

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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Committee on Regional Development

2007/2211(INI)

25.1.2008

OPINION

of the Committee on Regional Development

for the Committee on Culture and Education

on a European agenda for culture in a globalising world
(2007/2211(INI))

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Regional Development calls on the Committee on Culture and Education, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

- A. whereas culture and language are driving forces behind regional development and greatly help to attract incoming investment, especially in underdeveloped regions, poor in natural resources or tourist attractions, and whereas artists and cultural institutions play a decisive role in forming the identity of regions and increasing their attractiveness and in the European integration process,
- B. whereas culture, as a sector that both provides jobs and fosters economic growth, is particularly important for the development of towns (especially small and medium sized ones) and rural areas, and whereas, in the social sphere, cultural identity is an important factor making for integration and greater social cohesion in regions and local communities,
- C. whereas support can be given under cohesion and rural development policies to restoring the cultural heritage and promoting the artistic trades, with a view to increasing the attractiveness of regions,
- D. whereas SMEs and private capital should play an increasingly important role in the cultural sector and should be brought into play in the implementation of projects and measures in this field, particularly through public/private partnerships (PPPs),
 1. Acknowledges the significance of the plans for a European cultural agenda, but notes that the Commission communication on that agenda fails to provide any details regarding its funding or any practical plan for employing the open method of coordination; calls on the Commission to supply those details at the earliest opportunity;
 2. Notes the important role played by local and regional authorities in comprehensively fostering and nurturing culture in their areas; recommends that the Member States involve local and regional authorities in the process not only of monitoring results, but also of implementing any new EU cultural agenda, so that the cultural policy actually implemented reflects the specific expectations and needs of the regions;
 3. Draws attention to the need to promote cultural diversity and to give culture a significant role in dialogue not only between individual countries but also between regions throughout the world, promoting intercultural exchanges and including culture in development programmes; supports the idea of the integrated approach to creating strategies for culture, including all sectors and factors that directly or indirectly influence the development of culture;
 4. Stresses that cultural tourism plays a significant role in regional economic growth and wealth creation and in enhancing the value of Europe's cultural heritage and that regional cultural associations and people active in the arts must be involved in this process;
 5. Regrets the fact that the Commission pays too little attention to twinning arrangements

between towns, municipalities and regions, which have for many years provided an excellent forum for cultural cooperation and information exchange;

6. Emphasises the important role played by local and regional authorities in fostering and nurturing culture in their areas, above all in the sphere of cultural heritage and as patrons of artistic innovation, as the bodies responsible for providing and sponsoring cultural amenities and initiatives and education and training and as organisers of festivals and cultural encounters;
7. Calls on the Commission to promote best practices in cultural activities at European level, drawing attention to the fact that most best practices in this area are generated at regional level; suggests that thematic conferences be organised and that publicly accessible best-practice databases be set up in all the official languages of the European Union;
8. Bearing in mind the forthcoming European Year of Intercultural Dialogue, stresses the role which the regions can play as a genuine cultural meeting point; calls on the Commission to put forward firm proposals for activities for 2008 and to actively involve the regions in the planning and implementation of these activities;
9. Agrees with the Commission that the EU's cultural and linguistic diversity is a major competitive asset; reminds the Member States that language teaching and educational and cultural exchange programmes within and outside the European Union need continuous support; recalls the role of television broadcasting in the field of intercultural exchange;
10. Calls on the Commission to support cultural initiatives in regional cooperation projects, including at town level, especially in small and medium-sized towns, inter alia the Interreg IV C programme, and to incorporate a cultural dimension into the regions for economic change initiative;
11. Calls on the Member States to support culture in the regions by investing in cultural infrastructure, making use of structural funding, and to draw up regional cultural development programmes in consultation with the cultural and education sectors and with civil society;
12. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to lay down straightforward, transparent and clear rules for the implementation of PPPs, so that they may become an effective means of funding cultural ventures in the regions and may facilitate more active involvement on the part of SMEs;
13. Welcomes the Commission's proposal to set up an EU-ACP Cultural Fund as an EU contribution to the distribution of ACP and OCT cultural goods; takes the view that similar arrangements should be put in place for neighbourhood policy countries in particular.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	23.1.2008
Result of final vote	+ : 50 - : 1 0 : 0
Members present for the final vote	Alfonso Andria, Emmanouil Angelakas, Elspeth Attwooll, Jean Marie Beaupuy, Rolf Berend, Jana Bobošíková, Victor Boştinaru, Antonio De Blasio, Bairbre De Brún, Petru Filip, Gerardo Galeote, Iratxe García Pérez, Eugenijus Gentvilas, Ambroise Guellec, Pedro Guerreiro, Zita Gurmai, Marian Harkin, Jim Higgins, Filiz Hakaeva Hyusmenova, Mieczysław Edmund Janowski, Tunne Kelam, Evgeni Kirilov, Constanze Angela Krehl, Mario Mantovani, Sérgio Marques, Miroslav Mikolášik, James Nicholson, Lambert van Nistelrooij, Jan Olbrycht, Maria Petre, Markus Pieper, Pierre Pribetich, Wojciech Roszkowski, Elisabeth Schroedter, Grażyna Staniszewska, Catherine Stihler, Margie Sudre, Oldřich Vlasák, Vladimír Železný
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Jan Březina, Den Dover, Jill Evans, Emanuel Jardim Fernandes, Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg, Dariusz Maciej Grabowski, Francisca Pleguezuelos Aguilar, Christa Prets, Miloslav Ransdorf, Czesław Adam Siekierski, László Surján
Substitute(s) under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote	Vladimir Urutchev.