

European Conference
‘Cultural heritage and the EU-2020 strategy – towards an integrated approach’
November 13–14, 2013, Vilnius, Lithuania

FINAL STATEMENT

With reference to the conference ‘Cultural heritage and the EU2020-strategy – towards an integrated approach’, held in the city of Vilnius, Lithuania, on 13-14 November 2013, within the framework of the Lithuanian Presidency of the EU Council, co-funded by the Culture Programme of the European Union,

Having regard to

- Article 3.3 of the Treaty on European Union¹;
- Article 167 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union²;
- the Commission Communication of 10 May 2007 on a European Agenda for Culture in a Globalising World, endorsed by the Council in its resolution of 16 November 2007³ and related Council Work Plans for Culture;
- the Council Conclusions on the contribution of culture to the implementation of the Europe 2020 Strategy⁴;
- the Commission Communication of 26 September 2012 on cultural and creative sectors for growth and jobs in the EU⁵;
- the proposal for a new Creative Europe Programme (2014-2020)⁶;
- the closing declaration of the 4th European Heritage Forum in Wroclaw (Poland, 2011);
- the closing declaration of the conference "Cultural heritage: a resource for future. The benefits of interaction", held in Bruges within the framework of Belgian Presidency to the EU Council (Belgium, 2010).⁷

Welcoming

- the consistent work of the European Parliament in supporting cultural heritage and especially its efforts to better embedded cultural heritage in the new EU financial instruments for the period 2014-2020.

¹ "The Union shall respect its rich cultural and linguistic diversity, and...ensure that Europe's cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced"

² "The Union shall contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore... Action by the Union shall be aimed at encouraging cooperation between Member States and, if necessary, supporting and supplementing their action..."

³ OJ C 287, 29.11.2007, p. 1.

⁴ OJ C 175, 15.6.2011, p. 1.

⁵ COM(2012)0537

⁶ COM(2011)785

⁷ Declaration of Bruges, <http://heritageconference.rwo.be/Portals/117/Documenten/Declaration%20of%20Bruges.pdf>

Recognizing that

- cultural heritage is of great value to society, in cultural, social and economic terms. Its significance will keep growing in the 21st century;
- cultural heritage is an integral part of cultural and creative sectors, which could contribute considerably to the achievement of the objectives of Europe 2020. But its potential has not yet been fully exploited. A critical mass of activities has been generated in the recent years in the field of cultural heritage. This has increased the expectation for a stronger mobilisation of all heritage interests to face new challenges;
- cultural heritage is closely related to a variety of other sectors and policy fields. Due to this transversal dimension, a large number of EU policies and programmes deal with or have an impact on cultural heritage;
- at the same time, cultural heritage has huge potential as a resource for the achievement of the objectives of other policies, such as cohesion and agriculture policy, environment, tourism, education, research and innovation, etc.;
- therefore, the preservation, promotion and sustainable exploitation of cultural heritage raise a number of challenges which have to be tackled in the decision-making process of various policy fields at different levels, from the local to the European and international ones.

Recommends that

- member States should acknowledge the cross sectorial policy relevance of cultural heritage and promote the mainstreaming of cultural heritage in the wider context of national and European policies;
- a long-term plan should be elaborated, potentially in follow-up to the Council Work Plan for Culture 2011-2014, to ensure that cultural heritage is incorporated in other EU policies and programmes (cohesion policy, agriculture, research and innovation, education, maritime, environment, etc.) and put at the heart of the public policy agenda;
- member States should continue to explore ways to reach synergies between cultural heritage and other policy fields by organising different forums for discussions and creating the necessary conditions for networking;
- member States, the European Commission, the cultural heritage sector and the civil society organisations should reinforce their dialogue, on a more regular basis, to find solutions to exploit better the potential of cultural heritage and to publicise and support the sector's contribution to prosperity and well-being in the EU.

Invites

- the European Commission to promote cultural heritage through its programmes and financial instruments, in particular Creative Europe;
- all parties to contribute to putting the holistic approach and the mainstreaming principal into action and thus to promote cultural heritage spill-over effects for innovation, employment and for social and economic development;



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The Department of
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- the Member States and the European Commission to focus on a more coordinated strategic approach for cultural heritage policy, as well as to engage in deeper sectorial focus to identify and tackle specific challenges at the European level.

Encourages

- the forthcoming presidencies of the European Union to continue collaboration on cultural heritage issues at a strategic level, and to develop a new common strategic vision for the longer term with regard to cultural heritage as a transversal policy field in order to ensure stronger and more targeted support for heritage with all the concerned stakeholders.

