

Proposal for the establishment of an intergroup on the impact of the EU policy and legislation on culture

Background

Until now the EU vision to recover from the current crisis has been exclusively based on restoring economic growth as a condition for wealth redistribution. However, this approach ignores that some of the basis on which we want to build our wealth ceased to exist: today people live longer, the natural resources shrink, jobs become volatile. Despite the EU legislative efforts to stimulate economic growth for wealth redistribution the gap between the poorer and the wealthier has increased during the crisis.

Therefore it is time to consider the crisis as a transition period in which to adjust the models we build Europe on. A new pact for Europe is required to ensure the necessary conditions for social cohesion, the fulfilment of human rights and personal and collective well-being on which basis a healthy, dynamic, modern economy can flourish. This also requires investing in the development of social capital, which ultimately depends on the cultural level of the citizens and therefore on the quality of their everyday life experiences.

Participating in culture at every level can play an important role in enhancing social capital if it fosters citizens participation; it can enhance the quality of life and people's well-being; it can promote diversity and intercultural dialogue by developing sense of belonging and respect; it can help reduce social disparities and can foster social inclusion and cohesion as well as intergenerational dialogue. It can also foster the development of skills, knowledge, creativity and innovation and it can be an effective tool for formal, non-formal, informal lifelong learning and training. The quality and adequateness of people's cultural competences and skills is moreover paramount to face the social and technological challenge, both in its economic and cultural dimension.

Until now, the European integration has prioritised the economic dimension but Europe is first and foremost a social and political project and its future depends on how different countries and nations can come together around a single political, social and economic project, that is, on cultural factors in a broad sense.

Rationale

The Europe 2020 strategy targets social inclusion, education, health and wellbeing, which directly relate to culture. Today these priorities are even more crucial. Their impact on culture as well as culture's contribution to these targets needs to be re-assessed; its place in the European strategy for development re-defined especially taking in account that culture is not mentioned in the Europe 2020 strategy. In order to do this, we need to broaden the understanding of culture. The notion of culture should not be limited to artistic life and heritage but incorporate a large set of human activities through which individuals and communities forge social bonds and consolidate capacities and resources that are essential to generating social capital and boosting economy. Understood in these terms, most EU policies impact on culture, which in turn contributes to achieve the objectives of these policies. This potential has to be fully recognized and developed.

EP Committee on Culture, Education and Youth has a broad remit as it covers three thematic domains, each tackled by a specific policy and programmes. However, a number of EU public policies which impact the development of cultural skills and competences in Europe do not enter into the scope of the EP Culture Committee's work: from those related to regional development, social cohesion, to those concerning the environment and tourism, from those dealing with the digital agenda, research and innovation to those impacting on the regulation of state aid or the internal market. Many issues directly impacting on culture and on Europeans' cultural competences are split among the different areas of EU's work and among the committees of the

EP. Therefore, the creation of a space for a cross-parties and cross-committees' reflection and commitment on these issues is urgently needed to ensure that the potential of culture as a strategic resource and key asset in the EU is explored when building sustainable and smart Europe and creating well-being for the current and future generations. This gains particular importance if the EU fully acknowledges that its cultural capital is Europe's main advantage on the international arena.

Mission

The overall objective of the group is to ensure **the contribution of culture to societal wellbeing is taken in account in the making of the EP legislative and political works**. The group would be beneficial to mainstreaming culture in the work of all EP committees, also in connection to the work of other EU and international bodies. More particularly, the intergroup on the impact of the EU legislation on culture and generation of social capital should focus on:

- Impact assessment of the EU policies, legislation, directives on culture e.g.: specific nature of culture when applying state aid rules; telecommunications package and its impact on audiovisual sector; digital single market and authors rights; coordination of social protection systems and its impact on "portfolio workers" mobility e.g.: posting of workers directive; visa and tax issues and its impact on cultural workers mobility;

- Contribution of culture to the revised EU2020, its targets on employment, research, education and social inclusion and flagships i.e. through policies other than those directly aimed to culture e.g.: flagships: 'European Platform against poverty', 'A Digital Agenda for Europe', 'A New Jobs Agenda', 'New skills for New Jobs';

- Developing analysis of selected EU policies impact on culture, cultural competences and well-being;

- Developing knowledge and political basis for the integration of culture into the next generation of European strategies and policies

These are only proposals of working thematic areas. The members of the intergroup should decide the definitive agenda of the intergroup.

Membership

The intergroup is open to all MEPS committed to the vision outlined in the concept note and to promotion of the role of culture in this process through their everyday work.

Proposed co-chairs of the group:

- *MEP Mercedes Bresso (S&D)*
- *MEP Bogdan Zdrojewski (EPP)*

Additional information Further arguments:

- The work of the intergroup on the impact of the EU legislation on culture and generation of social capital will allow prior assessment of policy instruments impacting culture from a legal and political perspective. This is particularly important when EU is considering culture as its main advantage on the international arena.

- The work of the intergroup will allow to explore policy synergies and ultimately make EU policies more efficient. It will provide a space for collaboration and exchange among MEPs sitting in committees on issues such as that cannot be tackled in a single committee alone.

- In order to better match the needs of those at whom the policies impacting culture are aimed, the intergroup will involve civil society in the policy making process. The representatives of relevant sectors will be invited to discuss policy issues of their concern.

- Finally, the intergroup will allow the Committee on Culture, Education and Youth to broaden its scope and outreach with the European Parliament, among the EU and other institutions, thereby reinforcing its political positioning.

Structure

The secretariat would be located in the office of the President of the intergroup or shared between two co-Presidents. Vice-Presidents would be elected as representatives on topical issues who sit in various Committees. Culture Action Europe

(<http://www.cultureactioneurope.org>) in alliance with other organisations will collaborate with the secretariat especially in providing relevant civil society expertise on the issues of concern. Culture Action Europe, with its Spanish member organisation Interarts, runs the European Expert Network on Culture (<http://www.eenc.info>) which gathers many established experts in the field and has provided the OMC with technical input on many dossiers.

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