European agenda for culture in a globalising world

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The Committee on Culture and Education adopted the own initiative report by Vasco **GRAÇA MOURA** (EPP-ED, PT), examining the European agenda for culture in a globalising world proposed by the Commission and recalling the vital role of culture in the implementation of the Lisbon strategy and sustainable development. However, this must be done in close cooperation with local, regional and national groups, which is the reason why MEPs regret the lack of reference made to the role of local groups in the Commission's European agenda for culture.

Alarmed by the persistent confusion between cultural production and development of profit-making creative industries, MEPs regret that the Commission confines itself to presenting culture under social, economic and political aspects rather than as a value in itself. They emphasise that, from their perspective, the concept of culture unites individuals and is the driving force for dialogue between citizens. It is therefore necessary to develop the whole "dialogue with civil society" aspect of the European agenda for culture.

At EU and legislative level: towards new initiatives: MEPs recall that, through the application of article 151 of the Treaty, only cooperation policies and partnership agreements between Member States can be established in the cultural sector. However, MEPs believe that this is not sufficient and request that efforts be made to take into consideration the particular nature of the cultural sector regarding creativity, innovation and economic terms. In particular, MEPs believe that EU programmes that are currently available in the culture sector do not fully reflect the implications of the Europeans' common cultural heritage. They therefore call on the Commission to propose that specific programmes that stimulate the creativity of artists be drawn up, in order to preserve the links with the goods and values, both tangible and intangible, that constitute the European cultural heritage. In this context, a set of proposals has been put forward to reinforce the European agenda for culture, particularly:

- the implementation of a programme with a view to enhancing the prestige of the European classical heritage and the historic contributions of national cultures down through the centuries and complementing the "Culture framework programme for 2007 to 2013";

- the intensification of policies in support of literary translation provided for in the "Culture Programme (2007 to 2013)";

- the implementation of a programme aimed at developing the promotion of European languages in the world and their role in creative artistic activity in other continents;

- the promotion of all-encompassing international cultural exchanges and of the acquisition of intercultural skills of EU citizens;

- the implementation of the UNESCO Convention on the protection of cultural diversity and, in this context, the protection of Digital Rights Management Systems by bearing in mind both the requirements of the internal market of the Community and the principles of the Convention;

- the implementation of a specific instrument for the publishing market in order to no longer only finance best-sellers, to the detriment of all other literary works that are deemed to be less profitable;

- the implementation of an instrument for musical creation, which is threatened by piracy and illegal downloads (MEPs suggest, in particular, the creation of collective rights management);

- the deployment of new measures to ensure the respect and protection of literary and artistic property rights, particularly in the digital sphere;

- the development of initiatives aimed at reinforcing cultural tourism: MEPs suggest, in particular, the creation of a European list of "cultural places of pilgrimage" in all Member States and the creation of a European heritage "Label" aimed at recognising the European dimension of cultural goods, monuments, memorial sites and pieces of European history and heritage;

- the creation of a "European patron of the arts" so as to enable the public and private sectors to enter into effective partnerships;

- the creation of prestigious European prizes, awarded on a regular basis, for every sphere of creative artistic activity.

To further reinforce the visibility of cultural action undertaken at European level and to contribute to the promotion of European cultural values, MEPs call on the EU to regularly support a European Year to celebrate a prominent figure, an artistic activity or a large-scale demonstration of European culture. They therefore suggest that, to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the birth of Frederic Chopin, the year 2010 be declared "**European Year to celebrate Frederic Chopin**" and that 2011 be declared "**European Year of Greek and Latin Classics**".

Among the most emblematic cultural measure in Europe, MEPs recall the importance of "European Capitals of Culture". It is therefore necessary to step up efforts to implement this symbolic initiative until 2010. To promote cultural productivity and the creativity of artists, MEPs also consider it necessary to **help young artists** by ensuring that they can benefit from a stable social situation (particularly framework conditions in terms of tax schemes, the right to work, social security and copyrights).

Cultural mainstreaming: in more global terms, MEPs propose that the Parliament, the Council and the Commission, as well as Member States, make a stronger commitment to culture and cultural creation at all levels, particularly within families, at school, through lifelong learning, in social communication and in the world of digital technology. It is in this context that MEPs call for the establishment of voluntary initiatives for cultural education in all Member States. They suggest that, in all EU countries, a common history of the European Union teaching programme be established to promote European identity and culture in the context of globalisation. Furthermore, MEPs encourage the systematic integration of the cultural dimension and different components of culture in all external and development policies, projects and programmes.

In addition, MEPs remind the Commission that **cultural heritage** is of a fragile nature and therefore requires **sustainable management**. Therefore, it is necessary to promote an economic and sustainable management of European cultural heritage.

Budgetary level: MEPs request the revision of budgetary measures alleged to support actions envisaged in the European agenda for culture and regret that this agenda does not include any figures on the financing of the planned actions.

Local level: MEPs propose a whole raft of new measures to promote the rapid development of culture at regional level and of local groups. Among the parliamentary committee's proposals, the support of regional cooperation projects is noted, including that of small and medium sized towns via the Interreg IV C Programme. Moreover, they call for Member States to support culture at regional level via investments passing through European Structural Funds.

Commercial and multilateral level: combating piracy of cultural goods: MEPs also call for provisions governing commercial relations, on both a bilateral and multilateral level, with a view to enabling European cultural industries to develop their potential, particularly in the audiovisual, music and publishing sectors. In addition, they call on the Commission to: (i) review customs control mechanisms in order to prevent the illegal export and import of protected works of art and cultural goods; (ii) instigate an in-depth revision of the protection of intellectual property rights in order to eradicate the principal causes of counterfeiting and piracy; (iii) ensure that all commercial partners apply the endorsed obligations in the framework of the WTO; (iv) identify the possible non-tariff barriers imposed by third countries during commercial exchanges for certain European cultural goods and services; (v) endorse the access of cultural products and services of developing countries to the European market and, *a contrario*, encourage the development of European cultural demonstrations in developing countries.