

**Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States,
meeting within the Council, on a Work Plan for Culture (2015-2018)**

(2014/C 463/02)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE MEMBER STATES,
MEETING WITHIN THE COUNCIL,

I. INTRODUCTION

RECALLING the objectives assigned to the European Union in the field of culture by Article 167 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU);

RECALLING the Resolution of the Council of 16 November 2007 on a European Agenda for Culture ⁽¹⁾ and its strategic objectives, namely the promotion of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue, the promotion of culture as a catalyst for creativity and the promotion of culture as a vital element in the Union's international relations;

RECALLING the Regulation (EU) No 1295/2013 establishing the Creative Europe Programme (2014 to 2020) ⁽²⁾, and in particular its general objectives which aim at enhancing European cultural and linguistic diversity, promoting Europe's cultural heritage, and strengthening the competitiveness of the European cultural and creative sectors with a view to promoting smart, sustainable and inclusive growth;

RECALLING the substantial contribution of the cultural and creative sectors to economic, social and regional development, the importance of these sectors to the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and the fact that the discussion of Culture Ministers at the Council meeting on 25 November 2014 will contribute to the Council's response in the framework of the mid-term review of the strategy planned for 2015;

TAKING NOTE of the results of the work carried out in the framework of the Council Work Plan for Culture 2011-2014 ⁽³⁾ as well as the results of the final evaluation carried out by Member States within the Council ⁽⁴⁾ which form the basis of the Commission's final report on the implementation and relevance of the 2011-14 Work Plan for Culture ⁽⁵⁾;

HAVING REGARD to the Council conclusions of 26 November 2012 on Cultural Governance ⁽⁶⁾ and in particular its provision on regular and early-stage information delivery about EU policies and actions in other policy areas with direct or indirect impact on cultural issues and policies.

AGREE TO:

- establish, with due regard to the principle of subsidiarity, a four year Work Plan for Culture for the period 2015-2018, allowing for a mid-term review;
- focus activities in the cultural field on the priority themes, key topics, outputs and working methods as listed in this Work Plan;
- adopt priorities for the Work Plan as set out in Annex I;
- establish working groups composed of experts appointed by the Member States on the basis of the priorities, principles and mandates defined in Annexes I and II and to follow their work.

CONSIDER that a four-year Work Plan should be governed by the following guiding principles:

- a) to build on the achievements of the previous Work Plan for Culture (2011-2014) while adding to it a more strategic dimension in order to reinforce the link between the Work Plan and the work of the Council and its rotating Presidencies;
- b) to concentrate on topics with a clear EU added value;
- c) to take into account the intrinsic value of culture and the arts to enhance cultural diversity;

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 287, 29.11.2007, p. 1.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 221.

⁽³⁾ OJ C 325, 2.12.2010, p. 1.

⁽⁴⁾ doc. 9591/14.

⁽⁵⁾ doc. 12646/14.

⁽⁶⁾ OJ C 393, 19.12.2012, p. 8.

- d) to ensure the excellence, innovation and competitiveness of the cultural and creative sectors by promoting the work of artists, creators and cultural professionals and recognising the sectors' contribution to the goals of the Europe 2020 strategy for growth and jobs, paying particular attention to the digital shift challenges;
- e) to mainstream culture in other policy areas, wherever relevant, in accordance with Article 167(4) TFEU;
- f) to encourage cross-sectorial cooperation;
- g) to ensure synergies with the Creative Europe Programme;
- h) to work towards evidence-based policy.

II. PRIORITIES AND WORKING METHODS

— AGREE to pursue the priorities as set in Annex I:

A. Accessible and inclusive culture;

B. Cultural heritage;

C. Cultural and creative sectors: creative economy and innovation;

D. Promotion of cultural diversity, culture in EU external relations and mobility.

— AGREE that reliable, comparable and up-to-date cultural statistics are the basis of the sound cultural policy-making and therefore statistics are a cross-sectorial priority in this Work Plan; and therefore LOOK FORWARD to the results of the work to be carried out under the auspices of Eurostat in order to ensure the regular production and dissemination of statistics on culture, while taking into account recommendations contained in the ESS-net culture report;

— AGREE to take stock of the work carried out in the field of culture in EU external relations and on the need to continue working in this area, in cooperation with the European External Action Service and the Commission;

— AGREE to use different working methods, depending on the purpose and the topic:

- i. the Open Method of Coordination (OMC), which should remain as the main working method of cooperation among Member States;
- ii. informal meetings of officials from Ministries of Culture, including with officials from other Ministries;
- iii. ad-hoc expert groups or thematic seminars convened by the Commission to further examine issues related to the Work Plan's topics and interact with other instruments of the Work Plan;
- iv. stock-taking meetings organised by the Commission in the policy areas which were dealt with extensively by the previous work plans for culture;
- v. conferences, studies and peer learning initiatives.

III. ACTIONS

INVITE THE MEMBER STATES TO:

- consider, whilst respecting the principle of subsidiarity, the results achieved by this Work Plan when developing policy at national level;
- disseminate information on the outputs of the Work Plan to interested stakeholders at all levels.

INVITE THE PRESIDENCIES OF THE COUNCIL TO:

- take into account, in the context of the Trio Presidency, the Work Plan priorities when developing their 18-month programme;

- inform the Council preparatory body in the field of culture on the work carried out by other Council preparatory bodies that has a direct or indirect impact on cultural issues and policy ⁽⁷⁾;
- convene, when appropriate, informal meetings (including those of a joint and cross-sectorial nature) to discuss and take up the outputs obtained through the Work Plan, and to disseminate them widely;
- consider, on the basis of a final report prepared by the Commission relying on the voluntary contributions from Member States, whether to propose a new Work Plan.

INVITE THE COMMISSION TO:

- support the Member States and other relevant stakeholders in cooperating within the framework set out in these Conclusions, in particular by:
 - a) supporting the widest possible participation of Member States, as well as experts and other stakeholders, in the working structures referred to in Annex I;
 - b) supplementing the work of OMC groups with studies as well as peer learning exercises;
- disseminate information on the outputs of the Work Plan in as many languages as deemed appropriate, including via digital means e.g. its website;
- report to the competent preparatory body of the Council in the field of culture at the earliest possible stage about its relevant initiatives, with particular regard to proposals, for which the impact assessment has highlighted a direct or indirect impact on cultural issues ⁽⁸⁾;
- ensure mutual exchange of information among OMC groups in the culture field and between them and relevant OMC groups working in related sectors;
- regularly inform the Council preparatory body in the field of culture on the progress of the work in the area of culture statistics;
- consult and inform regularly stakeholders at European level, including civil society, on the progress of the Work Plan in order to ensure the relevance and visibility of the activities, including via the European Culture Forum;
- adopt, before the end of the first half of 2018, and on the basis of voluntary contributions from Member States, a final report on the implementation and relevance of the Work Plan.

INVITE THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION, WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE SPHERES OF COMPETENCE AND WITH DUE REGARD TO THE PRINCIPLE OF SUBSIDIARITY, TO:

- work together in a cooperative and concerted manner by using the working structures and methods specified in these Conclusions in order to deliver added value in the field of culture at EU level;
- take culture into account when formulating, implementing and evaluating policies and actions in other policy fields, with particular attention to ensuring early and effective inclusion in the policy development process;
- promote better contribution of culture to the overall goals of the Europe 2020 strategy, given the sector's role in achieving smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and considering its positive effects on areas such as employment, social inclusion, education and training, tourism, research and innovation, and regional development;
- promote reading as a tool to spread knowledge, enhance creativity, support access to culture and cultural diversity and develop awareness of a European identity, taking into account the various conditions applied to e-books and physical books;
- share regularly and at an early stage information about the EU policies and actions with direct or indirect impact on cultural issues and policies and in this regard encourage them to exchange information via digital means, including virtual platforms;

⁽⁷⁾ In line with the 2012 Council conclusions on cultural governance.

⁽⁸⁾ See footnote 7.

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- foster cooperation with third countries, in particular candidate countries, potential candidate countries and countries of the European neighbourhood policy and with the competent international organisations in the field of culture, including the Council of Europe, including via regular meetings with the third countries concerned;
 - undertake a mid-term review of the implementation of the Work Plan with a view to possible adaptations or reorientation in the light of the results achieved and policy developments at EU level.
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Priorities for the Work Plan for Culture 2015-2018

Priority Area A: Accessible and inclusive culture

European agenda for culture: Cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue (3.1)

Europe 2020 strategy: Inclusive growth (priority 3)

Actions by	Topics	Instruments and working methods (incl. if cross-sectorial)	Target outputs and indicative timeline
Member States	A1) Development of the key competence 'cultural awareness and expression'	<p>OMC ⁽¹⁾, cross-sectorial</p> <p>Experts will identify good practices for the development of this key competence and its integration into education policies, on the basis of knowledge and attitudes identified in the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning ⁽²⁾.</p>	<p>End 2015</p> <p>Manual of good practice for culture and education authorities at national and European level.</p>
Member States	<p>A2) Promoting access to culture via digital means: policies and strategies for audience development</p> <p>Digital technologies have changed the way people access, produce and use cultural content. What is the impact of the digital shift on audience development policies and the practices of cultural institutions?</p> <p>Promoting reading in the digital environment in order to encourage access and audience development. Mapping of the regulatory framework with particular reference to licensing practices, cross-border services and e-lending by public libraries.</p>	<p>OMC</p> <p>Experts will map existing policies and programmes and identify good practices.</p> <p>OMC sub-group ⁽³⁾</p> <p>Experts will map best practices.</p>	<p>2015-2016</p> <p>Manual of good practice for cultural institutions and professionals.</p> <p>2015</p> <p>Report containing case studies.</p>

Actions by	Topics	Instruments and working methods (incl. if cross-sectorial)	Target outputs and indicative timeline
Member States	A3) Fostering the contribution of culture to social inclusion How can public policies encourage and support cultural institutions in working within partnerships with other sectors (healthcare, social care, prison service etc.)?	OMC Experts will map existing public policies dealing with social inclusion through culture and identify good practices.	2017-2018 Guidelines for policy makers and cultural institutions.

⁽¹⁾ Working group established in 2014 under the Work Plan for Culture 2011-2014, the mandate of which was extended. It consists of experts from both ministries of culture and education.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 394, 30.12.2006, p. 10.

⁽³⁾ This is a sub-group of the OMC working group on promoting access to culture via digital means.

Priority Area B: Cultural heritage

European agenda for culture: Cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue (3.1)

Europe 2020 strategy: Smart and sustainable growth (priorities 1 and 2)

Actions by	Topics	Instruments and working methods (incl. if cross-sectorial)	Target outputs and indicative timeline
Member States	B1) Participatory governance of cultural heritage Identification of innovative approaches to the multilevel governance of tangible, intangible and digital heritage which involve the public sector, private stakeholders and the civil society. Cooperation between different levels of governance and policy areas will be addressed.	OMC Experts will map and compare public policies at national and regional level to identify good practices also in cooperation with existing heritage networks.	2015-2016 Manual of good practice for policy makers and cultural heritage institutions.
Member States	B2) Skills, training and knowledge transfer: traditional and emerging heritage professions Capacity building for heritage professionals. Focus on the transmission of traditional skills and know-know and on emerging professions, including in the context of the digital shift. The participation of education experts will be encouraged.	OMC, cross-sectorial Experts will map existing training schemes and identify emerging skills and training needs in the tangible, intangible and digital heritage field.	2017-2018 Manual of good practices for cultural and education institutions.

Actions by	Topics	Instruments and working methods (incl. if cross-sectorial)	Target outputs and indicative timeline
Commission	<p>B3) Risk assessment and prevention for safeguarding cultural heritage from the effects of natural disasters and threats caused by human action</p> <p>Mapping existing strategies and practices at national level. Over-exploitation, pollution, unsustainable development, conflict areas and natural catastrophes (fire, floods, earthquake) are among factors to be considered.</p>	Study	2016

Priority area C: Cultural and creative sectors: Creative economy and innovation

European agenda for culture: Culture as a catalyst for creativity (3.2)

Europe 2020 strategy: Smart and sustainable growth (priorities 1 and 2)

Actions by	Topics	Instruments and working methods (incl. if cross-sectorial)	Target outputs and indicative timeline
Member States	<p>C1) Access to finance</p> <p>Focus on the financial ecosystem for the cultural and creative sectors. Examination of financial instruments, such as loans and equities. Overview and analysis of alternative financing, such as public-private funds, business angels, venture capital, crowdfunding, sponsorship, donations and philanthropy.</p> <p>The participation of finance and economy experts will be encouraged.</p>	<p>OMC ⁽¹⁾, cross-sectorial</p> <p>Experts will identify innovative funding schemes and investment practices in the cultural and creative sectors.</p>	<p>2015</p> <p>Recommendations for public authorities.</p>
Member States	<p>C2) Role of public policies in developing entrepreneurial and innovation potential of cultural and creative sectors</p> <p>a. Cultural and creative cross-overs to stimulate innovation, economic sustainability and social inclusion.</p> <p>To examine and promote synergies between the cultural and creative sectors, on one hand, and other relevant sectors, on the other hand.</p>	possible Council conclusions	2015
Member States	<p>b. To identify innovative measures to promote entrepreneurship and new business models in the cultural and creative sectors.</p>	OMC, cross-sectorial	2016-2017

Actions by	Topics	Instruments and working methods (incl. if cross-sectorial)	Target outputs and indicative timeline
	The participation of economy and enterprise experts will be encouraged.	Experts will identify good practice of business support measures to cultural and creative entrepreneurs.	Manual of good practice and recommendations for public authorities.
Member States	C3) Sustainable cultural tourism Identify ways to create a European tourism offer based on tangible and intangible cultural heritage as a competitive factor in order to attract new forms of sustainable tourism. Explore how digitisation of cultural content and digital services can foster the expansion of trans-European tourism networks and further the development of itineraries, including small emerging destinations, also taking into account contemporary arts activities, festivals and cultural events. The participation of experts on tourism will be encouraged.	OMC, cross-sectorial Experts will map methods and tools to make European cultural heritage accessible to and interoperable with the system of tourism promotion and marketing.	2017-2018 Guidelines for policymakers

(¹) Working group established in 2014 under the Work Plan for Culture 2011-2014.

Priority area D: Promotion of cultural diversity, culture in the EU external relations and mobility

European agenda for culture: Cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue (3.1), Culture as a vital element in international relations (3.3)

Europe 2020 strategy: Sustainable and inclusive growth (priorities 2, 3), Deploying EU external policy instruments.

Actions by	Topics	Instruments and working methods (incl. if cross-sectorial)	Target outputs and indicative timeline
Member States/Commission	D1) Unesco convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expression Assess the implementation of the 2005 Unesco Convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions on the basis of the report made on behalf of the EU in 2012 (¹). Consider its impact on the agreements and protocols on cultural cooperation in free trade agreements. Examine its application in particular in the digital context.	Stock-taking activities	2015

Actions by	Topics	Instruments and working methods (incl. if cross-sectorial)	Target outputs and indicative timeline
Member States	D2) Culture in EU external relations a. Culture in the EU's development cooperation policies — Support the integration of culture in the EU's development cooperation agenda, instruments and programmes with third countries and assess the role of culture in sustainable development.	possible Council conclusions	2015
Commission/Member States	— Existing programmes addressing culture in countries of the European Neighbourhood Policy	Study Discussion and follow-up in the Council preparatory body in the field of culture, with the participation of the European External Action Service (EEAS)	2015
Member States	b. Strengthening of a strategic approach to culture in the EU external relations	Joint informal meetings of senior officials from Ministries of Culture and senior officials responsible for culture in Ministries of Foreign Affairs, with the possible participation of the EEAS ⁽²⁾	2015-2018
Commission/Member States	c. Preparatory action on culture in EU external relations ⁽³⁾ : discussion, analysis and follow-up involving the Council preparatory body in the field of culture and the EEAS.	Analysis and follow-up activities	2015-2018
Commission	D3) Intercultural dialogue and mobility a. Intercultural dialogue b. Mobility of cultural professionals, including tax obstacles to artists' mobility in cross-border situations. The participation of tax experts will be encouraged.	Stock-taking meeting Stock-taking meeting	2016, reports for each theme

Actions by	Topics	Instruments and working methods (incl. if cross-sectorial)	Target outputs and indicative timeline
	<p>c. Mobility of collections</p> <p>d. Illicit trafficking of cultural objects, including EU import rules for cultural objects illegally exported from third countries.</p>	<p>Stock-taking meeting</p> <p>Study</p>	<p>2016</p>
Member States	<p>D4) Cinema: improving circulation of European films</p> <p>Identify complementarities between film policies and support instruments at regional, national and EU level with a view of improving circulation of European films, in particular in the digital environment.</p> <p>The participation of experts from ministries in charge of film policy and from national film funds and institutes will be encouraged.</p>	<p>OMC</p> <p>Experts will identify good practices, taking into account the outcomes of the European Film Forum ⁽⁴⁾.</p>	<p>2017-2018</p> <p>Manual of good practices.</p>

⁽¹⁾ Quadrennial periodic report on behalf of the European Union on measures to protect and promote the diversity of cultural expressions in the framework of the 2008 Unesco Convention — Commission Staff Working Document (SWD(2012) 129 final).

⁽²⁾ Meetings to be organised by rotating Presidencies of the Council on a voluntary basis.

⁽³⁾ http://cultureinexternalrelations.eu/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Executive-Summary-ENG_13.06.2014.pdf

⁽⁴⁾ European Film Forum is a platform of structured dialogue established by the Commission in its Communication on European film in the digital era (doc. 10024/14). The first outcome of this structured dialogue is expected for 2016.

ANNEX II

Principles relating to the membership and functioning of the working groups established by the Member States in the framework of the Work Plan for Culture 2015-2018**Membership**

- The participation of Member States in the work of the groups is voluntary and Member States can join them at any time.
- Each Member State interested in participating in the work of the groups will appoint experts as members of a working group. The Member State will ensure that the appointed experts have practical experience in the relevant field at national level and will ensure effective communication with competent national authorities. The Commission will coordinate the appointment exercise. In order to identify the most suitable expert profile for each theme, the Member States may appoint, if necessary, a different expert for each thematic area.
- Each working group can decide to invite independent experts to contribute to the work of the group, representatives of the civil society as well as representatives of European third countries.

Working Procedures

- The groups are to address the topics defined in the Work Plan complying with the timeline identified in Annex I.
- The definition and timeline for the objectives may be revised during the mid-term review in the light of results achieved and policy developments at EU level.
- A duration of a group is on average 18 months during which an average of 6 meetings may take place.
- Each working group will be responsible for appointing its chair or co-chairs for each thematic area among its priorities.

Reporting and Information

- The chairs of the working groups will report to the Cultural Affairs Committee on the progress of work in the respective groups. The Cultural Affairs Committee will be given an opportunity to give guidance to the working groups in order to guarantee the desired outcome and the coordination of the groups' work.
 - For each objective mentioned in Annex I, the groups will submit an output on the work carried out, containing concrete and useable results.
 - The meeting agendas and minutes of all groups will be available to all Member States, irrespective of their degree of participation in a given area. The outputs of the groups will be published.
 - The Commission will provide logistical and secretarial support to the work of the groups. As far as possible, it will support the groups by other suitable means (including studies relevant to their field of work).
 - The above reports will feed into the final report by the Commission on the implementation of the Work Plan.
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