to include “cultural awareness and expression” as a key competence for lifelong learning, as well as the decision by the OECD to add creative thinking to the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) tests as from 2021. These new targets now need to be worked into comprehensive and accessible-to-all education programmes.
3. In this context, the Council of Europe Framework Competences for Democratic Culture (CDC) present a comprehensive set of values, skills and attitudes for an appropriate participation in democratic societies, and the Indicator Framework on Culture and Democracy (IFCD) offers a unique tool for assessing and optimising cultural policies and for examining links between culture and democracy.
4. The Assembly reiterates its appeal to European governments, expressed previously in Resolution 2123 (2016) on culture and democracy, to allocate the same level of sustained investment to education and cultural activities as to other areas crucial to Europe’s global economic competitiveness and stability.
5. The recent Resolution 2270 (2019) on the value of cultural heritage in a democratic society further recommends European governments to direct culture and heritage into education in more effective ways, and to revise education curricula and vocational training in order to create better synergies between arts, economy, technology and science, and to stimulate interaction between technologies, creative arts and entrepreneurship.
6. All children, regardless of their artistic skills and abilities or economic status, should be entitled to receive high-standard arts and culture education. The Assembly notes however with concern that, despite the successful advocacy to include arts as part of the education policy, this has not led to wide-scale implementation of quality programmes for teaching in arts and through arts at the school level.
7. The implementation of quality arts and culture education largely depends on the teachers and creative professionals, but they often lack appropriate in-service professional training. Digitalisation creates new possibilities for teaching art and culture and through art and culture, which cannot be fully exploited without

¹ Reference to committee: [Doc. 13972](#), Reference 4194 of 22 April 2016

² Draft resolution adopted unanimously by the committee on 8 April 2019

the adequate preparation of teachers, creative professionals and school leaders.

8. However, quality arts and culture education are not the responsibility of individual establishments or institutions it requires cross-cutting partnerships involving responsible state institutions, schools, communities, arts organisations and increasingly also industries and businesses. There is a strong need for sustainable and project-based partnerships.

9. Non-formal and informal learning play an equally important role in the development of essential cultural and creative competences. However, the knowledge, skills and attitudes developed while practicing extra-curricular activities go mostly unrecorded and unrecognised. Enhanced cooperation between different learning settings and the official recognition of their respective value for personal, social and civic development would encourage new learning approaches and initiatives.

10. Consequently, the Assembly would welcome the creation of a Europe-wide tool for recognising young persons' competences acquired whilst participating in arts, cultural and creative activities in a variety of learning contexts.

11. In the light of the above, the Assembly recommends that the member States of the Council of Europe:

11.1. embed creative competences and cultural awareness within formal education systems, in line with the recommendations of the European Reference Framework of Key Competences for Lifelong learning, to foster the creativity of young people and their innovation potential in the digital era;

11.2. design modern quality arts and culture education programmes, both for teaching arts and artistic expression and for using arts as a cross-sectoral pedagogical tool in teaching other subjects, taking into consideration the recommendations of the UNESCO "Seoul Agenda";

11.3. promote inclusivity in providing quality arts and culture education, with specific attention to children and young people from underprivileged socio-economic backgrounds, with the aim to encourage active citizenship, openness, curiosity and critical thinking, building *inter alia* on the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture and the Indicator Framework on Culture and Democracy;

11.4. support innovation in education and develop novel approaches to teaching and learning; review the professional training systems for teachers and creative professionals, encouraging well-adapted in-service training and mobility for professionals in teaching art and culture and offering special training for teaching other subjects through arts-based practices;

11.5. foster and financially support sustainable, long-term partnerships between schools, communities, creative industries, cultural institutions, businesses and employers to offer young people new opportunities to develop their competences on cultural awareness and expression.

12. The Assembly invites the European Commission:

12.1. to introduce a stronger and more inclusive link between fostering European identity through cultural diversity, creativity and mobility and providing quality arts and culture education in school programmes within its Creative Europe Programme (2021-2027); this would meaningfully contribute to building the European Education Area by 2025;

12.2. to support and stimulate cross sectoral and cross border cooperation between culture, education and other policy and professional sectors as well as innovative partnerships involving state institutions, schools, communities, organisations and private businesses at EU, national and local levels;

12.3. to develop a competence framework for "cultural awareness and expression" (EU key competence #8 for lifelong learning), which should include *inter alia* a frame of reference for teacher competence development within the context of pedagogical innovation, as well as provisions for assessing creativity and cultural competence;

12.4. to reflect on the creation of a Europe-wide tool to recognise the competences developed by young people whilst participating in arts, culture and creative activities, in collaboration with the Council of Europe and relevant professional associations, within the framework of its Creative Europe Programme (2021-2027) and more particularly within its Work Plan for Culture 2019-2021 (under "Young creative generation" and "Citizenship, values and democracy"). This tool should serve the purposes of:

12.4.1. recording the competences (knowledge, skills and attitudes) articulated in the EU lifelong learning key competency “Cultural awareness and expression” which young people gain by participating in statutory and/or non-statutory arts, culture and creative activities, to certify the acquisition of these competences;

12.4.2. encouraging young people’s participation in innovative partnerships intended to promote and further integrate cultural awareness and expression throughout policy development in Europe;

12.4.3. ensuring that European values are better understood and valued by the young generations.

B. Explanatory memorandum by Mr Mogens Jensen, rapporteur

1. Introduction

1. The XXI century societies require creativity and awareness of cultural diversity and values, which are deeply connected with other social skills such as open-mindedness, tolerance, adaptability and the ability to handle conflict. Education systems must uphold the development of these essential competences for personal development, job success and active participation in society.

2. Parliamentary Assembly [Resolution 2123 \(2016\)](#) “Culture and democracy” urged “*much stronger recognition of the role that culture can play in upholding democratic principles and values, and building inclusive societies*”, underlining that “*culture is a source of intellectual renewal and human growth. Active participation in cultural activities helps people to acquire a critical mind, to develop a broader understanding of different world views, to interact with others, to have a voice and to define their role in society*” (§§ 2 and 3).

3. The Resolution also underscores that “*Education policies generally focus on providing professional skills and knowledge targeted at economic needs, while personal development has been to a large degree neglected in recent decades, even though it is a key element for personal and societal well-being. The Assembly considers that education policies should be reviewed and used as a driving force in today’s world of rapid change and increasing complexity. Cultural education should play an important part in this process, in particular to promote dialogue and mutual understanding and to strengthen solidarity and respect for human rights*” (§ 4).

4. The present report is a direct follow-up to the above resolution. The aims are twofold:

- on the one hand, it will consider how personal development should be stimulated through state policies of quality arts and cultural education and through new types of partnerships between different state establishments and between state and non-state actors;
- on the other hand, it will explore how personal development could be encouraged through the recognition of competences in the field of arts and culture acquired in the institutions of the educational system but also when young people are engaged in out-of-school activities.

5. In this respect, I propose to consider the expediency and feasibility of a Europe-wide tool for recognising the competences gained by learners whilst participating in arts, cultural and creative activities: a “Cultural Competences Award”.³ The ideas regarding this Europe-wide tool have been elaborated together with Ms Joan Parr, Head of Creative Learning at Creative Scotland (Edinburgh) and Chairperson of ACEnet.⁴

6. This tool would be intended to document and give value to the skills, knowledge and attitudes acquired by the many thousands of young people who currently take part in non-statutory arts and culture-based learning activities across Europe, that currently go unrecognised. It would serve individual young people in terms of their personal development, well-being and employability, and would witness our understanding of the relationship between culture and European values.

7. The report focuses on young people, but the proposals could also serve lifelong learners. It focuses mostly on non-statutory activities, i.e. activities that are not part of the core school curriculum; however, nothing impedes that the activities in question take place in school time or be led by teachers, depending on local conditions.

8. My report will also propose an outline methodology for the initial and further development of the award

³ The initiator of the present report, and my predecessor as rapporteur, Dr Thomas Feist, highlighted the German pilot project “Competencies through Cultural Education” and its end result “Cultural Competency Record” (CCR). I will examine whether this instrument can be worked into a Europe-wide cultural competency certification, which could give recognition to the competences acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning, offer young people a useful validation of their strengths and capabilities that could be used when applying for a work-study or internship programme, a job or job training and simply make a contribution to their character development. My choice of the term “Award” is based on English language usage meaning certification of achievement and attainment, for example; Duke of Edinburgh Award, Arts Award, Scottish Qualification Awards (SQA).

⁴ [ACEnet](#) is a network of European policy makers, civil servants and academics working in the fields of arts and cultural education. Its mission is to put arts, cultural, and creative education at the heart of our society. The membership is comprised of representatives from both Culture and Education ministries. As an informal learning network, ACEnet strives to improve arts and cultural education in Europe, by exchanging information, knowledge, experiences and inspiration. It offers the possibility to benchmark policy measures in an international context and it also functions as a platform for presenting good national practices, and for testing ideas with or receiving feedback from other EU countries on work-in-progress.

that will provide the opportunity to build new, meaningful and stable partnerships across a range of stakeholders who are committed to promote the achievements and attainment of young people in the competence of cultural awareness and expression, as they are aware of its interconnectedness with other European Key Competences and of its importance for firmly adhering to European values.

2. The role of arts education

9. Since the beginning of the 21st century, UNESCO has focused on arts education. At the 2nd World Conference on Arts Education that was held in 2010 in Seoul, government representatives and experts from the 95 participating countries agreed on a “Seoul Agenda”.⁵ It emphasised the important role which arts education has to play “in the constructive transformation of educational systems that are struggling to meet the needs of learners in a rapidly changing world characterised by remarkable advances in technology on the one hand and intractable social and cultural injustices on the other.”

10. The “Seoul Agenda” called on UNESCO member States to “employ the proposed strategies, and to implement the action items in a concerted effort:

- to realise the full potential of high-quality arts education to positively renew educational systems
- to achieve crucial social and cultural objectives, and ultimately
- to benefit children, youth and life-long learners of all ages”.

11. The “Seoul Agenda” launched a discussion on quality arts education as well as the distinction between **education for the arts** (e.g. promotion of young talents who may form the next generation of artists), **education in the arts** (e.g. teaching in fine arts, music, drama, crafts) and **education through arts** (e.g. the use of arts as a pedagogical tool in other subjects, such as literacy, numeracy and technology).

12. When arts education is linked to areas outside the cultural sector (**education through the arts**), three further main concepts can be distinguished: an approach that accentuates the importance of arts education for the development of **cognitive skills** and for the renewal of education (transfer effects to other fields of competence as well as interactions between arts and other areas that are important for our societies, like innovation through education), **a social aspect** (e.g. education for sustainable development or civic education) and **an economic dimension**.

13. The year 2020 will mark the 10th anniversary of the UNESCO “Seoul Agenda” and many international networks, including ACEnet, the European Network of Observatories (ENO), International Network of Researchers in Arts Education (INRAE), International Society for Education through Art (InSEA) or the International collaboration of Teaching Artists (ITAC) are working towards devising a methodology to record different European nations’ progress in relation to the goals of the “Seoul Agenda”. This report also goes in this same direction.

3. What is at stake?

14. There are increasingly strong economic, social and educational drivers for developing, supporting and recognising arts, culture and creativity competences across formal, informal and non-formal learning. Specialists observe that young people who are involved in the arts and culture on a long-term basis do not only acquire artistic skills but also those skills that are useful in all areas of life.

15. A recent publication by the UK-based Cultural Learning Alliance⁶ indicates that:

- Participation in structured arts activities can increase cognitive abilities by 17%;
- Learning through arts and culture can improve attainment in Maths and English;
- Learning through arts and culture develops skills and behaviour that lead children to do better in school;
- Students from low-income families who take part in arts activities at school are three times more likely to get a degree;
- Employability of students who study arts subjects is higher and they are more likely to stay in employment;

⁵ UNESCO: “[Seoul Agenda: Goals for the Development of Arts Education](#).”

⁶ The Cultural Learning Alliance (CLA) is a collective voice working to ensure that all children and young people have meaningful access to culture. It is supported by a membership of 10,000 organisations and individuals. A full report “Key Research findings: the case of Cultural Learning” can be found at <http://culturalllearningalliance.org.uk/evidence/>.

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- Students from low-income families who engage in the arts at school are twice as likely to volunteer. Students from low-income families who engage in the arts at school are 20% more likely to vote as young adults;
- Young offenders who take part in arts activities are 18% less likely to re-offend;
- People who take part in the arts are 38% more likely to report good health.

16. The Davos World Economic Forum⁷ forecasts suggest that the arts will be a major force in economic development with 65% of the children starting school now who will work in jobs in the future that do not yet exist. The so-called creative industries are emerging as the largest single sector of economic activity in many countries. This calls for a complete overhaul of the European education system. The World Economic Forum recognises **creativity** as the third most important skill set for employability.⁸ Therefore creativity will have to have a much stronger focus in education.

17. The OECD is going in the same direction: it is currently looking at how to include **Creative Thinking** in the **Programme for international Student Assessment (PISA)**, starting a test phase in 2021. This is likely to significantly raise awareness and interest in further supporting the development of creativity skills. The advisory group working on the project is considering “creativity” in terms of five “habits of mind”: inquisitive, persistent, collaborative, disciplined and imaginative. The final decision on whether PISA will include a creativity assessment (and whether to rank the results) will be taken later in the process.

18. In this context, it is worth recalling that the Assembly, in its Resolutions 2123 (2016)⁹ and 2270 (2019),¹⁰ defines culture to include spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features which characterise a society. Not only does culture cover cultural heritage, the arts and letters, but also lifestyles, ways of thinking and acting, value systems, traditions and beliefs.

19. There is a strong movement among the European institutions to adopt **competency-based models of school curricula**, and an understanding that arts, cultural and creative activities are vital to healthy individuals and societies.

20. Despite the increased attention to these competences and the edge that in the future the “arts and creativity inclined” population is likely to have, specialised research¹¹ paints a somewhat depressing picture of the general standard of classroom provisions in arts and creativity education in most parts of Europe. It recognises that in around a quarter of cases, **poor quality arts and culture programmes** may in fact negatively impact children’s participation in the arts, their creativity and their imagination.

21. Young people enhance their competences (knowledge, skills and attitudes) through a wide range of extra-curricular activities; therefore, there is a need to develop a method that should best reflect and value the full range of their achievements, as opposed to evaluating young people solely on the results of their school examinations.

4. Quality arts education for all

22. The research indicates¹² that not just any arts and culture education is “good enough”. Children require high quality arts education at all levels of education and within both formal and informal education. Yet, despite the advocacy to include arts as part of education policy having been largely successful, this has not led to wide scale implementation of quality arts programmes at the school level.

23. Except for a few countries, the overall standard of arts and culture education received by children is very low. In most countries, teachers are not prepared to teach the arts or to use some of its techniques in the learning process. The current situation sees global monitoring and reporting on educational standards within

⁷ “The Future of Jobs: Employment, Skills and Workforce Strategy for the Fourth Industrial Revolution”, Global Challenge Insight Report, World Economic Forum, January 2016 http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Future_of_Jobs.pdf.

⁸ The first two most important skills identified are “complex problem solving” and “critical thinking” which are subsets of creativity skills.

⁹ [Resolution 2123 \(2016\)](#) on culture and democracy.

¹⁰ [Resolution 2270 \(2019\)](#) on the value of cultural heritage in a democratic society.

¹¹ Bamford, A. “A Child’s Right to Quality Arts and Cultural Education”, http://veille-et-analyses.ens-lyon.fr/LettreVST/pdf/15-fevrier-2006_AnneBamford.pdf.

¹² The references to research in chapters 4-6 are mostly quoted from the work of Prof Anne Bamford, Wimbledon School of Art, London: “A Child’s Right to Quality Arts and Cultural Education” http://veille-et-analyses.ens-lyon.fr/LettreVST/pdf/15-fevrier-2006_AnneBamford.pdf and “Measuring the impact: Research into arts and cultural education”, PPT presentation www.kulturskoleradet.no/extension/media/.../2007_02_Anne_Bamford_foredrag.pdf

literacy, mathematics, science and ICT, but does not include the impact of arts and cultural experiences within a child's total education.

24. Nevertheless, there are examples of good practices around the world. Quality arts education promotes cultural identity and has a positive impact on the academic performance of children, especially in areas of literacy and the learning of second languages. Concurrently, quality arts-rich education leads to an improvement in students' attitudes towards school, on parental and community perception of schools, as well as on student interest for culture and the arts.

25. Good quality arts and culture education also enhances self-esteem, builds a sense of identity, and encourages unity and diversity. It improves an individual's ability to handle change in a dynamic society and encourages an appreciation and understanding of heritage (both tangible and intangible). In fact, culturally rich education enables individuals to be active in the creation of future heritage, design and production. In this way, the arts could be viewed as one of the most valuable investments for the future.

26. It is equally essential for arts and culture education to teach the competences necessary for participating effectively in the culture of democracy and living peacefully together with others in culturally diverse democratic societies. In this context, I would underline the importance of the values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and critical understanding as defined in the Council of Europe Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture¹³ alongside the EU Cultural Awareness and Expression key competence framework,¹⁴ be incorporated as crucial elements in the programmes of teaching arts and through the arts.

27. Quality programmes should be built around the notion of inclusivity and worthy arts-rich education for all. This means that all children, regardless of artistic skills and abilities, initial motivation, behaviour or economic status, should be entitled to receive high standard arts provisions, both within the various art forms and using creative and artistic approaches to teach other areas of the curriculum. This is particularly important in relation to initiatives to provide education for all and to look at a greater inclusion of a variety of marginalised groups within general education.

28. There is a need to ensure that there are quality arts programmes for all children. Providing classes for talented or interested students only cannot be considered as providing a comprehensive education for all. Having a school band, choir, dance group, once a year play or art club does not within itself constitute adequate arts education.

5. The role of teachers and school leadership in providing quality arts education

29. In many cases, the quality of arts education depends on what is provided at school level, which can be different from school to school. Yet teachers are largely unsupported in the teaching of arts education. There is a perception that the arts lack status within most educational curricula and the art teachers are for the most part untrained – or at least inadequately trained. Research shows that in countries that have taken their responsibility for providing adequate arts and cultural education seriously, implementation of policy has been supported by systematic and extensive teacher professional development.

30. There is a general need for quality training for teachers and in-service professional training of both creative professionals and teachers, which as the research shows, is far more effective in improving the quality of arts education than pre-service training. On-going professional development has the potential to reinvigorate teachers and creative professionals and to build the confidence, creativity and enjoyment of these groups. Studies indicate that the arts re-engage teachers and increase the quality of their overall pedagogy.

31. School leaders such as school directors, principals and local inspectors play a vital role in ensuring quality arts education is implemented within schools; therefore, these school leaders also require professional development to extend the raft of skills needed to effectively manage, organise, adapt and plan instruction, to create a space for arts practices within schools.

32. Quality arts-rich programmes tend to flourish in situations where there is scope for organisational flexibility. Within the education sectors, rigid timetables, compartmentalisation of learning and restrictive assessment structures tends to limit the extent and quality of art-rich education. Similarly, within cultural organisations, high costs, containment within the physical boundaries of a gallery or facility and lack of administrative flexibility limit the likely success of engaging fully with the education sector.

¹³ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/education/competences-for-democratic-culture>.

¹⁴ [Cultural awareness and expression handbook](#).

6. The strive for new partnerships

33. **Arts and culture education** are not the responsibility of one establishment or institution alone; it **is a cross-cutting task**. Its base is in establishments, institutions, organisations, associations and societies that are concerned primarily with culture, education, youth and academia, but also with the economy, health and urban development. Quality arts and culture education stems from strong **partnerships** involving responsible state institutions, the schools and outside arts and community organisations, or – more innovatively – schools, arts organisations and private businesses. It is schools, teachers, artists, the communities and increasingly the various industries and donor businesses, which together share the responsibility for the delivery of the programmes.

34. In this same spirit, our recent Resolution 2270 (2019) on the value of cultural heritage in a democratic society encouraged policies designed to “*review and update education curricula and vocational training so that they respond correctly to changing employment needs within the cultural sector, allowing for a stronger combination of arts, economy, technology and science to be formed in order to stimulate much more convincing interaction between technologies, the creative arts and entrepreneurship*” (§ 4.2.4).

35. The paradox is that most European states have separate ministries or departments at national, regional and local level for education – from primary, secondary and tertiary, plus adult, education – and for culture. Different authorities manage establishments such as opera houses, libraries, theatres and museums, kindergartens, schools and universities. The range of these different establishments also reflects the differing remits, goals and target groups of the authorities responsible for them, along with differing attitudes, values and methods of delivering education and culture.

36. Active partnership involves the direct inclusion of a range of cultural and artistic organisations in all aspects of the planning and delivery of arts education programmes. The most effective programmes have managed to build sustainable, long-term and reciprocal associations with cultural agencies and industries. An authentic partnership means that all players acknowledge the contributions made by the others and are involved in all aspects of decision making, implementation and evaluation.

37. While many schools have had artist-in-residence programmes, these frequently fall short of the level of partnership implied in quality arts provisions. These partnerships need to occur externally, between different schools and other educational entities/agents such as institutions, artists, the community and families.

38. Often family members are reluctant to encourage their children to take part in artistic activities, as it is perceived to be recreational rather than educational. The involvement of cultural partnerships builds support for arts education and encourages the broader community to see the arts as valuable. Furthermore, early alliance between cultural institutions, parents and children is likely to reap benefits in terms of audience development in later years.

39. Short-term and tokenistic involvement of creative professionals is unlikely to produce sustained changes in the quality provisions within school or educational contexts. Quality partnerships should ideally be for at least two years' duration and involve the high-level commitment of education, arts and cultural organisations.

40. Collaboration is a crucial part of the arts, especially the performing arts. More than in the case of other disciplines, as arts subjects very often require group work activities such as in the case of drama, music and dancing. Group work in turn creates a spirit of belonging and personal interaction that is also important for the personal development of the child. Teamwork further develops communication and social skills and may have an important impact on the child's general attitude towards school.

7. The policy foundations for a Europe-wide tool for recognising cultural competences: what do current policy documents say?

41. The urgent need for promoting European values, recognising the centrality of culture to current social, economic and democratic issues, giving value to cultural awareness and expression competences and encouraging partnerships across different policy sectors are eloquently argued for in a number of recent Council of Europe and European Commission documents. The following is a very small selection taken from key documents.

7.1. *Culture and Democracy, PACE Resolution 2123 (2016), Recommendation (2093), report no.14070, May 2016*

42. In our report on “Culture and democracy” (Rapporteur: Ms Vesna Marjanovic, Serbia, Socialist Group)

we urged our organisation to stay at the forefront of positioning culture as an integral part of the democratic process. The report recommends fostering cooperation between different sectors of the Council of Europe to develop innovative approaches to cultural policies. It points to the need for member states to better integrate cultural activities; improving access to culture for marginalised and underprivileged youth, and to support projects that aim to integrate cultural activities into other policy sectors such as health, social services, prison and penitentiary rehabilitation schemes.¹⁵

43. Based on this report, PACE Resolution 2123 (2016) asks, inter alia, that member States:

- uphold the right of everyone to participate in cultural life as a core human right (§ 6.1.);
- promote the diversity of cultural expression as positive factors for innovation and development (§ 6.2.);
- foster partnerships between the cultural sectors (cultural institutions and individual artists) and the education system, including formal education and lifelong learning, to promote the understanding of freedom of expression, respect for diversity and the development of intercultural competences from a very early age (§ 6.4);
- Bring decision making processes regarding culture as close as possible to the citizen (§ 6.5.).

7.2. *Indicator Framework on Culture and Democracy (IFCD), Policy Makers Guidebook, Council of Europe.*

44. The IFCD is a tool for assessing and optimising cultural policies on the basis of reliable, comparative data and for examining links between culture and democracy within and among the 47 Council of Europe member States. The first thematic report “Cultural participation and inclusive societies (2017)” highlights the links between culture, trust in society and inclusion. The IFCD policy maker’s guidebook (2016) explains the logic and how to implement the framework.

45. The latter document states that: *“A link has been made in recent years between a strong, well-functioning democracy and an abundance of cultural opportunities for citizens and others living within a society. Societies are said to be more open, tolerant, well-functioning and economically successful where people have easy access to a wide range of cultural activities and participation rates in these activities are high. Cultural activities seem to be an important part of building citizens’ skills to express themselves, inform themselves, think critically and hold opinions – skills that are essential for a democracy to work”*.¹⁶

7.3. *Cultural Awareness and Expression Handbook, EU OMC Working Group December 2015*

46. The European Union OMC (Open Method of Coordination) working group on “cultural awareness and expression” published a handbook¹⁷ in 2016 on the subject; its annex¹⁸ contains good practice examples from across Europe. The competence in cultural awareness and expression is one of the eight key competences that form the reference tool which EU member States are called to integrate into strategies and infrastructure in the context of lifelong learning.

47. The document defines “cultural awareness and expression” as *“the appreciation of the importance of the creative expression of ideas, experiences and emotions in a range of media, including music, performing arts, literature, and the visual arts. Cultural knowledge includes an awareness of local, national and European cultural heritage and their place in the world. It covers a basic knowledge of major cultural works, including popular contemporary culture.”* This definition is based on the idea that a solid understanding of one’s own culture and a sense of identity can be the basis for an open-minded attitude towards others and respect for diversity and cultural expression.

48. Relevant skills related to this competence include, among others, the ability to relate one’s own creative and expressive points of view to the opinions of others, and to identify and realise social and economic opportunities in cultural activity”.¹⁹

¹⁵ [Doc. 14070](#) on “Culture and democracy” (Rapporteur: Ms Vesna Marjanovic, Serbia, Socialist Group), Summary, May 2016.

¹⁶ [Indicator Framework on Culture and Democracy](#), p 9.

¹⁷ [Cultural awareness and expression handbook](#).

¹⁸ [Cultural awareness and expression handbook - Annex](#).

¹⁹ Pp. 16-18.

7. 4. EU Council Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning

49. On 22 May 2018, the Council of the European Union adopted a [Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning](#). The Recommendation includes in annex the updated “European Reference Framework” of key competences for lifelong learning. This Framework sets out eight key competences,²⁰ considered equally important and interlocked, which “all individuals need for personal fulfilment and development, employability, social inclusion, sustainable lifestyle, a successful life in peaceful societies, health-conscious life management and active citizenship”.

50. These key competences include the “competence in cultural awareness and expression”, which “involves having an understanding of and respect for how ideas and meaning are creatively expressed and communicated in different cultures and through a range of arts and other cultural forms. It involves being engaged in understanding, developing and expressing one's own ideas and sense of place or role in society in a variety of ways and contexts”.

7.5. EU Creative Europe Programme (2014-2020, 2021-2027)

51. The Creative Europe programme was established in 2014 with the objective to safeguard and promote cultural and linguistic diversity and Europe's cultural heritage, and to strengthen the competitiveness of the European cultural and creative sectors. The programme aims to anticipate new trends in the relevant sectors by bridging culture and creativity, fostering the movement of young talented artists and sharing cultural content across borders. It helps cultural and creative organisations to operate transnationally and promotes the cross-border circulation of works of culture and the mobility of cultural players.

52. The new European Commission proposal for the Creative Europe programme 2021-2027²¹ recognises the intrinsic value of culture and puts forward a double increase in the budget, safeguarding the freedom of artistic expression, mobility of artists and circulation of works. Regrettably, the proposal does not promote an explicit link between creativity, culture and education.

53. On 27 November 2018, the EU Ministers of Culture adopted the Conclusions on the Work Plan for Culture 2019-2022,²² which nevertheless offers two areas for creating synergies between culture, education, research, digitalisation and regional and urban development. These include: a) “Young creative generation” which will aim at fostering the creativity of young people and their innovation potential in the digital age, and b) “Citizenship, values and democracy”, which will examine the impact of participation in arts and culture on active citizenship, openness, curiosity and critical thinking and the applicability of the Council of Europe Indicator Framework on Culture and Democracy (IFCD) in the EU context.

8. Existing models of youth awards and certifications

54. There are many existing youth awards and recognitions administered within European territories but a very few that have a focus on the arts or culture or are intended to recognise and record the achievements of young people.

55. [Youthpass](#)²³ is a Europe-wide tool to document and recognise learning outcomes from youth work and solidarity activities. It is available for projects funded by Erasmus+ Youth in Action programme. Project participants are given the possibility to describe what they have done in their project and which competences they have acquired. Thus, Youthpass encourages the reflection upon the personal non-formal learning process and outcomes, strengthens the social recognition of youth work and supports active European citizenship of young people and of youth workers by describing the added value of their project. It also aims at supporting

²⁰ These are:

- Literacy competence;
- Multilingual competence;
- Mathematical competence and competence in science, technology and engineering;
- Digital competence;
- Personal, social and learning to learn competence;
- Citizenship competence;
- Entrepreneurship competence;
- Cultural awareness and expression competence.

²¹ [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/docs_autres_institutions/commission_europeenne/com/2018/0366/COM_COM\(2018\)0366_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/docs_autres_institutions/commission_europeenne/com/2018/0366/COM_COM(2018)0366_EN.pdf).

²² <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-13948-2018-INIT/en/pdf>.

²³ <https://www.youthpass.eu/en/>.

the employability of young people and of youth workers by raising their awareness of and helping to describe their competences, and by documenting their acquisition of key competences on a certificate.

56. The Arts Award²⁴ in the UK is a thriving model of a national programme that was founded in 2005 and is managed by Trinity College, London in association with the Arts Council, England. It is a tool to support young people who want to deepen their engagement with the arts, build creative and leadership skills, and to achieve a national qualification. Through its five levels, children and young people aged up to 25 can explore any art form including performing arts, visual arts, literature, media and multimedia. The award builds confidence, helps young people to enjoy cultural activities, and prepares them for further education or employment. The Arts Award is particularly good at promoting leadership skills in the arts. However, to the writer's knowledge, does not include the wider elements of culture and heritage.

57. At institutional level, Artsmark²⁵ is the creative quality standard for schools, accredited by Arts Council England. It provides a clear framework for teachers to plan, develop and evaluate arts, culture and creativity across the curriculum. It provides schools with access to enviable networks of leading cultural organisations that enable them to use the arts to engage and develop self-expressed and confident young people and inspire teachers. As well as recognising schools that are making the arts come alive, the Artsmark award is a practical and valuable tool for enriching a school's arts provision whatever the starting point. Schools are awarded Silver, Gold or Platinum, based on their achievements.

58. The Cultural Competency Record²⁶ is a German pilot project, an individual educational passport given to young people from the age of twelve, which describes the artistic activities pursued by the young person and the individual strengths he/she has demonstrated in the course of the project. This set of tools has been developed in cooperation with practitioners of cultural youth education, social scientists and representatives from the business community.

59. Whilst these four projects are useful tools within particular local contexts, none of them is easily implementable across the member States of the Council of Europe. None takes an explicit account of the growing importance of "creativity" and its cross curricular nature. As suggested by Ms Parr, the time is ripe for the development of a new award or certification taking into account the new European Reference Framework of key competences, the increased profile of and value placed on creativity skills and the emphasis on lifelong learning, as learning does not just happen in school.

60. The uniqueness of the award that I would like to propose is that it will:

- be relevant to the arts and culture;
- promote the skills, knowledge and attitudes articulated in the EU lifelong key competency # 8, defined as "cultural awareness and expression";
- be Europe-wide and promote European values;
- encourage partnerships across culture and other policy and professional sectors at EU and local levels.

9. Proposed framework of the award

9.1. Key elements

61. The proposed award would recognise the learner's achievement and progression through the knowledge, skills and attitudes defined in the "European Reference Framework" of key competences for lifelong learning.

62. I find particularly significant the explanation given by this text as regards the essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to the "Competence in cultural awareness and expression":

"This competence requires knowledge of local, national, regional, European and global cultures and expressions (...) and an understanding of how these expressions can influence each other as well as the ideas of the individual. It includes understanding the different ways of communicating ideas between creator, participant and audience (...). It requires an understanding of one's own developing identity and cultural heritage within a world of cultural diversity and how arts and other cultural forms can be a way

²⁴ <http://www.artsaward.org.uk/site/?id=1977>.

²⁵ <https://www.artsmark.org.uk/about-artsmark>

²⁶ https://www.bkj.de/fileadmin/user_upload/documents/Kulturelle_Bildung_International/World_Summit_2013/PechaKucha_Witte.pdf.

to both view and shape the world.

Skills include the ability to express and interpret figurative and abstract ideas, experiences and emotions with empathy, (...) and the ability to engage in creative processes, both as an individual and collectively.

It is important to have an open attitude towards, and respect for, diversity of cultural expression (...). A positive attitude also includes a curiosity about the world, an openness to imagine new possibilities, and a willingness to participate in cultural experiences”.

63. The tool would recognise competences achieved whilst the learner takes part in formal, non-formal and informal²⁷ learning activities. Subcultures, diversity and creative technology should be included and respected both in the range of activities and in the methods of recording achievement.

64. The learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and attitudes to be acquired) could be articulated in increasing levels of challenge and routes for progression so that achievement could be recognised at several levels (e.g.: bronze, silver, gold; or levels 1, 2, 3).

65. The learning journey and goals to be achieved within this framework should be proposed in the first instance by the learner taking part in the award scheme. They should be discussed and agreed by an approved local mentor, such as a teacher, arts or cultural professional, youth or community worker who would be responsible for supporting and challenging the learner throughout the process and recommending the award be given when there is sufficient evidence that the agreed goals have been reached and appropriate level of competences achieved. Input from more specialised professionals will be needed through the progression routes.

66. Identified learning goals will be achieved over time and evidence of the learning journey will be gathered and presented as evidence of achievement for an award to be given. Both the challenge of the learning goals and the scrutiny of the collected evidence should increase with the progression levels of the award.

67. A record of reflection and self-assessment by the learner should be an important part of the process and in itself evidences progression particularly in skills and attitudes.

68. National or territory hubs could act as a link between the local and European levels to train and support local mentors.

69. In order to maintain the strong European dimension of this award scheme, all awards should be distributed from a single European centre: a sponsoring organisation, perhaps with the support of a contracted university which could advise and manage accreditation and training.

70. An imaginative and creative approach should be taken to gathering evidence of achievement and the learners should propose how this is done. It is likely that creative technology will play a major part in the recording activities and achievement for assessment.

71. Modules for cultural awareness and expression at different progression levels could be developed and offered as additions to existing youth achievement award schemes. Existing award schemes could apply to deliver these modules, achievement would still be assessed at local or European level for these modules depending on the degree of challenge and a European quality assurance mark added to the learner's certification.

²⁷ These terms have the following meanings:

- “formal learning” / “formal education” → organised teaching, provided at school or in an organised and structured context (e.g. in an educational or training institution, or in the workplace) and which is explicitly designated as learning (in terms of goals, time or resources);
- “non-formal learning” / “non-formal education” → teaching of a particular subject, within or outside the school, which is integrated into planned activities that are not explicitly designated as learning activities but have an important learning component;
- “informal learning” / “informal education” → learning that derives from activities of daily living related to work, family or leisure. It is neither organised nor structured (in terms of objectives, time or resources).

Non-formal learning is intentional on the part of the learner, whereas informal learning is most of the time unintentional on the part of the learner. However, it is not always easy to apply these distinctions. See, for example (in French): [Apprentissage formel, informel, non-formel, des notions difficiles à utiliser... pourquoi?](#)

9.2. Outcomes of the tool

72. The outcomes of the tool should be:

- Young people/ learners can evidence the competences (knowledge, skills and attitudes) they gain by participating in statutory and/or non-statutory arts, culture and creative activities.
- The importance and relevance of the knowledge, skills and attitudes associated with cultural awareness and expression are better understood.
- New partnerships across a wide range of sectors and disciplines are developed and sustained with the common aim of promoting and further integrating cultural awareness and expression throughout policy development in Europe.
- European values are better understood and valued. Europe is a global leader in promoting values of democracy, inclusivity, freedom of speech and expression, participation and respect for diversity.

9.3. How to get started?

73. Ideally, this should be a joint project between the Council of Europe and the European Commission. It will involve several phases and the exact scope of future work can only be determined after the output of an initial phase is known.

74. To begin with, the Council of Europe and the EU Commission could designate a project lead who should:

- Devise and implement a consultation strategy to evidence the extent of the interest for the proposed award of stakeholders from a variety of sectors, including culture, arts, youth work, justice and health. The consultation should seek the views of young people, policy makers, arts, culture, youth work and education professionals as well as academics and employers. This could take the form of a questionnaire disseminated online through a variety of existing organisations and networks and would seek to gather information and opinion about local benefits and possible barriers.
- Research in more depth possible models of delivery and their associated costs including the possibility of establishing a new award and/or the possibility of adding a "module" to existing awards.
- Research possible sources of funding for the implementation of the award.

75. It may be that this work cannot be resourced from existing personnel in which case a tender for this phase of the project could be developed and suitably qualified external contractors sought. In either case the project lead should appoint a small advisory group for support and challenge. It is recommended that the advisory group members are sought from a range of sectors such as health, justice and social work as well as the more obvious sectors of culture and education.

76. The following partners could be approached for their input:

- **ACEnet**, an informal network of policy makers from European Education and Culture Ministries.
- **European Network of Observatories (ENO)**. ENO connects knowledge centres in European countries. It aims to facilitate the exchange of research findings and innovative practice, to stimulate new research in arts and cultural education and to support the development of arts education within the framework of global UNESCO-policies and guidelines for education, culture and sustainable development.
- **European Youth Parliament**: they should be central to the development of this tool, as part of its rationale is to support the development of young people's critical faculties.
- **European Youth Card Association**: a non-profit making organisation that represents 36 countries across Europe and is committed to supporting youth mobility and active citizenship to its 6 million card holders.
- Representatives of the following existing awards: Arts Awards, Cultural Competency Record and Youth Pass.
- **Former chair or member of the OMC group on Cultural Awareness and expression**: this group was time and task limited so no longer meets; but, having been involved in the process of developing

the Cultural Awareness and Expression Handbook, they could have interesting and well-informed insights to contribute.

9.4. Principles for development

77. To be successful, the project should build on sound foundations. In this respect, I believe that:

- Young people must be viewed and treated as integral partners (co-creators) in the planning and development of the tool.
- The diversity of European citizens must be respected and supported at all stages of development and implementation.
- Doing/ making/ producing/ creating must be integral to the achievements measured by the tool.
- Quality of cultural experience is vital and should be considered at every stage of design.
- The process must involve elements of self-identified goals, self-reflection and self-assessment.
- The accreditation process is likely to involve local, regional/ national and European level elements.
- Making best use of digital tools should be considered both for the recording and administration processes and for connecting likeminded young people from across Europe as part of the challenge.

10. Conclusions

78. Creativity and creative competences have an important role to play in truly transformational education and can help boost the conditions where children and teachers flourish and thrive. In today's context where teachers are working with an overloaded curriculum in a culture of accountability, it is too easy for classroom practice to become driven by tests and test results rather than developing young people's competences and preparedness for active professional and enriching personal lives. There needs to be a major shift in European education systems: modern learning will have to be framed not by test design, but by the pupils' needs and interests.

79. Developing learners' creative and emphatic skills and competences makes them confident and ambitious with high levels of self-esteem. They become motivated to explore and challenge assumptions, be ready to take ownership of their own learning and thinking. They become imaginative, open-minded, confident risk-takers, and appreciate issues from different perspectives. They can ask questions, make connections across disciplines, envisage what might be possible and not possible, explore ideas, identify problems and seek and justify solutions".²⁸

80. Modern schools need strong programmes both in arts and through arts, and artistic and creative ways to learn in an integrated way across the curriculum. For this to be put into practice, European schools need competent teachers to be able to teach transversally and creatively through arts and culture.

81. Based on the evidence and work already undertaken and cited above, I'm moving towards three key recommendations:

- The governments of member States should be encouraged to embed cultural and creative competences within their formal education systems.
- The governments of member States should encourage and support sustainable, long-term partnerships between schools, employers, creative industries and cultural institutions in order to give young people the confidence and capabilities that they will need in a world and economy that depends on innovation.
- These partnerships should:
 - involve a range of organisations in all aspects of the planning and delivery;
 - create sustainable and reciprocal associations;
 - encourage shared responsibility for planning, implementing and evaluating a programme;
 - be accessible to all, with specific attention to children starting from an early age and to the young people from underprivileged socio-economic backgrounds;
 - be research-oriented and project-based around inquiries that enable spontaneous situations and create meaningful learning opportunities.

²⁸ How good is OUR school, Education Scotland, <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/HGIOURS-Part1.pdf>.

- The Council of Europe and the European Commission, in collaboration with professional associations and involving the input of cross sectoral policy leads, should develop a Europe-wide tool for recognising the competences developed by learners whilst participating in arts/ culture/ creative activities (beyond those funded by Erasmus+ and including skill development elements).