

19.09.14

Resolution
of the *Bundesrat***Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Towards an integrated approach to cultural heritage for Europe**

COM(2014) 477 final

At its 925th session, held on 19. September 2014, the German *Bundesrat* adopted the following position pursuant to §§ 3 and 5 of the Act on Cooperation between the Federal Government and the *Länder* in Matters Relating to the European Union (EUZBLG).

1. The *Bundesrat* warmly welcomes the Commission's proposed integrated approach to Europe's cultural heritage, an approach which requires an examination of how public measures can be better geared to exploiting the long-term and sustainable value of Europe's cultural heritage and to developing a more integrated approach to maintaining that heritage and enhancing its value. The *Bundesrat* asks the Commission to also take the libraries and archives sector fully into account when further developing its approach.
2. The *Bundesrat* shares the Commission's view that Member States and other stakeholders should make the best possible use of the extensive support mechanisms which are available under various EU instruments, particularly the Structural Funds, for Europe's cultural heritage.
3. The *Bundesrat* shares the Commission's view that investments in culture and cultural heritage, especially via the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), should be part of an integrated and sustainable strategy for economic development. Like the Commission, the *Bundesrat* is convinced that investments in culture and cultural heritage as part of a territorial strategy help to develop endogenous potential, promote social inclusion and improve the quality of life, particularly by improving access to cultural and recreational services in both urban

and rural contexts.

4. The *Bundesrat* also recognises the considerable, yet underestimated, contribution which the cultural heritage sector makes to economic growth and social cohesion, particularly in the building industry, tourism and technology, but also to social integration. The *Bundesrat* shares the Commission's view that targeted development of cultural heritage has the capacity to promote social cohesion and integration by regenerating neglected areas and creating local jobs. It is against this background that the *Bundesrat* agrees with the Commission that towns and regions where historical sites are located are engines for economic activities which are a source of innovation and contribute to smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.
5. Despite the *Bundesrat's* otherwise favourable view of the Commission's approach, it is difficult to understand why the Commission should take such a critical view of the promotion of culture and cultural heritage via the ERDF as part of the authorisation procedures for the operational programmes, even in areas where an integrated approach to promoting culture and cultural heritage has been adopted.
6. The *Bundesrat* therefore believes that the Commission must look at the assumptions (to which the *Bundesrat* subscribes) on which it bases its approach to promoting culture and cultural heritage, including those assumptions with a bearing on the authorisation procedures for the operational programmes of the Structural Funds.
7. The *Bundesrat* welcomes the Commission's stated view that promoting culture and cultural heritage is a "catalyst for creativity", whose economic potential can also help to achieve the objectives of the European Agenda for Culture.
8. The *Bundesrat* will send this position to the Commission directly.