



REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA
MINISTRY OF CULTURE

Mr. Glenn Micallef,
Commissioner for Intergenerational Fairness,
Youth, Culture and Sport

European Commission
cab-micallef-contact@ec.europa.eu

27.01.2025 No 9-1/93-1

Creative Europe programme

Honourable Commissioner Micallef,

I would like to extend my warmest congratulations on your appointment as Commissioner for Youth, Culture, and Sport. This position carries significant responsibility, and I am confident your leadership will contribute greatly to the EU's goals during this mandate.

In this spirit, I would like to bring your attention to Estonia's key positions regarding the Creative Europe programme, particularly in view of the public consultation launched by the European Commission on May 31st, 2024.

Referring to the AOB item initiated by Estonia and Latvia at the last EU Council of Culture Ministers as well as the joint letter signed by all 27 member states, Estonia emphasizes the importance of maintaining dedicated funding measures for the cultural and creative sectors, including the promotion of cross-border cooperation and distribution in the audiovisual sector. The Creative Europe programme has been vitally important for Estonian cultural and audiovisual sector. It has enhanced the professional cooperation capacity of creative individuals and cultural organizations, their visibility, and competitiveness at the international level. The funding has enabled the initiation and implementation of projects that would not have taken place without the "Creative Europe" support.

Regarding the third pillar of the programme, when supporting media and journalism, it is vital to ensure their diversity and quality, particularly in smaller member states and regions, while addressing digital changes, misinformation, and the strong link between media and security. In Estonia, where the threat of misinformation is heightened by the war in Ukraine, support for quality journalism is essential for combating propaganda and safeguarding media freedom.

Additionally, we feel the European Investment Fund's loan guarantee scheme has not been sufficiently effective, especially in Estonia and smaller member states. Its conditions need to be redesigned to be more accessible and ensure balanced geographical distribution. According to the

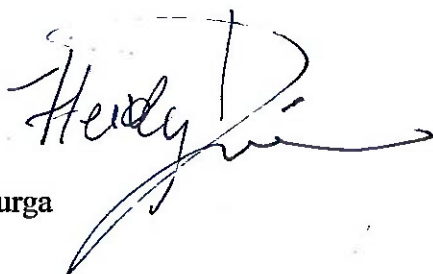
European Investment Fund's report the scheme's usage is heavily concentrated in three member states (Spain, Italy, and Portugal), with 21 other member states receiving under 1% of the guaranteed loans, highlighting a lack of geographical balance.

Furthermore, we support integrating gender equality, equal opportunities, and sustainable development goals horizontally across EU creative sector support measures, however, with flexibility allowing for region-specific solutions, especially in transport and connectivity. The Creative Europe programme's approach, allowing applicants to design projects based on these principles, should be continued to ensure that no one is excluded in achieving green objectives.

Regarding the funding application process, we emphasize that it should be accessible and administratively manageable for the sector, bearing in mind also the specifics of smaller countries. This could include positive discrimination measures, such as awarding extra points to lower capacity actors and ensuring geographical balance, providing support opportunities for projects with shorter durations and fewer partners. It is also important to reduce excessive administrative burden, for example, by using lump sums and advance payments, simplifying interim reports for funding usage, and implementing AI solutions for application form checks etc.

Finally, we believe the support measures must remain flexible to adapt to future changes and sectoral needs, as demonstrated during the COVID-19 recovery and the swift response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine with a €5 million cultural cooperation measure. We advocate for this level of flexibility also in future funding.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Heidy Purga', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Heidy Purga

Minister

Kadri Jauram +372 55652788
kadri.jauram@kul.ee