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To the European Commission

- *Executive Vice-President Valdis DOMBROVSKIS*
- *Commissioner Mariya GABRIEL*
- *Commissioner Nicolas SCHMIT*

To our colleagues in the European Parliament

- *Members of the Committee on Culture and Education*
- *Members of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs*

Brussels, 08 April 2022

Dear Executive Vice-President,
Dear Commissioners,
Dear Colleagues,

It is well known that the pandemic has put an enormous strain on the people working in the Cultural and Creative Sectors (CCS), especially performers (e.g. actors/actresses, musicians, dancers), depriving them of their sources of income, since live performances were not taking place for long periods.

This massive hit of the pandemic came against the CCS as one of the major employers particularly for youth and women. The EU's Cultural and Creative Sectors are an important contributor to the EU's economy, employing about 8.7 million people – approximately 3.8 % of the overall EU employment – and accounting for 4.4 % of the EU's GDP.

Nevertheless, there were vast differences in terms of speed and efficiency regarding the way Member States reacted to this problem.

The differences observed in Member States' responses to these urgent problems largely derived from differences that preceded the pandemic, most notably concerning social security systems and safety nets already established for CCS professionals – or the lack thereof. In fact, the pandemic exacerbated pre-existing problems, as CCS professionals had been facing difficult working conditions and problematic insurance schemes even before COVID-19, and in most Member States.

Thus, we believe it is of utmost importance to map in detail the social security systems and the safety nets that exist for CCS professionals in each Member State. Firstly, such mapping will provide us with a clear picture of what applies to each Member State as well as with the up-to-date and sector-specific data needed for a comparative study. Secondly, it will localise the good

practices already existing in this field, allowing their diffusion; the Commission could take the appropriate initiatives in this direction and Member States could organise peer-learning meetings on this subject.

The pandemic has revealed that there is a general lack of data regarding the CCS. It is high time to fill the gaps in order to help the policymaking both on EU level as well as on national level, and to promote the improvement of the conditions that CCS professionals face.

After all, any sound policy design needs to have strong foundations in terms of situation analysis and therefore reliable and updated data and overall information.

We also consider this as the first step towards a European Status of the Artist, setting a framework for equal social rights and working conditions for CCS professionals across the EU, safeguarding minimum standards in terms of income, social coverage and overall labour conditions.

Kind regards

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— Members of the **Cultural Creators Friendship Group*** —

**The Cultural Creators Friendship Group (CCFG) is a group of currently 26 Members of the European Parliament from 6 political groups and 14 different countries. More information at www.CulturalCreators.eu*