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on a European agenda for culture in a globalising world
(2007/0000(INI))

Committee on Culture and Education

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MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

on a European agenda for culture in a globalising world (2007/0000(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Article 151 of the EC Treaty,
 - having regard to Decision No 1855/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2006 establishing the Culture Programme (2007 to 2013)¹,
 - having regard to the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, adopted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Unesco) on 20 October 2005,
 - having regard to the conclusions issued by the Education, Youth and Culture Council following its meeting of 24 and 25 May 2007 and to Council document 9021/2007,
 - having regard to the Commission communication entitled ‘Europe in the World – Some Practical Proposals for Greater Coherence, Effectiveness and Visibility’ (COM(2006)0278),
 - having regard to the Commission communication on a European agenda for culture in a globalising world (COM(2007)0242) and to the related Commission staff working paper (SEC(2007)0570),
 - having regard to its resolution of 5 September 2001 on cultural cooperation in the European Union²,
 - having regard to its resolution of 4 September 2003 on cultural industries³
 - having regard to Rule 45 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Culture and Education (A6-0000/2007),
- A. whereas, without denying the fact that it is wholly desirable to take as open an attitude as possible to every other culture, the European Union has a very special duty to safeguard Europe’s cultural richness, implying that the European cultural heritage, in all its dimensions, must, by every means, be preserved, disseminated, and shared both within and outside the Union,
- B. whereas the European cultural heritage, encompassing its diverse forms of expression and the combination of its founding sources, such as, for example, Graeco-Latin and Judaeo-Christian antiquity, has, over the course of history, placed Europe in the vanguard of all the continents, proved to be a matchless driver of development and progress, and spread in

¹ OJ L 372, 27.12.2006, p.1.

² OJ C 72 E, 21.3.2002, p. 142.

³ OJ C 76 E, 25.3.2004, p. 459.

every direction, and today still constitutes an essential reference point for humanism, spiritual enrichment and enlivenment, tolerance, and citizenship,

- C. whereas in an increasingly more globalised world, the outstanding specific qualities contained within the nucleus of Europe's cultural richness constitute genuine European added value and their identity-giving role is vital for Europe and the Union in that it helps them to understand the world, bring about cohesion within, emphasise their uniqueness, and assert themselves in relation to other peoples,
- D. whereas the particular ways in which the influence of the European cultural heritage has over the course of history found expression in other continents must lead to special measures emphasising those factors which serve to build civilisation, mutual understanding, and a constructive approach uniting the peoples represented by such forms of expression,
1. Welcomes the Commission communication and endorses the aims set out therein; notes that it has pointed on several occasions to the essential role of culture in imparting structure to the Lisbon strategy and establishing a new pillar of global governance and sustainable development;
 2. Points out that under Article 151 of the Treaty, action in the culture sector, which must not undermine cultural diversity and national identities, has to take the form of cooperation policies and partnership agreements between Member States;
 3. Believes that if Article 151(4) of the Treaty is to be implemented completely and coherently, the specific features of the culture sector, not least its creative and innovative potential, have to be taken into account so that culture can fully assume its rightful place within the Lisbon strategy;
 4. Believes that the existing Community programmes in the culture sector do not fully reflect the implications of the Europeans' common cultural heritage, and calls on the Commission, therefore, to propose that specific programmes be drawn up in order to preserve the links, on a wider scale and at a deeper seated level, with the goods and values, both tangible and intangible, that constitute the European cultural heritage and to enable those goods and values to interact according to the humanist conception of identities and differences and in present-day cultural works, thus making it possible to reap and share their benefits;
 5. Stresses that the culture sector programmes will all do a great deal to foster cohesion, real convergence, economic growth, sustainable development, employment, and competitiveness;
 6. Recommends to the Council and Commission that a programme be drawn up with a view to enhancing the prestige of the European classical heritage and the historic contributions of national cultures in all their dimensions down through the centuries, and that such a programme should exist alongside and complement the 'Culture' framework programme for 2007 to 2013;
 7. Calls on the Commission to intensify the policies in support of literary translation

provided for in the ‘Culture Programme (2007 to 2013)’;

8. Calls on the Commission to draw up a programme aimed at developing the promotion of European languages in the world and their role in creative artistic activity in other continents, so as to facilitate both mutual knowledge and understanding and the cultural interaction generated and conveyed by those languages in their extra-European dimensions;
9. Proposes that Parliament, the Council, the Commission, and the Member States undertake to establish conditions genuinely conducive to culture and creative activity in every walk of life in the Union, focusing in particular on the family, schools, lifelong learning, the mass media, and the world of digital technologies;
10. Points out that teaching of the arts and literature has an important part to play in rounding out the personalities of young people, awakening and fostering their vocations, and enabling them to enjoy cultural goods and values to the full;
11. Maintains that it is important, both in schools and in society, to build innovative bridges between culture and research, science, and technology, and to have programmes covering these matters;
12. Calls on the Commission to devise means serving to identify sectors in crisis in European cultural industries, focusing particular attention on the publishing market, in which the trend has been such that high-quality creative writing is now in danger of being eclipsed by best-sellers, and on the world of music-making, the quality and diversity of which are likewise being threatened by the worldwide spread of digital technologies by the concentration processes entailed in collective rights management and by piracy;
13. Believes that the foundations should be laid for genuine European cultural diplomacy and calls on the Member States and the Community institutions to strengthen the cultural component of their diplomatic representation and embark on regular organised initiatives given over to European culture;
14. Recommends that the Council and Commission compile and promote a list of ‘cultural places of pilgrimage’ in all the Member States with a view to organising specific initiatives and events to take place regularly in these monuments to, and powerhouses of, culture;
15. Proposes that the Council and Commission establish a European arts sponsorship scheme and the status of ‘European patron of the arts’ so as to enable the public and private sectors to enter into effective partnerships consistent with the aims of the Commission’s proposed action;
16. Proposes also that prestigious European prizes, awarded on a regular basis, be established for every sphere of creative artistic activity;
17. Suggests that the year 2010 be designated ‘European Year of the Greek and Latin Classics’ in order to make the peoples of the Union more aware of this essential cultural heritage now in danger of being forgotten;

18. Points out to the Council that the intended budget funding for the measures proposed in the Commission communication and those already in existence needs to be reviewed immediately and as a matter of urgency;
19. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, and the governments and parliaments of the Member States, and to Unesco and the Council of Europe.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

I. The Commission communication

In its communication the Commission emphasises the central role that culture has to play in European integration and in raising the EU's profile on the international stage.

An agenda for culture is thus being proposed to enable a strategy to be pursued both within the EU and in the EU's relations with third countries.

To complement the communication, there is a Commission staff working paper listing the various ways and means employed by the EU for its action in the cultural sphere.

When it drew up its communication, the Commission held wide-ranging prior consultations with European cultural stakeholders.

The communication, the first systematic attempt to move towards a European strategy for culture, centres on three main aims:

- promoting cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue,
- promoting culture as a catalyst for creativity within the Lisbon strategy,
- promoting culture as an essential element in the EU's external relations.

Secondly, the Commission identifies the ways of bringing a cultural policy into being and is calling for the cultural dimension to be incorporated into other relevant Community policies. Regarding this latter point, it indicates that it has recently set up an inter-service group.

As regards implementation of the strategy, the Commission is proposing to apply various procedures, most importantly an open method of coordination.

Also worthy of note are the proposals to establish firstly an EU-ACP Cultural Fund and secondly a Cultural Forum to provide a framework for the dialogue with civil society.

II. Remarks

1. Regarding the idea of taking culture into account in the other Community policies, this is not so much a legitimate ambition, as an obligation imposed by Article 151(4) of the Treaty: regrettably, since the entry into force of the Maastricht Treaty and the later Treaty of Amsterdam, nothing has ever been done to implement it.

The present approach should consequently be welcomed, and the Commission called upon to commit itself formally at the highest level. The task force for culture announced by President Barroso in Budapest in November 2005 has still not been set up; taking the necessary action would be a real sign of a determination to progress in the right direction.

As regards the proposed open method of coordination, Parliament should be involved in order

to lend further momentum to the process.

One point to note is that in the communication, culture is viewed more as a means to an end, be it social, economic, or political, than in the light of its intrinsic value as an end in itself. The communication is nevertheless important in that it raises the possibility of new processes and arrangements beyond the scope of the existing Community programmes and the rather modest scale of their resources.

Be that as it may, the question of budget funding commensurate with the declared objectives is one that the Council will have to consider very seriously.

The fact that culture is to be taken into account in the EU's external relations is a highly significant development. The work needed in this area – of which there is a great deal – has to be tackled by means of a proper strategy.

2. Our rapporteur has had occasion more than once, not least within the life of this Parliament, to maintain that the Lisbon strategy can never fully achieve its aims unless culture is treated as one of its essential dimensions.

The Commission communication should therefore be welcomed, as it proves that we are right.

Culture will thus be a key point in the European political agenda. The communication views it from a horizontal, multidirectional perspective that we believe to be sound.

What needs to be considered is not just all the programmes whose direct or indirect impact in the cultural sphere will make for the best solutions, based on best practice and operating in conjunction with other Community instruments, such as the Structural Funds, as provided for in the 2007-2013 Culture Programme, but also the role which those programmes, in their dynamic interaction, could play in a globalising world.

And the fact that the world is globalising is what, to our mind, is implying an ever more pressing and urgent need to assert and strengthen the European identity, without detracting from the diversity of the cultures existing among the peoples of Europe.

This brings us to the common cultural heritage. The report takes the view that the Union has a special duty to safeguard Europe's cultural richness; the European cultural heritage must be preserved, disseminated, and shared within and outside the Union, enabling the Union as it does to understand the world, foster its cohesion and development, emphasise its uniqueness, and assert itself in relation to other peoples.

It is true that Europe now already has programmes to cover and encourage creative activity, the movement of works, the mobility of creative artists and stakeholders and professionals in the culture sector, and film- and audio-visual programme-making; however, in addition to this body of measures, which should be developed to the most useful effect, further programmes are needed in order to encompass the European cultural heritage more specifically and systematically, bearing in mind that one of its founding sources is in grave danger of disappearing and, moreover, within the Union, there is still a great deal of ignorance on all sides about the national forms in which the common cultural heritage has found practical expression in the Member States and in other European countries down through the centuries.

Given that it is desirable to draw attention to the above points, the report makes some recommendations which, in the opinion of our rapporteur, would do much to enhance EU cultural policy and enable the aims of the Lisbon strategy to be achieved better and more fully.