

**Committee of the Regions****EDUC-V-029****101st plenary session, 30 May 2013****OPINION****CULTURAL AND CREATIVE SECTORS FOR GROWTH AND JOBS****THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS**

- welcomes that culture is recognised as a tool for local and regional development and the importance of smart specialisation strategies and holistic approaches to creative development is highlighted;
- suggests developing creative concepts at local and regional level and feeding these into a "European Creativity Forum", which would bring together public, private and voluntary groups to analyse ways in which Europe could apply creative solutions to pressing local and European problems;
- underlines the importance of learning creative skills from an early age, thus empowering the young generation to fully benefit from the new forms of access to culture and better prepare for future jobs, particularly helping them and the wider society to deal with the consequences of the digital shift;
- supports Communication's focus on the need to simplify the existing rules and increase access to external financing for the cultural and creative sectors;
- urges that culture and creativity become better integrated in the Europe 2020 strategy and that the important links with other policy areas, such as industry, tourism, education, finance are recognised.

Rapporteur

Anton Rombouts (NL/EPP), Mayor of the city of 's Hertogenbosch

Reference document

Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on Promoting cultural and creative sectors for growth and jobs in the EU
COM(2012) 537 final

Opinion of the Committee of the Regions – Cultural and Creative Sectors for Growth and Jobs

I. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS

General context

1. welcomes the communication on "Promoting cultural and creative sectors for growth and jobs in the EU" as a timely strategy that aims at fully using the potential of these sectors for socio-economic development; specifically welcomes the focus on CCS capacity for generating growth and employment, the contribution to fostering innovation, as well as possible spill-over effects in other sectors and policies. The communication demonstrates the high degree of synergy between the positions of the European Commission and the CoR in their approach to the growth potential of culture and creativity. The CoR underlines the importance of the local and regional level for the development of the CCS in Europe, as reflected in the CoR Opinion on Unlocking the potential of Cultural and Creative Industries¹ which is also reflected in the communication;
2. recalls that at a time of financial and economic crisis, the cultural and creative sectors can also play a role in creatively meeting social and health policy objectives by fostering innovation while contributing to growth²;
3. reiterates that culture also has an intrinsic value, which is independent of the economic aspects of cultural goods and insists that this dual nature must be taken into account by not focussing exclusively on the economic usefulness of culture³;
4. welcomes that the communication recognises the important benefits that strategic investments in CCS at local and regional level can bring and the call for a comprehensive strategic response involving all actors from the local up to the EU level;
5. welcomes that throughout the communication, culture is recognised as a tool for local and regional development and the importance of smart specialisation strategies is highlighted;
6. recognises the need for a stronger integration between strategies at local/regional levels and those at national levels and the proposed focus on assessing the potential of the sectors in regional development strategies in the forthcoming Cohesion Policy programmes;

¹ CdR 181/2010 fin.

² CdR 181/2010 fin.

³ CdR 401/2011 fin.

7. recalls previous CoR positions on the European Capitals of Culture (ECoC) as a valuable event that highlights the wealth, diversity and common aspects of European cultures⁴; Together with the European Heritage Label (EHL) initiative, they could be further used as laboratories for audience development and citizen participation;
8. welcomes Commission proposals to set up cooperation programmes in order to ensure mutual learning, to build a network of contacts in order to facilitate exchanges and to ensure diversity. The action of the EU will also be necessary with the involvement of local and regional authorities to promote the creative sector so that it can jump from the local to the world level;
9. the proposals of the Commission, as they stand in the present COM communication, do not seem to raise any issue concerning the respect of subsidiarity principles. However, concrete measures/actions will have to be monitored in the future as they are proposed/adopted at EU level;

Recommendations

THE NEED FOR A LONG TERM VISION

10. taking into consideration the current challenges facing Europe, the CoR underlines the need for a long-term vision that can help steer a path towards prosperity and a better quality of life for all. Such a vision needs to have a strong relationship with culture and creativity. The CoR agrees that EU's international influence is based on imagination, creativity and innovation by pursuing new ideas, new concepts and new projects and it is convinced that CCS can make a major contribution in this regard;
11. this is clearly understood by cities and regions who are striving to deliver a better quality of life for their citizens. There is a need for a vision that links the soft qualities of European cities and regions to the fight against unemployment and exclusion of vulnerable groups. This vision could be made more concrete for citizens by developing creative concepts at local and regional level and feeding these into a "European Creativity Forum", which would bring together public, private and voluntary groups to analyse ways in which Europe could apply creative solutions to pressing local and European problems. In this context, the CoR would particularly highlight the importance of ensuring that creativity, problem solving and artistic and cultural knowledge and skills have a central role throughout the education system;
12. it is therefore important, as the communication states, to utilise the power of culture and creativity in a multifunctional way. This requires not just the progressive vertical and horizontal organisational model proposed in the communication, but an approach that deals with the entire cultural ecosystem. This includes, importantly, the participative power of

⁴ CdR 191/2011 fin.

citizens in the process of co-creation and a recognition of the value of rooting culture and creativity in specific places;

13. points out that in a globalising world culture becomes an essential quality of place, that determines attractiveness and thereby competitiveness for business, investors and creative and enterprising individuals. Improving quality of life therefore has become an important aspiration in local and regional development programmes. Important is the balance between diversity, creative and cultural resources as well as adequate services and infrastructure. These issues are best dealt with at local and regional level, where local and regional authorities are best placed to link diversity and identities to development programmes. Calls therefore for the development of partnerships between research centres and innovation labs to study the effects of quality of place on location decisions and economic and social development;
14. Europe is not just an important economic area, but a shared culture that is based on important values of trust and inclusiveness that build social capital, therefore providing a basis for innovation and creativity. At the same time this atmosphere of unity in diversity supports a feeling of personal safety that increases the quality of life of citizens and increases the attractiveness of European cities and regions as good places to live, ultimately also increasing our competitiveness;

CULTURE AND INNOVATIVE PLACES

15. notes that while the communication emphasises the need to link sectors, it gives less emphasis to the need to embed flows of knowledge and creative capital in a place. In relation to "cultural clusters" or "creative districts" the CoR stresses the need to position cities and regions at the hub of knowledge networks in order to fully benefit from the free movement of ideas, capital and people in the global network economy. Support from local and regional authorities is vital for the development of such clusters, but these also need to be linked into European and global knowledge networks to enhance their effectiveness;
16. embedding creativity in places requires specific local and regional initiatives to be smart, sustainable and strategic. This provides local and regional authorities with a particularly important role in this respect. The development of culture at local level strengthens local identity and distinctiveness, creating cultural products that are not easily transferable and therefore creating a unique place-based value. These cultural factors are also important at European level;
17. considers that a community investing in culture, education and sport creates also more wealth, welfare and safety. This simple fact holds true for a city or a village, its region, a country and also the entire continent. The CoR calls for an ambitious agenda at EU level to make Europe an inspiring and attractive continent - "the place to be" for the young people of today and

tomorrow, a continent that creates new jobs, where future generations may live in a safe climate and clean environment and with a high quality of life.

18. believes that trust is basic to the quality of place, because it provides the basis for personal safety, allowing people to come together and share ideas, generating creative thought and innovation. Such spaces also help to anchor creative products, intangible heritage and creative people in places. This has an economic dimension, for example in terms of the role of culture in making places distinctive for tourism. But it also has an important social dimension, because a trusting culture also provides the basis for social cohesion;
19. these complex issues make it clear that a holistic approach is needed. Creativity and innovation are based on knowledge and skills as well as social and economic networks. Creative development must therefore be strategically pursued as a collective, cooperative endeavour of cross fertilisation. It is not just the CCS, or even economic agents that are involved in these processes, but the wider population as a whole;
20. therefore welcomes the fact that the Commission intends to support peer learning among city administrations, to allow local policymakers to share and compare experience on the impact of culture in the social and economic revitalisation of cities. But the CoR would urge a wider view of culture and creativity, involving the regional context, citizens, enterprises and non-profit organisations in such processes. One mechanism for this might be the model provided by the Comenius Regio Partnerships, an action focused on local development in education, but which could be transferred to the CCS as well;
21. recalls that local and regional authorities play a key role in developing and fostering culture in their respective areas, not least in protecting the cultural heritage and promoting artistic innovation, as well as in supporting and assisting not only cultural institutions and initiatives but also education and training, and in staging festivals and cultural events⁵. Local and regional authorities are uniquely placed to balance the different elements of the cultural and creative ecosystem and provide the matching resources required by those working in the CCS;

INCREASING ECONOMIC IMPACT

22. welcomes the fact that the Commission underlines the value of the CCS in terms of growth and employment (they account for 3.3% of GDP and employ 6.7 million people – 3% of total employment)⁶. The economic benefits can clearly be strengthened by the proposed new strategy to increase the competitiveness and export potential of these sectors, as well as to maximise their spill-over benefits for other areas such as innovation, ICT and urban regeneration. The CoR underlines the importance here of drawing on local and regional

⁵ CdR 172/2007 fin.

⁶ 2010 European Competitiveness Report. Other sources have estimated it higher at 4.5% of GDP and 8.5 million people employed (TERA Consultants, 2010).

experience and exploring how the creative sector can be used to drive growth within other sectors;

23. in order to maximise these effects, there is a need to facilitate the production and consumption of culture and the development of creativity. The CoR underlines the importance of learning creative skills from an early age, both within the education system and in leisure time, thus empowering the young generation to fully benefit from the new forms of access to culture and better prepare for future jobs, particularly helping them and the wider society to deal with the consequences of the digital shift;
24. the communication recognises the potential for the CCS to benefit from a wide range of financial instruments, including Creative Europe, Erasmus for all, the Cohesion Policy Funds, Horizon 2020, COSME and Connecting Europe Facility. It should also be recognised that regional and local authorities intervene more directly in the field of culture. Cities and regions not only provide the bulk of funding for culture in most areas of Europe, but they also act as laboratories for cultural and creative experimentation and innovation, and play a key role in the development of cultural and creative clusters;
25. underlines the importance of maintaining state aid granted with a view to promoting culture. Urges, therefore, the Commission to reconsider the territorial spending criterion when issuing the new State aid rules for films and other audiovisual works in order not to harm the territorial impact of such works;
26. there is a need to promote good cultural governance, in line with the Council conclusions adopted at the 3201st Council meeting on Education, Youth, Culture and Sport (Brussels, 26 and 27 November 2012);

IMPROVING THE CLIMATE FOR THE CCS IN EUROPE

27. the Commission calls for a range of actions to promote the right conditions for the cultural and creative sectors to flourish. They focus on skills development, access to finance, promotion of new business models, audience development, access to international markets, and improved links to other sectors. However, the CCS are also faced with particular challenges. The CCS are dominated by micro-enterprises, small and medium-sized businesses and enterprises of self-employed workers which require initiative and organisation at a local level. Therefore local and regional authorities can play a more effective role in informing local companies about ways and means to promote local and regional cultural activities⁷;
28. considers that partnership is vital for the CCS and welcomes measures to ensure partnerships/alliances and the right conditions for the transfer of best practices, for fostering knowledge, and setting up networks for sharing experience on the opportunities for making

⁷ CdR 401/2011 fin.

use of the potential of the CCS⁸. Consideration should be given to establishing Thematic Networks for the CCS so that transfer of knowledge can operate more effectively at European level;

29. notes the Commission's intention to improve the EU regulatory framework for the CCS and supports its focus on the need to simplify the existing rules and increase access to external financing for the cultural and creative sectors;
30. considers, however, a matter of urgency for the Commission to set a clear regulatory framework for intellectual property rights and copyright within the context of the development of cloud computing;

POLICY MEASURES

31. supports the emphasis in the communication on the five key policy drivers: developing skills; improving access to finance; promoting new business models and enlarging audiences; facilitating cooperation with other sectors and policies; and expanding international reach;
32. the Commission document clearly recognises the links that the CCS have with other policy areas, including ICT, tourism, etc. Their links with education policy areas should, however, be given greater prominence. The CoR also urges a more proactive approach that supports the development of synergies between CCS sectors and also with economic and social actors in other ambits in order to support new and innovative areas of activity, such as cross media, social media, digital publishing, creative tourism⁹, etc.;
33. supports the proposal for a multi-layered strategy built on a dual approach encompassing both the horizontal and vertical dimensions of policy. In particular the vertical line of action – a holistic approach for integrated strategies – is important because this explicitly recognises the links with other policy areas, such as industry, tourism, education, finance, etc.;
34. endorses the idea that the European Capitals of Culture and the European Heritage Label initiatives should be further used as laboratories for audience development and citizen participation. It should be recognised that such locally-based initiatives form important creative spaces and clusters within national and global networks in the CCS, and help to link global circuits of culture to local communities;
35. underlines the need for more information and evidence on the operation and effects of the CCS, which would also help to make the case for commercial funding for creative enterprises. Eurostat should be encouraged to develop more effective and timely European cultural statistics. In addition, studies of the CCS in specific local and regional contexts could be

⁸ CdR 181/2010 fin.

⁹ OECD (2009) The Impact of Culture on Tourism. OECD: Paris.

undertaken to analyse the functioning of the cultural ecosystem of different types of places across the EU in order to update best practice and identify major trends in the CCS;

36. urges that culture and creativity become better integrated in the Europe 2020 strategy notably, particularly through the flagship initiatives Digital Agenda, An Agenda for New Skills and Jobs and Innovation Union in recognition of the fact that not only "enterprises" but a complete knowledge system and healthy cultural ecosystem are necessary to support smart, sustainable and inclusive growth;
37. notes that the Commission concludes by suggesting that the strategy should be followed up using the culture open method of coordination; the CoR would point out in particular that the national representatives should systematically consult local and regional stakeholders so that they can raise questions as reliably as possible.

Brussels, 30 May 2013.

The President
of the Committee of the Regions

Ramón Luis Valcárcel Siso

The Secretary-General
of the Committee of the Regions

Gerhard Stahl

II. PROCEDURE

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| Title | Cultural and creative sectors for growth and jobs |
| Reference | COM(2012) 537 final |
| Legal basis | Article 307 (1) and Article 167 TFEU |
| Procedural basis | Optional consultation |
| Date of Commission letter | 26 September 2012 |
| Date of President's decision | 19 November 2012 |
| Commission responsible | Commission for Education, Youth, Culture and Research |
| Date adopted by commission | 25 February 2013 |
| Result of the vote in commission | Adopted unanimously |
| Date adopted in plenary | 30 May 2013 |
| Previous Committee opinions | European Capitals of Culture (2020-2033) ¹⁰ Creative Europe ¹¹ Future of the European Capital of Culture ¹² Unlocking the potential of cultural and creative industries ¹³ European Heritage Label ¹⁴ Integration policy and intercultural dialogue ¹⁵ European agenda for culture in a globalising world ¹⁶ Proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a Community action for the European Capital of Culture event for the years 2007 to 2019 ¹⁷ |

¹⁰ CdR 2077/2012 fin.

¹¹ CdR 401/2011 fin.

¹² CdR 191/2011 fin.

¹³ CdR 181/2010 fin.

¹⁴ CdR 105/2010 fin.

¹⁵ CdR 251/2008 fin.

¹⁶ CdR 172/2007 fin.

¹⁷ CdR 251/2005.

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| | Proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Culture 2007 programme (2007-2013) ¹⁸ Culture 2000 programme ¹⁹ |
| Date of Subsidiarity Monitoring Consultation | n/a |

18 CdR 259/2004.

19 CdR 227/98.