



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

*Brussels, 17.12.2018
C(2018) 8447 final*

*Mr Roberto FICO
President of the
Camera dei Deputati
Piazza Montecitorio
IT – 00100 ROME*

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Camera dei Deputati for its Opinion on the Communications ‘A New European Agenda for Culture’ {COM(2018) 267 final} and ‘Building a stronger Europe: the role of policies in the fields of youth, education and culture’ {COM (2018) 268 final}. These Opinions constitute an important contribution to the ongoing debate at the European level on culture and education and offer valuable areas for reflection.

The New European Agenda for Culture is a strategic document outlining an ambitious vision for culture. It follows up on the conclusions of the Social Summit in Gothenburg in November 2017 and the European Council in December 2017, where Heads of Government and State expressed their willingness to step up efforts in the areas of education and culture at the European level, recognising that these areas are key to building cohesive societies and sustaining competitiveness. The New Agenda provides a framework which supports innovation, creativity, sustainable jobs and growth as well as reinforces the external relations of the European Union.

In the Communication ‘Building a stronger Europe: the role of policies in the fields of youth, education and culture’ the Commission strengthens the youth, education, training and culture dimension of the European project. This will help building a Union that has the confidence to tackle future challenges. The Commission is delivering an ambitious set of actions to boost people’s resilience in a world of diversity, mobility, migration, globalisation and technological change.

The Commission is pleased to inform the Camera dei Deputati that on 30 May 2018 it proposed a new Creative Europe programme with an increased budget of EUR 1.85 billion for the 2021-2027 period¹. The new programme aims to support the competitiveness of the European cultural and creative sectors through innovative trans-border initiatives to exchange, co-create, co-produce and distribute European works and

¹ COM (2018) 366 final.

make them accessible to a wide and diverse audience. It aims to intensify the testing of new business models enabling creators to make best use of digital technology for creation and audience development, and help to support the European Union's media freedom and pluralism, which is crucial for maintaining open, inclusive and creative societies.

Furthermore, the Commission proposal for the next multiannual financial framework lays down solid grounds for coordination, complementarity and coherence between the Union instruments and between Funds in shared management and other Union instruments. As an example among many others of stronger mutual reinforcements of objectives under the next multiannual financial framework, infrastructure support for enabling the digitisation of theatres, opera houses, or museums under European Structural and Investment funding could ideally combine with audience development under Creative Europe. The further combination with the European Social Fund+ could in turn support the preservation of rare handicraft skills, while opening at the same time possibilities in digitisation and in highly specialised digital skills.

The Commission wishes to underline the importance it attaches to the inherent value of culture and the need to promote a rich and high-quality cultural offer. Increasing cultural participation is one of the seven priorities of the culture strand of the Commission proposal for the future Creative Europe programme. In this context, the Commission would also like to use the momentum of the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 to put more focus on the promotion of culture across the Union.

The Commission has also proposed a new form of individual mobility for the future Creative Europe programme. In order to prepare the ground for the future mobility action, in 2018 the Commission has launched a call for tenders to test an experimental cross-border mobility scheme tailored for the needs of artists and culture professionals. The initiative will be scaled-up in 2019 and 2020 and implemented on a regular basis from 2021 onwards.

Based on the mid-term evaluation of the current Creative Europe programme (2014-2020), the Commission is also developing a comprehensive performance monitoring framework for the future programme, consisting of a set of indicators which is closely related to the objectives of the programme, both in terms of the outputs and benefits for beneficiaries as well as the wider, more long-term, cultural, economic and social impacts.

Furthermore, in order to simplify the programme and facilitate access to funding, the proposal intends to reinforce the role of the network of Creative Europe Desks, which operate in all Member States and where cultural and creative organisations can get information and advice on how to apply under Creative Europe.

The Commission agrees with the Camera dei Deputati on the need to improve the working environment of culture professionals. The challenges in this area include the prevalence of project-based, atypical and part-time employment and the need to adapt the regulatory social protection framework to intermittent contracts and mobile workers.

These issues could be given a high priority in the next Work Plan for Culture which is currently being discussed with Member States in the Council. Measures to challenge gender-based stereotypes and address gender gaps in the field of cultural employment are also being discussed in the same context.

The Commission also agrees with the Camera dei Deputati that it is important to create opportunities for learners and apprentices in Vocational Education and Training to go abroad. Indeed, in its proposal for a new Erasmus programme post-2020², the Commission has proposed to increase such mobility.

Moreover, the Commission is pleased to inform the Camera dei Deputati about the recently launched action 'DiscoverEU', which allows around 15,000 young people to receive a free travel pass to understand better Europe's diversity and enjoy its cultural richness.

The Commission hopes that these comments address the issues raised by the Camera dei Deputati and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Frans Timmermans
First Vice-President*

*Tibor Navracsics
Member of the Commission*

² COM (2018) 367 final.