

# Action in the field of culture: Culture 2007 programme (2007-2013)

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The Commission presents a report in accordance with Decision n° 1855/2006/EC on the Culture programme. The Decision requires an interim evaluation report on the results obtained and on the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the implementation of the programme to be submitted by 31 December 2010.

The Commission details the findings of the external evaluation. This evaluation concludes that the Culture Programme plays a **unique role in stimulating cross-border cooperation**, promoting peer learning and increasing the access of European citizens to non-national European works. Indirectly it contributes to the development of content which is essential for sustainable growth and jobs, and stimulates new, creative and innovative developments. The report underlines that the programme plays a crucial role in respecting Europe's cultural and linguistic diversity and ensuring the enhancing of the EU's cultural heritage.

The evaluation recommends that it would be important to **revise the programme's objectives in the future** in order to take into account recent developments both in terms of EU policies (for example the [Europe 2020 Strategy](#) and the [European Agenda for Culture](#)), as well as the conditions affecting the cultural sector and its needs over the coming period (such as the impact of globalisation and the digital shift).

**Effectiveness:** the programme was generally successful in achieving its results, with a significant leverage effect. More than 700 grants were awarded to cultural operators from the programme from 2007 to 2009, reaching some **3 000 organisations** in total if the co-organisers are included, and with total grant payments in excess of **EUR 120 million**. The activities supported reach the wider public and are increasing access to European culture. The support for literary translation has helped the **translation of over 1 600 books** during the 3 year period, giving some 1.4 million readers access to European literature.

The European Capitals of Culture regularly attract millions of people and involve thousands of volunteers, with 10 million visitors to Liverpool during 2008. The European Heritage Days 2009 attracted 25 million visitors across Europe and the European Boarder Breakers Awards reached hundreds of thousands of Europeans through broadcasts on 12 television stations, 24 radio stations in 24 different countries and the internet.

**The main imbalance in the programmes concerns literary translation.** Although the support made a significant contribution to promoting the circulation of literary works, thereby increasing access to non-national European literature, English and French are the predominant source languages (more than four in ten translations) and five languages account for over half of translations in terms of the target language (Italian, Hungarian, Slovene, Bulgarian and Greek). There is therefore an untapped potential in terms of promoting cultural diversity by increasing translations into some of the large European world languages, which can serve as pivot languages for further translations into other languages.

The evaluation concludes that the programme has been effective in promoting cross-border cultural cooperation, supporting artistic and literary creation and improving the circulation of cultural expressions.

**Efficiency:** there has been high demand relative to the funding available: only around one in four applications to the cooperation project strands has been funded and only around one in three applications from organisations active at European level. The efficiency of the application process and the management of the programme have been considerably improved in comparison to its predecessor, the

Culture 2000 programme. Procedural modifications, including the modifications made to the comitology requirements of the Decision, have made the application process clearer and shorter than in the past (between 52 and 140 days shorter, depending on the strand). Various simplification measures by the Commission and EACEA have simplified the administrative requirements for applicants.

The evaluator's general conclusion on efficiency is that the programme has mostly met expectations in terms of participation by type of organisation and geographical balance. More than half of participants in the programme are from the performing arts, but there is also a relatively high proportion of "interdisciplinary" actors, reflecting the cross-disciplinary nature of many contemporary cultural activities.

**Sustainability;** the report states that many cooperation projects have generated follow-on activities, building solid foundations for future activity, fostering long-term benefits and forming partnerships that are strong enough to endure. However, their ongoing co-operation activities greatly depend on an organisations' capacity to continue their work on international scale after the project funding ends. In many cases, the costs entailed by transnational cooperation meant that projects were unable to continue beyond the duration of the project, or only on a reduced scale. According to the report, the cultural and linguistic fragmentation in Europe and current economic developments - and their effect on public spending on culture and the arts – present challenges for continued mobility and circulation, the building of capacity and thus for sustainable developments in this sector.

Based on the findings, the evaluator issued 17 recommendations. The **Commission shares the evaluator's overall assessment that the programme plays a unique role in stimulating cross-border cultural cooperation**, and fostering the benefits indicated. The evaluator's conclusions show that small improvements could be made in a limited number of specific areas and that, in general, participants are satisfied with the programme and recognise its unique European added value. The evaluation also underpins that demand from the cultural sector for this type of EU support may remain considerably high, if not further increase, over the coming few years and that the programme contributes to content and knowledge development which are essential for future sustainable growth and jobs and new, creative and innovative developments.