

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3361/02  
by Maria Sanders-ten Holte (ELDR)  
to the Commission

Subject: Insurance

Large museums in all the Member States regularly organise exchanges of their collections so that the public in their respective countries can enjoy the great European artistic tradition. Unfortunately, such exchanges are seriously hampered by insurance problems. When, for example, the Teylers Museum in Haarlem and the British Museum wanted to hold a joint exhibition of the Michelangelo drawings in their respective collections, the British Museum did not have to spend anything on insurance premiums, whereas the Teylers Museum had to pay several million euro as a result of the Netherlands Finance Ministry's limited indemnity arrangements. European museums would be able to share Europe's cultural heritage with the public in their respective countries much more easily if a comprehensive indemnity arrangement was in place in every Member State.

1. Does the Commission agree that exchanges of cultural treasures make a contribution to European integration?
2. Is the Commission aware that insurance arrangements vary from one Member State to another, and that some have none at all?
3. Does the Commission agree that the present situation is undesirable, not least from the point of view of free movement of goods and ideas in Europe?
4. If so, is the Commission prepared to take steps to place this issue on the European agenda?
5. If so, is the Commission willing to put in place interim provisions as a temporary solution?