

**R1** Enabling creation, preserving memory. For the progressive cultural policy for Eastern Europe.

Organization: Executive Committee  
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Agenda item: 5. Resolutions

## Resolution text

1 Across Eastern Europe, culture is increasingly treated as a marginal or  
2 instrumental policy rather than a public good. Artists and cultural workers are  
3 often deprived of social security, forced to take on additional jobs outside the  
4 cultural sector, and pushed into precarious employment conditions, rendering  
5 long-term cultural work unsustainable. This leads to talent drain, burnout,  
6 emigration of artists and cultural workers, and the exclusion of people from  
7 less privileged backgrounds from artistic and cultural professions. At the same  
8 time, underfunding of cultural institutions in some countries, such as Serbia,  
9 is a political tool used to silence critical and anti-government narratives,  
10 further contributing to the precarity of culture workers and undermining  
11 artistic freedom. The fair pay and social security of artists and culture  
12 workers, as well as good, sustainable funding of institutions, should thus be a  
13 priority of cultural policy. The universal basic income for artists can be  
14 considered, following the evidence from pilot programmes, eg, in Ireland, that  
15 show strong socio-economic profits from such investments[1].

16 Participation in culture needs to be encouraged, especially among young people.  
17 There are several good practices already implemented in Eastern European  
18 countries, such as free museum entrance days programmes existing in Bulgaria or  
19 cultural vouchers covering entry to cultural institutions for students and  
20 teachers in Slovakia[2]. Young people need to be treated as creators of culture,  
21 not just consumers, and have spaces to create and participate in shaping  
22 cultural spaces and programmes in their communities. Culture needs to be  
23 integrated into education. There are some good ways to do it, such as school  
24 visits to cultural institutions or the Estonian initiative to organise the  
25 lessons with trained culture workers[3]. This needs to be tailored to the age  
26 and needs of children, to build the habit of enjoying culture, and go in pair  
27 with broader reform and modernisation of the educational system. Regional  
28 culture and local institutions should be financed to be attractive for young  
29 people, and cooperate with schools.

30 Systematic underfunding or neglect of cultural infrastructure also affects the  
31 cultural heritage. Archives, collections and documentations of historical and  
32 contemporary culture are often neglected or fragmented. Cultural products  
33 sectors as early digital art, video games, etc., are being lost[4]. The  
34 initiatives such as Stop Destroying Videogames[5] highlight the need for legal  
35 and institutional frameworks that allow preservation, archiving and public  
36 access to digital cultural works. Moreover, the neglect of digitalisation and  
37 the lack of open-source and free digital materials lead to further inequalities  
38 in access to culture, especially between big cities and towns and rural areas  
39 with little to no cultural institutions. Countries should follow examples such  
40 like Slovakiana cultural portal that has digitised over 180.000 objects from  
41 over 75 institutions.[6].

42 Promoting cultural heritage and collective memory is an important aspect of  
43 building resilience and decolonisation in some countries, such as Moldova or the  
44 Baltic States. On the other hand, historical revisionism is a key discourse  
45 point of Vucic's or Orban's regimes, and even in democratic countries, it is  
46 often a political tool used to consolidate power and spread hatred towards  
47 minorities and neighbours. For example, the Institute of the Romanian Revolution  
48 of December 1989 was led for 17 years by former president Ion Iliescu and used  
49 to promote himself and his political movements rather than conduct independent  
50 and reliable research. Similarly, the Polish Institute of National Remembrance,  
51 despite some successes, is widely used to legitimise current right-wing politics  
52 and whitewash Polish crimes (such as Operation Vistula). While promoting further  
53 decolonisation, states should depoliticise collective memory and focus on  
54 creating research institutions that promote high-quality scientific research,  
55 archiving, institutional intercultural dialogue, and funding for interactive and  
56 immersive museums.

57 With this, we urge the Eastern European politicians:

- 58 • Guarantee stable and independent public funding for culture, including a  
59 minimum budget threshold;
- 60 • Introduce social protection mechanisms, including healthcare, for cultural  
61 workers.
- 62 • Expand participatory cultural governance, including participatory  
63 budgeting and public involvement in shaping cultural priorities and  
64 programmes;
- 65 • Integrate culture meaningfully into education systems.
- 66 • Ensure public access to publicly funded culture, including the principle  
67 that cultural content financed publicly should be available digitally  
68 whenever possible and the implementation of good programmes from other  
69 countries.

70 CDN will contribute to these processes by:

- 71 • Advocating for cultural workers' rights and proper culture funding,  
72 including social security and fair pay, and promoting evidence-based  
73 policy arguments and good practices from Eastern European countries;
- 74 • Continuing its work to provide counter- and alternative narratives  
75 addressing populist use of prejudices and collective memory, supporting  
76 intercultural dialogue and decolonisation processes;
- 77 • Promoting digital access and archiving of culture, including open-access  
78 cultural content or initiatives to preserve endangered cultural forms;
- 79 • Working with its partners to develop youth-focused cultural participation  
80 programmes, with emphasis on active creation, such as a guidebook for  
81 leading school theatre or peer-led performances on important environmental  
82 issues

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- 84 [1] Department of Culture, Communications and Sport. (2025, September 22). Basic  
85 Income for the Arts pilot produced over €100 million in social and economic  
86 benefits. Government of Ireland. <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-culture-communications-and-sport/press-releases/basic-income-for-the-arts-pilot-produced-over-100-million-in-social-and-economic-benefits/>  
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- 89 [2] Council of Europe. Culture vouchers in: Strategy 21 - Good practices.  
90 <https://www.coe.int/en/web/culture-and-heritage/-/back-to-school>
- 91 [3] Council of Europe. Back to School in: Strategy 21 - Good practices.  
92 <https://www.coe.int/en/web/culture-and-heritage/-/back-to-school>
- 93 [4] Campbell, I. C. (2020, November 19). The Internet Archive is now preserving  
94 Flash games and animations. The Verge.  
95 <https://www.theverge.com/2020/11/19/21578616/internet-archive-preservation-flash-animations-games-adobe>  
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- 97 [5] European Citizens' Initiative. Stop Destroying Videogames. [https://citizens-initiative.europa.eu/initiatives/details/2024/000007\\_en](https://citizens-initiative.europa.eu/initiatives/details/2024/000007_en)  
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- 99 [6]<https://slovakiana.sk/en/about-slovakiana>