

# Culture 2000 programme for the period 2000-2004

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The first framework programme for culture, for 2000-2004, must be made more transparent and effective as well as giving more importance to small projects. These are some of the key ideas in the report by Nana MOUSKOURI (PPE, G) which was adopted unanimously by the Committee. The committee had very substantially amended the Commission proposal, proposing a total budget allocation of ECU 250 m, rather than the 167 m proposed by the Commission. In the interests of greater efficiency, the report proposes a sector-by-sector approach, keeping in mind the different needs of each area of culture. Six vertical actions are defined, each with a suggested percentage of the total allocation: performing arts (theatre, dance, etc), 9%; music, 16%; plastic arts, 7%; heritage, 35%; literature, 9%; other forms of artistic expression, 4%. In addition to this vertical approach to the arts, three horizontal actions are proposed, again with suggested percentages: synergies (trans-sectoral actions), 5%; joint actions with other Community programmes, 5%; actions in support of projects of a major nature and/or having symbolic importance, 10%. A more balanced distribution such as this will allow benefits to accrue to small projects as well as large. The report also modifies the initial proposals concerning the programme's implementation. It proposes creating closer links between the operators and the organisations having responsibilities in the cultural field. In addition, it offers a more specific definition of cooperation with the Member States. Also advocated is the setting-up of 'European cultural poles', with a view to the widest possible publicisation. One of Mrs Mouskouri's main concerns is the promotion of small-scale actions directly involving the public. Mrs Mouskouri makes detailed proposals for the monitoring and evaluation of the programme, in the interests of transparency and efficiency. The objectives of the various actions are to be realised via two types of measure. Firstly, there is to be support for integrated projects under 'cultural cooperation agreements' - that is, major large-scale projects (e.g. co-production of cultural events) involving at least five Member States. Such cooperation may be multiannual, in which case a report is to be submitted each year. Community support may not exceed 60% of the budget for the agreement or ECU 200 000 per annum. Secondly, there is to be annual support for specific projects involving operators from at least three Member States. One such project could, for instance, be a scheme for improving public access to and participation in the arts (conceived in their full social and regional diversity), including provision for the less-favoured strata and young people. A programme of this nature will require an adequate level of financing from the budget. The Culture Committee therefore proposes a budget of ECU 250 m for the duration of the programme, rather than the figure of 167 m put forward by the Commission.