

Statement of the
Committee on Cultural
Affairs
2018/19:KrU6

A New European Agenda for Culture

Summary

The Committee has examined the Commission's communication on a New European Agenda for Culture.

The Committee welcomes the Commission's examination of the way in which culture can contribute to social development, social cohesion and a more inclusive EU. The Committee notes that although the Work Plan for Culture 2019–2022, which the Council adopted in November 2018, contains the same description of reality as in the Commission's communication, it partly contains other proposed measures. The Committee believes that the four-year Work Plan for Culture which has now been established by the Council will now be able to live up to the European Council's conclusions on inclusive and cohesive societies which maintain Europe's competitiveness.

The Committee proposes that the Riksdag file the statement.

The statement contains one explanatory reservation from the Sweden Democrats.

The examined document

A New European Agenda for Culture COM(2018) 267 final.

The position of the Committee

Sweden is working actively both at the national level and as a member of the EU to reinforce the idea that a strong cultural life promotes positive developments in society. Hosting the meeting of the European Council in Gothenburg in November 2017 also served to put the importance of culture in building our common future on the agenda.

The Committee therefore welcomes the fact that the Commission is following up the European Council's conclusions stating that culture, together with education, is fundamental to building inclusive and cohesive societies that help to maintain the EU's competitiveness. The Committee also shares the analysis made by the Commission of how culture can be a contributory factor to economic growth, social justice, active citizenship and a European identity. At the same time, the Committee would like to emphasise that culture should always be able to exist securely in its own right because of the value it has in itself, rather than being primarily regarded as a tool whose main purpose is to participate in the solution of problems in other areas.

The communication's overall focus on cultural heritage and digitisation is especially important in the view of the Committee. These two themes are of great importance when it comes to succeeding in implementing the three strategic objectives. Taking care of and sharing our common cultural heritage provides favourable conditions for better knowledge and understanding of each other's history and gives us the pieces we have to fit together to help us interpret the world of today. The Committee also wishes to underline the fact that the transnational nature of digitisation requires common solutions in such areas as copyright law and business models for it to be possible to utilise the potential of increased creativity and efficiency that digital technology provides.

The Committee notes in this connection that the Work Plan for Culture 2019–2022 adopted by the Council in November 2018 is thematically well in line with the Commission’s communication on a New European Agenda for Culture. The direction and forms of cooperation of the Work Plan conform well with those advocated by Sweden based on the fact that cultural policy is a national matter where the EU’s supporting competence must not imply any harmonisation of the regulatory frameworks of the member states. The Committee believes that the four-year Work Plan for Culture will be able to live up to the European Council’s conclusions.

The EU’s complementary role is important for enabling the exchange of experience and knowledge and capacity building. Nor can the central importance of free movement for the well-being of the cultural sphere be underestimated when we are talking about the contribution of culture to social cohesion. The Committee is looking forward to continuing the debate about ideas on the importance of culture for the EU and how these ideas can be put into practice.

The Committee proposes that the Riksdag file the statement.