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Course of International Public Policies

Discourse and policymaking: the impact of past discourse on policy continuity

The case of the European budget for culture from 2017 up to the 2021-2027 MFF negotiations

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Art is never finished, only abandoned

Leonardo Da Vinci

Acronyms

3P	Three Pillar of Sustainable Development program
4P	Culture as a Fourth Pillar of Sustainable Development program
AV	Audiovisual sector
CAE	Culture Action Europe
CCIs	Cultural and Creative Industries
CCS	Cultural and Creative Sectors
CE	Creative Europe
CEGF	Creative Europe Guarantee Facility
CoE	Council of Europe
CULT	Committee on Culture and Education
EC	European Commission
ECoR	European Committee of Regions
EDAP	European Democracy Action Plan
EP	European Parliament
EU	European Union
MFF	Multiannual Financial Framework
MS	Member States
NEMO	Network of European Museum Organizations
OMC	Open Method of Coordination
SD	Sustainable Development
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
TEU	Treaty of the European Union
TFEU	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Table of contents

Summary

Creative Europe is the European Commission only Programme catered to the Cultural and Creative Sector. Starting out with a budget of 1,4b euros in the framework of the 2014-2020 MFF, the Programme received an increase in budget in 2018 up to 1,64b, in light of its positive mid-term evaluation. However, in 2020 when the Covid-19 pandemic hit, the European Commission proposed a decrease in Creative Europe's funding, who got assigned a budget of 1,52b (May 2020). This led to the uprising of numerous advocacy actors, among which Culture Action Europe, one of the main "networks of networks" implicated in the EU cultural field. Following the advocacy mobilization, in November 2020, the budget finally got brought back to 2.2b and Creative Europe got inscribed among the Flagship Programs of the Recovery Fund. This thesis aims at shedding light on what ensured this policy continuity. To do so so, this thesis explores the impact of past discourse on policy continuity. In particular, it aims at observing how Culture Action Europe (CAE)'s advocacy discourse was able to instrumentalize the past integration of its discourse to construct a post-proposal advocacy that would narrow down policy options, thus ensuring policy continuity.

Through a discursive institutionalism approach, this thesis presents a critical discourse analysis of three bodies of texts: first, Culture Action Europe's 2017 mid-term evaluation of Creative Europe that will shed light on the baseline discourse of the advocacy actor. Then a discursive comparison between the 2013 Regulation establishing Creative Europe and the Proposal for its amendment in 2018; this will reveal if CAE's discourse was successfully integrated. Lastly, the analysis will tackle CAE's official online publications from May 2020 to November 2020; this last section will explore the so-called lock-in effect, meaning a discursive process through which an advocacy actor instrumentalizes previous discursive successes to narrow down policy options in a following discourse, thus ensuring policy continuity.

Keywords: Discourse, policy continuity, European Cultural Policies, Discourse integration, Creative Europe, Multiannual Financial Framework, Discursive Institutionalism, Past discourse, Lock-in effect.

I. Introduction

A. Creative Europe, Covid and the funding for culture. Leaving culture behind?

In March 2020, the world was in lockdown due to the Covid19 pandemic. The atmosphere was grim, streets were empty, and the future looked unsure. However, all of a sudden, people started supporting each other, singing from their balconies, spreading a message of hope through the language all humans understand: music, culture, creativity.

Be it through online concerts, streaming platforms, social media, culture supported us through these challenging times, but the favor was not automatically reciprocated. The Cultural and Creative Industries are among the ones that suffered the most the effects of the pandemic. With concerts and shows cancelled, tourism put on hold and museums closed, the virus has tested the resilience of the cultural sector like no crisis has ever done before. This brought cultural workers to ask for the support of the public sector, both at the national and supranational level, with pleads to subsidize this necessary yet often overlooked sector.

In the European Union, culture remains a national competence, with the EU only having supporting competences. However, the Union has put in place through the years multiple supranational programmes to help the cultural sector. In the context of the 2014-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework, the EU inaugurated the Creative Europe Programme, the only European support Programme for the cultural sector.

Creative Europe (CE) is the European Commission multi-annual framework to support culture and the audiovisual sector in the EU. It is the descendent of the previous Culture 2000 Programme and was established in the framework of the 2014-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) in which it received a total of 1,46 billion euro (0,14% of total MFF). Its budget represents a 9% increase compared to the Culture, MEDIA and MEDIA Mundus programmes for the period 2007-2013 altogether (European Parliament. Directorate General for Parliamentary Research Services., 2018). Creative Europe aims at:

Safeguarding, develop and promote European cultural and linguistic diversity and to promote Europe's cultural heritage.

To strengthen the competitiveness of the European cultural and creative sectors (CCS), in particular the audiovisual sector, with a view to promoting smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth.

The Programme responds to the EU strategic policy objectives included in the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and the European Agenda for Culture (idem).

Creative Europe is structured around three main sub-programmes: MEDIA, Culture and a Cross-sectoral strand. MEDIA is the strand with the most funding (819 125 440€ or 56% of the total budget) and deals with supporting the audiovisual sector (AV) and cultural and creative industries (CCI). Given increasing

digitalization, this strand is concerned with ever more pressing issues. Its main objectives are the promotion and distribution of audiovisual works and access to market, support for the production of television, programmes and video-games, increase access to audiovisual goods, the promotion of European films with the aim of bringing them closer to citizens, facilitate international co-production and build capacities and skills. It also interests itself in issues such as the protection of intellectual propriety (idem).

The culture strand aims at encouraging cooperation between cultural and creative organizations from different countries, encourage the translation and circulation of literary works, establish networks to improve capacity building and establish platforms to promote emerging artists and stimulating European programming for cultural and artistic works. It received the 31% of the total budget, meaning 453 444 440€ (idem).

The Cross-sectoral strand is the most innovative aspect compared to previous programmes. It includes a Guarantee Facility targeting cultural and creative sectors, it encourages the promotion of transnational policy development and aims at supporting a network of Creative Europe Desks. This strand is specifically designed to help SMEs access funds and mitigate risk (idem). It is indeed recognized by policy-makers that the CCS holds a strong untapped potential, both in terms of direct economic gains and in terms of fostering social cohesion (that would lead to improved political decision making), but cultural industries are subject to a very high financial risk (Bakhshi, Cunningham and Mateos-Garcia, 2015). Indeed, they suffer from a very high failure rate, they have limited administrative know-how, they deal in often intangible goods and are subject to a very strong demand volatility (Dümcke, Jaurová and Inkei, 2014; Primorac, Uzelac and Bilić, 2018). Anecdotally (i.e. non scientifically), art expert Michael Findlay (Findlay, 2012) has indeed remarked in its book "The Value of Art" how both the art market and the consumption of cultural goods in general does not completely abide by a classic dynamic of offer and demand. This makes them a high potential but high-risk investment which requires adequate solutions.

The Cross Sectoral strand was the one that received less funding (13% or 190 154 120€) although it presented the most innovative instrument: the creation of a Guarantee Fund for CCIs (European Parliament. Directorate General for Parliamentary Research Services., 2018).

In 2018, Creative Europe received its mid-term evaluation by the European Commission (European Commission, 2018a). Overall, the Programme was deemed successful, although some shortcomings were highlighted. In particular, they related to the difficulties in access to financial subsidies and in the insufficient amount of money that had therefore to be spread too thin (idem).

The first issue was deemed linked to a scarcity of administrative know-how among cultural workers. Indeed, all the paperwork required to obtain the funding proved sometimes too ominous, as well as not being worth the amount of money (idem). This issue was not unknown to policy makers, who had set up under the Cross-Sectoral strand the Creative Europe Desks, organizations tasked with helping cultural workers navigate the intricacies of bureaucracy.

Secondly, the limited budget did not manage to accommodate all the requests for funding, which pushed the evaluation commissions of Creative Europe to having to operate choices. Having a selection process is of course normal, however, the lack of funding pushed Creative Europe to favor some projects not on their artistic merit but rather on their economic viability (Schlesinger, 2015).This kind of evaluation is often cited as a problem in cultural policy, as it discriminates smaller CCIs, creating a trickle-down array of issues that are not only economic in nature but also social (Landow And Ebdon, 2012)

Overall, a large amount of the issues found in the implementation of Creative Europe are to be attributed, according to the Commission, to a lack of budget. Besides that, the instruments put in place in the Programme seemed to be promising. As recognized by the European Parliament: «Creative Europe is suffering because of its own success» and merits a strengthened budget"(Culture Action Europe, 2020d).

This midterm evaluation, combined with the departure of the UK that presaged significant budgetary losses pushed the organization Culture Action Europe, one of the main interlocutors between the EU and the European creative community, as well as a network co-funded by the Creative Europe Programme, to launch two advocacy campaign that targeted the next 2021-2027 MFF: Double for Culture (#Double4Culture) and Commit 1% (#Commit1%)(Culture Action Europe, 2018a).

Double for Culture aimed at doubling the overall budget for Creative Europe from 1.4 to 2.8 billion euros.

Commit 1% aimed at committing 1% instead of 0,14% of the MFF for culture, incorporating spending for culture in every budget line, implicitly asking for a recognition of culture as a trans-sectorial policy object (idem).

The two campaigns were picked up by numerous other organizations, among which the European Cultural Foundation, Europa Nostra, the Network of European Museum Organizations (NEMO) and other so called "networks of networks". Moreover, they received support by numerous MEPs that pushed those campaigns in the budget negotiations.

Initially, the first draft of the Commission for the MFF in May 2018 proposed an increase for Creative Europe's budget to 1.64 billion. Although not as much as asked for, it was a signal that the Commission was picking up on the advocacy discourse that asked for an increased budget for culture (Culture Action Europe, 2020n).

In their document launching the Commit1% campaign, CAE especially stressed how it was important to re-prioritize culture in the EU budget and that said funding could not be put aside in case of «unforeseen events» (Culture Action Europe, 2018a) . In the initial paper, they were referring to the consequences of Brexit that threatened cuts to the overall EU budget. However, little did they know this sentence would become even more relevant.

Indeed, when Covid19 hit, the Commission seemed to forget of its previous commitments and positive evaluations. In its first post-Covid draft in May 2020, it proposed a 7% (1,52b) cut to Creative Europe's budget

and the Council even proposed an even higher cut (Culture Action Europe, 2020e). Moreover, unlike some other programmes such as Horizon, Creative Europe did not initially make the cut among the flagship programmes of the Recovery Fund who could have compensated the lack of increased direct funding. So, the Creative sector not only found itself, because of its mostly performative or transnational nature, incredibly affected by the pandemic, but it also found itself completely forgotten by the European public sector. In July 2020, the budget was brought back to 1.64b by the Commission, but this was not a significant increase compared to the initial budget of 1,52b, surely nowhere near what CAE had been asking for years (2.8b) (Culture Action Europe, 2020n).

The drafts created significant indignation among those who has campaigned for increased funding, including the European Parliament who actively put its foot down in the negotiations. The issue that saw the opposition of the EP were in particular the budget for culture and the assignment of funding from the Recovery fund to Member States (MS) that have problems implementing the rule of law. From the beginning of the two advocacy campaigns, the EP has been the European Institution that has lobbied the most for the increase of the budget, in particular through the Committee on Culture and Education (CULT) and in thigh collaboration with organizations such as CAE.

After the uproar, the MFF was renegotiated and the outcome was brighter for culture. Creative Europe received a budget of 2.2b and got included in the flagship programs (Culture Action Europe, 2020a). What lacked was some kind of mandatory condition that would force MS to include culture in their recovery plan – as it remains a national competence - although this next step corresponded to the next advocacy campaign of CAE, #CulturaldealEU(Culture Action Europe, 2020c).

What is remarkable, however, is this dynamic of policy continuity, where despite a crisis, the budget was finally approved in continuity with the previous increase, even being granted even more money that pre-Covid drafts. In this sense, the negotiations for the budget for culture represent an interesting case study on the topic of policy continuity.

This leads to the initial question of: what led to the re-increase of the budget for culture in the 2021-2027 MFF negotiations?

In order to answer this question, this thesis explores the impact of discourse on policy continuity, in particular how Culture Action Europe (CAE)'s advocacy discourse was able to instrumentalize the past integration of its (previously successful) discourse to construct a post-May proposal advocacy that would narrow down policy options, thus ensuring policy continuity.

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II.   Review of Literature

A.   Theories of policy change: from rational choice approaches to constructivism

As the budget for culture had initially been increased in 2018 and then was re-increased later on, what my research question implies is a matter of policy continuity, which leads me to explore in my review of literature what independent variables could ensure policy continuity. In order to do so I'll be reviewing first the big theories of policy change/continuity and then reviewing in more detail what independent variable has mostly been associated with policy change/continuity in cultural policy.

Policy change is one of the core questions of political science. Scholars have been asking themselves for years why public policies appear and change, who influences their development, who and how there are evaluated and with what consequences.

Understanding why public policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation changes and who dictates those changes is crucial for both scholars, policy makers and advocacy coalitions alike. For scholars, it means providing more complex and hopefully instrumental understanding of socio-political issues. Moreover, it allows them to shed light on the dynamics of power that shape our world, both at the national and supranational level. For policy makers and advocacy coalitions, understanding policy change means identifying windows of opportunity to further their interests and exert their influence, regardless of what their end goal could be (Barbieri, 2012).

The literature on policy change is vast and sometimes results in over-conceptualization of terms that end up robbing academia of clear points of references. However, we can identify three eras of theorizing of policy change. Those three eras differ on three elements: 1) The level of ideas on which change is said to be operated 2) a conflict-based approach towards a more constructivist approach 3) the object of study shifting from policy outcomes to policy framing. John (John, 2018) categorizes these three eras as the first, second and third age of policy studies.

Concerning the level of ideas, Ideas in political science can be categorized in three ways: as policies, as programmes and as philosophies (Schmidt, 2008, 2016). Policies refer to the instruments developed to tackle a particular issue; they are the ones that are most subject to change. Programmes are conceptually situated at a deeper level. Programmes are organizing principles of orienting policies. They are akin to paradigms and define the overall narrative that is present behind a policy. Philosophies are ideas that present a hegemonic

character, in the Gramscian sense of the term. These are ideologies such as capitalism, core ideas and values who are not often re-put into question, at least not at the same frequency of the previous two and often not without a significant exogenous catalyst for change (Schmidt, 2016).

Works on policy change have had the tendency to evolve from understanding change to be motivated by rational choice calculations to understanding change as a matter of framing and construction of meanings, who inform policy.

There has also been a shift in academia from focusing on policy outcomes and trying to explain why those outcomes occurred, how actors reacted to them and why and how they modify and evaluate said outcomes, towards a more conceptual understanding of policy change, where there is a focus on framing, trying to explain who shapes policy problems, what does evaluation entail in terms of goals and how can framing (programs and philosophies), instead of instruments (policies), modify outcomes.

The first era regroups authors such as Lasswell (John, 2018) (1951), Haas (1992) and Simon (1955). It is characterized by a conflict-based approach, where States engage in a rational choice calculation of their interests and cater their policies towards them. In this era, the object of study is mostly policy outcome and policy makers are understood to strive towards the optimization of said gain. Although rooted in rational choice, authors do not assume perfect knowledge. On the contrary, authors such as Herbert Simon (1997) based their theories on the assumption of bounded rationality, meaning that the actions and decisions of actors are limited by imperfect knowledge as well as structural and bureaucratic constraints.

This era is also characterized by change being thought of as exogenous and limited to ideas as *policies*. In other words, there is the assumption that actors' interests are shaped by to macro socio-economic changes - rather than by endogenous dynamics (John, 2018). Haas also argues that policy change is path-dependent and incremental, with interests being constructed around previously established policies and institutional limitations (Haas, 2004).

A part of Haas's work argues that policy change is mostly exogenous, with actors reacting to external pressures and abiding by rational choice calculations framed in path dependent structures. Haas argued, when dealing with the topic of European integration, that increased inter-dependence of economic interests would lead to a spill-over effect that would culminate in full political integration. The main takeaways of Haas theory of policy change are the exogenous nature of policy change, its determinism, and the assumption that reality is objective and not constructed. Later in life, Haas had to review its claims on determinism, following the empty chairs protest that disproved his theory (Haas, 2004), stopping what was thought to be an incremental path of integration. In admitting the limits of its spill-over theory, he recognized a limit on the rational choice calculations of actors. Although not refuting it completely, he had to concede on the idea that interests brought forward by actors are not objective, but rather, subjective. In particular, economic profit and optimization were recognized as not being the sole motivation for policy change, with political and ideological interests

generating as much expected utility as financial gain (Haas, 1992). This shift was crucial in opening up the way forward to more constructivist approaches.

This era, although more focused on game-theory, introduced some useful concepts that led to the second era, namely its focus on bounded rationality - who brought scholars to focus on the elements that constitute the limits of rationality and policy development – and the idea that interests were rooted in much more than just economic interests' maximization.

The second era is therefore characterized by a more constructivist approach and focuses on the role and constitutive power of ideas. Scholarly works provided here a more complex accounts of decision-making. Sabatier's Advocacy coalitions framework is one of the pillars of this era (Sabatier 2007).

Sabatier argues that there are sets of core ideas about causation and value in public policy. Actors whose interest are linked to those causal links tend to come together, mobilizing resources and ideas in order to bring forward favorable policy change. In this context, «Change comes from the ability of these ideas to adapt, ranging around a whole series of operational questions and what works in any one time or place» (John 2003). Policy change occurs through interactions between wide external changes or shocks to the political system and the success of the ideas in the coalitions, which may cause actors in the advocacy coalition to shift coalitions» (Cerna 2013).

Sabatier's work also contributed to the understanding of policy change as it introduced a greater focus on beliefs, rather than interests – in the sense that beliefs inform interest and not vice versa. He highlighted how policy change is rooted in framing and it provided a first schematization of the relation between beliefs and structure – structure understood here as the ensemble of institutional cultural and socio-political limitations (Sabatier,2007).

However, although Sabatier argued that ideas are at the core of policy change, he did so by understanding ideas as *policies*. In other words, he argued that the advocacy coalitions modify *policies*, instruments to tackle issues, but do not, endogenously, fundamentally modify the core causal beliefs that determine policy goals. The change in policy goals would derive from stronger and exogenous shocks, such as macro-economic events (Hassenteufel and Zittoun, 2014).

Bennett (1992)'s drew upon Sabatier's work and tried to explain policy change in terms of learning processes, implementing Haas' concept of epistemic communities with the interactive side of knowledge exchange. Learning based policy change analyzed the social interaction, exchange of information and evaluation practices related to a specific policy.

Policy learning refers to « relatively enduring alterations of thought or behavioral intentions which result from experience and which are concerned with the attainment (or revision) of policy objectives» (Heclo 1974, in

Cerna 2013). Bennett also highlighted, much like Sabatier, how policy learning can be a vector to change *policy* ideas, but that deeper changes are dependent on macro-economic exogenous events.

In their work on policy learning, Bennett and Howlett (1992) have underlined how this theory of policy learning suffers from a lack of clear definitions and needs to be nuanced around three main questions, in order to provide a satisfactory frame of analysis of policy change. These three questions are: who learns, learns what and to what effect. These three questions generate three categories of policy learning: government learning, lesson-drawing and social learning. The first one takes government officials as actors, learning process related elements and leading to an organizational change. The second one informs policy networks who learn mostly about instruments leading to a programmatic change (i.e., the overall policy structure). The third one refers to policy communities who learn about core ideas that can eventually lead to a paradigm shift. In any case, even by operating this form of categorization, policy learning remains a hard approach to operationalize, mostly given the complex, multi-level nature of the learning process (Bennett and Howlett 1992). Not unlikely other approaches, policy learning is a theory that requires clear definitions but that suffers from an overwhelming incoherence of terms and definitions.

Akin to the legal dynamic of constitutional borrowing, policy change can also be led by policy diffusion. This can happen through imitation, economic competition or coercion. Imitation refers to the action of one governmental actor emulating a policy option developed and applied by other governments. Although this approach is more focused on the action rather than the process of change – as in policy learning – the two are nevertheless interlinked. They are two different approaches, but it is hard to deny that emulation is just another form of learning, although the degree of interaction between actors can even be non-existent (i.e., two governments actively shared or do not share lesson-learned and policy evaluations) (Meseguer and Gilardi 2009).

Economic competition echoes Haas theory of spillover effect. According to this theory, policy change occurs because avoiding change would result in negative economic outcomes. In other words, policy changes based on economic incentives.

As I have mentioned, policy change theories have shifted towards a more constructive approach. Baumgartner and Jones (2012) have provided a useful bridge between more functionalist and rational choice approaches towards constructivism. They propose the model of change of punctuated equilibrium. This model stands by the idea that there exist a vast number of ideas that compete for adoption. Once an external event that destabilize the political equilibrium occurs, one of those ideas becomes the dominant one. In this sense, punctuated equilibrium highlights the prominent role of ideas but also stresses how change is dependent on windows of opportunity.

As Cerna summarizes well:

Punctuated equilibrium is the process of interaction of beliefs and values concerning particular policy (termed policy images) with the existing set of political institutions (venues of policy action). It explains both periods of extreme stability and short periods of rapid change. Policy venues are the 'institutional locations where authoritative decisions are made concerning a given issue', and different constituencies can be mobilized (Baumgartner and Jones 1991). Actors seek new venues when they need to adapt to institutional constraints in a changing environment – they resort to framing processes or policy images. Each venue carries decisional bias because both participants and decision-making routines differ. As the venue changes, the image may change as well; as the image of policy changes, venue change becomes more likely (Baumgartner and Jones 1991: 1047» (Cerna 2013)

In its rendition of Baumgartner and Jones theory, Cerna highlights another crucial point in policy change theory: strategic thinking through framing. In other words, the idea that actors may resort to employing discursive strategies in order to dictate the framing of issues and guarantee the achievement of their desired policy outcome.

Strategy wise, actors employ rhetorical instruments (policy images), among which images and myths to construct a policy programme that will reveal itself more in line with the existing set of political institutions (institutions here is understood both as the bureaucratic and ideological establishments – policy avenues). In other words, Baumgartner and Jones theorize on the interaction between ideas, institutions and strategic thinking which happens both through cognitive (the content of policies and programmes) and communicative discourse (how, to whom and with which strategies those ideas are conveyed). (Jacobs and Manzi, 1996; Hajer, 2004; Schmidt, 2010).

The latest, and as I will argue for in a second, more relevant approach to tackle policy continuity in cultural policy is, however, Discursive Institutionalism. Discursive institutionalism represents a constructivist (if not post-positivist in some authors) approach that aims at explaining policy change through the constitutive power of discourse (which regroups ideas and their delivery). In other words, discourse here does not represent anymore just an expression of reality, rather, it shapes reality. It is with the works of Foucault and then Schmidt, Hajer and Jacobs that discourse acquired more and more importance in the study of policy change, as an independent variable to explain policy change/continuity. This approach follows in the footsteps of Baumgartner and Jones but pushes further the constitutive power of ideas.

This first section has reviewed the contributions of the main theoretical approaches of policy change studies in the delineation of the elements that could trigger policy change/continuity. Rational choice authors argue that objective interests such as economic optimization or power maximization determine the policy choices that actors employ and maintain in time. This approach puts a special emphasis on the impact of exogenous macro events in the creation of interests. Constructivist authors on the other hand focus more on the process of policy making, rather than on interest maximization. In this sense, they explore theories of policy learning, knowledge acquisition, advocacy coalitions. Although they still mostly focus on policy outcomes, they do establish the theoretical basis for the constitutive power of ideas. The approach that pushes the furthest the

concept of the constitutive power of ideas as an independent variable is Discursive Institutionalism. This next section will be dedicated to exploring more detail what independent variables have mostly been associated with policy change/continuity in cultural policy

B. European cultural policy: a policy field tied to discourse

The literature on policy change is, as I have tried to illustrate, extremely vast. As I will be focusing on the specific case of cultural policy, I shall now illustrate how in literature, discourse has been one of the main lecture keys through which culture has been analyzed.

European cultural policies have been explored in two main directions: through an identarian lens and an economic one. All two directions depend on the overall instrumentalization of culture.

The first one refers to the wide literature of how European cultural initiatives construct a "European identity"; what values are brought forward in projects, how the "European added value" is defined, what sense of identity is constructed through trans-national projects (Bruter, 2005, Psychogiopoulou 2018). This branch of literature is arguably the most prolific, exploring the interesting topic of the creation of a supranational identity. Being concerned with identity and dynamics of self-definition of actors, these studies make a great use of discourse as a method of research, mostly through micro approaches and qualitative interviews of actors who take part in European cultural activities (Staiger 2012, Sassatelli 2007). In this section of literature, policy change/continuity is explored in terms of both functional and ideological needs to create a European *demos* that would increase the EU's legitimacy (Abbasi, 2005, Todorov and Bracher 2008, Ross, 2011, Horet, 1999). As such, policy change is directly linked to a will of the EU to *construct* a cultural community and to the instruments it sees fit to achieve this goal (Lähdesmäki, 2017). Priscariu (2007) for example explores the continued effort of the EU in developing symbols in order to create a sense of shared identity. In this sense, discourse is tackled both as a descriptive tool and as a constitutive/strategic tool. On one side, discourse shows how cultural actors construct their own definition of what it is being European; on the other side, works such as Priscariu's show how there is a will of the EU to shape and control the definition of what being European mean. The focus on constitutive discourse is therefore present in a framework of identarian instrumentalization of culture, where discourse is used to achieve identarian outcomes (Bruter 2005, Prisacariu 2007).

The second direction through which policy continuity and cultural policy are tackled is that of the economic utility of culture, meaning how culture can contribute to economic growth. Research in this area tends to adopt a cultural economy (John, 2018) approach and, when dealing with discourse, tends to focus on the definition of what the term CCIs encompasses. Far from being just a matter of financial accounting, the definition of CCIs implies deeper assumptions about what constitutes a cultural activity and what activities are given relevance in a particular setting. Works on the definition of CCIs also often highlight managerial shortcomings of the supranational handling of culture, that fails in harmonizing data to ensure better governance (Sassatelli

2007, Čopič and others 2013, Primorac and others 2018, Đukić-Dojčinović 2002-2003). Moreover, the focus on the economic side of culture often reveals how certain too generous framings of the utilities of culture have the potential to actually damage the cultural policy field, which is tasked with way more than it can achieve (Bruell, 2013).

These two approaches that are taken in order to explain why cultural policies are introduced and brought forward all depend on a wider macro dynamic that has been described by Barnett as the governmentalization of culture. The governmentalization of culture refers to the discursive process of how culture is instrumentalized (Trotter, 1997) in order to serve the goal of European Integration, where European Integration is understood as a multi-level and cross-sectorial dynamic (Barnett, 2001). The instrumentalization of culture can be understood as asking the question: what can culture do? Can it foster economic growth? Can it contribute to the increase of standards of living? Can it ensure social cohesion? In this sense, the discursive construction of what culture can do informs policy decisions (and their eventual continuity) (Waterton, Smith and Campbell, 2006).

Barbieri, drawing on the specific example of Catalan cultural policies, argues that discourse has been linked to policy change in three ways: the first one is the decision-making process, aka how decisions made at the policy making process have influenced the evolution of cultural policy. He talks in particular about the consolidation of variants of instrumental policy, or the attempt to implement a systemic perspective. Always through discourse, the cultural sector (as in both artistic production and governmental management of it) can be linked to response to globalization, privatization as a response to the crisis of the Welfare State or 'national aggrandisement' and establishment of a self-defining ideological framework a response to the weakness of the nation-state (Barbieri 2012).

This goes to show that while other policy sectors are definitely influenced by discourse (see Hajer's work on ecology or Jacobs and Manzi's work on public housing), culture has the additional specificity of being a polysemantic term with a huge array of definitions that lends itself to multiple subsequent policy strategies.

To define what policy can do means therefore to asking ourselves another crucial question: *how* are the utilities of culture constructed? Asking such a question does not only mean interrogating ourselves on policy framing, where policy issues are presented and solutions proposed based on rational choice calculations, but rather on the overall construction of the nature of a policy field, where deeper philosophies, programs and policies interact in order to frame the place of culture in the European Union and that thus motivate or not a proper funding of culture. Such a question, that implies a focus on multiple levels of ideas and a strong focus on the constitutive power of ideas, can be addressed through the lens of discourse.

Trying to explain what ensures policy continuity through a functional economic or identarian outlook could explain what led to the re-increase of the budget for culture. However, my case study explored policy continuity is a moment of crisis, of paradigm failure; therefore, to try to explain policy continuity through the

independent variable of, for example, the maximization of the economic utility of culture seems a bit limited in a context where much wider programmatic shifts may be happening, with the EU that needs to reconsider its overall Future strategy for recovery. Therefore, I deem more interesting to focus on a more constructivist approach, trying to explain policy continuity through discourse. In the next section I will focus on detailing the nature and dynamic of discourse and how it can help explain policy continuity.

III.   Theoretical Framework

My initial question was: "What led to the re-increase of the budget for culture in the 2021-2027 MFF negotiations?"

In order to shed light on the matter I have reviewed the literature on policy change, from approaches focusing on rational choice calculations to constructivist approaches that focus on the constitutive power of ideas. The last approach I reviewed was discursive institutionalism, an approach funded on the concept that *discourse matters*, in the sense that narratives shape our realities and therefore informs policy change. Such a constructivist approach reveals itself to be the most adequate to tackle the question of policy change in the realm of culture. As I have explained, changes in cultural policy have mainly been associated to changes in the definition and instrumentalization of the term culture itself. Given the polysemantic nature of culture (Romainville 2015, Gordon 2010, Pratt 2005, Mulcahy 2006), issues of framing and of "what culture can do" have been the main drive for changes in policy options. In particular at the European level, where the governmentalization of culture has gone beyond the construction of a common identity, as the EU does not have a clear nation-state blueprint that would allow that.

Discursive institutionalism is, however, an umbrella term that regroups various authors such as Schmidt, Barbieri, Sabatier, Hajer and many others (Bacchi, 2010). Each author has focused on a particular dynamic of how discourse interacts with policy change. Schmidt, other than her efforts to codify the approach of Discursive Institutionalism, has mainly focused on answering the question of *why* discourse matters and what makes a discourse successful in terms of institutionalization of ideas (Schmidt, 2008). Hajer on the other hand has focused more on the *how* discourse is constructed, how and why narratives are constructed and how they are received in order to ensure policy change/continuity (Hajer, 2004). Sabatier focused on how, in a network's context, ideas are assimilated, changed and integrated (Sabatier, 2007). Other authors have explored the emergence and diffusion of discourse in relation to external shocks or on the contrary in relation to dynamics of policy learning and epistemic communities (Haas, 1992; Barbieri, 2012) These are only some of the many approaches taken towards discourse. It is therefore important to limit the scope of this thesis in order to be able to answer my initial research question. As I will now explain, I have decided to focus on the impact of past discourse of the creation of successful discourses that ensure policy continuity.

A. What is discourse and why does discourse matters?

In order to advance to my research question and my hypothesis, I need to first establish some basic definitions and dynamics.

The first theoretical question to ask ourselves is: what is discourse?

Discourse needs not to be understood as merely text or spoken word that would be only be descriptive of reality. On the contrary, discourse needs to be understood as both the *content* and the *social process* through which ideas are conveyed and through which they shape our understanding of reality. Discourse is therefore composed of a substantive side (ideas) and a communicative side. Discourse is constitutive and constituent of reality, as it elaborates facts, it creates meanings and establishes logical correlations between events (Schmidt 2008).

Hajer defines discourse as «a specific ensemble of ideas, concepts, and categorizations that are produced, reproduced, and transformed in a particular set of practices and through which meaning is given to physical and social realities» (Hajer, 1995).

Empirically, a discourse can be observed in what Foucault calls «a series of discontinuous segments"— whereby the term statement is not limited to speech acts but includes texts, tables and arrangements of things and policy architecture» (Foucault, 1998 in Feindt and Oels, 2005). Discourse needs therefore to be analyzed over multiple media, through a strongly context aware approach (which includes historical, institutional, social, economic and political considerations) that can inform a critical vision not only of what is said, but also what is omitted, why it is said, who says it, how and with what aim (Hajer, 2004; Schmidt and Radaelli, 2004; Schmidt, 2008, 2011).

As both the byproduct and the constitutive element shaping reality, *discourse matters*, in the sense that it informs our understanding of issues and informs what policies we see more fit to fulfill those issues. In this sense, discourse influences policy changes through policy framing (Hajer 1995).

As discourse is constitutive of reality and culture is particularly sensitive to issues of discursive framing, through discourse we can observe both what framing of culture motivated change (ideas) and what kind of discursive strategy managed to ensure policy continuity (communicative action). Thus, in taking discourse as my independent variable, I take into consideration both the ideas that are brought forward and the discursive strategies that ensure used to ensure a successful discourse and thus policy continuity.

As discourse operates on different levels of ideas, from more "superficial" *policies*, to programs and then to philosophies, it is sometimes hard to isolate a specific dynamic relating to discourse and policy change. In order to explain the process through which a discourse becomes integrated (meaning it becomes accepted as relevant by policy makers who then develop policies stemming from it) and is able to be maintained, thus generating policy continuity, it is therefore important to first provide a categorization of the level of ideas, that

determine the dynamics of their integration and their power to ensure policy continuity. This will allow for a clearer terminology later on.

Ideas in political science can be categorized in three ways: as policies, as programmes and as philosophies (Schmidt 2008, 2016). Policies refer to the instruments developed to tackle a particular issue; they are the ones that are most subject to change. In order to become integrated (i.e., successful, adopted by policy makers) ideas needs to have administrative and political viability in addition to policy viability. They also need to be compatible with national traditions, share understanding of terms (epistemic communities), have good timing and are often influenced by turnover (Schmidt 2008).

Programmes are conceptually situated at a deeper level. Programmes are organizing principles of orienting policies. They are akin to paradigms and define the overall narrative that is present behind a policy. Their success is linked not only to the viability of a program's policy ideas but also to the program's long-term problem-solving potential.

Philosophies are ideas that present a hegemonic character, in the Gramscian sense of the term. These are ideologies such as capitalism, core ideas and values who are not often re-put into question, at least not at the same frequency of the previous two and often not without a significant exogenous catalyst for change (Schmidt 2016).

In this thesis, I also start from the theoretical assumption that discourse integration, meaning formal or informal recognition of the validity[1] of a discourse leads to ideological dependent policy decisions. In other words, as discourse informs our understanding of reality (Schmidt 2008, 2001, Hajer 2006), it orients our problem-solving reasoning which therefore leads to determinate policy solutions. What this implies is that traces of a determinate discourse (be it philosophy, program or policy) can be observed in all policy measures. In simpler terms, If I for example adopt a policy that aims at privatizing national healthcare in order to reduce inefficiencies in the sector, I am abiding by a liberal philosophy, whether the policy makers that devised this policy officially recognize it or not. Of course, there are numerous grey areas between what can be political discourse and the philosophies underlying policies and the two do not always correspond (Schmidt 2008). However, if we are able to theoretically define the characteristic of a determinate philosophy, program or policy we can then try to find traces of them in the discourse (as in spoken text, declarations, policy measures (Freeden 2003). One example of this kind of reasoning is Schmidt's work on the roots of neo-liberalism, where she first identifies what constitutes a liberal philosophy and then identifies its elements in various policies and programs in order to track down how liberal ideas shifted from more superficial to deeper levels of integration (Schmidt 2016). It's important to mention how concrete policies can carry signs of deeper programs and philosophies and vice versa, because it allows me to pose the theoretical basis upon which discourse can be

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[1] Validity understood as in the appropriateness of a certain philosophy, program or policy to tackle the policy issue ahead both in terms of cognitive and normative arguments. (Schmidt 2008)

observed in the long run. Indeed, as I wish to explore the impact of past discourse on the creation of a more recent successful discourse, it's important to delineate this dynamic where a continuity can be observed.

Another relevant question that needs to be asked is: what discourse do we take into consideration as a relevant independent variable? Sabatier (2007) in its Advocacy Coalition Framework theory suggests that a wide array of actors play a role in pushing for the institutionalization of discourse. Actors can be politicians, civil society actors, epistemic communities. As all are producers of discourse, clusters tend to appear that center themselves around common cognitive and normative arguments. Against this assumption, I can empirically identify one actor that had a relevant role during the MFF negotiations:

As anticipated, I take the discourse of Culture Action Europe.

For starters, CAE is the main recognized interlocutor between the European Commission and the European creative community. CAE is a network of networks, that comprises a vast array of actors in different areas of influence and expertise. They list six areas of influence: European institutions, Local government, National government, UNESCO / Other UN, Non-Governmental Organizations, Educational Institutions, Independent Research Organizations and more than twenty-five areas of expertise. Their members are a large number of networks of professionals such as the ACCR - European Network of Cultural Centres-Historic Monuments, NEMO and many others (Culture Action Europe, no date). CAE focuses its action on advocacy and knowledge production and they're routinely consulted in the development of European policies. Moreover, CAE enjoys a good degree of political traction. Indeed, CAE campaigns are routinely supported by the CULT Committee and various MEPSs that have taken an active role in supporting the demands of Double4Culture and #CulturaldealEU. Among them Niklas Nienaß (Greens/EFA) and more recently prominent figures such as European Commissioner in charge of Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth Mariya Gabriel, the European Parliament CULT Committee Chair Sabine Verheyen and more recently even EP President David Sassoli that intervened in a high profile online debate and spoke in favor of CAE's advocacy (Culture Action Europe, 2020c).

CAE can therefore be understood as a relevant actor in the European cultural field in light of its political resonance, his representativeness of cultural stakeholders and its advisory role in the devising of EU cultural policies.

Having established that in the case of cultural policy discourse is paramount to policy continuity and that CAE represents a valid actor in the political and institutional context of European cultural policies, I can now formulate my research question:

How did Culture Action Europe's advocacy discourse managed to ensure policy continuity in the form of a budget re-increase for the Creative Europe Programme in the context of the 2021-2027 MFF negotiations?

I have therefore established my independent and dependent variable as, respectively, CAE's advocacy discourse and the budget re-increase (of 2.2b for Creative Europe in November 2020).

B.   Why does discourse becomes integrated and ensures policy continuity?

In order to formulate my hypothesis, I now need to further explore what elements of discourse could ensure policy continuity, aka what makes a discourse successful. By shedding light on this matter, I will be able to give some theoretical grounding to my intuition that previous integration of a discourse enables an advocacy actor to create a subsequent successful discourse. Therefore, this section is dedicated to highlight the links between past and present discourse.

Discourse, a I have said, is constituted of both ideas and their communicative action. Ideas are conveyed through the construction of narratives or storylines (Hajer, 2006). The underlying idea being that whether or not a situation is perceived as a political problem depends on the narrative in which it is discussed. In the same fashion, how a problem is presented informs different policy options. In other words, policy framing (Feindt and Oels, 2005). Narratives are constructed through the use of both cognitive and normative arguments.

Cognitive arguments refer to arguments that illustrate what is and what to do. They establish causal links between the cause of the issue and the solution, based on an interest-based logic and necessity. Normative arguments refer instead to what's good and what's bad, attaching value to political action in line of cognitive ideas. They reflect the public wants in policy; they reflect in programmes the core value of philosophies. (Schmidt, 2008).

A discourse that become successful, that is integrated, relies on these two kinds of arguments. Cognitive arguments need to demonstrate the relevance, applicability and coherence of the policy/program while normative arguments do better if they resonate with long-standing or newly-emerging values, and that complement rather than contradict the cognitive arguments (Hajer 2006).

As such, policy makers can integrate a discourse and develop subsequent policies because they deem it fit to tackle the policy challenges ahead, both in terms of effectiveness (e.g. privatization as an answer to the ineffectiveness of hospitals) and in because it is in line with the values in place in a determinate context (e.g. in a context with a liberal philosophy, privatization becomes a conceivable policy given underlying assumptions of the preference for of a minimal state implication).

Of course, the context and the manner in which a discourse is proposed plays an extremely important role in its adoption. For example, a discourse that had previously been disregarded could suddenly become successful following an exogenous event that implies a paradigm failure (Schmidt, 2006). Revolutionary changes can happen at moments of critical juncture when paradigm failures are made evident and the foreground cognitive abilities of actors experience a cognitive dissonance between the ideas in place and their relevance to the context (Harmon-Jones & Mills 1999, Anheier and Yudhishthir 2012). As such, big macro societal events

such as war or economic crisis can highlight the weaknesses of the current systems and encourage a change (assuming that the crisis is discursively recognized as such). Not all levels of ideas are equally likely to be affected by critical junctures. Indeed, policies and programs are more subject to revolutionary changes, while philosophies are usually the byproduct of an evolutionary change, where ideas slowly become part of the actors' background ideational abilities (Schmidt, 2011). What is important to highlight, however, is the idea that, when deciding to focus on the impact of past over present discourse, we can start observing how both the process and the outcomes of a previous programmatic shift are then used in discourse to highlight cognitive (i.e., stressing the concrete unreasonableness in terms of outcomes that would derive from backing down from commitments) and normative (i.e., how betraying a past commitment can imply a moral shortcoming) arguments. A first link between past and present discourse can thus be theoretically hypothized and observed through the mobilization of these two kinds of arguments.

Evolutionary change, as opposed to revolutionary, can be explained as a slow process through which policy ideas slowly become part of the background ideational abilities of an increasingly number of actors, up to the moment where they become hegemonic (Schmidt, 2011). Observing this evolutionary process is more complex than observing revolutionary change. Indeed, it is hard to define when a policy stops being a policy and becomes a program, or when this one becomes a philosophy.

Evolutionary change is indeed characterized by a slow bleeding of certain ideas to deeper levels of understanding, up to a moment where policy actors cannot act without addressing a specific concern (Schmidt 2008) or where actors unconsciously develop policies and programs that do not re-put into question certain ideological assumptions (Schmidt, 2016). For example, capitalism can be considered a philosophy, in the sense that no policy making actor can conceive a policy that ignores the basic concept of money or exchange. But policy making actors can also be forced to abide by certain ideas because of international commitments or political pressures, generating a path-dependent process of the integration of ideas.

In the process of integration of ideas, as lines between levels of ideas become more blurred, the dynamic between the three levels also becomes more fluid. As such, the implementation of a policy instrument that implies a certain understanding of an issue can reinforce a program, which in turns informs more policies, up to a moment where the underlying assumption of the policy becomes so widely accepted that it can be understood as a philosophy (Schmidt, 2011, 2016). In this sense, ideas are incremental. Policies and programs can indeed always be traced back to a philosophy, and traces of a philosophy can be observed in all policies and programs. In her work, Schmidt defines the integration of ideas as the inclusion of them in "background ideas" that can be understood as deep core, often unconscious values that pervade both society and policy makers, but also as «ideologies that set an all-encompassing perspective on reality, and which combine deep philosophy with a specified policy program and even policy ideas» (Freeden, 2003). As such, changes in policies may bring to a re-evaluation of programs than in turn will bring to a change in philosophy. Ideas circulate, not only in space, but also at different levels of understanding and the three levels are strongly

interconnected in an evolutionary theory of discourse and policy change. However, ideas are incremental in nature (Schmidt, 2011) and the more one idea is used and not re-put into question, the more it becomes part of the background cognitive abilities of actors and thus play a role, in a more stable way, in their policy decisions. The more one idea is integrated and less re-put into question, the more it has the potential to remain integrated in more recent discourse, this provides a second element from the past that could exert pressure in the present. Indeed, the advocacy actor may develop a post-proposal discourse that builds so much on previously integrated ideas that they become impossible to ignore.

To provide an abstract example of this evolutionary integration of idea: if the Guarantee Fund of Creative Europe starts being implemented over a relevant number of years, it starts being emulated at the national level and international commitments start to be undertaken where a Guarantee Fund for the cultural sector becomes a legal obligation, slowly the idea that the cultural sector has an economic utility and that it needs to be supported by the public sector will start to become more and more engrained. On the contrary, if the Guarantee Fund is scrapped because CCIs ideologically oppose themselves to an economic instrumentalization of culture and this attitude is taken up by a sufficient number of people, the program where culture needs to be subsidized will change, informing a philosophy where intangible goods are incompatible with economic profit. If then in turn, in its post-proposal discourse, CAE starts proposing measures that impose to Member States to earmark a part of their money to their national Guarantee Funds in order to access the Recovery Fund money, this will for one, further sediment the idea that culture as an economic utility and second, create a path-dependent dynamic where the previous economic framing of culture now has repercussions on the array of policy options available. Of course, the shifts are not this linear, and they are subject to a myriad of variables, but the examples serve the purpose of illustrating how all levels of ideas are interconnected and incremental.

In the case of Creative Europe and Culture Action Europe, an initial increase of the budget on the basis of the effectiveness of the CE program had already been established in 2018 (up to 1.64b euros) only to be taken away in in May 2020, with the Commission proposal of 1,52b euros for the Programme. As I have said, what is determinant in the allocation of the budget and other policy decisions for culture is the discursive construction of its utility, in other words, what can culture do for the EU. The initial increase of the budget can therefore be hypothized to be attributed to a discourse program change. In other words, the budget was initially increased because culture was deemed (cognitively and normatively) to be increasingly fit to tackle policy challenges ahead, thus deserving more money to be able to achieve such goals. This assumption, that will be verified in my case study, leads me to believe that there may be an interaction between the past success of CAE's discourse and the discourse that then ensured a re-increase of the budget during the Covid crisis. It is this interaction between past and present discourse I wish to explore. This leads me to my two sub-questions that will then help me to arrive to my main hypothesis.

The first question is: what was CAE's discourse in 2017, when it issued its mid-term evaluation of Creative Europe? This question cannot be answered without an idea of what philosophies, programs and policies are in

place in the European cultural field, as discourse is highly dependent on its context. Thus, to answer this question I will draw indicators of possible present narratives in my operationalization section. When I will have determined what CAE's discourse was, I'll be able to move on to my second question, which is: can we attribute the increase of the budget for culture in the 2018 CE proposal for Regulation to a programmatic shift? In order to answer this question, I'll compare the two CE regulations in order to observe if some programmatic elements of the initial 2017 CAE evaluation have been integrated. As they are *programmatic* changes and thus imply a deeper understanding of why culture needs to be funded (i.e., we are not only talking of the fact that "culture needs more money because it's not enough" but rather "culture needs more money because its current resources limit the scope of what culture can do as a policy field"), I can safely assume that an eventual increase in the budget was motivated by a programmatic shift, if such a shift can be observed.

Once I will have managed to answer these two questions, I will have established that we find ourselves in a context where past and present ideas can interact, where programs are integrated and inform policy decisions (increase of budget) and can thus play a role in the construction of a new post-proposal discourse.

I can then explore the dynamics between this past discourse integration and the discourse that finally managed to ensure policy-continuity. In particular, I'll explore if references to the past integration of discourse are definitive arguments around which a successful narrative is constructed. The indicators I will utilize for each of these three sections will be detailed in the operationalization section.

I am aware that this idea of past discourse and present discourse may seem abstract, but to put it in extremely simple words, this thesis aims at describing scientifically if and how advocacy actors can tell to policy makers "but you promised!" and make them keep their promises. Only this is addressed through the lens of discourse, because discourse is relevant in the case of culture.

1. Hypothesis of lock-in effect

I reiterate that ideas are incremental and they can be conceived at the level of philosophies, programs and policies. They interact and they become increasingly hard to ignore as they go towards background abilities (philosophies), thus nudging towards policy options, because they determine our problem-solving reasoning, framing issues and solutions. This leads me to interrogate myself on the possibility of a path-dependent dynamic, where past discourse limits the scope for future policy options.

Path dependency is used to describe the causalities and dynamics of a specific open-ended evolutionary process whose early sequences in time have major effects on the future development trajectory (Strambach and Halkier 2013). In this sense, I wish to explore the hypothesis that CAE instrumentalized the previous integration of discourse in order to create a narrative that would narrow down policy options for Culture, thus ensuring a re-increase of the budget.

My hypothesis relates to an original dynamic that I wish to develop: lock in effect dynamic.

While other authors explore path dependency in terms of territorial and economic variables, I wish to propose a theory where discourse ensures path dependency. I indeed interrogate myself on the relationship between all the advocacy work that was done before the Covid crisis and that had yield results and the success of the post-Covid CAE discourse. I start with the assumption that CAE May 2020-November 2020 discourse was successful, in the sense that it managed to re-ensure an increase. But this leaves me with the question: why was it successful? How has CAE able to construct a discourse that was successful in ensuring continuity?

In this thesis I interrogate myself on if the success of CAE's post-May proposal discourse can be attributed to the instrumentalization of the integration of past discourse. Instrumentalization is here understood as utilizing elements of past discourse (in the form of integrated ideas and commitments) to construct a successful narrative. A successful narrative is one where policy options are narrowed down on the basis of cognitive and normative arguments that highlight how a certain policy option is the only one available/fit to tackle the policy issues ahead. The aim of this research is therefore to observe the evolution of CAE's discourse before the Covid crisis and then how past integrated ideas and undertakings are then mobilized to create a discourse that fulfills the criteria for success, meaning that it creates a discourse where the re-increase of the budget is the only option available. When talking about only policy option available, I refer to a re-increase both being most desirable in terms of policy outcomes, but also the one that implies the most costs if not ensured.

I call this dynamic of discourse and path dependency, the lock-in effect.

The lock-in effect can be defined as a discursive process through which an advocacy actor instrumentalizes previous discursive successes to narrow down policy options in a following discourse. In this sense, previously integrated ideas become leverage instruments that create a narrative where policy continuity is the *only available option* (Wagner 1991) in the current context. This thesis will thus interrogate itself the idea that a successful discourse may be constructed through the instrumentalization of a previous discourse integration

My hypothesis is therefore that: CAE was able to ensure policy continuity because by referencing a previous integration of discourse it was able to discursively narrow down policy options.

Summing it up, the theoretical basis for my hypothesis of a lock-in effect is that - in an evolutionary setting in which CAE's discourse seems to be situated given the longevity of its demands – as ideas shift towards a background abilities level (become integrated), they become harder to ignore (Schmidt 2011), because traces of those ideas are present in subsequent policy and programmes commitments (Freeden 2003). From this assumption, I put forward the hypothesis that integrated ideas provide opportunity for leverage for future policy decisions, because policy actors can no longer ignore the ideas they have committed to (lock-in). Therefore, even if a crisis arises, providing the opportunity to back down from commitment, advocacy actors can exploit that leverage ensured by previous commitments to ensure policy continuity.

This theoretical framework has served the purpose of establishing the basic concepts related to discourse and why discourse matters and has provided theoretical basis upon which a link between past and present discourse can be hypothized. I have then illustrated Schmidt's theory of discourse integration, where ideas slowly become integrates in the actor's background cognitive abilities and thus become more and more sedimented as philosophies as they become harder to ignore. In this sense, ideas are incremental and interact on different levels of ideas: philosophies, programs and policies. Given these incremental assumptions, I have then illustrated how, if I can prove that CAE's advocacy discourse places itself in a logic of continuity (which will be explored through my two sub-questions) there can be the conditions to hypothize a dynamic of discourse and path dependency. This leads me to the development of my hypothesis that I define as a dynamic of lock-in effect. This hypothesis postulates that CAE was able to ensure policy continuity because by referencing a previous integration of discourse it was able to discursively narrow down policy options, thus ensuring policy continuity.

The next section of this thesis will be dedicated to my methodology and then I'll move on to my operationalization, where I'll draw indicators to observe CAE's discourse from 2017 and establish CAE's discourse in a logic of continuity. This will later allow me to identify if and how the ideas that had been previously been integrated are instrumentalized in the May 2020 to November 2020 (period which I here define as post-proposal discourse) to narrow down policy options thus ensuring policy continuity.

IV.   Methodology

To observe the dynamic of lock-in effect, I decided to employ a discourse analysis à la Hajer, meaning the examination of argumentative structure in documents and other written or spoken statements. This argumentative discourse analysis examines what is being said, to whom and in what context with a particular emphasis on the argumentative side of discourse and the construction of *narratives* that determinate policy framing (Hajer 2006).

This choice is dictated by both theoretical elements and considerations of feasibility.

Theory wise, an approach focusing on narratives is especially adapted to the analysis of an advocacy actor. Indeed, as policy framing has been one of the most important drives for policy change in the cultural field, it is only fitting that CAE would be interested in presenting a curated and convincing narrative of what culture can do and how it should be managed. Moreover, as I am dealing with the budget for a supranational Programme in a field where the EU only has supporting competences, discourse becomes even more relevant because other more practical courses of action are limited by the principle of subsidiarity (Gordon, 2007, 2010). Lastly, narratives put a strong emphasis on context, which is crucial to understand cultural policy, as it is a policy sector where numerous rationales, values and interests intersect.

Empirically wise, discourse analysis is fitting to tackle the empirical material I have at my disposal, which is comprised of official EU and CAE documents. EU documents are the 2013 Regulation establishing Creative

Europe (European Parliament and European Council, 2013) and the following 2018 Proposal for Regulations establishing Creative Europe (European Commission, 2018b). The proposal was later approved but the document contains an initial memorandum where the rationale behind changes in the program are explained in detail, giving me more insight in why the EU implemented those changes. CAE's documents comprise: CAE's mid-term evaluation of Creative Europe (2017) (Culture Action Europe, 2017) and the CAE articles reacting to the May 2020 MFF proposal that have been issued on CAE's website (from May 2020 to November 2020, date of the 2.2b increase of the budget). CAE's articles include statements, reflection papers, campaigns, open-letters, news articles published on their website. In an effort to provide a more complete description of CAE post-proposal discourse, I will also be taking into consideration articles that are linked and cross-referenced in the May-November articles. I will not highlight every time where the article outside the timeframe is linked, but as I proceeded from first analyzing the May to November articles, it can be assumed that all articles and documents linked stem from the right timeframe. Finding relevant empirical material for this thesis has been extremely hard and has greatly conditioned the choice of my theoretical approach. Indeed, the data on the cultural field is extremely scattered which eliminated the possibility for more quantitative approaches.

The choice of my empirical material has been operated on theoretical grounds. Indeed, in order to prove the presence and explain the dynamic of a lock-in effect, I need first to empirically assess two elements: first, I need to determine what kind of discourse CAE has been putting forward since 2017. Second, I need to prove that this discourse has been integrated in the second Creative Europe Regulation, so that I can later prove that there was a reference to such integration. Having to follow this structure and having a limited amount of time and pages, I needed to find empirical material that would well encapsulate a wider discourse. In this sense, the CAE mid-term evaluation is the culmination of a big amount of research on the impact of culture on society and it is the establishing document that highlights what CAE perceives as being the strengths and weaknesses of the only EU Programme catered to culture. Evaluation documents and policy formulation are indeed often considered as being extremely telling in the observation of discourse, as the choice of evaluation criteria implies a purposeful choice of what elements become included in the construction of the narrative. They indeed determine what the potential of a Programme is, what its goals should be and through which instruments it should achieve it, thus revealing deeper ideological assumptions about society and the role of culture in it. CAE's mid-term evaluation focuses especially on the Culture strand, but as I will later detail at the beginning of my case study, this does not hinder the validity of the research or the appropriateness of the report as empirical material. A similar criterion of needing a significant document that would encapsulate a discourse was applied in choosing the two Regulations establishing Creative Europe. Indeed, those two documents encapsulate the main elements of policy framing and thus of the discourse behind a policy: why do we need culture, what are the issues at play and what instruments do we propose. Thus, comparing two regulations

allows me to observe if the elements I just highlighted have changed or not, going towards the direction of CAE's advocacy or not.

The choice of CAE's articles reacting to the MFF proposal was operated because of several reasons. First of all, CAE's website is extremely active, organized and up to date which allows me to have an easy access to the ideas that CAE wishes to bring forward. On the same line, the documents are easily accessible, which has been an issue for previous attempts at this thesis. Secondly, the articles issued on the website represent official statements of CAE, which is important in order to have a coherent body of texts that expressed the official view of the advocacy actor. In this sense, CAE is also interesting as case study, because as a network of networks it provides a reasonable estimate of the « pulse » of the European creative community.

In order to confirm my hypothesis of lock-in effect, I will start off by analyzing the core of the advocacy discourse of CAE by providing a critical discourse analysis of CAE's 2017 evaluation of Creative Europe. In this section, I'll highlight how the program brought forward is that of Culture as Fourth Pillar of Sustainable Development, for which I will have established indicators in the next section (Operationalization). Then, I'll verify if we can find traces of this program in the 2018 subsequent proposal for a new Creative Europe. In this section, I'll highlight how the program has been integrated and how policies have been catered to it. Thirdly, I'll analyze the articles posted on the CAE website relating to the problematic MFF May 2020 proposal (the one where cuts were proposed). I will take all the articles on the subject issued on CAE's website and I will analyze what discursive strategies were put in place (if referencing or not the past integration of discourse) and verify my hypothesis and thus my lock-in effect theory.

The next section of this theoretical framework will be dedicated to highlight the main policies, programs and philosophies of the European cultural policy field. As I have mentioned, discourse analysis needs to be implemented through a strong context-aware approach, which I wish to delineate here. The section will illustrate how over time, there was an evolution of both philosophies, programs and policies that varied accordingly to the perceived utilities of culture, as well as general EU priorities in terms of development and growth. This next section will therefore be useful to operationalize my hypothesis, providing me indicators of the possible programs that are at play in the European cultural field.

V.   Operationalization

A.   Why does culture matter for the EU? Philosophies, programs and policies of EU cultural policy: from instrumental to conceptual understanding of culture

Culture has been an often contended and problematic policy object (Regourd 2004), starting from the very own definition of the term "culture" (Grey 2007).

Culture has been linked to the notion of creation of artistic goods, in a context where there is a pre-established idea of what is considered artistic. Following this idea, the policing of culture can be understood as the management of creative industries and high-art (definition of which is also contested but

generally includes: opera, theatre, dance, painting, sculpture). A more anthropologic understanding of culture provides us with a greater focus on the ways of life, daily behaviors, traditions, and myths of a particular group of individuals. A third interpretation can touch upon the notion of civilization, of heritage and frames of understanding and self-representation (Mulcahy, 2006).

Hesmondhalgh speaks about symbolic creativity (Hesmondhalgh 2013) as he wished to detangle it from the often-reverential fear that scholars may have towards the act of artistic creation. The same author has also rightfully highlighted how to study cultural production is to understand the relationships between culture, society and economy. In reality, culture is not a term that can be pinned down to a unique definition. Its understanding depends on the field of study, on the motivations of the actors trying to define it, on the cultural background itself. Culture is, like the quintessence of discourse, an interactive social phenomenon that shapes but is also shaped by its social and historical context.

If no agreement exists among scholar of the definition of culture, one thing that is agreed upon is the multidimensionality of culture. Romainville (2015) lists five main understanding of the term "culture": identarian, as in a constitutive element of a community. Aesthetic. Economic as in a source of revenue and innovation. Social, as a way of reproduction of social hierarchy. Democratic, with culture as a tool for democratic training of citizens and the creation of public spaces. All of those elements compose culture as a policy object and can be harnessed in cultural policy. The strategies for harnessing said culture, however, vary greatly. As Soini and Birkeland (2014) highlight, the definition of culture has been linked not only to different philosophies, but also to different political currents, depending on the overall objective of the governmental action.

A relevant breakthrough in the study of cultural policy and culture as a policy object came from Barnett that theorized the so called governmentalization of culture (Barnett, 1999). In other words, he suggested to observe how the different utilities of culture were gradually politicized to further broader objectives, such as democratic construction, economic development, or social cohesion. The author also suggested that culture may had become a way for different actors to legitimize their position, advance ideological claims or increase effectiveness according to their specific goal.

In the case of the European Union, culture has been framed in different ways all throughout the years. This different framing has determined the goals and approaches undertaken to handle culture at a supranational level. The literature reveals two main understandings of culture, around which both academia and policy have been structured: Culture as an instrumental tool, be it for economic or social and identarian (as in creating a feeling of unity, a shared sense of fate and contributing to the personal well-being of individuals) goals, or in a conceptual understanding, where culture is though as a goal in itself, and as a lecture key to rethink, instead of achieve, economic, social and identarian goals. This evolution follows along a gradual decentralization of public action and an increased widening of the definition of culture from strictly high arts to more popular artforms and commercial innovation (Hesmondhalgh and Pratt, 2005). Moreover, the underlying philosophy present in the EU varied, going from a more hegemonic liberal philosophy to a

philosophy of Sustainable Development. When talking about philosophies, I mean the ideological and institutional context in which European cultural policies are developed and implemented.

1. The instrumental dichotomy program: between liberal philosophy and multiple utilities of culture.

We have established that discourse matters when it comes to policy change, we have also established why discourse matters for cultural policies. It is now time to ask ourselves, why does culture matter for the EU? As mentioned before, it is the framing of culture as a policy object that has the most affected the approaches undertaken to support and finance culture at the supranational level (Grey 2007, Bennett 1989, Lähdesmäki 2017). Littoz-Monnet (2007, 2012) argued that the construction of policy problems had direct effects on what policy option seemed more adequate, this includes what funding seems to be necessary for a policy. In other words, that the way through which actors constructed the meanings of culture as a policy object, of its utilities and of its relation to the public sector has shaped the policy solutions that were adopted and how much was spent. Littoz-Monnett (2007) argues in particular that from the 70s, the development of European cultural policies was the result of a conflict between two very distinct advocacy coalitions (Sabatier, 2007), the dirigiste one and the liberal one, among which the liberal one managed to prevail overall (although with some nuances). The aim of this section is to better define the philosophies, programs and policies of the European cultural policies.

Drawing an evolution of those three levels of ideas will be useful to understand in what context the advocacy discourse of CAE takes place: what are the main debates that have shaped the cultural field, what are the - often parallel – philosophies that collaborate and conflict and lastly, how the EU responded in programs and policies to those elements. If we want to ask how discourse was able to ensure policy continuity by referring to previous programmatic commitment, we need to understand what those commitments were and where they came from.

First of all, the EU can be thought of as a space that is based on a liberal philosophy (Littoz-Monnet, 2007). This can be tracked down to the economic scope of the ECSC and its reliance on economic interdependence (Haas, 2004). In relation to the liberal philosophy, the EU first developed an attitude towards culture that can be understood as *instrumental*, meaning that culture was understood as a *tool* to achieve objectives in other policy areas, such as economic development or political legitimacy (Lähdesmäki 2017, Kuhn 2019). Even when the EU engaged in more nation-state patterned cultural policies, such as the creation of European symbols, they aimed at fulfilling a lack of democratic legitimacy given by the limits of spill-over economic integration (Sassatelli 2002, Shore, 2000, Garben, 2015, 2019).

This leads to the question of why and how culture was instrumentalized. The two main utilities of culture that were understood as being of interest in the EU were its economic utility, meaning how cultural activities (museums, performances, AV sector, book translations) could generate revenue and employment and its

symbolic utility, meaning how culture is able to create a shared sense of identity, collaborate to the well-being of a person and increase political legitimacy.

The interaction between the liberal philosophy of the EU and an instrumental approach to culture generated what Sabatini calls a dichotomized approach to culture.

A dichotomized approach to culture understands culture as *a tool* to obtain policy outcomes in the economic field and (separately) in the social field. Policies wise, this instrumental dichotomy crystallized in a configuration that saw culture as being discursively and policy wise divided between Culture and Creative Industries (CCIs) and heritage/performance. CCIs became understood as those holding the most economic interest and that, as such, needed to be the main focus of subsidies. In particular, the audiovisual field became extremely relevant, especially given the increasing digitalization and commercial issues related to the production and distribution of audiovisual content (Sabatini, 2019, Kuipers, 2011, Ellmeier 2003, Crusafon, 2015). On the contrary, heritage and performance art, although fully recognized as having an intrinsic value on the transmission of ideas and creation of cultural capital, remained subordinated to the liberal philosophy that, although recognizing their abstract value, discursively circumscribed them to be the less productive ones, which in turn informed lower funding and lower interest in them (Sabatini, 2019, Menger, 2010).

It's important to remark, that, although the instrumental dichotomy program could be easily understood as a divide between economically sustainable cultural industries and an "arts for art's sake" approach, this is not the case. The divide is indeed not situated at a programmatic level, where culture is understood as having both utilities that are both important, but at a policy level, where policy goals and instruments are not in balance and they lean more towards the exploitation of the economic utility of culture, both in the AV and Culture sector. The consequence of such an approach that favors in policies the economic utility of culture, is that the AV sector is brought at the forefront, as it is able to generate more revenue, while the cultural sector isn't prioritized. I stress the idea of prioritization and balance, in the sense that no cultural policy has ever been developed saying that "culture is nothing but an economic asset"[2], but policy instruments have been developed that prioritize and aim at exploiting one utility over the other.

In other words, an instrumental dichotomy approach to culture does not negate the double tangible and intangible utility of culture, it does, however, treat those utilities as separate and worthy of separate logics of investment.

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[2] In her work, Littoz-Monnet argues that cultural policy has been shaped, from the 1970s by two advocacy coalitions, the liberal and the dirigiste that advocated respectively to treat culture as a normal economic asset while the other advocated for the cultural exception. However, even in this case there is no denying that culture possesses two utilities. In this case, there is a discrepancy in terms of policies, not programs. Indeed, both understand culture as having two utilities but one claims that these two utilities are better fostered by deregulation (policy) while the other by interventionist measures. As I mention Littoz-Monnet work often, I felt the need to specify that this thesis does not contradict her work.

An interesting discursive turn that has developed in reaction to this dichotomy approach, has been a tendency towards an over-estimation of culture's utilities and financial capabilities in order to obtain more public support (Grey 2007). Instead of reprioritizing the symbolic utility of culture for its own sake, some advocacy coalitions have tried to show how culture (as in performance and heritage) can be as good the more commercial AV sector. Anecdotally, as I spoke to one of the main figures at the Creative Europe Italian Desk at the initial stages of my thesis, to gather some information, she told me (paraphrasing): «you should do a thesis where you can show how culture can be an asset to the economy, to show policy makers that culture is valuable! ». Although culture has an undeniable economic utility, an overestimation can sometimes even work against the cultural field, as culture becomes tasked with more than it can actually chew, especially in economic terms, resulting in the perception of an underachieving policy field (Gray 2007).

But what are the indicators that could reveal an instrumental dichotomy program which, I remind, is characterized by an unbalance between economic and symbolic goals and that frames culture as being a tool to achieve such goals? I decided to take two elements: evaluation criteria and synergies (or lack thereof).

Evaluation criteria have been one of the main debates that have and continue to animate the cultural policy field both at the academic and policy level. As instruments that aim at evaluating if a cultural policy is successful or not, they hold an extreme discursive importance. Indeed, evaluation criteria reveal strong implications about what utilities of culture are brought at the forefront and how they should be managed. Evaluation criteria are also especially significant if we are looking at identifying a focus on the economic versus symbolic utility of culture, as the question of the value and evaluation of art has been at the core of cultural policy the beginning of European cultural policies. I will not, of course, deal on the philosophical implications of the question of what is the value of art. What I will do instead, is focus on the issue of evaluation criteria, as they are a crucial part of policy, they are useful to understand how the liberal philosophy of the EU interacts with programs and policies and they remain at the center of the current debates on the EU Cultural Programmes (Labaronne 2017, Molino and Zuleeg, 2011).

First of all, the liberal philosophy of the EU makes it biased towards quantitative criteria of evaluation, in particular economic criteria (Sabatini, 2019). This is because of the following reasons. Firstly, in a context where the EU needs to respect the imperative of plurality and subsidiarity and thus cannot express itself on the artistic merit of cultural activities (Gordon, 2007), quantitative indicators provide a good, more neutral gauge of the impact of cultural policies. Secondly, some of the positive outputs of culture are objectively hard to quantify (Merli, 2002). How should we go about measuring the impact of a ballet performance on the overall socio-economic development of a country? Is the enriching experience of that performance going to stimulate the purchase of other cultural goods? Is it going to boost innovation? As it may be evident, it is extremely hard to correctly evaluate the positive outcomes of cultural policy. The symbolic outputs of cultural policy are also extremely long-term and abstract, which is not ideal when it comes to justifying a policy expenses, hence quantitative economic indicators are easier to employ. Thirdly, given the lack of exclusive competences of the

EU in culture, qualitative criteria would need to cater to the specificity of each MS, which is almost impossible. The issue is that each MS has a very specific socio-cultural context in which cultural projects are embedded. As such, an Italian cultural project may be deemed successful is it contributes to the social cohesion between north and south of the Country (Malaguti, A., Gentilucci C., 2015). On the contrary, a German cultural project would not be concerned with such issues, as their cultural policy strategy is geared towards a strong decentralization. The need to develop ad-hoc indicators while acting at the supranational level clearly limits the scope of European cultural policies who need to develop other ways to evaluate their action, going towards economic indicators (Merli, 2002).

This choice and preference towards economic and quantitative evaluation criteria in the European Union can be understood as a characteristic of the instrumental dichotomy program for culture. Indeed, by focusing on quantitative criteria and especially economic criteria, the divide between those strands of culture that can and cannot perform well under those criteria is deepened and, in this sense, the symbolic utility of culture (which suffers from quantitative criteria) is submitted to the economic utility (Sabatini, 2019). Therefore, a push and the adoption of quantitative instead of qualitative evaluation criteria shapes the policy makers understanding of what culture can do and through what instruments, which is at the core of creating discursive narratives of policy framing.

The second indicator of an instrumental dichotomized approach to culture is the lack of focus on synergies, as synergies imply a non-instrumental approach to culture (Ostrom 1997).

Synergies refer both to the relationship between utilities of culture and between culture and other policy fields.

Between the symbolic and economic utility of culture, a synergy can be understood as a balanced approach between economic and symbolic goals. Synergies are thus understood as a situation where a focus on the symbolic utility of culture is though as beneficial for the economy that in turn fosters more symbolic utility. This allows goals in cultural policy to establish a virtuous cycle that balances economic and symbolic policy outcomes.

Between culture and other policy fields, synergies can be understood as an approach to policy-making where different policy fields are though as putting out mutually beneficial policy outcomes and where knowledge from different policy fields can mutually inform better goal setting. In the case of culture, this is understood as a non (strictly)-instrumental approach to culture, where culture is yes, seen as a tool to achieve economic prosperity, but also as a lens that can inform goal setting in fields such as urban regeneration and education.

In other words, synergies recognize the presence of culture (both in the form of artistic creation and in the anthropological sense) in all other policy fields and aim at harnessing this potential to provide optimized goal setting and outcomes.

The mention of synergies and an instrumental dichotomy program of culture are discursively incompatible: indeed, synergies imply approaching culture in a way that does not *only* see culture as being a *tool,* an instrument to achieve outcomes in other policy fields, but rather it also sees culture as a lens through which establishing goals and as an end on its own. In an instrumental dichotomy approach, on the other hand, culture is *solely* understood as an instrument which also does not benefit with the interaction with the liberal philosophy.

Summing up, the characteristics of an instrumental-dichotomy program of culture are:

1) A preference or a utilization of economic and quantitative evaluation criteria (policy instrument).
2) An unbalance between economic and symbolic/artistic goals (biased in favor of the economic ones).
3) A programmatic recognition of the economic and symbolic utility of culture but development of policies that do not exploit synergies between them.
4) Culture being portrayed as an instrument, rather than as a goal in itself or as a lens to inform other policy objectives.

2. The instrumental dichotomy program and new philosophies: Sustainable Development and culture.

a)   Sustainable development as a philosophy in the EU: policies and international commitments

This instrumental dichotomy program for culture has persisted in European cultural policies, with advocacy actors routinely lamenting the shortcoming highlighted above. However, it is currently present in a new philosophical context of Sustainable Development. As I have explained, the instrumental dichotomy program stems from a liberal philosophy that is an integral part of the European construction (Schmidt 2011) and that has shaped cultural policies through the imperative of deregulation (Littoz-Monnet 2007). However, as I have previously explained, ideas and philosophies are not hermetically sealed elements and the rise of new philosophies have the potential to change the programs of cultural policy. The instrumental dichotomy program is indeed experimenting some interactions with new discourses that are arising in the EU.

As I mentioned, discourse is dependent on context, and as new philosophies became integrated – meaning becoming part of the actor's background ideas – new discursive programs concerning culture appeared. Background ideas are defined as ideologies that set an all-encompassing perspective on reality and which combine deep philosophy with a specified policy program and even policy ideas (Freeden, 2003).

The new philosophy that gradually became integrated in the EU general policy context is that of Sustainable Development (SD) (Aghazadeh, 2019).

The core principle of Sustainable Development is the concept of intergenerational equity, as explained in the Rundtland Report of 1987 that conceptualizes sustainable development as «development that meets the needs

of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (United Nations, 1987» Traditionally, Sustainable Development has been understood as being comprised of three pillars: economic growth, environmental balance, and social inclusion (Secretariat, 2007).

In 2001, UNESCO's Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity first introduced culture as integral part of human rights and development, advocating for the cultural exception. In 2005, the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, a legally binding document, ratified the principle of the cultural exception, reinforcing the sovereignty of States to establish protectionist and supporting measures in their cultural policies in order to protect the dual utility of culture.

The example of the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions is a good chance to make a small digression in order to illustrate the idea that, although a Sustainable Development philosophy was slowly integrated in the EU, philosophies are never hermetically sealed elements. On the contrary, they interact and evolve over time thanks to the implementation of policies derived by different programs, advocacy movements, actor's interests. In this evolutionary vision of policy change, the integration of a discourse from policy and program to a philosophy is made up of a significant number of measures that end up institutionalizing certain ideas as part of the actors' background ideas or background ideational abilities.

The adoption of the Convention may indeed seem to be at odds with an instrumental approach to culture, as it puts forward a more holistic vision of culture, which would falsify the basis assumption of this thesis, which is that a program of culture as a Fourth Pillar of Development is not yet integrated in the EU, at least not before 2018. However, a look at the signatories of the Convention and at the EP recommendations for Member States present at the negotiation reveals another story.

The recommendation highlights the importance of establishing the principle of cultural exception internationally, as total liberalization without subsidies would expose the limited EU audiovisual productions to stronger foreign competition. The absence of the US among the signatories supports this hypothesis, as during the GATT negotiations (Hemel, Mommaas and Smithuysen, 1996) they aimed at imposing a total liberalization in order to enter the EU audiovisual market. In this case, the EU presented a more or less united front, arguing in favor of the cultural exception and the adoption of a Convention putting forward a holistic approach to culture, while being motivated mainly by the will to exploit the economic utility of culture.

This digression concluded and having established that philosophies, programs and policies interact and can become increasingly integrated, I will now highlight how in the general context of the EU, the Sustainable Development philosophy, understood as upholding the principle of intergenerational equity, became more and more a part of background ideas through the incremental implementation of more and more policies that stemmed from that philosophy and the undertaking of multiple related international commitments.

Agazadeh-Wegener (2019) identifies four phases during which the EU has integrated the philosophy of Sustainable Development as comprised of three pillars (economic, environmental, social). An initial phase introducing environmental protection to economic policies (1992-2001), then the integration of policies within the three-pillar-notion (2001-2006), the concretization and extension in scope of action (2006-2016), finally enhancing internal procedures (since 2016). She highlights in particular the Lisbon Treaty and the Treaty of Amsterdam as being the two legal milestones that added a sustainable development priority to European Policies, gradually including the imperative of economic, environmental, and social sustainability in a cross-sectoral approach. The same author laments, however, of an imbalance of commitment among the three pillars, with the economic and environmental one being at the forefront, while the social one being left behind. Indeed, while the literature between economic growth and environmental protection is wide and has established clear synergetic links, the synergy between the two pillars and the social one remains blurred. This negligence is not necessarily only a matter of ideological conviction, but rather a mixture of legal and political reasons, mostly due to debates over measures in the social market economy and the difficulty in theorizing a more holistic view of sustainable development that requires creativity and imagination.

However, as highlighted by the authors, it is undeniable that the main core idea of sustainability, intergenerational equity, has been integrated in the EU, at least at an official level, being inscribed in both Lisbon Treaty with the basic three-pillar-notion (Art. 2 (3) subpara. 1 TEU). in May 2007 the first strategy for a European cultural policy was also adopted by the European Commission in its Communication entitled: A European Agenda for Culture in a Globalizing world. This agenda was developed and approved under the Barroso presidency, which spoke often in favor of cultural mainstreaming.

Moreover, the EU further engaged with sustainability policy wise, adopting the Better Regulation Agenda (2016) and the Strategy implementing the SDGs that introduced respectively more ex-ante and ex-post evaluations practices geared at ensuring sustainability.

Sustainable Development can be understood as a developing background idea in the EU. Although background ideas can relate to deep-core, often hegemonic discourses that are recognized and accepted by everyone, such as neo-liberalism, background ideas may not only constitute the 'deep core' of policy programs (as understood by Sabatier, 1993) but also their elaboration in 'core' programmatic ideas about what to do and how to do it to what end. In this sense, Sustainable Development can have a set of deep core ideas and then be articulated in different policies and programs (Schmidt 2011).

b)   *The two programs of Sustainable Development: Three versus Four Pillars of Development*

I can identify two different and yet often complementary programs of sustainable development. The first is the classic three pillar one, the second one, is the Fourth Pillar of Sustainable Development program, with culture as the Fourth Pillar.

In the following part, I'll highlight what constitute the discourse of culture as a Fourth Pillar of Sustainable Development (Astara, 2014).

In a program understanding Sustainable Development as comprised by Three Pillars, where culture is included only in the Social Pillar, there is no space for culture as a lens to rethink policy goals. Rather, it can only be understood as a tool to achieve goals in the Social pillar and in the Economic and Environmental one. As I anticipated, a Three Pillar program is the outcome of the interaction between the classic instrumental dichotomy program and a core philosophy of intergenerational equity. In this sense, we observe a Three Pillar Program when we can observe the same indicators of the instrumental dichotomy program. In particular, a lack of focus on synergies between different policy fields.

Overall, the main difference between a Three Pillar (3P) and a Four Pillar (4P) program, is a more holistic and comprehensive approach to culture (Sacco 2018):

1) that sees culture as a not *only* as a tool (echoing the instrumental view I illustrated above) to achieve other policy goals, but *also* as a lens through which *rethink* policy goals and as a goal in itself.
2) That advocates for cultural mainstreaming.
3) Who conceives cultural as a human right *without which* sustainable development is not achievable.
4) That aims at exploiting not only the different utilities of cultures but also the synergies between them, in order to develop cultural activity as well as empowering the objectives of the other pillars.

Such an approach can be understood as a programmatic change, rather than a policy change, because it implies a shift in the problematization of issues - as the policy making process needs to interrogate itself on the question "what would be the effect *on* culture" of this policy? – as opposed to "how can culture serve x goal?" Soini and Birkeland (2014) note «Cultural sustainability is a concept, but, as we suggested in the introduction, it seems to refer to a shift in thinking, a cultural turn in the perception of both sustainability and culture».

The 3P and 4P can also be understood as programs and not as philosophies, because although they abide by the same core principle of intergenerational equity, they differ in the causal relations that inform their idea of Sustainable Development and the means to achieve it.

The first indicator relates to the relation between the concept of sustainability and culture. This means going beyond the instrumental program of culture in order to develop a conceptual understanding, meaning applying sustainability to culture, instead of the other way around. Two goals are put forward and can be identified as giving away a 4P program in this sense: 1) an understanding of culture as an end in itself, as Sustainable Development without culture is not considered truly sustainable and 2) The sustainability of the cultural environment, meaning the protection of both the physical and social context in which culture, both anthropological and artistic, is created. This implies the creation of a resilient cultural sector and the protection of endangered cultural realities, as well as the development of new local realities that utilize culture to requalify

their territory (Hadida 2015, Anheier and Yudhishthir, 2012). Differently from a 3P program, the creation of economically viable CCIs is not framed as only a way to generate profit, but also as a way to ensure diversity and resilience in the *production* of culture. In other words, culture is a tool but also a goal in itself.

The second indicator relates to cultural mainstreaming, meaning considering culture in all other policy fields. This happens in two ways, which also imply a vision of culture as necessary for development as well as instrumental to development. The first one aims at considering the impact of other policies *on* culture, such as for example copyright laws (regulating for example the production and distribution of movies and books), financial and fiscal laws (for example aiming at eliminating double taxation for artists), mobility (to ensure free and sustainable trans-national mobility of artists and cultural goods), education (forming artists as well as including cultural education in schools, which impacts the later demand for culture (audience development*))* (Sabatini 2019).

The second one aims at considering culture *for* other policy fields, in a way not too dissimilar to the instrumental understanding of culture. Here, for example, using culture as a tool for urban regeneration. Urban regeneration also provides an interesting example, because policy makers are encouraged at including bottom-up consultations in order to cater their plans to the local social and cultural realities. In this way, culture becomes a tool but also a lens through which understanding what sustainable development looks like for local populations and at the same time can help with creating new traffic to impoverished areas, by the means of cultural activities (Wu and others, 2016).

The third indicator is the framing of culture as a human right without which Sustainable Development *cannot be considered achieved*. This relies mostly to recent research also presented by CAE that links culture to personal well-being and happiness, as well as political participation and democracy. In the 3P program, culture is not left completely outside, but is integrated in the social pillar, as an element of social sustainability, but not as a priority per se.

This leads me to the fourth criteria which is an emphasis on synergies. Synergies in discourse refer to the presence of *clear* causal links between objectives of all Four Pillars. As such, culture can be considered both as a tool to bridge a gap between one or more pillars, but also as a way to empower one of more goals of all pillars (Secretariat 2007, Sabatini, 2019, Wu and others 2016). One example is highlighting how cultural activity plays a role in democratization, which in turn informs more sustainable environmental practices thanks to consultation, which lead to better preservation of heritage sites that in turn leads to tourism, contributing to economic growth or more, how a florid cultural sector makes overall societies more resilient to macro exogenous crisis (Petrakis, 2015). If in the 3P program the synergies between the three pillars are not clearly developed, especially when it comes to the social pillar, a 4P program acquires legitimacy exactly thanks to this more holistic approach.

Linked to those indicators, there is a general advocacy for qualitative, rather than quantitative evaluation criteria that would allow to better grasp the symbolic, economic, and synergetic utility of culture.

The current debates on Creative Europe are interesting in light of these indicators. Although I will analyze this later, one of the main criticisms brought forward is related to the policy architecture and evaluation criteria that still reveals too much of an instrumental dichotomy approach. Moreover, European cultural policies are often criticized (often by advocacy discourses of the European creative community such as CAE) for not being coherent enough through policy fields and not fully grasping the whole spectrum of utilities of culture.

In this section, I have talked about the underlying philosophies that are most relevant for European cultural policies. In doing so, I have established that we now are in a context where a SD core philosophy (intergenerational equity) is integrated but where 3P and 4P are still competing.

B.   Detailing and operationalizing the lock-in effect

I will now briefly come back on the subject of the theory of policy continuity developed by Vivien Schmidt and how I wish to complement it with a theory of lock in effect, in light of the assumptions about current philosophies, programs and policies present in the EU.

In the general context of the EU, as I have illustrated beforehand, the imperative of intergenerational equity which is the core of the SD philosophy can be qualified as background ideas, in the sense that given official commitments and a documented (more or less successful) mainstreaming of SD, as well as legal obligations to keep in mind SD in policy making, SD has entered the "reflexes", the background cognitive ideational abilities of policy makers. Schmidt (2008), in explaining the causal effect of discourse, talks about the integration of a discourse in a way in which policy actors cannot act without addressing a specific concern, in this case the imperative of intergenerational equity. This discursive integration has been operated in an evolutionary manner, with the EU slowly integrating the SD philosophies and establishing different milestones such as the integration of the 3P SD ideas in the Lisbon Treaty.

The level upon which the SD is fully integrated as background ideas, of course, varies across policy fields, where those ideas can be more or less integrated, which is why I have previously highlighted specific debates going around in the cultural policy field and the presence of two different programs (3P and 4P) existing under a same integrated EU level philosophy of SD based on the concept of intergenerational equity.

The idea that I wish to explore in this thesis is if past discourse was used to ensure policy continuity. In this sense, I hypothize that we can witness an integration of a 4P program in the 2018 Regulation establishing Creative Europe with a subsequent increase of the budget (where budget is seen as an officialization of a
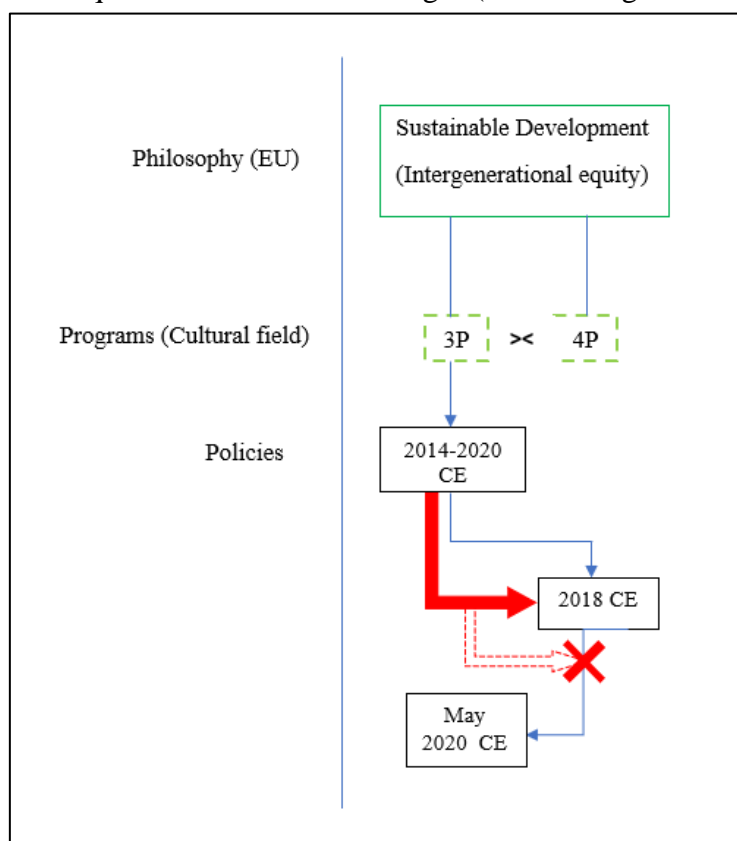

Figure 1: Lock-in effect overview. Original figure.

programmatic commitment) and then this increase and the programmatic assumption behind it was later referenced in the May 2020 to November 2020 CAE discourse.

In order to sustain my hypothesis of lock-in effect, where previous integration of discourse is the core of the successful narrative, I will observe if CAE instrumentalizes the previous process of integration of a 4P program in CE 2018 in its post-proposal discourse. The process of integration of a discourse, as I have mentioned results in two elements: an integration of ideas and the subsequent stemming of policy options. Thus, I'll observe if CAE instrumentalizes the ideas of a 4P that will have proven to be integrated in CE 2018 and the initial 2018 increase of the budget (2018) in order to narrow down policy options.

When talking about narrowing down policy options I refer to a situation where policy-makers cannot back down from ensuring policy continuity, fault to which they may encounter repercussions on their political legitimacy or they may see damages of policies in other policy fields. In this case, narrowing down policy options means discursively implying a cost too high in terms of political accountability and effectiveness if culture is not re-funded and managed through a 4P program.

I will first analyze the core of the advocacy discourse of CAE by providing a critical discourse analysis of CAE's evaluation of Creative Europe. In this section, I'll highlight how the program brought forward is that of Culture as Fourth Pillar of sustainable development, for which I have established indicators in the theoretical

framework. Then, I'll verify if we can find traces of this program in the 2018 proposal for a new Creative Europe. In this section, I'll highlight how the program has been integrated and how policies have been catered to it. Thirdly, I'll analyze the articles posted on the CAE website relating to the problematic MFF May 2020 proposal (the one where cuts were proposed). I will take all the articles on the subject and I will first observe what discursive strategies CAE employed to narrow down policy options. Then, I'll assess if those strategies stem from an instrumentalization of past discourse integration (in the form of both ideas and policies). If that is the case, I will be able to sustain my hypothesis that we are witnessing a lock-in effect, meaning that the instrumentalization of past discourse is what ensures policy continuity.

VI.   Case Study

A.   CAE advocacy discourse: the program of Culture as a Fourth Pillar of Sustainable Development.

For the first section of my case study, I wish to empirically delineate the discourse of Culture Action Europe and prove it puts forward a program of Culture as a Fourth Pillar of Sustainable Development. In order to do so, I'll analyze, in light of my previously drawn indicators, the 2017 mid-term Culture Action Europe evaluation of Creative Europe (Culture Action Europe, 2017) . Through the indicators, I will delineate the policy images present in the discourse. Establishing the program of their discourse will later allow me to observe if the Fourth Pillar program of Cultural Action Europe was integrated in the following Creative Europe Programme.

First of all, I need to justify why I have chosen the 2017 mid-term Culture Action Europe evaluation of Creative Europe as my starting point. The CAE report is a mid-term evaluation of the culture strand sub-program. It does not deal with the AV sector.

The 2017 mid-term Culture Action Europe evaluation of Creative Europe is the culmination of a large body of knowledge and research that is used to inform their opinion on the main EU supporting Programme for culture. As such, it represents an informed criticism of the flagship European cultural policy. It is possible to find in this evaluation, reference to numerous CAE studies and on-the-field investigations. Among all the material published by CAE, the evaluation is the one that establishes the basis for the advocacy, as it clearly establishes what programmatic and policy measures are seen as adequate and inadequate by CAE. This is why I chose to take this as a starting point. I could have chosen to refer to the first opinions that were presented by CAE after the approval of Creative Europe in 2014, but 2017 provides a better starting point, as it allowed CAE to develop a more informed opinion on the Programme which informed their propositions for the 2021-2027 MFF and next generation Creative Europe. The fact that it only focuses on the Culture strand of Creative Europe could be seen as a limit. However, this is not the case because for starters, by focusing on the cultural sector they also make relevant remarks about the other strands and the overall Programme for which they develop recommendations and secondly, because the Culture strand is the one that more explicitly allows us

to gauge if there is a program specifically aimed at framing what had been previously thought of as something having mostly a symbolic utility, as something more. In this sense, the less market-oriented nature of the Cultural strand is more adequate to gauge what kind of program is being brought forward.

1. CAE as champion of the 4P program

The analysis of the CAE report shows, overall, that the discourse can be qualified as putting forward a 4P program. The report presents, overall, a discourse portraying culture as a sector whose growth and potential are stunted by the inadequacy of Creative Europe program and policies, that are not able to cater to the specificity of the cultural sector, both in terms of administrative decisions and priorities. This specificity sees CCIs depicted as organizations that are based around artistic merit, that have limited administrative know how and that have limited budgets but that at the same time have a potential far beyond their economic utility. This policy image thus informs policy solutions that aim at modifying the Programme, rather than creating solutions that would fulfill the shortcomings of CCIs. This is significant, in the sense that the report puts the responsibility of action on the EU and especially the Commission, not criticizing what could be perceived as inadequacies of the cultural sector.

Before delving into what elements construct the aforementioned policy image, I want to discuss the methodology of the CAE report which already reveals a discursive choice. The report is based exclusively on qualitative data of interviews to the beneficiaries of CE funding. They utilized semi-open surveys that were sent to various networks which sometimes got complemented by open-ended questions and additionally, always qualitative, information. The results are then quantified in pie charts, but the report also makes use of verbatim quotes of cultural operators. This can be seen as a first sign of the advocacy for a more holistic evaluation of cultural policies. Indeed, choosing a qualitative approach instead of, for example, a review of how many jobs were created thanks to Creative Europe or how much revenue the cultural activities had generated already contributes to create a storyline of culture as being more complex of just its economic utility. The commitment to qualitative indicators, both in policy development and policy evaluation, is also a point that is often brought forward and that I will delve into later on. The choice is profoundly relevant, and contrasts, for example, with the Commission's evaluation that reads:

> *Culture and creativity play a crucial role in our societies today and in shaping our European future. Economically, the cultural and creative sectors generate approximately €509 billion in value added to Gross Domestic Product (GDP), representing 5.3% of the EU's total, and employs more than 12 million full-time jobs, equivalent to 7.5% of Europe's workforce.* (European Commission, 2018a)

Not once, in the CAE's evaluation, we find reference to GDP or revenue generated by Creative Europe. If we do, it is always a sentence highlighting how, although culture holds an important economic utility, generating tot amount of revenue, its utility cannot be limited to the economic one.

Indeed, this needs not to be interpreted as CAE advocating as arts for art's sake. On the contrary, I have already highlighted how culture and the economy are seen as compatible, even in the framework of a Fourth Pillar

program and it is something the report often highlights. However, not including monetary evaluation aims at, rather than eliminating discursively one utility of culture, at *rebalancing* cultural objectives, aiming at putting forward the social impact criteria of evaluation (Hadida 2015).

In short, basing the methodology of the report on qualitative, rather than quantitative data already shows, partially, a non-instrumental approach to culture.

The inclusion of a bottom-up approach in the proposal of improvements in both priorities and instrument also reveals a vision of culture as a lens through which rethink other policy goals. Indeed, it instills a dynamic where the target of the policy, the cultural workers, are able to voice their opinions, defining what they think can be considered as progress in the cultural policy field. Moreover, this ties to the push for a democratization of policy making, which is also typical of a 4P program. This bottom-up approach also suggests of a vision of culture as a lens, where cultural operators (so those who produce culture) are in charge of setting the priorities of the sector but also to independently decide what synergies they want to establish with other policy sectors.

In the section with suggestions for the 2020 CE, CAE interviewed the receivers on what priorities they though CE should bring forward in the next programme.

> *A clear mismatch appears in terms of the emphasis placed in the Guarantee Facility and access to markets and the priorities the sector feel Creative Europe should support in the cycle ahead. It is felt that cross-sectoral and crossover projects, international cooperation, audience development and social inclusion should be the driving priorities. […]*

> *[…] Yet, it must be stressed that the current direction of the cross-sectoral strand of the Creative Europe programme is not fit to address projects of such nature, often innovative and hence, with a high risk associated. The loan guarantee facility will have difficulties in supporting cross-sectoral innovation due to its market-driven nature. These priorities are closely followed by training, research, communication and support for the CEDs that are also considered as relevant for the sector.*(Culture Action Europe, 2017).

What this statement highlights is how the market-oriented rationale of CE is hurting the potential of culture that, on the contrary, spans over *cross-sectoral and cross-over* projects, including fields other than the cultural field itself, as comprised of arts and heritage. This policy image of culture as a cross-sectoral policy object that interacts with other policy fields is in line with the non-dichotomized 4P program.

Indeed, as mentioned before, the 4P program proposes a vision of culture as a tool to achieve economic and social objectives, but *also* as an end in itself. And end that needs to be understood as the overall contribution of creative thinking in all aspects of society and in multiple sectors.

Across the report, indeed, there are both explicit and implicit mentions of how Creative Europe is inadequate to foster the full potential of culture, because it is constructed and conceived through a dichotomized instrumental approach to culture. When asked if the division between the MEDIA and CULTURE strand of the Programme seemed clear, a vast majority of respondents answered affirmatively. However:

> *62% believe that [the division] it's* not positive for the sector as a whole*, as it signals a trend where social and cultural objectives are increasingly seen as* subordinate *to the economic development of the sector. The contribution of culture to the economy of the European Union is undeniable, amounting to 4.5% of the EU GDP and around 4% of the EU's share of employment.* Yet, *in the current socio-political context, more than ever, there is a need to* guarantee *that economic, social and cultural objectives are balanced within the programme. Failing to do so would constrain the wider contribution that artists and cultural actors can make to the European project.* (idem)

The division between MEDIA and CULTURE, where the MEDIA strand is allocated the vast majority of the CE budget still signals a tendency, in the policy architecture, towards a divided framing of culture, where investments are drawn towards that a sector that holds more economic potential. This echoes the 3P dichotomy between CCIs and the arts and heritage, which is criticized by CAE.

They highlight how economic measures to support cultural activities require high bureaucratic know-how, financial guarantees and they do not take into account the financial burden that bureaucratic practices represent for smaller CCIs. These measures are often not problematic for the MEDIA strand, while they are for the cultural strand and all small no-profit. This shows how there's a heightened interest in the economic utility of culture with CCIs while there is a neglect of the needs of heritage and less-utilitarian forms of culture. In other words, policies are not geared towards culture as a whole, but rather towards the assumption of separate needs and potentials of the two strands.

However, in its criticism of said dichotomy, CAE highlights two elements: firstly, that economic potential should not be considered the only positive outcome of culture and that culture's true potential lies in its *social impact* (Hadida, 2015) and secondly, that failing to reprioritize such element «constrains the wider contribution that artists and cultural actors can make to the European project» (idem).

CAE also employs the expression «need to guarantee» (idem), establishing a duty to ensure that culture's utilities are all fostered and establishing a sense of urgency. This is very relevant, as it highlights a discourse where culture is conceived as a need in itself and where the presence of culture in development becomes a *sine qua non* condition.

This is also evident in the fact that CAE mentions how wide socio-political issues may be alleviated through culture. In this sense, CAE established a causal relation between unspecified, wide "socio political context" and culture as a possible solution. The choice of keeping the problem that is presented and the solution on a macro level is not a random choice and instead reveals an understanding of culture as present in all aspects of life and that holds the potential to affect all -levels of society:

> *More space for transversal research is needed to tackle the societal and cultural challenges derived from the multiple transitions that we are facing, from the digital shift to sustainability or the impact of hyper-diversity at a local, regional and supra-national level. (…)*
> *In this regard, H2020 and Creative Europe is signaled as offering scope for complementarity in order to support sincere collaborations.* (idem).

Another element that highlights the transversal impact of culture is the reference to another CAE's study called Culture and Democracy, which serves as a basis to advocate for more inclusive and qualitative evaluation criteria that are needed to correctly evaluate and channel the contributions of culture.

The topic of evaluation criteria is also widely tackled in the report. Firstly, CAE recognizes the difficulty in establishing qualitative evaluation criteria for Creative Europe. It deems them, however, absolutely necessary for the creation of a more effective and efficient Programme.

In particular, CAE suggests funding further research for the establishment of more harmonized qualitative criteria that would be better suited to evaluate culture's social impact. In opposition to the option of qualitative indicators, CAE portrays quantitative indicators as limited in their scope and reflecting the previously criticized dichotomy and market-oriented logic of CE. It is also important to note, however, how quantitative indicators are not deemed to be completely useless, much like the economic utility of culture is not deemed inexistent. Instead, and this is a word often used in the report, there is an appeal to *rebalance* market-oriented priorities and policies with artistic, cultural, and social priorities and evaluation methods. Rebalancing is also one of the first-listed priorities presented in the report. Once again, the implication being that without proper qualitative indicators the cultural sector will be stunted by the Programme, instead of supported.

Indeed, CAE reports that among the priorities suggested by the interviewees:

> *[...] citizen's participation emerges as the key domain, together with social inclusion and cohesion. Such focus is the result of the current socio-political developments at a national and European level together with the limited scope that the programme currently allows in those areas. In contrast, economic development and the promotion of the Creative Industries are not seen as areas in need of reinforcement if balance is to be achieved. See fig. 2.* (idem).
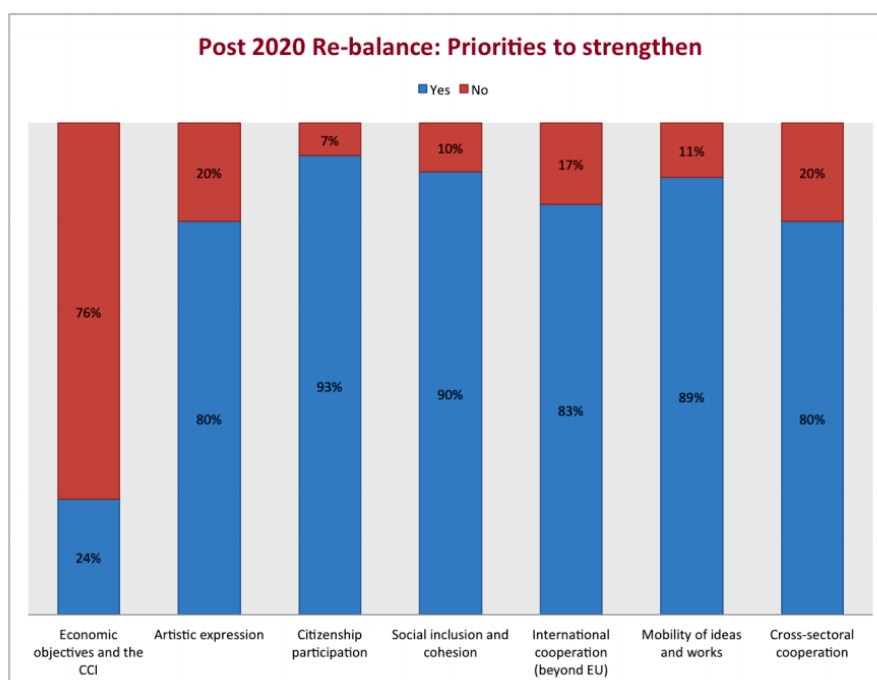

Figure 2 : Post 2020 re-balance of priorities (Culture Action Europe, 2017)

The topic of rebalancing priorities fits perfectly with the indicators of a 4P program that advocates for a wider understanding and support for culture as both an end in itself and a tool. Indeed, it does not negate that culture has an economic utility, but it argues it needs to be complemented with policies that harness its wider societal impact. Moreover, the very explicit advocacy for qualitative evaluation criteria that aims at gauging culture as described in the previous phrase indicate a 4P program and suggested policies.

The report also makes very explicit reference to synergies between pillars and subsequent necessary cultural mainstreaming that is, according to CAE, still lacking and not fully integrated in the logic of CE. The priorities still falling «outside of the remit programme» (idem):

> *Among them, sustainable development, equality, freedom of expression and cultural rights are seen as areas in need of development, within and beyond Creative Europe. These refer to rising societal concerns that did not yet surfaced in all its urgency during the prior design phase of the current programme.* (idem).

The report makes explicit mention to sustainability, which is depicted as being complemented and empowered by the inclusion of culture. Culture that is talked about in terms of *cultural rights* that is linked to freedom of expression and equality, echoing the 4P framing of culture as a human right.

The topic of synergies is further explored through cultural mainstreaming, where CAE refers to paragraph 4 of Article 167 of the Lisbon Treaty (Treaty of Lisbon, 2007) that establishes that «the Union should take cultural aspects into account in its action». In mentioning this legal principle, they also mention how the provision *converges* with the increasing transversal approach to culture taken by the sector. This creates a policy image of a Programme that needs to cater to a cultural sector that is already aligned towards a 4P program.

For cultural mainstreaming, CAE highlights policy fields where culture could contribute to the goals of other policy fields and where it should be taken into consideration, as to avoid negative effects *on* culture. A push towards policy coherence is also highly encouraged. In particular, there are explicit mentions of the field of education, where training for artists is encouraged through an Erasmus+ line dedicated to artists and their mobility.

Digitalization, where digital capacity building for CCIs is highlighted as a way to ensure environmental sustainability as well as audience development. Social and artistic hubs that make use of open technological innovation are also seen as part of the territorial development needed to confront the challenges that a globalized economy poses.

CAE also pushes the Commission to propose relevant social security measures in order to palliate the often-precarious economic situation of artists and the unequal access of creative people to cultural professions. In particular, they refer to the EU directive 2000/43/EC on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin as well as EU directive 2000/78/EC on the establishment

of a general framework for equal treatment, EU directive 2006/54/EC on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunity and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation, and EU directive 2004/113/EC on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services. This further contributes not only to the advocacy for cultural mainstreaming, showing that action is needed in other policy field in order to tutelage artists, but it also contributes to the creation of a discourse framing culture as a human right.

From this analysis, we can draw some general conclusions on the discourse of CAE: first of all, one of the main priorities highlighted by the report is a need for rebalancing priorities and overcoming the still present dichotomy between economic oriented cultural industries (mostly MEDIA) and "CULTURE" oriented organizations.

This dichotomy, which is in opposition to the 4P program, is portrayed as creating a Programme inadequate to 1) cater to cultural organizations (i.e., not ensuring sustainability) and 2) maximize their potential.

In this sense, cultural organizations are portrayed as being misunderstood in their needs, rationale and potential by a Programme that is too economic oriented. This signals that the criticism of CAE is not centered around *policies*, meaning the instruments deployed to help culture, but rather around *programs* that do not cater to the maximization of synergies and of the development of culture as a goal in itself. This program then informs, in CAE's opinion, wrong policy decisions, such as quantitative evaluation criteria and discriminatory requirements such as co-funding.

The causal relation that is established between policy problems and policy solutions is also telling. Indeed, cultural organizations are depicted as dynamic in their potential but static in their limits. In other words, while they have the potential to produce outcomes across policy fields and contribute to economic growth, as well as democracy and environmental sustainability, they are characterized by a limited administrative know-how, economic precariousness, and often small staff numbers. This specificity is not however portrayed as a limit, rather, as an intrinsic characteristic of a sector that deals with intangible outcomes and artistic merit, that has strength exactly because of these characteristics and that calls for tailor made solutions. In this sense, we could draw a parallel with the concept of the cultural exception put forward by Littoz-Monett dirigiste advocacy coalition (Littoz-Monnet, 2013).

In short, there is no *remise en question* of the capacities of cultural organizations, while there is clear criticism of a sort of blindness of the EU that is unable to grasp and correctly manage the sector. Only limited solutions are proposed when it comes to in-house capacity buildings of cultural organizations or their long-term economic viability through, for example, training in sounder financial and administrative procedures or sponsoring techniques.

Such a policy image where the "burden of guilt" falls upon the public sector can, of course, be explained by the actor's interests in not portraying themselves, as cultural actors, as failing or inadequate. In this sense, such

a discourse is to be expected. However, the fact that CAE highlights such programmatic shortcomings hints that it is not with more money or more managerial know-how that the cultural sector will flourish.

This concretizes in a hierarchy of goals highlighted in discourse, where there is a clear prioritization of a programmatic shift over the increase of the budget, although the two priorities remain linked.

The report clearly stresses that any policy change needs to be implemented with a subsequent increase of the budget. Reacting, in text, to a preliminary discussion in the Commission about reframing the programme for the post-2020 cycle, which would include the field of tourism under the umbrella of heritage, respondents said that this change would be relevant only if it was met with a budget increase, as resources are already spread too thin.

However, there is a stress on the fact that only an increase in funds is not sufficient. On the contrary, the aforementioned programmatic shifts are highlighted as being paramount in order to create a Programme catered to the cultural sector. In particular, the social and political utilities of culture need to stop being subordinated to the economic one, in order to ensure more adequate measures to support the cultural sector which in turn would put to good use a (needed) increase of the budget.

The overall message is that there should be no budget increase without programmatic revisions. It may seem counter intuitive that CAE would advocate against an increase of the budget, but in a way, it does so. Although CAE highlights how increased budget is needed to meet the demand of subsidies and allow greater flexibility in the evaluation process, the need for more money is *subordinate* to a program change.

CAE frames the CE strategy as inadequate because it does not fulfill a 4P program. The proposed solution remains a supranational solution, but in order for the supranational solution to be effective there would need to be a program shift. In other words, they frame culture as a Fourth Pillar of Development, for which they propose a European solution that demands more money which will be effectively spent if and only if they are invested in a Creative Europe that follows the 4P program.

In other words, CAE disagrees with the goal setting of Creative Europe that derives from a non 4P program and hence with the policies (dichotomized funding methods, and more in between program and policy, evaluation criteria).

Especially interesting is the implicit appeal to effectiveness of spending. The report indeed highlights how if an increase in budget would be ensured prior to a program change, the money would not be employed at its maximum utility, meaning fulfilling only an economic and symbolic utility which would neglect the potential for a much more interesting outcome.

This potential is said to needing to be measured, in line with the discourse, through more qualitative evaluation criteria. This shows a very strong commitment to a qualitative evaluation and understanding of culture. Therefore, the report implies effectiveness of spending, but it understands effectiveness as achieving the goals

of social impact and sustainability, not only as economic profit. The numbers relating to employment are, for example, only mentioned once.

In conclusion, evidence supports that the discourse of CAE in its 2017 mid-term evaluation report of CE puts forward a 4P program, as it advocates for a more holistic approach to culture, criticizes an instrumental dichotomy approach, advocates for the use of qualitative instead of quantitative evaluation criteria, highlights and aims at exploiting synergies between pillars, portrays the shortcomings of cultural organizations as characteristics rather than weaknesses that demand tailor made solutions and lastly, it subordinates a budget increase to a programmatic shift in order to ensure maximum benefit from the Programme.

From this point, I shall now compare the initial CE establishing document versus its post-evaluation revision. In this next section, I will try to confirm my hypothesis that the EU has integrated – meaning implemented changes related to the 4P program – in the next CE. This will provide the basis for the lock-in effect.

B. Comparing Creative Europe 2014-2020 and Creative Europe 2021-2027: an integration of a 4P discourse?

This next section aims at observing how much of CAE's 4P program discourse was integrated in the Creative Europe proposal for 2021-2027 (European Commission, 2018b). I have established that CAE's discourse is indeed a 4P program, with culture being thought of as both a tool and an end in itself, with a strong advocacy for qualitative evaluation criteria, strong emphasis on synergies and cultural mainstreaming and an advocacy for rebalancing economic, social and artistic goals. Utilizing the same indicators, I will now try to find traces of this 4P program in the next CE proposal.

This proposal dates to 2018, so before Covid but after the initial results of the Brexit referendum. With the withdrawal of the UK for the European Union, a sense of urgency and shifting priorities was in place, with the EU having to start planning the next MFF with the prospect of decreased funds. In this regard, the 2018 CE proposal had to respond to various exogenous events and macro socio-economic shifts. In particular Brexit, but also the Migration crisis of 2015 that led to increased political polarization and the ever more present Digital shift, which presented both opportunities and obstacles for culture. Pushed by those macro changes, a series of international commitments related to culture were also undertaken by the EU that aimed at setting out a blueprint for a new, more sustainable future.

This period of time can therefore be understood as a period of change, a window of opportunity (Jacobs and Manzi 1996) where there was the possibility for shifting paradigms and proposal of new policy solutions. In this context, the success of a discourse can be linked not only to the viability of a program's policy ideas but also to the program's long-term problem-solving potential (Schmidt, 2008; Kuhn, 2019). Certainly, I cannot prove that CAE advocacy work was the definite factor that influenced a programmatic shift in Creative Europe. However, as highlighted before, as one of the main interlocutors between the European creative community and the EU, their influence can be at least partially assumed.

Overall, I can partly confirm my sub-question, which is that a 4P program was integrated in the CE discourse. Indeed, some 3P characteristics of the 2013 proposal (CE 2014-2020) are still present, notably a strong focus on the MEDIA strand portrayed as more economically interesting than the Culture strand. However, other characteristic such as a strong focus on cultural mainstreaming, synergies between pillars and a rebalancing of economic, social and artistic objectives can also be observed, supporting the idea of a shift, although not a full integration, in the discourse of the Creative Europe Programme.

I will start by pointing out the main characteristics of the 2013 (CE 2014-2020) CE establishing Regulation, establishing the presence of a 3P programme, and then compare it with the 2017 amendment in order to prove that more and more 4P elements were integrated. This will then lead to the next section of my thesis which will focus on the reaction of CAE to the post-Covid proposal for CE that saw a sharp decrease in budget.

1. Creative Europe 2014-2020: a programme constructed around a 3P program but open to programmatic change

The first Creative Europe reveals itself to be, based on its framing of culture and the policies proposed to exploit it, a Programme based around an instrumental dichotomy of culture. In the explanation of the general objectives, the Regulation reads:

> *The Commission Communication entitled "Europe 2020 – A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth" (the "Europe 2020 Strategy") defines a strategy that aims to turn the Union into a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy delivering high levels of employment, productivity and social cohesion. In that communication, the Commission noted that the Union needs to provide more attractive framework conditions for innovation and creativity. In that regard, cultural and creative sectors are a source of innovative ideas that can be turned into products and services that create growth and jobs and help address societal changes. Moreover, excellence and competitiveness in those sectors are primarily the result of efforts on the part of artists, creators and professionals that need to be promoted. For that purpose, access to finance for the cultural and creative sectors should be improved.* (European Parliament and European Council, 2013)

To suggest that Creative Europe stemmed from an extreme, instrumentalized view of culture who did not consider concepts of cultural specificity and the intrinsic value of culture would be, of course, wrong and an oversimplification.

However, the way in which the discourse around culture is framed reveals a tendency towards seeing culture not as a pillar in itself, but as a tool. In the excerpt, The EU affirms a commitment to a smart, sustainable and inclusive «economy» (idem). It portrays culture and creativity as being a source of innovative ideas «that can be turned into products and services that create growth and jobs and help address societal changes» (idem). The term turned implies, in this context, a narrative of culture not as an end in itself, but as something that needs to be utilized as a tool to achieve the goals of other pillars, in this case economic growth and social cohesion. Certainly, the Regulation mentions how creativity needs to be fostered in order to create excellence in the field and that access to finance needs to be improved (so creating tailor made solutions). However, the

policy solutions later suggested focus more on in-house capacity building and economic sustainability than creating tailor made solutions. It is not, indeed without cause that CAE highlighted these shortcomings.

This instrumental dichotomy approach can be further identified in the strong focus of the program in the MEDIA strand. In the articles detailing the scope of the strand and its utility, the main argument brought forward is that audiovisual production and distribution is a vector for economic growth and international competitiveness. On the contrary, the Culture strand is allocated, other than less funds, also less attention in terms of measures and number of articles. The main utility of the culture strand is also presented as mainly and exclusively being the ability to promote a "united in diversity" feeling among the people of Europe, with almost an exclusive focus on its trans-national added value. The intrinsic utility of culture is therefore mostly channeled through international cooperation and acquiring more knowledge of each other's culture. This fails to mention, however, the political effects of culture or the synergies between pillars. This added value is not, indeed, discursively explored, neither in terms of synergies nor in terms of a more defined own added value of culture as an end itself. This resonates with the very abstract and limited "symbolic utility" often associated with heritage and performance art that I have highlighted as being part of the instrumental dichotomy approach.

Another relevant element to highlight is the construction of issues and the proposed solutions for CCIs. Regarding CCIs, the Creative Europe Programme aims at correcting those specificities that CAE had highlighted as being something that needed to be catered to, rather than corrected. In this sense, there are suggestions in order to ensure the increased economic sustainability of culture and in-house administrative skill building, which are presented as the main obstacles to a more resilient cultural sector. In other words, while CAE suggests that the issue with the resilience of the cultural sector is a programme that does not identify a correct balance between objectives, the EU proposes as the main problem a structural disadvantage that CCIs have in accessing funds. As such, mostly economic and financial tools are deployed to solve issues «For that purpose, access to finance for the cultural and creative sectors should be improved» (idem). The instruments to grant this access to finance remain, however, biased towards market-driven projects, as highlighted by CAE.

There is also relevantly less advocacy for qualitative criteria of evaluation (of the Programme), especially for Culture which instead focus on how many cultural activities, how many loans awarded and the success rate of applications. As I have illustrated before, although relevant indicators, this kind of evaluation criteria tell a whole different story that the one that would transpire from more qualitative indicators. It is not my desire to imply that any of these indicators are not relevant, nor to depict the EU as a cold, economic machine, but in the framework of this study, it is telling that mostly quantitative criteria are chosen to determine the success of the overall programme.

A relevant element concerning evaluation criteria is also, however, the explicit recognition of the fact that qualitative indicators would be needed but are not yet solid enough to be implemented. What this indicates is

a potential openness towards a 4P program, where the 4P programs are not programmatically seen as contradicting the current 3P one.

Indeed, in the whole document, there is not any idea or policy proposal that would be so ideologically opposed to a 4P program as to make it impossible to be integrated. For once, both texts refer to the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions which is one of the founding documents of the inclusion of culture in the sustainable development paradigm. This provides a common ideological basis where ideas of 3P and 4P compete in terms of efficacy and in the program's long-term problem-solving potential, but with certain programmatic points in common, such as the recognition of the double utility of culture and the need, at least in theory, for qualitative evaluation criteria. The main divide between the two documents stems therefore from the topic of synergies, a topic absent in the 2013 discourse.

What this tells us is that in the case of culture there is not an abrupt shift in programs, as we shall also see later. On the contrary, various small windows of opportunities such as a programmatic openness towards qualitative evaluation, general Agenda commitments of the EU towards sustainable development and the inclusion of CE in the Open Method of Coordination ensured the possibility for an evolutionary shift of program, rather than a revolutionary shift. Through the analysis of CE, it is noticeable how there are indeed several ideological and policy conditions – windows of opportunity - that would present an opportunity for a 4P discourse to be integrated in the CE Programme.

A window of opportunity is here understood as an institutional or ideological condition that favors the circulation and voluntary possible integration of ideas. This relates in particular to the absence of critically opposite ideas that would contradict at the programmatic or philosophical level.

I identified three main programmatic windows of opportunities that would allow an integration towards a 4P program. Firstly, the recognized importance of cultural mainstreaming; secondly, the commitment to bottom-up and external evaluations of the Programme; thirdly, the recognition of a lack of knowledge and will for research in areas associated with a 4P program such as the exploitation of synergies.

Cultural mainstreaming is presented, in the 2013 Regulation, as a priority that aims at ensuring consistency and complementarity among MS and EU policies. The Regulation reads:

> *It is necessary to ensure the European added value of all actions and activities carried out within the Programme, their complementarity to Member States' activities, their compliance with Article 167(4) TFEU and their consistency with other Union activities, in particular in the fields of education, employment, the internal market, enterprise, youth, health, citizenship and justice, research and innovation, industrial and cohesion policy, tourism and external relations, trade and development, and the digital agenda (*idem).

While there is no mention of synergies – which tells us, we are still in a 3P program – mainstreaming is recognized as an obligation to ensure consistency and coherence between MS and EU policies. So, although not exploited in this 2013 Regulation, cultural mainstreaming is recognized as potentially being relevant to

benefit the EU and the efficacy of the Program. In other words, if further measures for cultural mainstreaming were to be introduced, possibly in a way to exploit synergies in order to make the Programme more *efficient,* there could be no ideological basis in the 2013 Regulation that would contradict that.

The 2013 Regulation also establishes, in addition to the Commission evaluation criteria for the Programme that as I mentioned are mostly quantitative in nature, the commitment to bottom-up and external evaluations of the Programme in the framework of the Open Method of Coordination. The section on the evaluation of the Programme reads:

> *In addition to regularly monitoring the Programme, the Commission shall establish a mid-term evaluation report, based on an external and independent evaluation, which:*
>
> *(a) includes qualitative and quantitative elements, in order to assess the effectiveness of the Programme in achieving its objectives, the efficiency of the Programme, and its European added value; (b) addresses the scope for simplification of the Programme, its internal and external coherence, the continued relevance of all its objectives and the contribution of the measures to the Union priorities of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth [...]* (idem).

Allowing for external evaluation represents a window of opportunity in the sense that it provides a chance to explore new cognitive arguments such as new data and statistics, as well as opening up new policy venues where pressure can be exerted. In this sense, external evaluation also establishes the basis for increased accountability. Moreover, the aim of the external evaluation is also important. Indeed, by highlighting how the evaluation is useful to keep the Programme relevant under the Three Pillars of sustainable development (smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth*)* the programmes provides a change for new ideas to be presented as relevant within the Programme.

Although the practice of taking into account lesson-learnt is nothing new and is arguably at the basis of every policy evaluation, the explicit inclusion of it in the document creates a policy image that is projected to the future and aims at guaranteeing certain degree of dynamism. As such, external mid-term evaluation represents a relevant window of opportunity to introduce new programmatic ideas, using cognitive arguments that would prove the policy program's relevance, applicability, and coherence; and normative arguments that resonate with long-standing or newly-emerging values, and that complement rather than contradict the cognitive arguments (Schmidt 2000a; 2002b in Hajer 2006).

The third element representing a window of opportunity for evolutionary programmatic change is the admission of a lack of knowledge in certain areas linked to the effectiveness and the impact of culture on both economic, artistic, and social realities. Much like CAE and the general literature around cultural policy highlights, there exists a strong lack of harmonized data on the subject of culture, both on the current realities of cultural policy and on their long-term impact. This is for a few reasons: different national definitions of what industries are part of the "cultural sector", the plurality of cultures in which cultural activities are embedded and which make it hard to issue comparative work, the lack of adequate indicators. The CE 2013 Regulation highlights the need to ensure collaboration and complementarity with other European funds

devoted to research and innovation and encourages the diffusion of lessons learnt and new management practices. Although it can be argued that the final aim of these measures is to improve the economic viability of CCIs, it still remains an important window of opportunity for ideas to circulate. The concept of cultural sustainability, which is at the core of the 4P program, is a term still in the stages of its conceptual development. Therefore, to recognize the importance of ideas exchange in the development of a European Programme for culture is to create favorable conditions to the integration of new ideas and hence the integration of the 4P program.

In conclusion, the discourse of the first 2013 Regulation establishing the Creative Europe Programme has the following characteristics:

1) It presents an understanding of culture as a *tool* to achieve the goals of other Pillars of sustainable development. In particular, there is an emphasis on the economic utility of culture that dictates the policy solutions to problems.

2) The problems of the cultural sector are defined as being for the most part economic in nature. In particular, the CCIs are portrayed as being intrinsically risky industries – as they deal with intangible goods – that need to improve their managerial capacities in order to access to better financial instruments. In-house skill building is encouraged for this reason.

   In the MEDIA strand, the main goal is improved circulation of works *despite* linguistic differences. In this sense, cultural diversity is seen as a resource but also as an obstacle, market wise. This relates to the strong economic potential of the AV industry.

   In the Culture strand, the main utility highlighted is that of cultural exchange and the creation of an "ever closer Union". There are no mentions of synergies, not of culture as a *lens* to define other policy objects.

3) The main element that transpires and does not qualify the CE Regulation as implementing a 4P program is the lack of focus on synergies that derives from the its instrumental dichotomy approach. Synergies are indeed never explicitly mentioned or illustrated through clear causal links (e.g., the impact of culture *on* tourism).

These characteristics support the idea that the CE discourse is indeed one putting forward a 3P program.

However, the CE Programme still presents a programmatic predisposition towards evolutionary program change. The 3P values brought forward in discourse do not indeed establish ideas that would be ideologically incompatible with 4P ideas and they even create favorable conditions for the circulation of ideas through bottom-up evaluation methods.

I will now compare the 2013 CE Regulation with the one of 2018. The 2018 proposal for the amendment to the Regulation has been compiled after mid-term evaluations of both the Commission and other external

commissions. The new draft mentions how Creative Europe has mostly been a successful Programme, with adequate goals and policies, although with a lack of budget.

However, as I have illustrated before, CAE had presented more programmatic criticism towards the Programme, highlighting the fact that a programmatic change had priority over the increase of budget. In this section I will therefore try to find traces of a program change (3P towards 4P) from one Regulation to another. If there are relevant traces of a program shift, I will be able to say that CAE's discourse has been integrated and that it informed an increase in the budget.

2. Creative Europe 2018 (for the 2021-2027 period): 4P program and the liberal philosophy of the EU. A personalized integration of ideas in the name of efficiency and long-term policy fit

In comparison to the 2013 CE Regulation, the 2018 proposal (European Commission, 2018b) highlights a partial integration of the discourse of Culture Action Europe. The elements that got integrated are: a rebalancing of economic, artistic and social objectives, an explicit focus on synergies and an increased inclusion of culture in other policy fields (cultural mainstreaming). However, what is also remarkable is how the EU has managed to integrate a 4P program with its liberal philosophy, bypassing the instrumental/non-instrumental opposition.

Assessing the rebalancing of objectives is not an easy task, because the economic utility is still an element that remains at the forefront of the objectives of Creative Europe, even in the 2018 proposal. However, what changed is to what end the economic utility of culture is aimed at. If in the 2013 document the main goals were those of employment and social cohesion (in a dichotomized understanding of it, so with a preference for the economic end goal of culture), the more recent proposal focuses on economic utility as a tool to ensure greater diffusion of cultural products which would thereby ensure social development. As such, although the economic utility is still present, culture is not thought of as a tool to ensure economic growth but rather it is the other way around, with economic growth serving the development of artistic activities. As such, not only culture is seen as a goal in itself, but there is also a push towards the sustainability of the cultural sector for the sake of artistic production.

> *The promotion of European cultural diversity depends on the existence of flourishing and resilient cultural and creative sectors, able to create, produce and distribute their works to a large and diverse European audience. This thereby enlarges their business potential and contributes to sustainable growth and jobs creation* (European Commission, 2018b).

Both regulations imply that the diversity of culture is granted only if the cultural sector is economically sustainable. But while the 2013 draws a line from culture to the economy – with cultural products that are transformed into economic profit -; the 2018 regulation establishes more of a virtuous circle between the economy and cultural diversity, postulating that cultural diversity (and artistic merit) depends on the economic viability of CCIs, but that this economic viability is not the end goal of cultural policy; rather, the end goal is to encourage more diversity/artistic merit *via* the economy.

It is also remarkable how, textually in the 2013 version of CE, the first utility that always gets mentioned when referring to the potential of the cultural sector was its economic potential *and then* its social impact. In the 2018 text, the social and cross-sectoral utility of culture are almost always put first and then followed by the mention of economic growth, employment and competitiveness. This element could potentially indicate how, in the mind of policy-makers, there is a shift on what the priorities of culture are. Although the order of mention is not a definitive proof of a rebalancing of priorities, if I postulate that discourse matters, and that all discursive elements are an expression of a determinate vision of the world, I can draw upon this detail to further support my argument that we do see a rebalancing of priorities. A more micro approach of this thesis, with interviews to EU policy makers could verify this in the future.

The rebalancing of priorities is also deeply tied to the advances in cultural mainstreaming. Indeed, the cross-sectorial and non-dichotomized utilities of culture are often mentioned as a tool to tackle exogenous events, such as the rise of misinformation ("fake news") that would endanger democracy, increased international pressure towards ecological sustainability and the need to further harness the knowledge and digital economy. These three goals correspond to the three Pillars of sustainable development (economic growth, social progress and ecological sustainability) which could indicate that culture is once again nothing more than a tool to achieve goals in a 3P program. However, this is not the case, and the inclusion of culture in other policy fields runs deeper than a mere instrumental use. Indeed, there are explicit mentions of mainstreaming climate *into* culture and how there is a need to reprioritize culture in education in order to ensure the sustainability of the cultural environment. Moreover, citizen participation through cultural activities is framed as being useful to inform more aware policies in terms of urban planning and touristic practices. In this sense, we can witness a shift from a culture that needs to be *transformed (ref. previous section)* to a culture that not only is valuable as itself, but that provides a lens through which developing other policy goals, which is one of the indicators of a 4P program.

Therefore, there is a balance of goals that is achieved in the integration of CAE's discourse, with culture still being understood in an instrumental manner as tool for both social and economic development, but *also* as a lens.

One doubt may however arise among the readers of this thesis. If an instrumental view of culture and a holistic (4P) view of it are compatible, how can we know we are witnessing different programs instead of just one? The answer lies in the concept of dichotomy. Indeed, a 3P program conceives the instrumental approach to culture only in a dichotomized way, where the two branches of culture, Media and heritage/performance art are discursively divided on the basis of their economic potential. In this sense, they both are recognized as possessing both utilities, but policies are developed to manage them as separate policy objects, on the basis that the AV's main utility is economic while the heritage/performance is mainly symbolic. On the contrary, in a 4P program, the economic and symbolic utility of all branches of culture are understood as being equally as important and that need to inspire policies that encourage both economic and symbolic utilities in both

branches at the same time. Moreover, a 4P program highlights the importance of synergies which develop by harnessing both the economic and symbolic utility of all branches of culture, transferring them to other policy fields, thus creating a virtuous cycle that fosters the positive interaction between economic and symbolic utility of culture, as well as its application to other policy fields.

Thus, the main discursive difference that can tell us if we are in the presence of a 3P or a 4P program is the presence of a dichotomized narrative of culture, rather than the mention of the economic utility of culture. As such, mentions of the importance of fostering the economic utility of culture need not automatically to be understood as indicating a 3P program. Rather, it is necessary to adopt a very context aware approach and delineate the overall narrative that is being displayed. As such, the still strong presence of economic goals for the AV sector who persisted in the 2018 Regulation, need to viewed and interpreted together with the fact that there is also a strong emphasis on encouraging creativity and innovation in the AV sector, with the aim of encouraging the diffusion of audiovisual work for the sake of its artistic merit (cf. above). Moreover, a mention of synergies can also make us re-evaluate the economic focus of the AV sector in a different light.

Therefore, the vision of culture as a tool is not incompatible with a 4P program, as long as culture is not seen *solely* as a tool and there are clear indications of culture also being understood as a lens (which is indicated by a non-dichotomized approach to policy solutions and a focus on synergies).

As remarked by Sabatini, indeed, culture as a Fourth Pillar of sustainable development can encompass both instrumental and non-instrumental utilities, and culture can provide a bridge between pillars as well as be a pillar on its own. Although some authors argue that culture can be framed as a tool *or* as a Pillar, with no in between, I find that this is not the case, and the reality is far more nuanced.

These considerations are extremely important, because they 1) give legitimacy to my indicators, as they highlight the context aware approach I have been taking in my analysis and that can be hard to convey otherwise 2) they provide a more nuanced lecture key of the integration of a 4P discourse in the Creative Europe Programme. Indeed, to look for a complete negation of the economic utility of culture would be too simplistic and would not make sense from a policy making standpoint as culture has indeed a strong economic potential. On the contrary, it would only make this analysis fall in a commercial vs art for art's sake debate, which is not the aim of this thesis. Thus, in this thesis I do not only observe isolated statements that focus on the economic or non-economic utility of culture, but rather aim at capturing the overall balance between objectives as proof that a 4P program has been integrated.

As such, statements that can be found in paragraphs such as paragraph 6 that read:

> *The Programme should take into account the dual nature of the cultural and creative sectors, recognizing, on the one hand, the intrinsic and artistic value of culture and, on the other, the economic value of those sectors, including their broader contribution to growth and competitiveness, creativity and innovation. This requires strong European cultural and creative sectors, in particular a vibrant European audiovisual industry, taking into account its capacity to reach large audiences and its*

economic importance, including for other creative sectors as well as cultural tourism. (European Commission, 2018b)

The statement needs to be read in relation to what has been previously stated on the final aim of AV production and in light of the subsequent mention of synergies which I shall come back to in an instant. Therefore, although it may seem like culture remains framed as a tool for economic competition, this is revealed not to be the case.

There is indeed really a rebalancing of objectives, rather than a complete reprioritization of the non-economic utilities of culture over the economic ones. Indeed, some elements remain constant between the two documents, such as the heavy focus on the AV sector and on its potential for economic competitiveness, but there is a lot of encouragement of creativity and, most importantly, synergies, which brings me to the next section.

Further evidence of a rebalancing of objectives and of a non-dichotomized approach to culture comes indeed from the explicit mention of synergies, which other than being mentioned seventeen times versus one in the previous version, are thoroughly explored in the first part of the revised proposal.

A whole section is indeed titled and dedicated to synergies. In the document, the section falls under the Consistency with other Union policies and programmes section. Although this section was present in the earlier version of Creative Europe, it was not thoroughly explored as it is here. Synergies are articulated in respect to eight sectors: education and youth policies, Rights and Values programme, employment and social policies, regional, urban and rural policies, Single Market, Digital programme, research and innovation programme, external action policies. The indicator for a truly 4P approach to synergies would be to approach the mainstream of culture in other sectors by asking not only how culture can be instrumental to those other fields but also how those other fields can be instrumental for culture. This is not fully what can be observed, but the analysis of the synergies section reveals interesting dynamics on how the EU integrates ideas in relation to its liberal philosophy. We find in this section a strong economic silver lining that however does not negate a 4P approach to culture.

For the education and youth policies, the link between culture and education is established mostly through the Erasmus + Programme that would aim at ensuring a correct fostering of young people's creative potential. This creative potential is framed as being relevant in equipping young people with knowledge, skills and competences needed to face social and economic challenges and to fulfill their potential in particular in terms of entrepreneurship and innovation in the digital economy. So, does this framing tackles the question of how can education be instrumental for culture? In a sense, yes, as it is recognized that cultural offer needs to be nurtured and needs to be allowed to emerge. This is also noticeable in the proposal of encouraging more young people in being interested in heritage conservation. However, there is also a clear economic aim towards which this creativity is nudged, with the special emphasis on entrepreneurship and the digital economy. As such, this synergy does tackle the question of how to manage education *in order to* foster culture, but also highlights

how this will serve to create culture as an instrument later on. This rather complex causal relation that is drawn can be seen as the way through which the EU « liberalizes » ideas, creating its very own definition of synergy, where the link between culture and all policy fields is the economy, but where the relation between economy and culture passes through the encouragement of artistic merit and the « intrinsic » value of culture. In other words, the EU wants a symbolically resilient cultural sector and environment, so that it may serve an economic imperative seen as beneficial to all policy sectors. So, the final aim is economic, but the process through which that happens ensures a rebalancing of priorities.

This is especially evident in the Employment and Social policies section, where it is highlighted how a strong and resilient cultural sector can contribute to intercultural dialogue, this intercultural dialogue in turn reinforces social cohesion and encourages cultural production which in turn opens up employment opportunities.

Regional and urban development is the section where Creative Europe is more understood as being a lens, with the explicit mention of how Creative Europe can:

> *[…] support peer learning on meaningful long-term cultural investment plans for creative industries, tourism, social inclusion, cultural heritage restauration based on quality standards of renovation of cultural heritage and increasing their contribution to the objectives of the regional and urban development and financial self-sustainability of cultural projects* (idem).

Once again, we see that the EU manages to conjugate the culture as a lens framing with an instrumental view of culture, where framing through culture is seen as useful to enhance financial goals.

In the Single Market section, a special focus is given to tourism, where the power of culture to foster mutual understanding is said to be able to encourage tourism and better tourism practices. Creative Europe is also said to aim at supporting the creative side of other economic activities, such as fashion and design. In this section that would have the most lent itself to a pure dichotomized instrumentalization of culture, with mentions of the potential of the AV sector for example, the EU chose to highlight the social impact of culture as functional for economic (tourism) development, which in turn creates a virtuous circle. This is a shift from the previous Regulation where no such synergy was highlighted. Once again, the document highlights how a strong cultural component to other policies is beneficial to the economic growth of the EU.

The Digital program follows a similar trend as the Single Market section. Indeed, the Regulation highlights how the EU Digital program already has two projects aimed at ensuring a « #digital4culture ». In particular, the synergy with Creative Europe is found at the level of CE initiatives encouraging digital literacy. In the words of Jacques Bughin (Mc Kinsey), « a digital success requires a digital culture » (Bughin, 2017) which is precisely where the synergy with CE is situated. Thus, culture can encourage digital literacy that in turn can encourage a digital consumption of cultural goods that then can create opportunities for profit. Saying that digital programmes can encourage cultural consumption equates to answering the question of « how can this policy sector benefit culture? », but this does not negate the question « how can culture benefit the digital shift? ».

When it comes to the Research and innovation programme, the link between it and culture is established through the question of how research and innovation can affect culture and not vice versa. Indeed, synergies aim at

> *Pooling resources in order to apply the latest technologies and stimulate new scientific approaches can greatly improve the understanding, preservation and dissemination of cultural heritage and in the cultural and creative sector in general. Potential synergies will need to be strengthened to reinforce the complementarity between these instruments and Creative Europe, so that the* cultural and creative sectors fully benefit *from the advances of European research.* (European Commission, 2018b)

This highlights an understanding of culture as an aim in itself and a commitment to the environmental sustainability (Hadida, 2015) of the cultural sector. Moreover, it commits the EU to invest in research that supports the production and consumption of cultural goods.

The synergies for the external action policies are geared to a larger debate which is that of cultural diplomacy, which would require a specific focus on its own (see Garner (2017) for an interesting outlook on cultural policy and the instrumental utilities of culture). However, what can be remarked is how the synergy is framed in terms of how including third countries in cultural initiatives such as the European Capitals for Culture has the potential to encourage the inclusion of said countries in key economic festivals. As such, the EU once again frames culture as an instrument but as an instrument that can only work if it is managed as an end in itself.

Overall, what can be remarked in how the EU handles synergies in the revised 2018 CE Regulation, is that there is more knowledge of how culture interacts with other policy fields and how it needs to be managed in order to be instrumental. We indeed witness a coexistence of instrumental and non-instrumental understanding of culture (i.e., culture as a tool and culture as a lens) that crystallize around an overarching economic goal. This economic goal, however, can only be achieved if culture and creativity are fostered in all of their utilities at the same time, from encouraging innovation specifically for entrepreneurship to fostering intercultural dialogue in order to create more opportunities for cultural activities.

So, can we say that the way in which the EU understands synergies is compatible with a 4P program? The answer is yes, although with some nuance, because there is still a strong focus on the economic side of culture being the ultimate goal, thus still framing culture as an instrument to economic development and running the risk of re-falling in an unbalanced approach towards culture.

However, while as CAE remarked, the previous Creative Europe was structured in a way where culture was submitted to the economic imperative *to the damage* of the wider trans-sectorial utility of culture and the very own resilience of the cultural sector; now, the fostering of culture for social and artistic goals is fostered in order to develop the economy. In this sense, culture is framed as a pillar on its own (4P) that needs however also to be understood as a bridging element between the other Pillars. In short, the EU integrates culture as a

4P of Sustainable Development but does maintain also an instrumental understanding of culture, the two not being at odds.

What this shows is an interesting adaptation of the 4P program to a liberal philosophy of the EU, where there
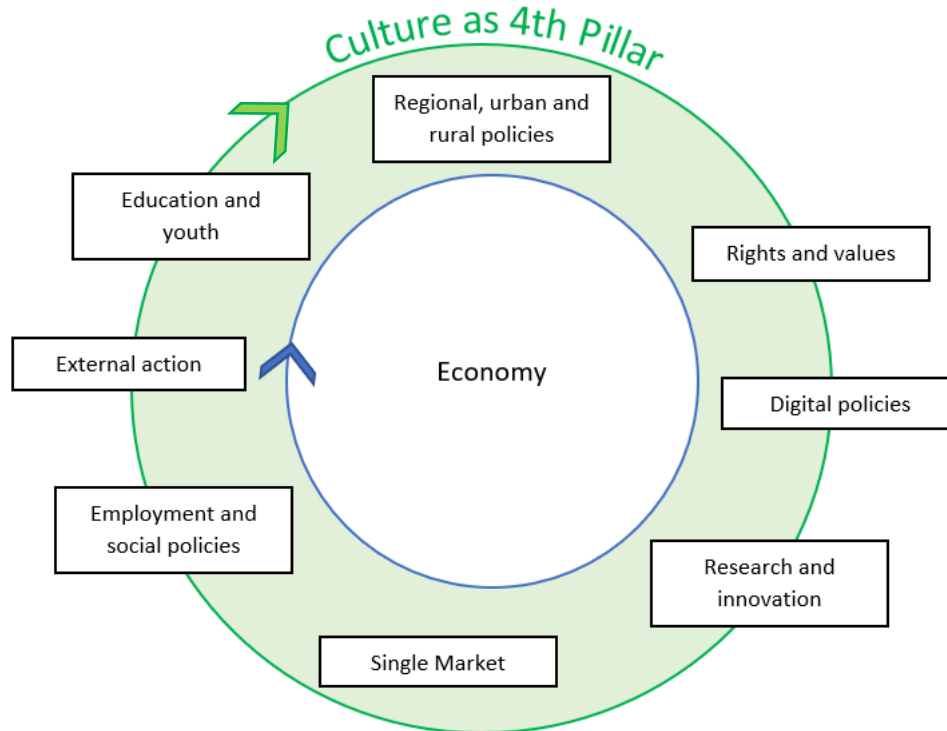

Figure 2 : Synergies in EU cultural policies : in the green sphere culture produces positive outcomes for the other policy fields and at the same time benefits from the other policy fields's outcomes. Original figure.

has been an effort to find compatibility between the two set of ideas, a liberal philosophy that would dictate a dichotomized approach to culture and a 4P program that would encourage synergies and the fostering of culture as an end itself. The two sets of ideas find a meeting point in the idea that an economically resilient cultural sector can produce more diverse and artistically innovative cultural products that in turn can « give back » to the economy. CAE criticized CE for establishing a hierarchy of goals between measures aimed at encouraging economic profit and those that aimed at fostering the symbolic utility of culture; in response, the EU integrated this idea of eliminating a dichotomized approach all the while not diminishing the importance of the economic side of culture. Thus, the EU has indeed integrated culture as a Fourth Pillar of Sustainable Development, through an upwards rebalancing of economic and social/artistic goals.

Therefore, we witness a partial integration of a 4P program in the 2018 CE Regulation proposal:

1) in the sense that culture meant as artistic expression is understood as a goal on its own that can and needs to be fostered by policies situated in other pillars (culture as a goal and cultural mainstreaming) (4P).

2) In the sense that culture can inform better practices in other policy fields (culture as a lens) (4P).

3) In the sense that all the positive policy outcomes of culture can encourage the economy which is understood as fueling progress in all other Pillars (culture as an instrument and a bridging element between Pillars) (3P/4P).

4) In the sense that both this instrumental and non-instrumental approach to culture is seen as complementary and indivisible to the sustainability of the cultural sector and to the achievement of the goals in the other Three Pillars and thus cannot be approached through a dichotomized approach where economic profitability would be a discriminant factor in the development of policies (4P).

The integration of a 4P program is further supported by a commitment to more tailor-made solutions for CCIs and a praise for qualitative performance indicators and the inclusion of cultural workers experts in the evaluation panel of projects.

Thus, the EU can be said to having integrated a 4P discourse, adopting a narrative where culture is seen as both an instrument and a lens and where in order to be a valuable instrument, it needs to be encouraged as an independent pillar of Sustainable Development, *as well* as being mainstreamed in the other three (fig.2).
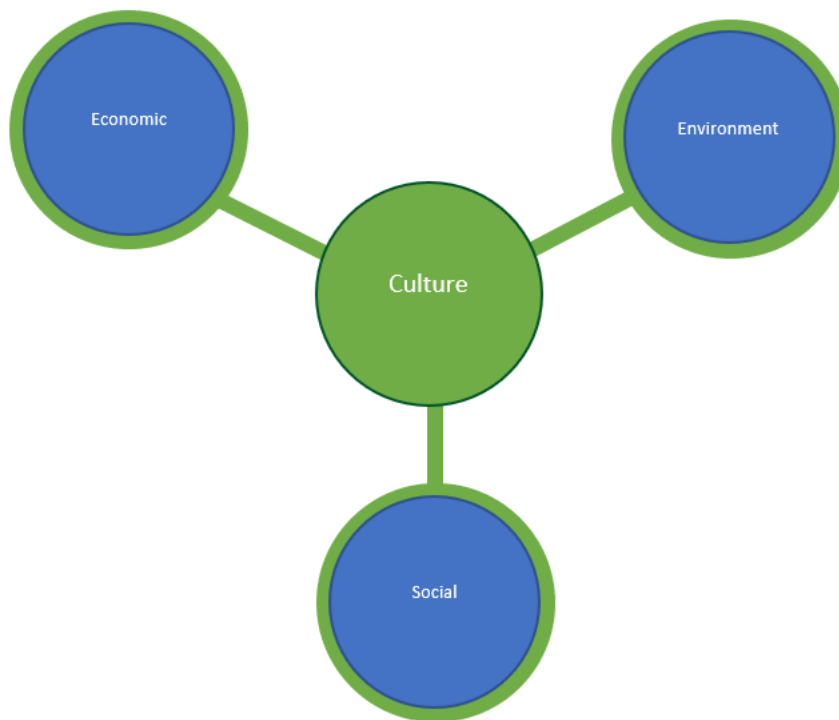
Figure 3 : Culture in the EU as a 4P of Sustainable Development and as a mainstreamed element in other Pillars. Original figure.

The differences between the two documents are sometimes very subtle and the blurriness of an evolutionary integration of ideas can sometimes be confusing. Rather than seeing this as a limit of the research, I consider that it is a good depiction of how ideas in a discourse slowly bleed into acceptance, becoming part of a more solidified set of ideas while retaining some elements of the previous program in place. It is hard to clearly

determine if a 4P program has become part of the background abilities of policy makers; this is something that can only be tested through a more micro approach. However, the shifts in the framing of culture and its place in relation to the Three Pillars of Sustainable Development do attest of the fact that those 4P programmatic solutions were deemed appropriate in light of their long-term problem-solving potential. By integrating them in the official proposal (later adopted) for a new Regulation establishing Creative Europe, the EU officializes its commitment to certain elements of a 4P program. Indeed, the proposal highlights how culture is a valuable element to tackle long term policy issues such as countering the "fake news" narrative, foster the integration of migrants and alleviate the rising nationalism in the EU. As such, the inclusion of synergies and the mention of these issues go to show that policy makers adopted a more 4P program in light of its perceived fitness to tackle policy issues ahead. This, as I will illustrate later, will play a role in lock-in effect. I indeed hypothize that this relevancy, coherency and long term fit of the 4P program will be referenced later on when it came to defending those ideological acquisitions.

What this analysis also tells us is that the compatibility of ideas plays a role in their integration. Indeed, while some ideas of a 3P program remain (such as an emphasis of the economic utility of culture) they are complemented by 4P ideas that are portrayed as increasing the overall utility of culture as a policy object, which is what grants their integration. In this case, culture in the 2018 Recommendation is portrayed as being a more interesting policy object than in its 2013 counterpart, in light of the fact that the EU can exploit the synergies generated by culture, providing a better answer (both as tool and as a lens) to current policy problems.

In this sense, 3P and 4P are not incompatible programs, which allows for a gradual integration of new ideas and policy solutions which aim at exploiting this newly found larger utility of culture. This is something that was present in CAE's criticism: the complaint that the Creative Europe Programme, as it was structured, *limited* the potential of culture. In this sense, a discursive enlargement of culture's utilities through the inclusion of synergies represents a major integration of CAE's discourse in the new Regulation.

This not only further grounds the assumption that policy change and the integration of ideas in the cultural field is an evolutionary process, but also tells us something about the *how* this process happens. The evolutionary integration of ideas happens through appealing to the optimization of a policy object utilities, as long as those new ideas remain compatible and complementary with the previously established program. As such, there need to be contact points between the two discourses that can be exploited by an advocacy discourse.

The fact that ideas can freely circulate also depends on the policy context in which they happen.

First, the EU is a favorable policy venue for new ideas, as long as those remain compatible with its pre-existing programs and philosophies. The EU aims at developing new sustainable practices (as shown by its international commitments and prevalent role in international negotiations), therefore the EU as a policy venue

remains philosophically open to new approached to policy. Still showing discursive signs of a strong economic imperative and liberal philosophy, the EU integrates new programs *precisely because* they do not contradict this base liberal philosophy. If CAE's 4P discourse had negated the economic utility of culture or aimed at overthrowing instead of rebalancing objectives, there would have been an ideological incompatibility between CAE and the EU. The favorable nature of the EU towards new ideas also stems from the fact that the 3P and 4P programs all derive from an already integrated philosophy of Sustainable Development, which is also not incompatible with a liberal philosophy, finding points of accord on, for example, the need for a resilient global economy. With a stronger ideological opposition, the integration of a new program may have been more problematic; however, in the case of culture the integration benefitted from a smooth transition.

In conclusion for this part, evidence supports the integration of a 4P discourse in the 2018 proposal for Creative Europe. The discourse that has been integrated corresponds to the previously observed discourse of CAE; however, the EU has integrated it by making it compatible with its liberal philosophy that had dictated the previous 3P program, where culture was only seen as a tool. As such, culture is now seen as a tool *and* as a lens, which can still be understood as informing culture as a 4th Pillar of Sustainable Development, insofar as a rebalancing of economic, artistic and social objectives has been achieved (i.e., abandonment of dichotomized approach).

As I have observed an official proposal (that was later approved), I can establish that an official commitment has been taken to the implementation of a 4P program. In this sense, a 4P program has been considered as adequate to tackle long term-policy issues. This is further supported by the undertaking (in the Regulation) of the formal commitment of the to the « new political approach based on cultural crossovers, as set out in the New European Agenda for Culture » (European Commission, 2018b) which particularly commits the EU to the cross-sectoral exploitation of synergies.

Before proceeding with the last part of my case study, it's now useful to recap what the contributions of these two sections of my case study have been to the answering of my research question: how has CAE's discourse ensured policy continuity?

For the moment, I have established that a 4P program has slowly been integrated in the policy discourse of the EU. The first section has aimed at determining that CAE was indeed advocating for a 4P program. The elements that testified of a 4P program in CAE's mid-term evaluation of CE were then later found in the revised version of CE. As I have mentioned in my theoretical framework, the presence and integration of a program can also be observed in the adoption of policies that imply a programmatic commitment. As such, the EU has adopted policy options in the form of a budget increase by being motivated by a programmatic commitment, notably in the recognition of the existence of synergies and the opportunity to exploit them. Indeed, increasing the budget in a context where you enlarge the utility of culture indicates that policy makers aim at funding this new found utility of culture, that they assimilate the change to a need to increase the budget.

This thus provides an affirmative answer the second sub-question that I had asked: can we attribute the increase of the budget for culture in the 2018 CE proposal for Regulation to a programmatic shift?

The fact that the EU has integrated a previous discourse is crucial to the answering of my research question, because it provides the basis upon which to observe if those past programmatic commitments are instrumentalized in order to narrow down policy options.

Therefore, we have now set the stage for verifying the presence of a lock-in effect.

Now that this has been established, I will move on to the next part of my case study, that will try to observe CAE's discourse in reaction to the May 2020 proposal, where the budget for culture was drastically cut, before being re-increased. I will especially focus on observing how CAE constructs its discourse in terms of cognitive and normative arguments based on past integration. This will serve the purpose of confirming my hypothesis of lock-in effect, where CAE mobilizes cognitive and normative arguments that reference the previous integration of the 4P discourse, exploiting therefore a leverage established by previous discourse.

C.   CAE'S post-proposal discourse: drawing on the past to frame 4P as the only policy option

This last section will aim at confirming or infirming my hypothesis of lock-in effect, where past integration of discourse is discursively instrumentalized in order to narrow down policy options, making a 4P program and a re-increase of the budget for culture the only option available.

Before starting, I'll remind the reader of the two indicators I'll be taking into consideration, which are ideas of a 4P that have proven to be integrated in CE 2018 and the initial 2018 increase of the budget. I'll observe how the instrumentalization of these two elements is then used to narrow down policy options.

1. A narrative constructed in continuity with the past

a)   Same problems, same solutions: the power of consistent framing

The first element that needs to be highlighted in CAE's post-proposal discourse is a sense of programmatic continuity with the past discourse. This means that there are no ideological oppositions between what CAE was advocating for in 2017 and now during the crisis; on the contrary, past advocacy work is often mobilized. This speaks to the long-standing fitness of a 4P program. Indeed, by maintaining a consistent discourse through the years, CAE can enlarge the arguments at its disposal, referencing back to previous advocacy campaigns and research and thus already providing policy solutions for the crisis. In other words, having a programmatically consistent discourse is important to prove that your program is fit to withstand challenges and that it can provide adequate solutions to current policy problems. CAE highlights how the previous increase of the budget was done because a synergetic potential of culture was recognized. Then, CAE proceeds to show that the same synergetic link and overall understanding of culture as a 4P is a valuable program to tackle the policy challenges ahead. Thus, CAE frames the current issues in a similar way that previous issues, which suggest policy makers to adopt the same solutions (namely a 4P program and a re-increase of the

budget). Moreover, by highlighting how previous solutions were valuable, CAE is able to pressure policy makers on the ground that, if previous measures had been taken, the cultural sector would have had some ways to better cope with the crisis

This sense of continuity is conveyed through three elements that echo the ideological assumptions of the previously integrated 4P program: a similar portrayal of the issues of the cultural and creative industries that are portrayed as only being exacerbated by the crisis, the same narrative that postulates that these issues need to be addressed through a 4P program and the reference to the long-term coherency of CAE's advocacy initiatives.

In CAE's article issued on the 14th of July, CAE remarks how the lockdown measures imposed by Covid are: «exacerbating the desperately perilous situation in which culture, the arts and the creative sectors at large find themselves» (Culture Action Europe, 2020o) and in its official position on the post-coronavirus 2021-2027 MFF (Culture Action Europe, 2020d) CAE highlights how « The cultural and creative sectors are facing old and new challenges » The new challenges highlighted in both documents refer to some elements that are intrinsic to CCIs and that make them structurally more vulnerable to lockdown measures.

Among the new challenges, the text highlights how CCIs have been particularly affected by lock-down, as this has limited the possibilities for cross-national collaboration and casting (Culture Action Europe, 2020q) ; the dependency of live performances is also mentioned as crucially endangering the future of the cultural sector. These two elements are presented as something inevitable that therefore does not imply any inherent past responsibility of policy makers and are complemented with suggestions for welfare measures such as the conversion of project loans to structural funds for CCIs (Culture Action Europe, 2020l). In this sense, what is stressed is the need to commit to implement these measures, as if left alone, culture risks on incurring in irreparable damage (Culture Action Europe, 2020q, 2020f). These are specific measures that are not linked with previous commitments, although CAE does stress that welfare measures should remain tailor made and aware of the prerogative of rebalancing economic and non-economic priorities (Culture Action Europe, 2020i).

Another part, however, refers to issues that have not been addressed in the past, and for which CAE had been advocating, and that would have been improved if and only if a wider approach to culture had been adopted in the past.

CAE laments, by reiterating the validity of its Double4culture campaign, that CE was already unable to fully cover its expenditures and that the EU had been made aware of this and, most importantly, had recognized it (Culture Action Europe, 2020q), thus mentioning the first shortcoming that, if implemented in the past, could have made the sector more resilient during the crisis. For example, in its first official call to uphold culture in the EU budget, CAE stresses that « Doubling Creative Europe's budget, as we have been asking for years together with the European Parliament, is more urgent than ever» (Culture Action Europe, 2020q). Further highlighting the already previous underfunding despite the recognized potential: «The success rate declined

from one programming period to another, reflecting that the schemes are insufficiently funded compared to the potential interest they generate» (Culture Action Europe, 2020q). Reacting to the slight increase in the budget (back to 1,64b) that had been achieved by June 2020, CULT Chair mentions in a EP press release later referenced in CAE's article (Culture Action Europe, 2020o) in relation to Charles Michel meager increase of the budget for Culture: «It's not clear what has happened, but he was right the first time when he said the EU budget should be future-focused» (European Parliament, 2020a). The link between culture and the « Future » also dates back to CAE's pre-Covid discourse and will be at the core of the narrowing down of policy options, as I'll explain later. For now, what is worth noting is the programmatic continuity between the pre- and post-proposal that is specifically addressed through references to elements that have been criticized but never sufficiently addressed.

On this note, the advocacy of CAE for a more comprehensive approach to culture, where having culture as a Fourth Pillar was framed as being key to a more sustainable development and to a more resilient cultural sector in case of unforeseen events can already be found in the 2018 campaign launch of Commit1% (Culture Action Europe, 2018a). This campaign and its arguments are routinely mentioned throughout my body of texts, signaling how CAE relies on advocacy arguments that it had already developed and that, in their logic, should have already been implemented («he was right the first time» cf. above). Among these arguments for a more efficient and resilient cultural sector, the imperative of cultural mainstreaming (which is the logical underpinning of commit1%, that aims at earmarking 1% of every budget line to culture), the opportunity offered by synergies, and the need to foster the own Value of art. All these arguments are supported by evidence in the CAE publication «The Value and Values of Culture » (Culture Action Europe, 2018b). This publication constitutes one of the main documents that underpins both the Double4Culture and Commit1% campaigns.

 Another example of how CAE laments a non-sufficient integration of 4P measures for culture is by highlighting how no measures have been put in place to protect free-lancers (Culture Action Europe, 2020d), a category that constitutes the majority of cultural workers and that had been mentioned as needing tailor made solutions already in 2017 (Culture Action Europe, 2017). In particular, CAE takes the chance to reiterate how free-lancers would need tailor made solutions that would not expose them to the competition for the allocation of funds with big profit-making cultural institutions. This argument, that echoes the need to rebalance economic and non-economic priorities I had encountered in the 2017 CAE mid-term evaluation.

The issue of geographical imbalances in various EU national cultural sectors is also once again highlighted (Culture Action Europe, 2020f), as it was highlighted in the 2017 mid-term evaluation. The fact that no measures have been taken in between 2017 and 2020 is something that is both implicitly and explicitly remarked by CAE, with sentences such as « Too often, in the past culture has been the first to be compromised in budget allocations and the most heavily affected economically and financially. We cannot accept that this happens again» (Culture Action Europe, 2020i).

Enlarging slightly the timeframe of this analysis, continuity in ideas can also be observed in the transitionary period between the 2018 CE Regulation and the beginning of the Covid crisis in March 2020. Before the Covid storm, on the 13th of September 2019 (Culture Action Europe, 2019), CAE addressed a letter to then-newly elected Commission President Ursula Von Der Leyen expressing concern about the lack of the word "culture" in the portfolio of Commissioner Mairya Gabriel that then grouped culture together with youth, research, innovation, sport and education. In particular, CAE noted that it was glad to see culture embedded in so many other fields, but that they feared that with through this grouping, culture's importance would be downgraded and not given the necessary relevance as a pillar on its own. In the letter, they still recognized the instrumental value of culture as a tool to achieve the goals of the Social Pillar, but they highlighted how culture needs to be understood as both: as an instrument but also as a pillar in its own. Thus, even during the transitionary period, CAE continued to maintain a strong programmatic continuity.

Overall, the programmatic shift that CAE aims at pushing forward, exploiting the opportunity of Covid and the Recovery Fund, reiterates goals and measures that had already been published between 2017 and March 2020. This consistency serves two purposes: one, it legitimizes the program as a valid policy option. Indeed, by continuously referencing past arguments, CAE highlights the overarching fitness of the program to tackle policy issues ahead and, moreover, it links its approach with wider, long term issues such as globalization, the green transition, digitalization, overall speaking to that Sustainable Development philosophy. For example, it is highlighted how «Art and culture are essential for tackling societal issues which have come to the fore during the COVID crisis» (Culture Action Europe, 2020n). In this context, it's highlighted how new issues came to the fore, but they are rooted in wider and more longs standings issues. By also highlighting how a 4P approach should have already been more integrated, it leverages policy makers by instilling in them a sense of urgency, the idea that the implementation of a 4P program can no longer be delayed, fault to which the cultural sector may not recover.

I shall come back to the link that CAE ties between 4P and recovery, but for the moment what is important to remark is that CAE holds a coherent discourse with the elements that have been previously integrated in the 2018 CE and for which it has been advocating since 2017.

As the cultural sector is portrayed as having the same issues, only exacerbated by the crisis, it makes sense that CAE would suggest an increased funding for culture in the next MFF as the most logical policy solution. In other words, to the same problems, the same solutions.

In this sense, as the framing of issues does not change but is only exacerbated by a sense of urgency, we can establish a first leverage point that aims at reducing the scope of alternative policy options. Thus, the first way through which CAE narrows down the policy solutions through referencing past commitments, is showing that, as previous problems had been addressed through a 4P program and an increase in the budget, exacerbated problems should be met with the same programmatic solutions. Keeping a consistent framing of issues and

solutions also allows CAE to propose well documented policy options, among which cultural mainstreaming measures and an imperative re-increase of the budget.

Programmatic continuity, as I have said, can suggest to policy makers that the previous (4P) solutions could withstand the crisis. However, this still virtually leaves a lot of room to policy makers to evaluate those propositions and eventually back down from commitments. Here enters the interplay with the references with *formal* commitments to a 4P program.

b) *Referencing formal commitments to leverage policy makers accountability*

Formal commitments can be understood as a second leverage point through which past discourse narrows down policy options. Indeed, referencing past formal commitments brings two elements to the table: first, it formally reiterates how 4P solutions had been deemed useful by policy makers themselves, this narrows down policy options because it implies that backing down would be incoherent and ineffective from a policy making standpoint and, in light of the similar framing of issues, incoherent and ineffective for the future. Secondly, referencing past commitments exercises leverage on a normative ground, as backing down is framed as being a betrayal and a breach of ministerial accountability.

Starting from May 2020, CAE refers multiple times to formal commitments undertaken by the EU towards culture, both in form of official budget proposals and in terms of official statements. Starting with the article directly reacting to the May 2020 proposal (Culture Action Europe, 2020e),CAE highlights:

> *Since when does the Commission call decreases increases? Back in July 2019, when Commission President Von der Leyen addressed the Parliament's plenary, she promised to back our call for tripling the Erasmus+ budget. What has happened? It is very unfortunate that the Commission is proposing lower numbers compared to its original proposal two years ago. Since then, the Von der Leyen Commission has created expectations that are not met by the proposal which is now on the table.*

Such a statement implies two kinds of arguments, a normative and cognitive one.

Normatively, CAE frames proposing a decreased budget as a betrayal of promises that implies, in a sense, a moral shortcoming from the part of the Commission which is highlighted by a rather aggressive phrasing («Since when does the Commission call decreases increases?») as well in another article of June the 3rd where they remind that «In 2018, the Commission recognized that Creative Europe is underfinanced, despite its great potential» (Culture Action Europe, 2020q) or again «Despite strong messages from leaders of the European Union that our sectors would be firmly supported, the current proposals for a recovery plan and a European budget strangely fail to consider the needs of the cultural and creative sectors» (Culture Action Europe, 2020b). Another normative argument that is mobilized relates to the moral implication of the Commission *purposefully* ignoring the damage of the Covid crisis on the cultural sector. In a time when dealing with the Covid pandemic is at the forefront, CAE links previous commitments (and also lack thereof despite being asked to commit) to a moral shortcoming, accusing the Commission of purposefully leaving some sectors behind. For example, it mentions how:

The Covid-19 pandemic has also ravaged the cultural and creative and media sectors across Europe, but the proposal – a decrease compared to the 2018 proposal – ignores this impact completely. Creative Europe is the only EU programme that provides direct support to these sectors. The European Parliament has called on the Commission time and time again to put in place an ambitious plan to help the sectors recover, but the Commission is missing this opportunity and sending a terrible message (Culture Action Europe, 2020e).

In this passage, CAE mentions refers both positive and negative commitments. On one hand, it reminds the EU that they had initially envisioned a higher budget (2018 proposal) and on the other hand, they remind them the Commission has not been developing sufficient measures like CAE had been advocating for (which is tied to the long-standing validity of CAE's discourse).

As such, CAE utilizes the Covid crisis as a leverage point by linking it with of previous commitments. In other words, it creates a narrative where the Commission *had promised* culture an increase in budget before the sector was even in distress and now, after culture would really need help, they leave it alone. By implication, they highlight the unreasonableness of such a policy choice, thus putting forward also the cognitive argument that a decreased budget is unable to correctly address the issues at hand. Relating verbatim in one of their articles titled "EC proposal "absolutely insufficient", says CULT Committee Chair" the words of CULT Committee Chair Sabine Verheyen (EPP, DE):

First, we have to see that the original proposal from the Commission from the year 2018 was much higher than what is proposed now. And it was the minimum for what we need to fulfill the obligations out of the programs and the ambitious aims. We, as Parliament's said very clear that we need a tripling of the Erasmus plus and a doubling of creative Europe (Culture Action Europe, 2020g).

Once again, through referencing past official commitments, CAE highlights the cognitive unreasonableness of decreasing the budget and not proposing ambitious plan that would put culture forward in the recovery plan; moreover, the phrasing also implies a moral shortcoming that comes from this lack of effort, which is also in line with the decisive advocacy position Sabine Verheyen had taken in previous declarations in the EP (see supra).

References to past formal commitments also come in the form of stressing CAE's collaboration and support with several MEPs, especially with those of the CULT Committee and that this collaboration and mutual consultation dates back to well before the Covid crisis (Culture Action Europe, 2020f). This support is not discursively irrelevant because it multiplies the official commitments of EU policy makers towards culture. In other words, if CAE had only been referring to its own advocacy work, it may have been argued that its 4P program advocacy had been consistent, but consistently not integrated in the EU sphere, or just in the CE program. On the contrary, interactions with EU officials give legitimacy to the claim of CAE and show how their ideas were already partially integrated. Moreover, this allows CAE to bypass the eventual non-full integration of 4P policies that, as we have seen in the previous section, have been partially integrated but still have elements of a liberal philosophy that could motivate a shift-back.

The reliance of CAE on MEPs, it can be read as CAE establishing the idea that their advocacy, that for a 4P program, has already been integrated by at least one section of policy makers (EP) and that therefore it has already proved to be relevant and fit to tackle the challenges ahead.

In short, references to past official commitments are instrumentalized to narrow down policy options, because they frame an increase of the budget and a 4P program as being more reasonable effectiveness/efficacy wise and they remind the Commission of its moral obligation not to betray promises. As such, if policy makers were to back down, they would incur in a loss of political legitimacy and a decreased effectiveness of their policies.

2. The framing of the Covid crisis: a time to implement past commitments

The opposite to evolutionary discourse/policy change is revolutionary change. Schmidt (2011) mentions how moments of paradigm failure provide the opportunity for discourse to become successful.

Talking about how a crisis is presented is crucial in studies that deal with policy change/continuity. Indeed, moments of crisis can act as catalysts for change only if they are discursively recognized as such (Hajer 2006). In this sub-section I'll explore how Covid is framed by CAE, in order to verify if the opportunity that Covid represents is framed in terms of implementing previous programmatic commitments or if on the contrary, Covid represents an opportunity for drastic programmatic change. I'll then reflect upon the question of how one or the other framing enables CAE to narrow down policy options.

It's important to note that my hypothesis of lock-in effect does not negate that a crisis such as Covid acted as turning point. However, it was framed by CAE as an *accelerator* to implement commitments that had already been promised (although not yet fully achieved), thus maintaining a strong ideological link to the past. Indeed, the framing of the Covid crisis needs to be understood in parallel with the references to past formal (and informal) commitments (see supra).

First of all, Covid is framed by CAE as both a tragedy (with numerous referrals to the impact of the crisis on CCIs) (Culture Action Europe, 2021) and an opportunity, with CAE deeply exploiting the window of opportunity of the Recovery Fund to 1) ensure more budget for culture and 2) ensure that MS are forced to earmark a percentage of their funds to culture). This topic of culture and recovery monopolizes all the articles issued by CAE from the 4th of May 2020 to 20th of November 2020.

Covid is indeed presented as a moment of critical juncture, a moment to : «rebuild our societies»(CAE, 2020ap), «for Europe to be ambitious»(Culture Action Europe, 2020b), «for the EU to amply demonstrate that it can honor its values»(idem), «an opportunity to build back better, designing policies that allow culture to fulfil its role as the fourth pillar of sustainable development» (Culture Action Europe, 2020i) and, implying a sense of urgency, a make it or break it situation « How decision-makers choose to respond now will set the scene for the next decade of cultural and creative life in our union» (Culture Action Europe, 2020b). Against

this background, culture is established as being an integral part of the Sustainable Development paradigm and a Pillar that needs to be catered on its own. The discursive references to this new (but old) role of culture in Sustainable Development can be observed in almost all articles, with phrasing such as: «Culture is the driving force holding the Union together » (Culture Action Europe, 2020q). Referring to the new German Presidency of the Council of the European Union «[The Presidency] will need to convince the other EU leaders about the fact that culture is a key driver for recovery in Europe» (Culture Action Europe, 2020p). Highlighting the necessity of investing in culture in this time of crisis, to fully take advantage of the paradigm shift ahead : «[S&D Coordinator Petra Kammerever] stressed on the need to "not just repair the damage but create something new" by investing in culture and doubling the Creative Europe budget» (Culture Action Europe, 2020o).

CAE mentions how the pandemic has had a disastrous impact on the cultural field. At the same time though, when advocating for its vision of a post-Covid MFF and cultural field, CAE highlights how this moment of crisis is an opportunity to rethink development in its totality (Culture Action Europe and European Cultural Foundation, 2020). What re-thinking development in its totality entails is much more in continuity with past discourse that it may seem at a first glance. Indeed, what it entails is putting culture at the center of recovery, both as a tool and as a lens and by understanding culture as a 4th Pillar of development, with a value in its own. As such, Covid is presented as a moment of programmatic failure, but the solutions remain consistent to what CAE had proposed before.

For example, in CAE and European Cultural Foundation joint statement (idem), it is highlighted how after Covid, the realities of CCIs will never be the same. The pandemic would thus be the perfect opportunity to: «to join forces at the EU level to re-imagine the future, to rethink the existing models and to ensure a fair transition towards more sustainable patterns in future». However, the solutions proposed to re-invent this future are much in line with what CAE had been advocating for, namely cultural mainstreaming in the MFF budget, more collaboration with cultural actors in the devising of policies and the recognition of culture as an integral part of the social, environmental and economic recovery in light of synergies.

Such mentions of a 4P program as the solution for the Covid crisis can also be observed in extracts such as these, where a 4P program (culture as an instrument to understand and rebuild societies in a non-dichotomized understanding) is put forward to tackle the programmatic failure of Covid.

> *(CCIs) have a fundamental role in promoting well-being and resilience 1) in individuals and communities, guarantee access to information, encourage awareness, tolerance and build the capacities to imagine the societies of the future, which are already in formation due to the ongoing global upheaval* (Culture Action Europe, 2020i).

> And *We have an opportunity to build back better, designing policies that allow culture to fulfil its role as the fourth pillar of sustainable development. Doing so will provide a more comprehensive frame to understand our world and make for stronger, more innovative, more tolerant and more resilient communities tomorrow* (idem)

Not only these two extracts highlight the fitness of the 4P program, but they also introduce another leverage point, which is that this 4P program (that I remind, has been framed as officially recognized through referencing past formal commitments) creates an image of future oriented policy. The construction of such an image oriented towards the future represents an appealing option for the EU, in a moment when it is requires to rethink its overall strategy. As such, CAE's discourse provides not only a seemly valuable option in terms of solutions, but also a desirable option in terms of political image.

CAE further exploits this appeal that a 4P could have if adopted. Indeed, they often refer to the very concrete impact that cultural activities had in keeping up the morale of people during lock-down (Culture Action Europe, 2020b). This creates a leverage point towards the general public, that further encourages the adoption of the 4P program. By creating a very vivid image of how the intrinsic value of culture affects all people, be it for moral support, *resilience* or the spreading of health messages, CAE brings the issue of culture closer to people. This creates a further incentive for the EU not to ignore culture and ensure a re-increase of the budget. Although not directly linked to past discourse, CAE does use this discursive strategy to further narrow down policy options by increasing political accountability.

It must be noted that, in CAE's discourse, the depicting of this moment of crisis as an opportunity is much more apparent that explicit reproaches to the insufficient measures adopted by the EU for culture. In this sense, a first look at CAE's discourse could bring us to think that, instead of having continuity, CAE's discourse actually draws a strong sense of discontinuity with the past. This is true, when it comes to the framing of the Covid crisis. However, a deeper look at what arguments are brought forward reveal that CAE's discourse is, programmatically, extremely coherent. In this sense, the scarcity of direct reproaches and the image of culture as the next key to the future can be read as a strategy to appeal to the current political needs of the EU. In other words, an exploitation of the window of opportunity of Recovery to bring forward the deep programmatic changes that could have not found the same opportunity in a moment of non-crisis.

In conclusion, CAE frames the Covid pandemic as the time to finally fully integrate a 4P program, a moment where the EU can maintain promises and reveal itself a forward-looking political project. Discursively, this further narrows down the policy options. Indeed, framing Covid as a crisis with past solutions speaks to the effectiveness of the previously proposed solutions (effectivity/efficiency), moreover, it links the final integration of a 4P program as the proof of an EU concerned with its future and that is able to tackle the pandemic with new solutions. In a context of programmatic failure, being able to provide solutions that create a forward-looking image can increase the appeal of the program. If the EU were to neglect culture and maintain a low budget (which I remind, comes with a programmatic implication), they would reveal themselves to not have an overall new approach to development, which in a moment of paradigm failure means incurring in lowered political legitimacy and criticism.

This leads me to my last section, that illustrates the discursive strategy that pressured the most policy makers. This narrative is constructed on the previously accepted idea of synergies.

3. No recovery without culture: 4P as a *sine qua non* condition for recovery

The core of CAE's post-proposal advocacy discourse is a "no recovery without culture" narrative. CAE exploits the *assumption* that culture has synergetic links to all policy fields (which is something that had been integrated in the previous 2018 CE) in order to narrow down policy options in a way where treating culture as a Fourth Pillar of Sustainable Development becomes the *only available option*. Indeed, CAE frames equates managing culture as only an instrument in a Three Pillar program to failing the overall recovery of the EU itself, entailing a price in terms of political accountability and effectiveness that the EU cannot afford in times of crisis.

The no recovery without culture narrative is something made explicit in the post-proposal discourse, with arguments explicitly mentioning the "no recovery without culture" wording and articles being titled: "Culture is not a luxury but a necessity", "Make culture central in the EU recovery" and "No sustainable development without culture". However, in order to prove that this narrative references past ideas we need to delve deeper into how this narrative is constructed, to observe how, without an idea that belongs distinctively to a 4P program, that of synergies, CAE could not have developed this *sine qua non* narrative.

From what I could observe, the *sine qua non* link between culture and recovery is established through what I define as a strategic expansion of the role of culture. This strategic expansion is not *only* based on the idea that culture can be instrumental to the achievement of an economic recovery, social development and environmental sustainability, but also that culture as a goal/pillar in itself has a synergetic relation with the other pillars. These synergies can yield positive policy results, but they can also jeopardize policies in the other pillars *if* culture is not managed through a 4P program.

It is in this negative synergy that we can really find a trace of the instrumentalization of past discourse. Indeed, an instrumental view of culture that only sees culture as an instrument, conceives culture as an *option*, not as something *unavoidable*. Thus, it could not have created a discourse where the inclusion of culture as a Fourth Pillar is the only available option for the future. As such, to establish the argument that a neglected cultural pillar could bring negative results in other policy fields implies a recognition of a synergetic interdependency between the cultural pillar and the other pillars, in other words, it means *assuming* the presence of synergies, which are a 4P idea. CAE therefore exploits the incremental nature of ideas to build a narrative that narrows down policy options.

In a series of open letters, CAE addresses the role of culture in four main domains: cultural heritage and the digital transition, culture and democracy, culture and the economy and finally culture and the EU external relations. The first one aims at exploring how the digital transition could affect heritage (effect *on* culture), the second one highlights how artistic freedom is a necessary element for democracy and that as such needs to be

protected, the third asks for financial support for CCIs that provide considerable wealth and employment in the EU and lastly, CAE highlights how culture needs to be further integrated in the EU external relations as it is a vector for democratization, mutual understanding and a tool to fight nationalism and misinformation.

The first open letter (Culture Action Europe, 2020k) on digitalization implies, in its practical recommendations for improved collaboration between digitalization and culture, a synergetic link between the two, as well as synergies with the Social and Environmental pillar. Indeed, CAE highlights how a more comprehensive application of digital resources to Cultural Heritage will be able to ensure better conservation which in turn will bring positive outcomes in the domain of democratization. CAE also highlights how the EU should concern itself with developing regulations for the preservation of digital heritage itself (thus showing a commitment to culture, heritage, as a goal in itself) and invest in research to further understand the environmental impact of digital preservation (in terms of CO_2 emissions, electricity consumption etc.). The interaction between cultural heritage and digitalization is also described as relevant in the field of education, where new educational experiences can be developed through the help of AI, 3D models and other innovative options. Furthermore, CAE also stresses how Digital Cultural Heritage should not necessarily be profitable, but rather understood as bringing positive transversal outcomes through its *process*.

The second letter, titled European Democracy Action Plan (Culture Action Europe, 2020m) aims at complementing the EU Democracy Action Plan (EDAP) through the inclusion of a focus on artistic expression, framed as necessary to the accomplishment of the Action Plan and not yet mentioned in the Plan. Here, CAE even refers to a previous EU formal commitment of the CE 2018 version (which highlights the interplay with references to past commitments):

> *In presenting its proposal for Creative Europe 2021-2027, the European Commission recognises that "Artistic freedom and diverse and free media environment are central to conveying diverging opinions and perspectives. They contribute to pluralistic societies where citizens are able to make informed choices, including in the context of political elections* (idem).

The letter highlights how in current political times cultural operators are being subject to a restriction of their artistic freedom, included in countries that are bound to receive money from the Recovery Fund. CAE argues that freedom of expression in the form of artistic freedom is crucial to the development of pluralistic societies where citizens are able to make informed choices, including when it comes to political elections. Culture is thus framed as being necessary to, basically, the Social pillar of sustainable development, but where repercussions are bound to happen in all aspects of society. The assumption of synergies is not as evident as in the first letter; however, it is conveyed through a wide link to broad societal issues, much like we find in the post-proposal discourse articles where culture is framed as being the key to a very general "future". Indeed, CAE mentions how the EDAP recognizes the importance of media freedom for democratic and value-based societies to function, to which it adds that therefore, artistic expression should as well be thought as important for the functioning of society.

The third letter (Culture Action Europe, 2020l) relates to support for the CCIS both in times of crisis and for the future. It aims at ensuring that the Creative Europe Guarantee Facility (CEGF), the main financial instrument that geared at ensuring structural funding to CCIs that was now moved from the CE program to the InvestEU fund is allocated proper funding in order to ensure its effectiveness. They indeed highlight how under CE, the CEGF had already seen its budget increased in the name of its proven effectiveness. By implication, this means that not ensuring proper funding would hinder the effectiveness of the instrument, dramatically damaging CCIs. The damage to CCIs is framed as having wider repercussions. CAE indeed highlights how CCIs are, other than an industry that accounts for 4,4% of EU GDP and 12 million jobs, a crucial element for EU overall competitiveness, framing creativity and culture as «one of Europe's strongest assets» (idem). As I had remarked in the previous sections, the EU has maintained, although integrating a 4P program, a marked liberal philosophy which is however not seen as in opposition to a 4P program. The economy is indeed understood, much like culture, as being a transversal policy element that can generate positive policy outcomes in all policy fields. In this sense, the mention of the importance of culture for the overall economic recovery of the EU still testifies of a synergetic outlook, especially in light of the fact that culture is framed as crucial for the overall competitiveness of the EU, not only in terms of being one of the main industries, but in light of its drive for innovation.

The fourth and last letter refers to the EU's external relations (Culture Action Europe, 2020j) and it is perhaps where the argument of synergies is more evident, because external relations cover a wide array of policy fields, from diplomatic relations to economic collaboration, to knowledge exchange and so on. One first synergetic link CAE draws reflects perfectly the intertwinement between pillars and the role of culture as both an instrument and a lens. CAE argues that the EU needs to ensure proper funding to the CCS and at the same time mainstream culture into diplomacy (cultural diplomacy). Cultural diplomacy has indeed the potential to open up markets, increase the cultural and economic influence of the EU and last but not least encourage more cultural production as audiences become more diversified, especially through new digital means.

Moreover, CAE remarks how, while *also* contributing to the economy of the EU, culture is the basis to create democratic, free and sustainable societies. This social outcome in turn will foster friendlier international relations between the EU and its partners, as it will contribute to dispel fake news, reestablishing trust and mutual responsibility, making the EU a global leading and more effective actor. These causal links established between culture and economic, environmental (sustainable) and social goals make the Four Pillars interdependent, which is what the idea of synergies in a 4P program entails.

In the letter, CAE advocates thus for a «systemic change, a broad engagement, and a wide support and lots of innovation and creativity» (idem) where the suggested change would be a shift towards a 4P program.

As also illustrated in the previous sub-section, CAE inscribes this systemic change in a frame of programmatic continuity, praising the previous efforts to embed culture as a strategic element for political, social and

economic development and contributing to external policy objectives (mentioning how the role of culture has been «increased perceived as strategic»). It also explicitly suggests that the European Commission should «build on what has been achieved so far (see policy background below) and put adequate efforts and resources to further strengthen cultural relations» (idem). The proposed policy options are then all-in line with a 4P program, proposing recommendations for increased cultural mainstreaming and increased coherence and cooperation among external relations and cultural programmes.

Thus, these four open letters show how CAE constructs its discourse of "why we should fund culture" mainly on the concept of synergies; a concept that is reiterated to have been previously recognized as valid through the mention of previous formal commitments (such as previous increase of budget of the CEGF) and programmatic commitments implied in policies (with the references of policies and measures that have been achieved so far). What this discursive strategy can be understood as is, as anticipated, a strategic expansion of the role of culture. In other words, CAE highlights how culture is embedded in all policy fields and it is able to bring positive outcomes. As such, culture becomes embedded in all the aspects of the recovery.

Now that CAE has established that culture is everywhere and has interdependent links to all Pillars of Sustainable Development, CAE is able to ensure the final discursive strike that narrows down the programmatic (and thus policy) options for the EU. CAE postulates that these positive synergies can *only* be achieved if culture is managed as a Pillar in its own, not as a mere instrument. In other words, CAE has discursively linked culture to all the policy fields that are relevant for the Recovery of the EU and then made the success of the measures in those policy fields *dependent* on a 4P program, in light of their synergetic links with culture.

Coming back to previous articles, CAE explicitly references how culture cannot be understood only as an instrument and needs to be understood as an independent pillar, fault to which the EU wouldn't be able to harness its full potential. While in a 3P program, the full potential is understood as the maximization of cultural activities in economic and social terms, in a 4P program, not harnessing its full potential means now damaging the other policy fields, because their links are interdependent. This is well summarized in CAE's Position on the post Coronavirus 2021-2027 MFF, where it's highlighted that, however, sufficient funding must be provided:

> *Culture brings societal gains through crossovers with other areas of EU action, such as cohesion policy, social inclusion, external relations, environment, education, research and innovation. Culture plays a key role in changing the current practices of society, promoting the objectives of the Green Deal. However, sufficient funding shall be provided to this end* (Culture Action Europe, 2020d).

Thus, a strategic expansion of the role of culture in a 4P program multiplies the leverage points that CAE can use to ensure that culture is properly funded, because in CAE's discourse, to fail culture means to fail the overall Recovery of the EU, which is something that is not acceptable for the European Union in this day and

age, both politically and economically. Indeed, EU policy makers are not insensitive to matters of political accountability, and have been shown to take it in great account in the voting of budgets, even prioritizing it over economic considerations (Thurmaier, 1995).

Thus, the narrative of "no recovery without culture" runs deeper than just proposing a viable policy option for recovery. By exploiting the interdependencies of (previously integrated and referenced as such) 4P concept of synergies, CAE is able to suggests that every shortcoming in other fields can be linked back to a shortcoming for culture and, vice versa, all shortcomings for culture can be linked back to shortcomings for other fields. This makes developing 4P policies and properly funding culture unavoidable, the only policy option for Recovery.

To further support the realness and not just the assumed integration and success of CAE's discourse I can mention that during the span of time from May to November 2020, CAE mentions that more and more MEPs are picking up on their advocacy work, as attested by the adoption of a EP resolution advocating for bringing culture at the center of the recovery(European Parliament, 2020b). Moreover, CAE remarks how also the European Central Bank has listened to CAE's plea to reprioritize culture (Culture Action Europe, 2020h). Finally, on the 18th of November 2020, EP President David Sassoli proclaimed his support for a Cultural Deal for Europe (Culture Action Europe, 2020c) (i.e. a work-in-progress culture centered Recovery Plan) during a high profile online debate held by CAE. This happened right after on the 10th of November 2.2b euros were agreed for culture, together with relevant measures to uphold culture in the European Recovery (Culture Action Europe, 2020a).

4. Confirming the lock-in effect?

My hypothesis was that CAE had managed to ensure policy continuity through a lock-in effect.

The lock-in effect refers to a discursive process through which an advocacy actor instrumentalizes previous discursive successes to narrow down policy options. In my analysis, I have therefore observed if CAE was able, through referencing the past integration of a 4P discourse, to frame a 4P program and a re-increase of the budget as the only possible policy/programmatic choice. I therefore argued more broadly that discourse was able to ensure policy path dependency.

The main arguments that could be observed in CAE's post-proposal discourse are the following:

CCIs are portrayed as having the same issues than before the crisis, only exacerbated (difficulties in accessing funding, dependence on mobility, being limited solely by an economic framing). So, CAE uses this continuity in order to keep proposing always the same 4P solutions (i.e., treating culture as a pillar in its own, focusing on synergies) and pressures policy makers by reminding them that they had previously agreed on the fitness of the 4P program to tackle the policy issues of the cultural field, through referencing formal commitments.

The referencing through formal commitments is able to exercise pressure because CAE attaches moral values to the possibility of breaching them and highlights how, in light of the long-term effectiveness of a 4P program, not committing to what has been promised would have negative repercussions both in terms of effectiveness and political accountability, all the while failing to grasp an important opportunity for the future.

When talking about the Covid crisis, CAE frames it as a moment to implement previous commitments or finally implement those 4P measures that had been lacking. For this, CAE frames Covid as a moment to "rethink our future" but where the solutions are indeed in continuity with what has been previously said. Keeping the policy/program solutions consistent allows CAE to narrow down policy options because, once again, it can rely on the long-term fitness of the 4P program to tackle challenges ahead and reference it through previous formal commitments. In other words, it can remind policy makers that they had adopted 4P solutions to tackle the previous policy issues and now, with the Covid pandemic, they're facing the same issues, only exacerbated. Thus, they implicitly suggest that to the same issues, one should adopt the same solutions, so surely not decrease the budget and, on the contrary, prioritize culture even more.

CAE exploited the idea that policy makers had officially recognized the existence of synergies (by increasing the budget following the 2018 discourse integration) in order not only to highlight that managing culture as a 4th pillar (and thus re-increasing the budget) could be a good option, but that it is a necessity, fault to which the whole recovery would fail, because of the negative synergies that would be created by neglecting culture as a Fourth pillar. The empirical evidence is the strong highlight the discourse puts on synergies, both in terms of positive and negative synergies, and the explicit phrasing of their advocacy, with titles such as "no recovery without culture". For this, CAE exploited the integrated of synergies that had previously motivated a budget increase, in order to develop a discursive strategy of a strategic expansion of the role of culture. By establishing that culture is embedded in all policy fields, it was able to stress that culture, if not managed through a 4P program, could not only not benefit other policy fields, but rather damage them. In this sense, CAE shifted the image of culture as a Fourth Pillar from being a possibility to being something unavoidable. It did so by establishing a link between culture understood in a 4P manner and the achievement of Recovery. As Recovery is right now the main EU priority and something that the EU cannot afford to fail at (or to show it's failing at), this exercised strong pressure on policy makers. In this way, CAE established that a 4P program for culture (with consequent budget re-increase) as the only available option for the EU, fault to which the EU would incur in both normative and cognitive shortcomings.

What this goes to show is that CAE's discourse has a strong programmatic continuity and that it has exploited in order to create a convincing narrative that highlights the fitness of a 4P as a program for the long-term. In the discourse, references to formal commitments are also in constant interaction with all the other elements of the advocacy discourse, because they provide leverage points to concretely remind policy makers of their past actions and of the normative and cognitive implications of them.

But what does this tell us on the presence of a lock-in effect and its dynamics?

First of all, in a context of continuity, CAE uses referencing to previous commitment to higher budget to highlight a *cognitive dissonance* between what's promised and what's done. On what's promised in terms of funding, it highlights how not to fund means to render CE ineffective, to no longer cater to culture's needs and to miss out for the future. It also highlights how the previous budget increase was done on the idea that it was a good program for the long-term issues of not only the cultural sector, but of sustainable development overall. By then framing the Covid crisis as an exacerbation of previous problems that still call for a SD imperative, CAE narrows down policy options. Indeed, if a 4P program is still appropriate on the same basis that motivated the first adoption of it, why not commit to it anymore?

Thus, evidence suggests that you can instrumentalize previous discourse integration and especially previous commitments. However, only if then you're able to show that the program is still relevant to tackle current issues. In the case of CAE, the instrumentalization of past discourse is successful because CAE at the same time projects the program to the future. Otherwise, the fact that it had been integrated wouldn't have had relevance per se. Indeed, what Covid being framed as an opportunity to implement what hasn't been done before tells us is that, although it's presented as a turning point, the solutions presented are the same. This goes to show that CAE makes the program relevant for the current policies.

In this, formal commitments then play again a role because "if it was relevant before and you invested in it and it's relevant now, why wouldn't you invest?". Moreover, it's with Covid that CAE associates moral value to not adopting the program. Indeed, it refers to not investing in culture and not reprioritizing it as a failure to tackle future challenges, to fail the future.

Thirdly, by engaging in a strategic expansion of the role of culture, CAE highlights the price of not only not refunding, but also not taking a 4P program as a whole. In this dynamic, references to past commitments are less relevant, because the discourse highlights in particular what investing in culture can bring to the table for the future. However, this is relevant for what made the success.

This suggests the idea that there are two parallel dynamics of narrowing down policy decisions. One referring to the past and one to the future. The two interact when there is a programmatic continuity, mutually reinforcing the strength of the discourse.

What all of this goes to show is that the instrumentalizes of past discourse integration and policy continuity is not automatic. References to past arguments can narrow down policy options, but only if the program is also able to adapt. In a moment of crisis therefore if remains paramount that a program can still support its relevance. However, if that is the case, referencing back past commitments allows for the establishment of normative and cognitive points of leverage that are likely to hold policy makers accountable.

Another thing needs to be noted, which is that policy makers need to be under sufficient ministerial accountability for the issue (van der Ploeg, F. 2006). In my case, Recovery provided a high-profile opportunity for CAE to propose a programmatic shift and to be able to appeal to the link between culture and the future of people as an argument. When culture was not under the spotlight, we have seen that although ideas were integrated, they did not impeach a step back from happening. This also informs me, in hindsight, on the degree of integration of 4P in the 2018 CE. Although the budget was re increased on the basis of synergies, the ideas proved not to be integrated at a programmatic level but rather only at a policy level. This could be explained by the relative recent introduction of these ideas of synergies and culture as a Fourth Pillar. However, it would be incorrect to relegate these advances to the last five or ten years. The multiplication of utilities was something already observed and proved in academia and given the strong ties between CAE and the EU there is reasonable space to hypothize that they were aware of such proved presence of synergies. This makes me attribute the lack of deep integration more to a persistence of a 3P instrumental dichotomy that, when tested in a time of crisis where culture would have needed some counter-intuitive investments (in the sense that culture is high risk), informed a decrease in the budget in light of short-term calculations on the long-term potential of culture. A programmatic shift is thus a work in progress.

However, it needs to be said that the ability of CAE was also to extend culture's utilities in a way where it multiplied the zones of ministerial accountability. Indeed, by linking culture with the Green Deal, democracy, and digitalization, CAE has multiplied the policy venues where culture could bring its contribution and thus be advocated for. Maybe when 4P ideas and cultural mainstreaming will be more integrated as background cognitive abilities, pressure to properly fund the cultural side of other policy fields could come from the other fields themselves. This is not yet the case, but maybe in the future. If such a thing could be observed, it would also provide with a good indicator to assess the degree of successful cultural mainstreaming.

In any case, am I in measure of confirming my hypothesis? Partially.

Indeed, CAE discourse was able to ensure policy continuity by instrumentalizing past discourse but only because it was able to do it in combination with a discursive adaptation of the program to the window of opportunity.

On this topic, another consideration that needs to be made is the role of the window of opportunity of Covid. Lock-in effect is not in opposition to a revolutionary theory of policy change, where one major exogenous event reshuffles the situation in a way that it allows for a new discourse to emerge and get established. On the contrary, CAE's discourse was absolutely successful because it was able to exploit the window of opportunity of Covid, creating an exclusive causal relation between the adoption of a 4P program/increase of budget and the achievement of Recovery, complementing it with the normative and cognitive elements that stem from the cognitive dissonance of breached formal commitments. Therefore, lock in effect can be seen as compatible both with an evolutionary and revolutionary theory of discourse integration.

VII. Conclusion

This Master thesis has dealt with the subject of discourse and policy change/continuity. In particular, it has wished to explore the impact of past discourse on policy continuity.

The initial research question of this thesis was: What led to the re-increase of the budget for culture in the 2021-2027 MFF negotiations? In an effort to narrow down what could have motivated a re-increase of the budget for Culture, I have first explored various theories of policy change/continuity starting from rational choice and game theories, towards constructivist theories and finally landing on discursive institutionalism. Always by reviewing the literature I have established that the discursive institutionalism approach was the most fitting to explain policy continuity in the field of European Cultural policies. Indeed, culture in the EU context is very dependent upon matters of definition and policy framing as "culture" is an extremely wide policy object that can be understood both in the anthropological and artistic sense. By consequence, the policing of culture has been tied to the question of "what can culture do?".

With the initial assumption that cultural policy was better understood through the lens of discourse I have delved into my theoretical framework where I have established why discourse matters, mainly drawing from the work of authors such as Schmidt and Hajer. Here, I have established that discourse is both constitutive and constituent of reality and it determines what can culture do and also through what instruments (policy framing). Therefore, I concluded that through discourse I could observe both what framing of culture motivated change and what kind of discursive strategy managed to ensure policy continuity. I also took this chance to justify my choice of CAE as a relevant case study, highlighting how CAE is a relevant actor in the field of European cultural policies, enjoying political traction and collaborating to the policy development of the EU. This led me to my research question which was:

How did Culture Action Europe's advocacy discourse managed to ensure policy continuity in the form of a budget re-increase for the Creative Europe Programme in the context of the 2021-2027 MFF negotiations?

In order to answer this question, I have first explored what elements make a discourse successful. Success is determined by the ability of the program to prove its fitness to tackle policy issues ahead, cognitively wise, and to be in line or at least not in strong contradiction with long standing values present in the context. This provided me with the theoretical basis to affirm that CAE's post-proposal discourse had to create a discourse that at least in part fulfilled those requirements. But this still left the question open on how did CAE managed to do it, how did it mange to present a re-increase of the budget as the fittest policy option. Given the fact that CAE had already managed to ensure an initial increase of the budget, I interrogated myself on the possibility that this previous integration may generate a dynamic of path dependency, where past discourse provides leverage for the advocacy discourse to lock-in policy choices. Indeed, as Schmidt's theory of discourse integration argues, ideas are incremental. Therefore, to explore how this incremental nature is exploited in the construction of a successful discourse became the focus of this thesis.

This led me to my hypothesis which is also the main takeaway of this thesis: the so-called lock-in effect. The lock-in effect refers to a discursive process through which an advocacy actor instrumentalizes previous discourse integration to narrow down policy options. The lock in effect refers to both the ideas that are contained in the successful discourse (which I argue are dependent on previously integrated ideas) and to the communicative action through which these ideas are conveyed (i.e., how the advocacy actor instrumentalizes previous formal commitments in order to keep policy makers accountable, by linking formal commitments with considerations of effectiveness and moral accountability). The lock in effect conjugates theories of discourse integration with the concept of path-dependency, where path dependency is used to describe the causalities and dynamics of a specific open-ended evolutionary process whose early sequences in time have major effects on the future development trajectory. My hypothesis was therefore formulated as such:

CAE was able to ensure policy continuity because by referencing a previous integration of discourse it was able to discursively narrow down policy options (lock-in effect).

In order to verify my hypothesis and link previous program integration to the creation of a successful discourse that ensured policy continuity, I first needed to answer two questions: what was CAE's discourse in 2017, when it issued its mid-term evaluation of Creative Europe and can we attribute the increase of the budget for culture in the 2018 CE proposal for Regulation to a programmatic shift? These two questions would establish the basis for the observation of the impact of past discourse integration on CAE's post-proposal discourse. The first question required me to first identify what philosophies, programs and policies were currently interacting in the Cultural policy field, in order to have a baseline. Through the exploration of literature, I established that there are two philosophies in the EU cultural policy framework: a liberal philosophy and a sustainable development one based on the principle of intergenerational equity. Inside of this sustainable development philosophy, I identified two programs, a 3P and a 4P program, for which I identified indicators. Among the most relevant ones, the recognition and focus on synergies between the pillars of development and culture as a fourth pillar in itself and the understanding of culture both as a tool and as a lens.

In the first section of the case study, I have reviewed CAE's 2017 mid-term evaluation and I tried to identify if it was advocating for a 3p or 4P program. CAE could be identified as putting forward a 4P program because: it advocated for a more holistic approach to culture, criticizes an instrumental dichotomy approach, advocated for the use of qualitative instead of quantitative evaluation criteria, highlighted and aimed at exploiting synergies between pillars, portrayed the shortcomings of cultural organizations as characteristics rather than weaknesses that demand tailor made solutions and lastly, it subordinated a budget increase to a programmatic shift in order to ensure maximum benefit from the Programme.

The second section of the case study dealt with the integration of CAE' discourse in the subsequent 2018 Proposal for CE Regulation, in comparison to the 2013 version of CE. What I wished to observe was the presence of a 4P program that would have motivated a budget increase. Overall, the document shows an

integration of a 4P program through a rebalancing of economic, artistic and social objectives, an explicit focus on synergies and an increased inclusion of culture in other policy fields (cultural mainstreaming). A strong economic focus is still maintained. However, it is not in opposition to a 4P program of culture, because the economy becomes understood as a pillar having similar synergetic links with not only the environmental and social pillar, but also with the cultural pillar itself. Indeed, the new focus on synergies (which is addressed in an explicit part of the document) highlights how culture needs to be fostered as an end in itself, which in turn will generate positive interactions in the other fields. This left me to answer the question: can we attribute the budget increase to a program change? The answer would be yes. Indeed, as highlighted in the theoretical framework, policy change in culture is motivated by the question "what can culture do? How can it be useful and why is it worth investing in?" these answers are found in programs that frame culture as having a determinate utility. Thus, when new utilities (synergies) are highlighted and the budget is increased it means that new funding is being mobilized to ensure the effectiveness of these new utilities. Something needs to be noted on the degree of integration of 4P ideas in the 2018 CE. These ideas are only integrated in a superficial manner. What this means is that they're understood as being valuable to tackle challenges ahead but they cannot be understood as background cognitive abilities. Indeed, when the crisis arose, the EC was able to back down fairly easily, showing that a 4P program wasn't part of the policy makers reflexes. What is relevant for the later instrumentalization of past discourse is, however, not the fact that ideas had been fully integrated, but that they had been considered valid in the 2018 context. Indeed, as shown in the following section, CAE was still able to refer to the commitment the EU had taken towards a 4P program in order to narrow down policy options.

Having established that there was indeed an integration of discourse and the adoption of subsequent policy decisions (initial budget increase) in then tackled the last part of my thesis. In this section, I have analyzed how both integrated ideas and subsequent policies are instrumentalized in order to narrow down policy options.

In the end, evidence partially supported my hypothesis of lock in effect.

Indeed, a lock-in effect could be observed, but managed to ensure policy continuity only because CAE was also able to adjust its program to be discursively relevant with policy issues ahead. In this sense, CAE established a sense of programmatic continuity with its previous discourse, highlighting how a 4P program had been the recognized answer before as being a valid tool not only to tackle short-term issues of the cultural field, but to tackle long term development issues such as digitalization and globalization. This continuity was then channeled through the framing of the Covid crisis, where CAE presented Covid as a turning point, but that informed the same programmatic solutions. This allowed CAE to instrumentalize past formal commitments (in the form of integrated ideas of synergies and past program-motivated increase of the budget) to highlight a cognitive dissonance between what had been promised and what had been done. To this cognitive dissonance, it linked a moral accountability, where coming back from commitments would imply a normative shortcoming, both because it would "betray" the policy makers words, but also because it would engender

negative repercussions in terms of efficacy of CE, both towards old and new challenges (lock-in). As a last discursive strategy to narrow down policy options, CAE discursively linked, through the highlight of synergies, the adoption of a 4P program to the achievement of the overall EU recovery. Indeed, drawing on the idea of synergies, which are interdependent links between policy fields, it managed to embed culture in all other aspects of recovery, from the Green Deal to the digital transition. By doing so, it multiplied the leverage points to narrow down policy options, as to fail to treat culture as its own pillar with its synergies would imply not only not fully benefit from the utilities of culture, but actually to create negative outcomes in unrelated policy fields. As such, to fail culture became synonym with failing all the other aspects of Recovery. This implied a cost too high in terms of political accountability and material recovery that was then recognized and adopted by policy makers, thus ensuring policy continuity (i.e., a re-increase of the budget in order to avoid the aforementioned negative outcomes). So, overall, evidence supports the idea that previous programmatic commitments were instrumentalized (in the form of references to previous increase of the budget and the underlying reasons for it, that were reproposed in an optic of continuity) but this lock-in effect was finally able to ensure policy continuity only because CAE also managed to adapt its discourse to the current window of opportunity, constructing a narrative that would leverage the possible consequences of a Recovery without culture. In this sense, a lock-in can be observed, but it needs to be understood as effective only in a context where the program can prove its continued relevance. In this sense, if lock-in refers to the past, it better be a past that still have some relevance.

This theory of lock in effect answers a question that had been left unanswered in literature, which is how past discourse is able to ensure policy continuity. In particular, if discourse can create policy path dependency. The answer, according to this research, is yes, as long as the program remains relevant. At the same time, it can be concluded that a successful discourse may also be dependent on past discourse, which would limit policy options in a context where maybe other programs/policies could have emerged. It could be interesting to further develop this dynamic of lock-in effect with a case study opposite to this, therefore where a program had been constantly denied and then approved all of a sudden. Research of this kind of case studies has already been done, however, the next research would be exploring in particular the relation between past and present discourse.

Before ending this thesis, I wish to write a disclaimer, in order to not give the impression that this thesis is overly ambitious: this research is not enough to draw generalizations. Culture is an absolutely unique policy field and thus theories of discourse, being extremely context dependent, cannot be assumed to apply to other policy fields. Culture, unlike the majority of policy fields, is a hegemonic policy object and concept. This derives from the fact that culture can be understood both as artistic creation and as the ensemble of ways of life. There is nothing that can be understood without referencing culture: even in a governance context where culture as artistic expression would be totally ignored, that would still be a specific kind of management/governance *culture.* As such, culture benefits from a huge window of opportunity to expand its

presence in other policy fields. Without further research, no other field can be assumed to do that. Even economic policy has its limits in its instrumental nature, as money is generally made to achieve some other goals and not, unlike culture, as an end itself. I will not delve further into the intricacies of culture as a concept, but It is extremely important to understand that culture is a unique policy object and that the lock-in effect hypothesis has only been (very humbly) tested in the case of culture.

I can draw a more general conclusion but that would need to be further explored, which is that the lock-in effect *potentially* applies only to trans-sectorial policy fields. A comparative research that aims at observing the presence of the lock in effect in different transversal policy fields could be interesting in this sense. Alternatively, it could be interesting to explore lock-in effect in different policy venues: for example, it could be interesting to assess how such a discourse is received in policy venues with different traditions towards culture.

Finally, answering my initial question: what led to the re-increase of the budget for culture in the 2021-2027 MFF negotiations? I argued in this thesis that the determinant fact that ensured policy continuity was the discourse of Cultural Action Europe that, by combining references to past discourse and an adaptation of its discourse to the window of opportunity of Covid, managed to narrow down policy options, both by highlighting the continued relevance of a 4P program and by highlighting the consequences of a failed investment in culture as a Fourth Pillar.

Finally, I also need to highlight the limitations of this thesis. First of all, it can be argued that the empirical material mobilized is not descriptive enough of the arguments brought forward. I tried my best to encapsulate in the extracts wider patterns that can be observed through a complete reading of the sources, but given the time and space limitations, as well as a desire not to overbear the text with quotes or footnotes, I tried to keep quotes to the minimum. Secondly, the discursive lines between 3P and 4P are sometimes blurred. I tried, by keeping in mind the characteristics of the two programs highlighted in my operationalization section, to identify them as separate programs. However, as I also remarked in the text, this exercise can sometimes be difficult, given the adaptability of ideas and their slow bleeding into one another. From the experience of this thesis, I can gather that maybe a micro approach with interviews to policy makers could have revealed more decisive proof of the relation between past integrated ideas and subsequent policy decisions. Indeed, through a more macro approach, it is impossible to conclusively speak on the leverage past ideas as background cognitive abilities may have had on the process of the approval of the budget re-increase.

I want to dedicate this last small part of my thesis to my personal considerations. This thesis has allowed me to explore the dynamics through which certain ideas are integrated and exploited to ensure policy continuity, however, I feel the need to address a pressing issue in light of the current pandemic we are facing.

During the whole time I was writing this thesis, like a lot of students that wish to draw some useful applications out of their Master thesis, I was asking myself a simple and yet very important question: at the end of the day, should we *really* invest in culture?

I had initially approached the question in a very pragmatic way, much like the head of Creative Europe Italy had suggested me to do, trying to find reasons why culture is "a very wise investment!", economically wise. Very frankly, it is not and it will never be. Or at least it is not compared to other policy fields that yield way more money than culture. In the context of Covid, it's much more strategic and economically wise to invest in the Healthcare field, in the Environmental Research field, in the manufacturing industries than it is in the cultural field. And we cannot assume policy makers are, unfortunately, all art-lovers that would invest in culture because they enjoy the aesthetic thrill of seeing an opera or a ballet, or a movie.

However, this instrumental reasoning is flawed on a fundamental level: it assumes we have the choice of not investing in culture. We don't have that choice.

Culture deals with something, something that is hard to grasp and yet conditions everything in our life, from the entertainment we consume, to the political discourses we are allowed to watch, to the way we *think*. To ignore culture means to ignore how we understand the world in favor of quantifiable criteria that however leave behind this present yet unharnessed potential. We saw the shortcomings of this approach. We live in a world where inequalities are rampant because progress is defined by who have more money, not by those who will be affected by policies; where identities are ignored because hard to manage, left behind in the name of economic optimization and they are left to fester in the confused simmer of our ever more fluid society.

So, to the question? Is culture a wise investment? I'd answer no, under an instrumental view of it. Is it something we can afford not investing in? No. Culture is there, whether we are able to devise policies to harness its potential or not. Whether we discursively frame it as important or not. So, if we ignore it, not only we are missing out on possibly more effective policies, we are also leaving it completely unmonitored and it *will* backfire on us. It already is, for example with the increase of divisive identity politics that culminated, among other things, with the disgraceful events of the US Capitol riots.

This does not mean that culture needs to be controlled. It's impossible to control culture in the long run and it would be an extremely Orwellian frightening perspective. However, culture needs to be *taken into consideration*, much like the need of the human body to breathe is taken into consideration when trying to devise a cure for an illness. This is how I wish to end this thesis, drawing on the hope for a brighter future for all of us affected by this pandemic, both in body and spirit. We have developed a vaccine for Covid to heal our bodies, now we need to culture to heal our future.

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Annex I: Research summary

Département de Science politique

Department of Political Science

Course Subject: International Public Policies

— DOUBLE DEGREE PROGRAM —

Master en Sciences politiques, orientation relations internationales, Finalité Monde

Master in International Relations, with major European Studies

SUMMARY OF THE THESIS

Discourse and policymaking: the impact of past discourse on policy continuity

The case of the European budget for culture from 2017 up to the 2021-2027 MFF negotiations

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Table of contents

A. Introduction

Creative Europe (CE) is the European Commission only Programme catered to the Cultural and Creative Sector (CCS). Starting out with a budget of 1,4b euros in the framework of the 2014-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), the Programme received an increase in budget in 2018 up to 1,64b euros in light of its positive European Commission mid-term evaluation and of the two advocacy campaigns, Double4Culture and Commit1% that aimed at advocating for an overall doubling of the budget for culture (2.8b) and the earmarking of 1% of every MFF budget line for culture. These campaigns were launched by Culture Action Europe (CAE), one of the main interlocutors between the EU and the European creative community, as well as a network co-funded by the Creative Europe Programme. Although the increase was not what had been requested, it signaled a step in the direction of CAE's requests.

However, in 2020 when the Covid pandemic started, the European Commission proposed a decrease in the Creative Europe budget, who got assigned a budget of 1,52b (May 2020) and was not included in the flagship programmes of the Recovery Fund. This led to the uprising of numerous advocacy actors, among which Culture Action Europe. These advocacy movement promoted not only a re-increase of the budget, but an overall prioritization of culture in the European Recovery Strategy. Following the advocacy mobilization, in November 2020, the budget finally got brought back to 2.2b and Creative Europe got inscribed among the flagship programmes.

This thesis aims at shedding light on what ensured this policy continuity in the form of a re-increase of the budget for culture in the 2021-2027 MFF.

In particular, this thesis aims at exploring the impact of discourse on policy continuity, by asking the research question: How did Culture Action Europe's advocacy discourse managed to ensure policy continuity in the form of a budget re-increase for the Creative Europe Programme in the context of the 2021-2027 MFF negotiations? In asking this question, this thesis aims at exploring the specific impact of past discursive successes (that ensured the 2018 increase of budget) in the construction of a subsequent successful discourse.

In order to tackle this question, I rely on Schmidt's theory of discourse integration and on the concept of path dependency to develop an original hypothesis of lock-in effect. The lock-in effect refers to a discursive process through which an advocacy actor instrumentalizes previous discursive successes to narrow down policy options in a following discourse, thus ensuring policy continuity. This informs my hypothesis that: CAE was able to ensure policy continuity because by referencing a previous integration of discourse it was able to discursively narrow down policy options.

To verify this lock-in hypothesis I propose a three-step discourse analysis of three bodies of texts. First, I analyze CAE's mid-term evaluation of Creative Europe (2017) in order to delineate, against previously drawn indicators, CAE's baseline discourse. I identify this discourse as a 4P, meaning a discourse advocating for

culture as a Fourth Pillar of Sustainable Development. Then, by comparing the 2013 Regulation establishing Creative Europe and its subsequent proposal for a revision of 2018, I verify if traces of this 4P discourse can be found in the latter, thus supporting the sub-hypothesis that the EU had at least partially integrated CAE's advocacy discourse. Lastly, I analyze my main body of texts which is comprised of the articles published by CAE on its website, reacting to the May 2020 proposal. The timeframe of this articles is from May 2020 to November 2020; however, it also includes the documents cross-referenced inside of said articles that date back to 2017. In this section, I observe if CAE instrumentalized the references to the previous budget-increase in order to present a narrative where adopting a 4P program and a subsequent increase of the budget is the *only option available*

B. Policy change, Cultural Policy and discourse

My thesis starts with a review of literature that first tackles broad theories of policy change and then policy change/continuity in the case of cultural policy. Other than serving the purpose of delineating an overview of the theories and approaches that have been utilized to explain policy continuity in the cultural field, this section serves the purpose of justifying the taking into consideration the question of discourse as a relevant element to explain the MFF negotiations.

Theories of policy change/continuity span from rational-choice game theory where actors aim at the optimization of objective material interests to constructivist theories that emphasize the role of ideas[1] and policy framing as explanatory elements of policy change/continuity. This evolution follows the shift of three main conceptual elements: 1) the level of ideas on which change is said to be operated 2) a rational-choice approach towards a more constructivist approach 3) the object of study shifting from policy outcomes to policy framing (John, 2018).

Authors such as Lasswell (1951), Haas (1958) and Simon (1955) approach policy change through a conflict-based approach, where States engage in a rational choice calculation of their interests and cater their policies towards them. In this era, the object of study is mostly policy outcome and policy makers are understood to strive towards the optimization of said gain. Although these authors do not assume perfect knowledge and on the contrary talk about bounded rationality, they still attribute policy change to the interests that are generated by exogenous events or produced through a path dependent dynamic (Haas, 2004). By focusing on interest's

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[1] Ideas in political science can be categorized in three ways: as policies, as programmes and as philosophies (Schmidt 2008,2016). Policies refer to the instruments developed to tackle a particular issue; they are the ones that are most subject to change. Programmes are conceptually situated at a deeper level. Programmes are organizing principles of orienting policies. They are akin to paradigms and define the overall narrative that is present behind a policy. Philosophies are ideas that present a hegemonic character, in the Gramscian sense of the term. These are ideologies such as capitalism, core ideas and values who are not often re-put into question, at least not at the same frequency of the previous two and often not without a significant exogenous catalyst for change (Schmidt 2016).

maximization, these authors talk about ideas in term of policies, not dealing with the constitutive power of ideas.

A shift towards constructivism can be observed in literature with the introduction of more knowledge-based theories, where ideas start to assume a constructivist power in shaping policy issues and thus informing policies. Sabatier (Sabatier, 2007) argues that there are sets of core ideas about causation and value in public policy and that objective interests are not necessarily the determinant element that informs policy decisions, but rather they are informed by beliefs. Although still focused on the policy level of ideas, Sabatier introduces the idea that *ideas* can determine different policy framings and thus policy outcomes. Against this background, other authors have explored the role of ideas in policy change/continuity. Bennett (Bennett and Howlett, 1992) proposed processes of policy learning as explanatory factors, Baumgartner and Jones (2012) then introduce the theory of punctuated equilibrium, where there exist a vast number of ideas that compete for adoption. Once an external event that destabilize the political equilibrium occurs, one of those ideas becomes the dominant one. The authors also theorize on the interaction between ideas, institutions and strategic thinking which happens both through cognitive (the content of policies and programmes) and communicative discourse (how, to whom and with which strategies those ideas are conveyed). This leads me to observe the latest approach that has appeared in policy change studies, discursive institutionalism. Discursive institutionalism represents a constructivist (if not post-positivist in some authors) approach that aims at explaining policy change through the constitutive power of discourse (which regroups ideas and their delivery). In other words, discourse here does not represent anymore just an expression of reality, rather, it shapes reality (Jacobs and Manzi, 1996; Hajer, 2004; Schmidt, 2010).

The relevance of tracking down approaches to what elements could explain policy continuity is fast explained. Indeed, cultural policy and policy change/continuity is not an extremely explored segment of literature, especially not in a macro approach. Indeed, culture being an extremely wide policy object, it tends to be studied at a more micro and meso level, according to its perceived utility. In this sense, the literature relating to European cultural policy mostly focuses on the economic impact of culture or the identarian utility of it, where culture is instrumentalized in order to create political legitimacy for the EU.

However, this neglects a wider dynamic related to culture which is the governmentalization of culture. The governmentalization of culture refers to the *discursive process* of how culture is instrumentalized (Trotter, 1997; Barnett, 1999). In this sense, the instrumentalization of culture can be understood as asking the question: what can culture do? Can it foster economic growth? Can it contribute to the increase of standards of living? Can it ensure social cohesion? In this sense, the discursive construction of what culture can do informs policy decisions (and their eventual continuity) (Waterton, Smith and Campbell, 2006).

To define what policy can do means therefore to asking ourselves another crucial question: *how* are the utilities of culture constructed? Asking such a question does not only mean interrogating ourselves on policy framing,

where policy issues are presented and solutions proposed based on rational choice calculations, but rather on the overall construction of the nature of a policy field, where deeper philosophies, programs and policies interact in order to frame the place of culture in the European Union and that thus motivate or not a proper funding of culture. Discourse thus allows me to better grasp the reasons behind policy continuity in a moment not only where interest may be shifting, but where overall programs and philosophies of development may be shifting, due to the paradigm failure represented by the Covid pandemic. Moreover, it represents an interesting way to analyze the change of the overall EU cultural policies which are particular in nature, given their limits dictated by the principle of plurality and subsidiarity.

This thesis thus inserts itself in the wider context of the literature that tackles the governmentalization of culture through discourse, in order to then observe specific dynamics of discourse and policy continuity. In particular, it wishes to contribute to observing how past discourse can create successful narratives at the governmentalization level of culture.

a. Theoretical framework: defining discourse and theorizing a path-dependent dynamic of discourse.

Once established through my review of literature that discourse may be an interesting light through which tackling policy continuity in the field of culture, I move on to explain more in detail what is discourse, why discourse matters, so as to further narrow down my research question and then argue upon which theoretical assumptions I can hypothize a link between past and present discourse.

Discourse needs to be understood as both constitutive and constituent of reality (Schmidt, 2010). Discourse therefore determines what culture can do and also through what instruments (policy framing) (Hajer, 2004; Schmidt, 2010). Therefore, through discourse we can observe both what framing of culture motivated change and what kind of discursive strategy managed to ensure policy continuity. In this thesis, underpinned by the idea of policy framing, I also start from the theoretical assumption that traces of a determinate discourse (be it philosophy, program or policy), once they are integrated, can be observed as implied in subsequent policy measures(Schmidt, 2011).

Another relevant question that needs to be asked is: what discourse do we take into consideration. As anticipated, I take the discourse of Culture Action Europe in light of its political resonance, his representativeness of cultural stakeholders and its advisory role in the devising of EU cultural policies. These three elements make CAE a relevant actor, because they allow me to assume that its discourse is received by EU policy makers and has a resonance in the EU institutions.

This leads me to my research question: how did Culture Action Europe's advocacy discourse managed to ensure policy continuity in the form of a budget re-increase for the Creative Europe Programme in the context of the 2021-2027 MFF negotiations?

In order to formulate my hypothesis, I need to further explore what elements of discourse could ensure policy continuity, meaning what makes a discourse successful, integrated. A discourse becomes successful when it possesses normative and cognitive arguments that prove its fitness to tackle policy challenges. Cognitive arguments need to demonstrate the relevance, applicability and coherence of the policy/program while normative arguments do better if they resonate with long-standing or newly-emerging values, and that complement rather than contradict the cognitive arguments (Hajer, 2006). Now, CAE's advocacy had already managed to ensure an increase of the budget, therefore it had proved itself fit to tackle policy issues. This leads me to interrogate myself on the possibility of a path-dependent (Strambach and Halkier, 2013) hypothesis, where the impact of past discourse is able to lock-in policy options. In my theoretical framework, I proceed to provide a theoretical support to the hypothesis that past discourse may have an impact on the creation of a later successful discourse.

The first element that ties past and present discourse is the knowledge that ideas are incremental(Schmidt, 2011). This means that the more one idea is used in the development of policies, and underpinned in other levels of ideas, the more it becomes established, it becomes part of policy maker's background cognitive abilities, their reflexes. As ideas shift to deeper levels of integration, they become increasingly hard to ignore, because their logic becomes embedded in more and more policies and instruments, thus nudging towards determinate policy options, as they determine our problem-solving reasoning, framing issues and solutions. As such, if advocacy actors consistently do not question certain programmatic assumptions and they build measures and other policies on previously integrated ideas, they can limit the array of available policy options in the future.

A second element relates to the normative and cognitive arguments that can stem from the previously integrated ideas. As I have said, the integration of a discourse concretizes in policies but can also concretize in the undertaking of formal programmatic commitments, such as official declarations of intent. In a setting of ministerial accountability, this can provide leverage for advocacy actors. Indeed, they can employ cognitive arguments that highlight the unreasonableness of backing down from a previous program, as that may create negative repercussions in terms of effectiveness and secondly, normative arguments, as they can attribute a moral value to the political action of backing down from promises(Schmidt, 2011). These two elements thus limit policy options, because they imply a cost in the case of a backing down from previous commitments.

These two reasonings can therefore suggest that there may be a dynamic of instrumentalization of the integration of past discourse in order to create a successful later discourse. It's this dynamic that this thesis wishes to explore, as it has not been addressed in literature.

In light of this and the fact that we had already witnessed a previous increase in the budget, this leads me to my hypothesis: CAE was able to ensure policy continuity because by referencing a previous integration of discourse it was able to discursively narrow down policy options.

In this thesis, this dynamic of interaction and instrumentalization is defined as lock-in effect. The lock-in effect can be defined as a discursive process through which an advocacy actor instrumentalizes previous discursive successes to narrow down policy options in a following discourse. Instrumentalization is here understood as utilizing elements of past discourse (in the form of integrated ideas and commitments) to construct a successful narrative. A successful narrative is one where policy options are narrowed down on the basis of cognitive and normative arguments that highlight how a certain policy option is the only one available/fit to tackle the policy issues ahead. In this sense, previously integrated ideas become leverage instruments that create a narrative where policy continuity is the only available option (Wagner *et al.*, 1991) in the current context. The aim of this thesis is therefore to observe if we can observe in CAE's post May discourse, a lock-in effect.

In order to be able to verify the presence or not of a lock-in effect, some previous sub-questions need to be verified. Indeed, I first need to empirically determine what discourses were present, which ones were integrated and if elements of these past discourses were then instrumentalized to narrow down policy options. Thus, I propose the first sub-question: what was CAE's discourse in 2017, when it issued its mid-term evaluation of Creative Europe? This will allow me to determine a baseline discourse. In order to better observe it, I later draw indicators that allow me to have a more concise vision of what discourses may be at stake in the context of cultural policy. The second question will then be: can we attribute the increase of the budget for culture in the 2018 CE proposal for Regulation to a programmatic shift? In order to answer this question, I'll compare the two CE regulations in order to observe if some programmatic elements of the initial 2017 CAE evaluation have been integrated. As they are programmatic changes and thus imply a deeper understanding of why culture needs to be funded (i.e., we are not only talking of the fact that "culture needs more money because it's not enough" but rather "culture needs more money because its current resources limit the scope of what culture can do as a policy field"), I can safely assume that an eventual increase in the budget was motivated by a programmatic shift, if such an integration of discourse can be observed.

Methodologically speaking, I chose to rely on a discourse analysis à la Hajer, meaning the examination of argumentative structure in documents and other written or spoken statements. This argumentative discourse analysis examines what is being said, to whom and in what context with a particular emphasis on the argumentative side of discourse and the construction of narratives that determinate policy framing (Hajer, 2006). This choice was operated on both theoretical and empirical reasons. Theoretically, an approach focusing on narratives is especially adapted to the analysis of an advocacy actor, in light of the instrumentality of discourse for such actors. Moreover, it is fitting to determine what utilities CAE associates with culture and thus how it justifies the funding. Empirically, discourse analysis allows me to exploit the empirical material I have at my disposal, namely CAE's articles and the various EU regulations.

b. Operationalization: establishing indicators

In order to operationalize my sub-questions and later on hypothesis, I first need to identify the philosophies, programs and policies in place in the EU cultural policy field. This will allow me to narrow down the ideas that may be in interplay in the later discussions.

The EU can be understood as a space where two philosophies are present, a liberal one and one of Sustainable Development (SD) (based on the core imperative of intergenerational equity). The first one can be tracked down to the economic scope of the earlier EU integration (Littoz-Monnet, 2007) while the second one can be attributed to the need to cater to ever more pressing global issues and that got further sedimented with the undertaking of multiple international and EU commitments to intergenerational equity (Aghazadeh-Wegener, 2019). Inside the philosophy of SD, I can observe two different competing programs. The first one is the program of a Three Pillar of SD (3P) (Secretariat, 2007), where culture is through of as being part of the social development pillar. The second one is a Four Pillar program of SD, where Culture represents the Fourth Pillar (4P) (Secretariat, 2007; Astara, 2014). Based on literature, I draw indicators for the two programs. A 3P program is characterized by:

1) A preference or a utilization of economic and quantitative evaluation criteria (policy instrument).
2) An unbalance between economic and symbolic/artistic goals (biased in favor of the economic ones).
3) A programmatic recognition of the economic and symbolic utility of culture but development of policies that do not exploit synergies[2] between them (dichotomized approach to culture) (Sabatini, 2019).
4) Culture being portrayed as an instrument, rather than as a goal in itself or as a lens to inform other policy objectives (absence of cultural mainstreaming. Instrumental view).

A 4P is on the other hand characterized by an approach:

1) That sees culture as a not *only* as a tool (echoing the instrumental view I illustrated above) to achieve other policy goals, but *also* as a lens through which *rethink* policy goals and as a goal in itself.
2) That advocates for cultural mainstreaming.
3) Who conceives cultural as a human right *without which* sustainable development is not achievable.
4) That aims at exploiting not only the different utilities of cultures but also the synergies between them, in order to develop cultural activity as well as empowering the objectives of the other pillars.

The drawing of these indicators allows me to operationalize my first and second sub-questions, so that I may later set the stage to support the argument that a past discourse was instrumentalized to ensure policy continuity. In this sense, I aim at first verifying if CAE's 2017 mid-term evaluation attests of a 4P program,

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[2] Synergies are interdependent links between the various utilities of culture and between culture and other policy fields. An approach that caters to synergies aims therefore at harnessing these interactions in a virtuous cycle logic. (Ostrom, 1997)

then that we can witness an integration of a 4P program in the 2018 proposal for Regulation establishing Creative Europe with a subsequent increase of the budget (where budget is seen as an officialization of a programmatic commitment) and then this increase and the programmatic assumption behind it was later referenced in the May 2020 to November 2020 CAE discourse.

C. Case study

a. CAE advocacy discourse: the program of Culture as a Fourth Pillar of Sustainable Development

The analysis of the CAE report (*Creative Europe: Programme Analysis and Recommendations*, 2017) shows, overall, that the discourse can be qualified as putting forward a 4P program. The report presents, overall, a discourse portraying culture as a sector whose growth and potential are stunted by the inadequacy of Creative Europe program and policies, that are not able to cater to the specificity of the cultural sector, both in terms of administrative decisions and priorities. This specificity sees CCIs depicted as organizations that are based around artistic merit, that have limited administrative know how and that have limited budgets but that at the same time have a potential far beyond their economic utility. This policy image thus informs policy solutions that aim at modifying the Programme, rather than creating solutions that would fulfill the shortcomings of CCIs. This is significant, in the sense that the report puts the responsibility of action on the EU and especially the Commission, not criticizing what could be perceived as inadequacies of the cultural sector.

A first element that indicates a 4P program is the methodology utilized by CAE in the compiling of the evaluation. Indeed, CAE relies only on qualitative indicators in order to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the program. These qualitative indicators are operationalized through semi-structured questionnaires sent to various cultural organizations and that are sometimes even complemented by open-questions. As mentioned, relying of qualitative criteria already reveals a tendency towards a 4P program. Indeed, by not focusing on, for example, how many jobs were created or how much revenue CCIs were able to generate, CAE already operates a programmatic choice, creating a narrative where there is a need to rebalance economic and social impact goals, rather than optimizing the potential of culture in an instrumental dichotomy approach. In other words, qualitative methods shape the image of culture that CAE wishes to bring forward. By focusing on its social impact, it determines what culture can do and in what ways this potential is not being fully exploited. Moreover, by consulting with cultural operators, CAE enters in a dynamic where a bottom-up approach is presented as valuable in order to correctly set priorities for the cultural sector. This bottom-up approach also suggests of a vision of culture as a lens, where cultural operators (so those who produce culture) are in charge of setting the priorities of the sector but also to independently decide what synergies they want to establish with other policy sectors.

The goals highlighted by cultural operators as crucial for the future of CE relate in particular to the synergetic potential of «cross-sectoral and crossover projects, international cooperation, audience development and social

inclusion should be the driving priorities» while remarking how» (CAE, 2017). These goals are said to not be adequately catered to through the loan guarantee facility, because of its market-driven nature. In other words, the innovative and cross-sectorial potential of culture is portrayed as being hindered by a market-driven (dichotomized) 3P program, where the utility of culture is only though as being instrumental. According to CAS, therefore, CE fails to grasp the full potential of culture that lies in its synergies because it does not create policy instruments that foster these synergetic utilities, preferring to apply measures that encourage economic competition that risks on discriminating less market oriented but high on artistic merit CCIs. In this sense, with a focus on synergies and a criticism towards CE in not being able to harness them, CAE's report suggests a 4P program. It must be notes that CAE aims at a *rebalancing* of priorities, not just advocating for art's for art's sake. CAE highlights how the economic utility of culture is important and needs to be exploited, but it must not be all. Culture needs to be understood as both a tool and at the same time an end in itself.

Another element that indicates a 4P, because it implies the vision of innovative cultural production seen as a goal and pillar in itself, is CAE's portrayal of CCIs. CCIs are indeed portrayed as dynamic in their potential but static in their limits. This means that the specificities of CCIs (limited administrative know-how, high-risk nature, small staffs) are portrayed as inevitable elements that require tailor made solutions, rather than in-house improving. This is attested by the policy solutions that CAE suggests, that focus on rebalancing goals, improving flexibility of the loans and adopting more qualitative criteria in the project evaluation for funding, rather than in-house capacity building. In this sense, culture is portrayed as a Pillar in its own, not as a tool that needs to be adapted to other policy fields, such as competition and market policies, but rather that need to be catered to, as a pillar with its own needs and potentials.

What this narrative of a CE that aims at the wrong targets and employs (dichotomized) policy solutions that damage and at the same time fail to fully exploit culture, crystallizes in a hierarchy of goals for the next CE, where there is a clear prioritization of a programmatic shift over the increase of the budget, although the two priorities remain linked. Indeed, the main stress of the evaluation report is on the need to rebalance goals to fully exploit what culture can do. By implication, the mere increase in budget would help, but would not be put to full use and would therefore be an ineffective, or at least not fully optimized, investment. CAE indeed explicitly highlights, in particular, the social and political utilities of culture need to stop being subordinated to the economic one, in order to ensure more adequate measures to support the cultural sector which in turn would put to good use a (needed) increase of the budget.

In conclusion, evidence supports that the discourse of CAE in its 2017 mid-term evaluation report of CE puts forward a 4P program, as it advocates for a more holistic approach to culture, criticizes an instrumental dichotomy approach, advocates for the use of qualitative instead of quantitative evaluation criteria, highlights and aims at exploiting synergies between pillars, portrays the shortcomings of cultural organizations as

characteristics rather than weaknesses that demand tailor made solutions and lastly, it subordinates a budget increase to a programmatic shift in order to ensure maximum benefit from the Programme.

b. Comparing Creative Europe 2014-2020 and Creative Europe 2021-2027: a partial integration of a 4P discourse

Starting from the 2013 Regulation(European Parliament, 2013), CE shows signs of a 3P program. However, it shows itself to be a Programme open to programmatic change. Signs of a 3P program can be found in the framing of the end-goal of cultural activities: a special focus is marked (both explicitly and in terms of number of articles) on the competitiveness of the AV sector and the need to strongly invest in it. On the other hand, the Culture Strand is deemed important in light of its ability to foster a "united in diversity" feeling. As such, no synergies between the two are highlighted and although both are said to need to be fostered, there is no further explication of why investing in the Culture strand would be interesting in a broader perspective. This echoes the dichotomized approach to culture that, I remind, does not negate the intrinsic utility of culture. Indeed, fostering the intrinsic value of culture is deemed as necessary. However, not in light of the synergies that doing so can provide, but rather because there is a need to foster social cohesion. In other words, a 3P program supports the idea that all utilities of culture are important but it does not harness the synergy between them. This is further supported by the policy solutions proposed, that aim at facilitating access to funding, without addressing the underlying issue of dichotomized approach to goal setting. Moreover, as highlighted by CAE, the measures to ensure access to funding rely on quantitative criteria that reveal themselves to be, in hindsight, ineffective in light of their discriminant power between more and less market oriented CCIs.

Although attesting of a 3P, the 2013 Regulation is not in complete opposition with a 4P program. On the contrary, the differences are often rather subtle and there are no points that could be seen as strongly incompatible with a 4P program. Indeed, the Regulation presents various ideological windows of opportunity for programmatic change to come through: first, the recognized importance of cultural mainstreaming; secondly, the commitment to bottom-up and external evaluations of the Programme; thirdly, the recognition of a lack of knowledge and will for research in areas associated with a 4P program such as the exploitation of synergies. The first element is developed in light of the coherence between CE and the other EU programmes. There is a highlight on how it should be coherent with the other programmes. However, there are no explicit mentions of synergies and the element is not further developed. The other two elements provide a window of opportunity for ideas to circulate and thus inform new policy options. Given that no strong arguments that would show a philosophical opposition could be remarked, this shows an openness of the Programme to programmatic change. The only thing that really sets apart the two programs in a lack of focus on synergies.

This leads me to the second part of this sub-section, where I verify if 4P elements have been integrated in the 2018 proposal for a regulation.

In comparison to the 2013 CE Regulation, the 2018 proposal (European Commission, 2018) highlights a partial integration of the discourse of Culture Action Europe. The elements that got integrated are: a rebalancing of economic, artistic and social objectives, an explicit focus on synergies and an increased inclusion of culture in other policy fields (cultural mainstreaming). However, what is also remarkable is how the EU has managed to integrate a 4P program with its liberal philosophy, bypassing the instrumental/non-instrumental opposition. What changed is to what end the economic utility of culture is aimed at. If in the 2013 document the main goals were those of employment and social cohesion (in a dichotomized understanding of it, so with a preference for the economic end goal of culture), the more recent proposal focuses on economic utility as a tool to ensure greater diffusion of cultural products which would thereby ensure social development. As such, although the economic utility is still present, culture is not thought of as a tool to ensure economic growth but rather it is the other way around, with economic growth serving the development of artistic activities. As such, not only culture is seen as a goal in itself, but there is also a push towards the sustainability of the cultural sector for the sake of artistic

production. In other words, culture is tackled more through a virtuous circle. The main element that transpires, indeed, is a newly found focus on synergies. Synergies are addressed in a specific section of the proposal, drawing explicit interdependent links between education and youth policies, Rights and Values programme, employment and social policies, regional, urban and rural policies, Single Market, Digital programme, research and innovation programme, external action policies. What transpires from the analysis of the causal links highlighted inside of each section is that there remains a constant economic silver lining. How to conjugate the idea of a strong economic focus with a 4P program? The answer lies in the fact that the EU keeps framing culture as a tool but *also* as a goal in its own. Indeed, the EU "liberalizes" ideas, creating its very own definition of synergy, where the link between culture and all policy fields is the economy, but where the relation between economy and culture passes through the encouragement of artistic merit and the "intrinsic" value of culture. In other words, the EU wants a symbolically resilient cultural sector and environment, so that it may serve an economic imperative seen as beneficial to all policy sectors. So, the final aim is economic, but the process through which that happens ensures a rebalancing of priorities. Thus, the EU can be said to having integrated a 4P discourse, adopting a narrative where culture is seen as both an instrument and a lens and where in order to be a valuable instrument, it needs to be encouraged as an independent pillar of Sustainable Development, *as well* as being mainstreamed in the other three.

In this section, I also highlight one difficulty of this thesis, which is that it is sometimes hard to fully draw a line between 3P and 4P, despite having established indicators. Indeed, the two programs can be compatible, as shown by how the EU has adopted 4P ideas while maintaining a focus on the economic side of culture. It can even be argued that it is precisely because those programs are compatible that they managed to be adopted. However, this does blur lines for my analytical framework. Yet, this can be seen, rather than a limit, as a way

to observe the complexity of how compatible ideas slowly bleed into each other. However, more conclusive research on the level of integration of those ideas could be better tackled through a more micro approach.

Coming back to the document, the focus on these new found links between culture and other policy fields can also be put in the wider context of the policy issues that were relevant in 2018. Indeed, the proposal highlights how culture is a valuable element to tackle long term policy issues such as countering the "fake news" narrative, foster the integration of migrants and alleviate the rising nationalism in the EU. As such, the inclusion of synergies and the mention of these issues go to show that policy makers adopted a more 4P program in light of its perceived fitness to tackle policy issues ahead. In this sense, the increase of the budget can be understood as the response to an enlargement of culture's perceived 4P utilities. This, as I will illustrate later, will play a role in lock-in effect. Having established that some elements of a 4P program got integrated (cultural mainstreaming, culture as a tool but also as a lens, synergies) in light of their fitness to tackle policy challenges ahead and that informed a budget increase, I will now proceed to illustrate the main findings of the last part of my research.

Before starting, I'll remind the reader of the two indicators I'll be taking into consideration, which are ideas of a 4P that have proven to be integrated in CE 2018 and the initial 2018 increase of the budget (2018). I'll observe how the instrumentalization of these two elements is then used to narrow down policy options. Narrowing down policy options means, in this case, implying too high of a cost in term of effectiveness and political accountability in case of a de-crease of budget and an abandonment of a 4P program.

c. CAE'S post-proposal discourse: drawing on the past to frame 4P as the only policy option

The main arguments that could be observed in CAE's post- May 2020 proposal discourse are the following:

CCIs are portrayed as having the same issues than before the crisis, only exacerbated (difficulties in accessing funding, dependence on mobility, being limited solely by an economic framing). So, CAE uses this continuity in order to keep proposing always the same 4P solutions (i.e., treating culture as a pillar in its own, focusing on synergies) and pressures policy makers by reminding them that they had previously agreed on the fitness of the 4P program to tackle the policy issues of the cultural field, through referencing formal commitments.

The referencing through formal commitments is able to exercise pressure because CAE attaches moral values to the possibility of breaching them and highlights how, in light of the long-term effectiveness of a 4P program, not committing to what has been promised would have negative repercussions both in terms of effectiveness and political accountability, all the while failing to grasp an important opportunity for the future.

When talking about the Covid crisis, indeed, CAE frames it as a moment to implement previous commitments or finally implement those 4P measures that had been lacking. For this, CAE frames Covid as a moment to "rethink our future" but where the solutions are indeed in continuity with what has been previously said. Keeping the policy/program solutions consistent allows CAE to narrow down policy options because, once

again, it can rely on the long-term fitness of the 4P program to tackle challenges ahead and reference it through previous formal commitments. In other words, it can remind policy makers that they had adopted 4P solutions to tackle the previous policy issues and now, with the Covid pandemic, they're facing the exacerbated version of those same problems. Thus, they implicitly suggest that to the same issues, one should adopt the same solutions, so surely not a decrease in the budget and, on the contrary, prioritize culture even more.

CAE exploited the idea that policy makers had officially recognized the existence of synergies (by increasing the budget following the 2018 discourse integration) in order not only to highlight that managing culture as a 4th pillar (and thus re-increasing the budget) could be a good option, but that it is a necessity, fault to which the whole recovery would fail, because of the negative synergies that would be created by neglecting culture as a Fourth pillar. The empirical evidence is the strong highlight the discourse puts on synergies, both in terms of positive and negative interdependencies, and the explicit phrasing of their advocacy, with titles such as "no recovery without culture". For this, CAE exploited the integrated of synergies that had previously motivated a budget increase, in order to develop a what I call a discursive strategy of a strategic expansion of the role of culture. By establishing that culture is embedded in all policy fields, it was able to stress that culture, if not managed through a 4P program, could not only not benefit other policy fields, but rather damage them. In this sense, CAE shifted the image of culture as a Fourth Pillar from being a possibility to being something unavoidable. It did so by discursively establishing a link between culture understood in a 4P manner and the achievement of Recovery. As Recovery is right now the main EU priority and something that the EU cannot afford to fail at (or to show it's failing at), this exercised strong pressure on policy makers. In this way, CAE established that a 4P program for culture (with consequent budget re-increase) as the only available option for the EU, fault to which the EU would incur in both normative and cognitive shortcomings.

What this goes to show is that CAE's discourse has a strong programmatic continuity and that it has exploited in order to create a convincing narrative that highlights the fitness of a 4P as a program for the long-term. In the discourse, references to formal commitments are also in constant interaction with all the other elements of the advocacy discourse, because they provide leverage points to concretely remind policy makers of their past actions and of the normative and cognitive implications of them.

But what does this tell us on the presence of a lock-in effect and its dynamics?

First of all, in a context of continuity, CAE uses referencing to previous commitment to higher budget to highlight a *cognitive dissonance* (Schmidt, 2011) between what's promised and what's done. On what's promised in terms of funding, it highlights how not to fund means to render CE ineffective, to no longer cater to culture's needs and to miss out for the future. It also highlights how the previous budget increase was done on the idea that it was a good program for the long-term issues of not only the cultural sector, but of Sustainable Development overall. By then framing the Covid crisis as an exacerbation of previous problems that still call

for a SD imperative, CAE narrows down policy options. Indeed, if a 4P program is still appropriate on the same basis that motivated the first adoption of it, why not commit to it anymore?

Thus, evidence suggests that an advocacy actor can instrumentalize previous discourse integration and especially previous commitments. However, only if then it is able to show that the program is still relevant to tackle current issues. In the case of CAE, the instrumentalization of past discourse is successful in narrowing down options because CAE at the same time projects the program to the future. Otherwise, the fact that a previous program had been integrated wouldn't have had relevance per se. Indeed, what Covid being framed as an opportunity to implement what hasn't been done before tells us is that, although it's presented as a turning point, the solutions presented are the same. This goes to show that CAE makes the program relevant for the current policies. In this, formal commitments then play again a role because "if it was relevant before and you invested in it and it's relevant now, why wouldn't you invest?". Moreover, it's with Covid that CAE associates moral value to not adopting the program. Indeed, it refers to not investing in culture and not reprioritizing it as a failure to tackle future challenges, to fail the future.

Thirdly, by engaging in a strategic expansion of the role of culture, CAE highlights the price of not only not refunding, but also not taking a 4P program as a whole. In this dynamic, references to past commitments are less relevant, because the discourse highlights in particular what investing in culture can bring to the table for the future. However, this is relevant for what made the success.

This suggests the idea that there are two parallel dynamics of narrowing down policy decisions. One referring to the past and one to the future. The two interact when there is a programmatic continuity, mutually reinforcing the strength of the discourse.

What all of this goes to show is that the instrumentalizes of past discourse integration and policy continuity is not automatic. References to past arguments can narrow down policy options, but only if the program is also able to adapt. In a moment of crisis therefore if remains paramount that a program can still support its relevance. However, if that is the case, referencing back past commitments allows for the establishment of normative and cognitive points of leverage that are likely to hold policy makers accountable.

Another thing needs to be noted, which is that policy makers need to be under sufficient ministerial accountability for the issue (van der Ploeg, 2006). In my case, Recovery provided a high-profile opportunity for CAE to propose a programmatic shift and to be able to appeal to the link between culture and the future of people as an argument. When culture was not under the spotlight, we have seen that although ideas were integrated, they did not impeach a step back from happening. This also informs me, in hindsight, on the degree of integration of 4P in the 2018 CE. Although the budget was re increased on the basis of synergies, the ideas proved not to be integrated at a programmatic level but rather only at a policy level. This could be explained by the relative recent introduction of these ideas of synergies and culture as a Fourth Pillar. However, it would

be incorrect to relegate these advances to the last five or ten years. The multiplication of utilities was something already observed and proved in academia and given the strong ties between CAE and the EU there is reasonable space to hypothize that they were aware of such proved presence of synergies. This makes me attribute the lack of deep integration more to a persistence of a 3P instrumental dichotomy that, when tested in a time of crisis where culture would have needed some counter-intuitive investments (in the sense that culture is high risk), informed a decrease in the budget in light of short-term calculations on the long-term potential of culture. A programmatic shift is thus a work in progress.

However, it needs to be said that the ability of CAE was also to extend culture's utilities in a way where it multiplied the zones of ministerial accountability. Indeed, by linking culture with the Green Deal, democracy, and digitalization, CAE has multiplied the policy venues where culture could bring its contribution and thus be advocated for. Maybe when 4P ideas and cultural mainstreaming will be more integrated as background cognitive abilities, pressure to properly fund the cultural side of other policy fields could come from the other fields themselves. This is not yet the case, but maybe in the future. If such a thing could be observed, it would also provide with a good indicator to assess the degree of successful cultural mainstreaming.

In any case, am I in measure of confirming my hypothesis? Partially.

Indeed, CAE discourse was able to ensure policy continuity by instrumentalizing past discourse but only because it was able to do it in combination with a discursive adaptation of the program to the window of opportunity.

On this topic, another consideration that needs to be made is the role of the window of opportunity of Covid. Lock-in effect is not in opposition to a revolutionary theory of policy change, where one major exogenous event reshuffles the situation in a way that it allows for a new discourse to emerge and get established. On the contrary, CAE's discourse was absolutely successful because it was able to exploit the window of opportunity of Covid, creating an exclusive causal relation between the adoption of a 4P program/increase of budget and the achievement of Recovery, complementing it with the normative and cognitive elements that stem from the cognitive dissonance of breached formal commitments. Therefore, lock in effect can be seen as compatible both with an evolutionary and revolutionary theory of discourse integration.

D. Conclusion

This Master thesis has dealt with the subject of discourse and policy continuity. In particular, it has wished to explore the impact of past discourse on policy continuity through the hypothesis of lock-in effect. The initial research question of this thesis was: What led to the re-increase of the budget for Culture in the 2021-2027 MFF negotiations? In an effort to narrow down what could have motivated a re-increase of the budget for Culture, I have first explored various theories of policy change/continuity starting from rational choice and game theories, towards constructivist theories and finally landing on discursive institutionalism. Always by

reviewing the literature I have established that the discursive institutionalism approach was the most fitting to explain policy continuity in the field of European Cultural policies. My theoretical framework has then allowed me to better define the concept of discourse and its causal relation with policy decisions. I have also established why CAE revealed itself a valid actor to take into consideration. This informed my research question: How did Culture Action Europe's advocacy discourse managed to ensure policy continuity in the form of a budget re-increase for the Creative Europe Programme in the context of the 2021-2027 MFF negotiations?

Further drawing on theory, I have provided some theoretical basis to support my intuition that, given the previous discursive success of CAE in ensuring an initial increase of the budget in 2018 (from 1,4b to 1,64b), past discourse could have an impact on the creation of a successful post-May proposal. Drawing on the idea that ideas are incremental in nature and that they inform formal policy commitments upon which normative and cognitive arguments can be constructed, I develop my hypothesis of lock-in effect. Lock-in effect is defined as a discursive process through which an advocacy actor instrumentalizes previous discursive successes to narrow down policy options in a following discourse. This thus informed my hypothesis formulated as: CAE was able to ensure policy continuity because by referencing a previous integration of discourse it was able to discursively narrow down policy options.

In order to verify the hypothesis, I have first established a baseline discourse of CAE, through theory drawn indicators (3P and 4P). Evidence supports that CAE was advocating in 2017 for a 4P program. I then observed if traces of the program could be found by comparing the 2013 and 2018 version of Creative Europe. Some elements were indeed integrated and deemed to be fit to tackle socio-economic challenges ahead. I then proceeded to tackle the last part of my research where I could partially confirm my hypothesis. Indeed, a lock-in effect can be observed but it was effective only because CAE also managed to adapt its advocacy discourse to the Covid window of opportunity. This answers my initial question, by providing evidence that discourse was indeed a component in what ensured policy continuity.

Finally, I highlight the limits of this thesis. It can be argued that the empirical material mobilized is not descriptive enough of the arguments brought forward. I tried my best to encapsulate in the extracts wider patterns that can be observed through a complete reading of the sources, but given the time and space limitations, as well as a desire not to overbear the text with quotes or footnotes, I tried to keep quotes to the minimum. Secondly, the discursive lines between 3P and 4P are sometimes blurred. I tried, by keeping in mind the characteristics of the two programs highlighted in my operationalization section, to identify them as separate programs. However, as I also remarked in the text, this exercise can sometimes be difficult, given the adaptability of ideas and their slow bleeding into one another. In hindsight, a more micro approach could have provided me with more insights.

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