

EVA Statement

Stakeholder meeting on the Own Initiative Report on Cultural and creative sectors in the age of AI ([2025/2180\(INI\)](#))

02/09/2026

Rapporteur: MEP Sousa Silva (EPP/PT) – BUDG sub CULT

Dear MEP Sousa Silva,

Thank you for giving us the floor, and thank you for taking over the precious task of drafting the initiative report on “Cultural and creative sectors in the age of AI”, a crucial topic to which we are delighted to contribute by offering the perspective of visual artists.

European Visual Artists is the umbrella organisation representing 32 visual arts’ Collective Management Organisations from 28 countries and managing the rights of more than 250 000 authors of visual works.

Visual artists have always welcomed new technologies while experimenting creative expressions. However, at the moment, artists are suffering considerable damage as a result of generative-AI. They lost all control over the use of their works in the digital environment, and the unconditionality of copyright protection enshrined in the Berne Convention is severely compromised, further worsening their vulnerability.

Europe must empower authors and protect their rights, especially online and when facing abuse for commercial purposes. If the principles of authorization, transparency and remuneration are respected and properly enforced, European artists can keep contributing to Europe’s dynamic and vibrant cultural landscape.

Therefore, we encourage reaching the following goals:

- **An adequate and fair copyright framework for AI** that would benefit from the know-how and experience of CMOs to provide ad hoc solutions. Licensing for instance ensures **fair remuneration for artists and legal certainty for users**. Promoting ethical copyright practices and setting fair remuneration standards for authors is key, particularly for EU funded entities and projects.
- **Prevent the use of copyright-protected content without authorization and compensation**, which is possible through an unwaivable right for compensation for unauthorized scraping and training activities that already took place, and by supporting a strong licensing market for future uses.
- **Exceptions and limitations to copyright should not be a given in the digital environment and only cover non-commercial purposes**. Platforms and AI models do not share the same nature and objectives as cultural and educational institutions. Besides, AI training generates significant revenues that are not shared with the artists whose works have been ingested in the model. Access to cultural content should be attained through public funding at European, national and local level, rather than by compromising the livelihood of artists by denying them an important source of income.
- **Ensuring better working conditions and social protection** would result in more competitive culture and creative sectors, thus improving employment and economic growth in the EU.
- **Endorsing creativity** and preventing AI-generated content from overflowing the market and affecting the demand for human creation, thus avoiding the substitution effect that is already taking place in the image market. (For example by imposing some quotas for use of human- made works for publicly funded entities and projects.)
- **Adequate budgeting** should be allocated to culture as a separate strand, with clear funding lines and according to a strong and defined sectorial approach. Poorly funded entities are more likely to resort to buy-out practices and to prioritize AI output over human works.

At the same time, the structural imbalances in the sector should be addressed with the same urgency and commitment through measures that prove effective in the long run. Visual artists are freelance professionals regularly working in precarious conditions within a highly competitive art market and are frequently obliged to accept unfavourable conditions like low or no remuneration in exchange for visibility, and unfair agreements, such as buy-out contracts. Unique human creativity must be placed at the heart of European funding instruments.

Thank you for attention and we remain open to further share our expertise and to support your work.