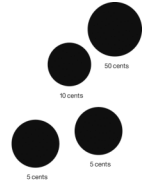


70! Cents! for! Culture!



Open Letter to the EU Heads of State or Government and EU Foreign Ministers on the Negotiations of the EU's Budgetary Framework for 2007-2013

Brussels and Amsterdam, 14th December 2005

Dear Prime Ministers and Presidents, dear Foreign Ministers,

The **70 cents for culture** campaign generated significant momentum throughout 2005, with the backing of key figures across the European Union in the political, business, civil society, and artistic spheres.

The value of investing in cultural co-operation at EU level has been widely recognized, most notably by Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso, who recently declared: *"Culture and the arts are a necessity, not a luxury, for Europe's process of integration. Culture - in its broadest possible meaning - help us to counter the growing imbalance between the rational and the emotional sides of European affairs. [...] I would like to state that the European project is not sustainable in the long run unless we redress the imbalance."*¹

We should bear in mind that Article 151 of the Treaty, which legitimises and encourages the development of EU cultural activities under the principle of subsidiarity, actually **requires** that the cultural dimension be taken into consideration in other Community policies.

We were therefore profoundly disappointed to see the proposal made by the UK presidency for the financial perspectives, in particular heading 3b: 520 million Euro per year to cover not only the culture programme, but also youth, audiovisual, health and consumer protection, can only be interpreted as a significant step backwards.

If the current distribution of funds among the programmes were maintained, this would represent **less than 7 cents per EU citizen per year** allocated to support for cultural cooperation.

This is a derisory proposal on the part of the UK presidency which takes no account of the fact that cultural cooperation helps address pressing issues: enhancing Europe's creative

¹ European Cultural Parliament, Lisbon, 3rd December 2005

competitiveness, developing European public debate and citizenship, building bridges within the enlarged EU and between the EU and its neighbours, etc. Supporting the mobility of artists and cultural operators, strengthening their networks, etc. for the achievement of these ends is an investment in the sustainability of the EU and of our European societies.

Despite the pressures for of a timely agreement on the framework and concerns about the implementation of EU programmes themselves, **we urge you to reject the budget of the UK presidency and support the European Parliament proposal instead**, which contains a still rather modest but more realistic budget for a cultural framework programme.

Yours faithfully,



Raj Isar
President

European Forum for the Arts and Heritage



Gottfried Wagner
Director

European Cultural Foundation

cc:

Ministers of Culture

Members of the European Parliament's Culture Committee and FINPER Committee

Commission President Barroso, Commissioner Figel'



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