
CULTURE, THE ENGINE
OF THE 21ST CENTURY
EUROPEAN CITIES

A EUROCITIES PAPER

ADOPTED BY THE CULTURE COMMITTEE:
19/09/2001

CULTURE, THE ENGINE OF THE 21ST
CENTURY EUROPEAN CITIES

The Culture Committee members, meeting in Turku at the occasion of the 2ndrd annual Culture Committee meeting, acting with the objective to actively contribute to the construction of a Europe of Culture and to forge ahead the debate on the place and the role of culture in the 21st century Europe,

Having regard to *the Culture, the Culture Industries and employment* paper published by the European Commission in May 1998.

Having regards to *Exploitation and development of the job potential in the cultural sector in the age of digitalisation* report of the European Commission published in July 2001.

Having regards to the opinion of the Committee of the Regions *on Culture 2000* published in December 1998.

Having regards to the report "*In from the margins. A contribution to the Debate on Culture and Development in Europe*" published by the Council of Europe in 1997.

Having regard to the policy note *cultural Employment in Europe* published by the Council of Europe in 2000.

Having regards to the "*Youth and Culture*" Declaration approved by the Culture Committee of Eurocities in Leipzig in September 1997.

Having regards to *the role of culture in preventing social exclusion* working paper approved by the Culture Committee of EUROCITIES in September 1998.

Having regards to the *recommendations for the Urban Forum* adopted in 1998.

Having regards to *the role of Culture policy in tackling the racism in Europe Today* policy paper approved by the Culture Committee of EUROCITIES in September 1999.

Having regards to the *Cultural industries and public policy profiles* policy paper approved by the Culture Committee of EUROCITIES in February 1999.

Having regards to the Culture Committee of Eurocities contribution to *the consideration on the subject of a single EU programme for culture* approved in 2000.

Having regards to the report on *Urban tourism as a tool for urban regeneration* policy paper approved by the Culture Committee of EUROCITIES in 2001.

Having regards the strategic planning on culture undertaken and implemented in several European cities".

Strongly believe that:

CITIES = CULTURE

Culture means City and City means Culture. The liaison between culture and the cities is very strong. And it is becoming even stronger. The identification between culture and cities has been a constant in European history, from the Ancient Greek polis to the recent European cultural capitals.

Culture and art have an intrinsic value/values. Nurturing heritage and enabling artistic developments form the core of the cultural policies in European cities and these axis give sense and quality of life to European citizens through aesthetic quality and critical perspectives.

Culture contributes to respond to the many challenges of urban societies. Issues such as multiculturalism, promotion of entrepreneurship and employment or the e-content of digital Europe cannot be matched without the concepts and processes of culture.

Culture is the new urban driver. Therefore new attention is given to public spaces and the involvement of artists and creative people in the urban management.

Culture is the social Research and Development engine of the 21st century Europe. The process of urban transformation is eminently cultural, and all the urban development areas must be liased to culture. Knowledge-based cities will be recognised by the role of culture and contents in urban development.

CULTURE CONCEPTS ARE MAINSTREAM

Culture and art mean innovation, participation, creativity, risk and trust and therefore culture and the activities surrounding it – directly or indirectly – are resources for the future and an important asset for the development of the employment in Europe.

Cultural institutions (opera houses, concert halls, theatres, museums, libraries, art galleries, festivals), cultural companies and artists are becoming closer and closer to citizenry. Therefore culture is an essential tool/ and art of its own/ for contributing to democratic values and commitment with society.

Culture is the centre of a knowledge-based society. In fact culture more and more is becoming *the* essential content of long-life learning and the centre of a knowledge-based society. Therefore, most of the institutions are encouraging the involvement and active participation by means of educational programmes to schools, youth and other target groups.

Culture fosters the economic sector. The econometric analyses of the added-value chain demonstrate the crucial role that creativity and symbolic dimension (thus, culture) is assuming in all sectors of the economy. Culture is the engine for a Europe of “*more and better jobs*”.

SOCIETY CALLS TO CULTURE

Culture plays a new strategic role in the society. In fact, the visibility of culture in society has clearly increased in recent years and cultural sphere is playing an important role. Culture has been called by new media and Information and Communication Technologies, ICT, to provide content for an overwhelming net of information; tourism boards to give attractive content to new visitors; urban regeneration strategies to breathe new life to former industrial buildings and/or derelict districts, and cities in general; local development agencies to foster entrepreneurship and train young generations, unemployed and risk groups to be more adaptable, flexible and creative.

Culture is also key to social welfare departments and contributes to conciliate diversity and create a sense of belonging. Therefore culture is playing an important role in designing and implementing programmes of social inclusion and “manage” the new diversity.

CULTURE IN OUR AGENDA, CULTURE IN YOUR AGENDA

Therefore, the Culture Committee:

Invite the European Institutions:

To undertake urgent measures in order to contribute to the construction of a Europe of culture. The marginal role of culture in the building of Europe sharply contrasts with the new centrality of culture in public policies.

Invite the European Commission

To include more ambitious cultural chapters in cohesion and regional programmes (DG-Regio), ICT programmes (Ten Telecom) and research agendas (Sixth Framework programme). Attention should be dedicated to deepen the suitability of comparable and transferable indicators that deal with culture (Urban Audit). In fact, Cultural Indicators are key to analyse, measure and enhance the quality of life of European citizens.

Ask to all public bodies

To liaise to culture with the rest of the urban strategic strands.

Encourage Eurocities' members

To participate in the Culture Committee and, conversely. The exchange of information and knowledge between the Culture Committee and the rest of committees and sub networks of Eurocities, by means of shared meetings and sustainable projects, is to be fostered.

Commit the Culture Committee of Eurocities :

To assume a more central and pro-active role within Eurocities.

To prepare the evaluation of the European Commission DG-EAC Culture 2000 Programme and lobby its reform. In fact, Culture 2000 is now a poor instrument to respond to the challenges of culture in contemporary European societies, including international cultural co-operation and networking.