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3349th Council meeting

Education, Youth, Culture and Sport

Brussels, 25 November 2014

Presidents **Dario Franceschini**
Minister for Cultural Assets and Activities and Tourism
Graziano Delrio
State Secretary, Prime Minister's Office (Cabinet
Secretary)

P R E S S

Main results of the Council

Audiovisual policy

The Council adopted conclusions on the **European audiovisual policy in the digital era**, in preparation for the future review of the Audiovisual Media Services directive and the modernisation of the EU copyright framework. The conclusions address in particular the new business environment, access to finance, public funding, media and film literacy, and film heritage. The future approach to European audiovisual policy should ensure cultural and linguistic diversity in the converged media and increase the competitiveness of the European audiovisual sector.

Work Plan for Culture

The Council also adopted conclusions establishing a **Work Plan for Culture** (2015-2018). This is a strategic document setting out the priorities for European cooperation in cultural policy-making for the next four years, focusing on topics that represent a clear EU added value and encourage cross-sectorial cooperation.

Cultural and creative sectors

Ministers also held a public debate on the contribution of the **cultural and creative sectors**, including cultural heritage, **to the Europe 2020 objectives**, in the context of the mid-term review of the Europe 2020 strategy.

The President of the Council

Minister Franceschini declared that "culture and tourism should constitute priorities for Europe and investment in these sectors is strategic for growth and development. The presidency's view was shared by all ministers at our informal meeting of ministers in Turin, and today's Council paved the way to giving culture and tourism a central role in EU policy-making."

Sport as a driver for innovation and growth

The Council adopted conclusions on **sport as a driver for innovation and economic growth**, which highlight the positive effects on others sectors of the economy of research and innovation in sport, as well as its potential to create jobs.

State Secretary Delrio and sports ministers from the presidency trio had a working lunch on the subject with representatives of sport organisations and of the sporting goods industry.

Sport and physical activity at school age

Ministers also discussed specific measures to promote **sport and physical activity at school age**. They acknowledged that in general there is a decline or marginalisation of sport and physical activity in school age children, in particular teenagers, which is a cause for concern. However, many member states are already developing programs and specific actions to reverse this trend.

Mr Delrio said that "Today we made progress in two subjects which are related to Europe 2020. It's clear that sport has a huge economic weight in Europe and was scarcely touched by the economic crisis. We must create conditions to promote its development further, in particular through innovation."

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- Where declarations, conclusions or resolutions have been formally adopted by the Council, this is indicated in the heading for the item concerned and the text is placed between quotation marks.
- Documents for which references are given in the text are available on the Council's Internet site (<http://www.consilium.europa.eu>).
- Acts adopted with statements for the Council minutes which may be released to the public are indicated by an asterisk; these statements are available on the Council's Internet site or may be obtained from the Press Office.

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Minister for Social Security, Minister for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Affairs, Minister for Sport

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Mr Ed VAIZEY

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Ms Shan MORGAN

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Mr Xavier PRATS MONNÉ

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ITEMS DEBATED

CULTURE AND AUDIOVISUAL

European audiovisual policy

The Council adopted conclusions on the [European audiovisual policy in the digital era](#), addressing in particular the new business environment, access to finance, public funding, media and film literacy, as well as film heritage. Furthermore, the conclusions call for an urgent review of the Audiovisual Media Services directive (AVMS directive)¹ and the modernisation of the EU copyright framework, in the light of digital shift.

These conclusions were adopted at a particularly strategic moment, since the creation of a "digital single market", allowing citizens to access audiovisual content on their electronic devices wherever they are in Europe and regardless of borders, is among the top priorities of the new Commission and its president.

The conclusions advocate compliance with three main principles to create a competitive European single market for audiovisual content that meets the demand of citizens, content creators and rightholders:

- facilitating the supply of high-quality content;
- meeting audience demand wherever that audience is; and
- ensuring equal conditions for all audiovisual media service providers.

In times of rapid technological changes and unpredictable market developments, such an approach aims to ensure cultural and linguistic diversity in the converged media and to increase the competitiveness of the European audiovisual sector.

¹ OJ L 95, 15.4.2010.

Work Plan for Culture

The Council adopted conclusions establishing a **Work Plan for Culture** (2015-2018). This is a strategic document setting out the priorities for European cooperation in cultural policy-making for the next four years. These priorities will subsequently be implemented by member states in cooperation with the Commission.

The new Work Plan has been streamlined, which should allow it to be implemented more efficiently. It is also more strategic, since it creates effective links with the work of the Council, in particular its rotating presidencies.

The Work Plan has four sectorial priorities (accessible culture; cultural heritage; creative economy and innovation; and cultural diversity, including culture in EU external relations), which are complemented for the first time by two cross-sectorial priorities (digital shift and statistics). They are all structured around the Europe 2020 strategy for growth and jobs.

The focus is on topics that represent a clear EU added value and encourage cross-sectorial cooperation, taking into account the dual nature - economic as well as cultural - of culture.

Member states in general welcomed the new Work Plan, considering it a clear step forward and an essential tool for reinforcing the role of culture in European policies.

Some member states would like to see a more ambitious work plan, in particular regarding culture-related statistics and culture in the EU's external relations.

To take this into account, greater priority was given to the role of culture in EU development cooperation. Regarding statistics, the Commission confirmed their crucial importance to the entire cultural sector and agreed that statistics needed to be considered in the new Work Plan as a key cross-cutting issue.

Member states also agreed on the need to promote reading, given in particular its strategic importance to support access to culture and cultural diversity and to develop awareness of European identity.

However, opinions diverged on how printed books and e-books should be taxed. Under the VAT Directive¹, printed books are treated as "goods" to which reduced VAT rates can apply, while e-books are considered as "electronic services", which do not benefit from reduced rates.

Several member states were of the view that a book is always a book, regardless of its format, and therefore member states should be allowed to apply the reduced VAT rate to e-books as well.

¹ 2006/112/EC.

In contrast, a number of member states considered that this is a complex issue which calls for a more cautious approach due to the unforeseeable consequences of such an approach on book policy and tax revenues.

The Commission confirmed that it was planning to address the challenge of overlap between on-line and physical formats including as regards taxation.

Several member states underlined the need to combat on-line piracy and support creation and creators in the digital environment.

In order to reach a consensus, the Presidency presented a compromise proposal that was accepted by the Council, inviting member states and the Commission to promote reading, while taking into account various conditions applied to electronic and physical books.

Cultural heritage

The Council adopted conclusions on **participatory governance of cultural heritage** (15320/14), inviting member states to promote a more active involvement of civil society and of the private sector in the governance of cultural heritage, at local, regional, national and European levels.

Cultural heritage is one of the priorities of the new Work Plan for Culture. It is a common good, a shared resource that requires a collective responsibility. The involvement of all interested parties in decision-making, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of cultural heritage policies and programmes can increase public awareness of the values that it represents, reinforce transparency and accountability in the use of public resources, and build trust between citizens and public authorities.

Alongside tangible and intangible heritage, the conclusions underline that digital heritage can be used for the development of innovative services, such as *Europeana*. They also explore synergies between the culture and tourism sectors, in particular via sustainable cultural tourism, in order to find the right balance between economic opportunities and the well-being of local communities.

The conclusions also call on the Commission to propose a "European Year of Cultural Heritage".

Contribution of cultural and creative sectors to Europe 2020

Ministers held a policy debate on the **contribution of cultural and creative sectors, including cultural heritage, to the Europe 2020 objectives**, in the context of the mid-term review of the strategy.

Ministers underlined that culture represents around 4% of EU GDP and contributes to growth through innovation, the digital economy, employment and youth policy, industrial policy and resource efficiency and is in turn affected by decisions in other policy areas.

In general, member states agreed that the cross-cutting nature of culture made it well-suited to Europe 2020 cross-sectorial approach and could therefore reinforce the effectiveness of the strategy as a whole, provided that an integrated approach was adopted at all levels.

However, several member states stressed that Europe 2020 is a very focused strategy with precise quantitative goals that are regularly monitored by the Commission, which would be difficult to apply to art and culture. Furthermore, this might detract from the focus and the impact of the strategy. In the field of culture and creativity cooperation should be preferred to regulation..

Most ministers underlined that the EU's cultural and creative sectors give Europe a competitive advantage over the rest of the world since they benefit from Europe's unique, extraordinarily rich and diverse cultural heritage.

In this context, several ministers suggested that the digitalisation of cultural heritage be stepped up, in particular making a better use of Europeana.

A number of member states also advocated a stronger interaction between tourism and cultural policies, and between training, research and innovation policies, which would also contribute to the preservation of the cultural heritage for future generations

Many member states agreed on the need to protect intellectual property rights, updating the current copyright framework and combatting piracy on-line, in order to ensure fair competition for Europe's cultural and creative sectors.

Other business

– *Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership Agreement*

Ministers took note of information from Commission on the state of play of negotiations on the audiovisual related issues of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership Agreement (TTIP) between the EU and the USA.

The TTIP is a comprehensive agreement that addresses a broad range of bilateral trade and investment issues with the aim of boosting trade and investment between the two partners. The negotiations started in mid-2013, and seven rounds have taken place so far, the last one from 29 September to 3 October 2014.

In order to guarantee the protection of cultural diversity (the so-called "cultural exception") audiovisual services were explicitly excluded from the negotiating mandate given to the Commission by member states last June, as it has been the case for more than two decades in negotiations with third countries..

The Presidency recalled that, at its two most recent meetings, the EYCS Council has addressed in the challenges that the agreement could represent to cultural diversity and underlined that this is a value to which the European Union is deeply attached.

The Commission reiterated that during the negotiations it had strictly respected the mandate given by member states regarding audiovisual services and that there was no change at all since the last round. It also recalled that President Juncker had declared on this matter that he would not "sacrifice Europe's cultural diversity on the altar of free trade".

This has also been confirmed by the new Commissioner for Trade, Cecilia Malmström in her hearing before the European Parliament, and more recently she has announced that she was in favour of transparency and wanted to give a fresh start to negotiations.

– *Work programme of the incoming Presidency*

The Latvian delegation presented the main priorities of its Presidency for next semester:

- Cross-sectorial cooperation between cultural and creative sectors and other policy areas
- Links between cultural heritage and contemporary art
- Culture in the context of the mid-term review of the Europe 2020 strategy
- Culture in external relations, in particular in the context of post-2015 development agenda
- Continuing work on the possible review of the Audiovisual Media Services directive

SPORT

Sport and innovation

As an introduction to this topic, the Italian Presidency presented a synthesis of the main messages from the “structured dialogue” with representatives of sports movement and of the sports industry:

- Sport market represents €66 billion and employs more than 600 000 people;
- More than 150 000 innovations are developed every year;
- Public and private sector cooperation are crucial (this includes the public sector, the sports movement and universities)
- Innovative public and private partnerships should also be developed
- A very modest investment in sports and innovation can generate very significant returns

The Council then adopted conclusions on **sport as a driver of innovation and economic growth** ([14954/14](#)), highlighting the importance of research and innovation in sport and its positive effects on other sectors of the economy, as well as its potential to create jobs, which is not always acknowledged.

The conclusions place special emphasis on the need to promote cross-sectoral and cross-border clusters, involving local administrations, universities, research centres, industry and sport bodies, and to provide a favourable environment for sports-based research and product development. They underline that innovation goes both ways: sport benefits from breakthroughs in other sectors, while at the same time its innovations are taken up elsewhere.

The conclusions also invite member states to make the best use of the EU Programmes and funds, such as Horizon 2020, COSME and Erasmus+, which could provide an important contribution in this field.

The EU Work Plan for Sport 2014-2017¹, following last November conclusions on the contribution of sport to the EU economy, underline the need for the Council to continue work on the economic dimension of sport, addressing in particular innovation, in addition to the sustainable financing of sport and the legacy of major sport events. These conclusions constitute an important step forward in that direction.

⁷ OJ C 183, 14.6.2014.

Sport and physical activity at school age

Ministers discussed specific measures to promote **sport and physical activity at school age**, also as a contribution to the recommendations provided for in the new EU Work Plan for Sport, which aim to develop physical education in schools and to strengthen cooperation with the sporting organisations, national and local authorities and the private sector.

Although physical education is a compulsory subject in all EU member states, most ministers acknowledged that there has been a decline or marginalisation of sport and physical activity in school age children, in particular among teenagers and girls.

This is partly due to the way time is allocated in schools curricula, to the lack of financial, material and human resources and also to competition from computer games, Internet and TV, which leads to increasingly sedentary lifestyles.

Member states agreed in general that physical activity not only contributed to good health, but also developed principles and concepts such as fair play and respect, as well as social awareness and better academic results.

The following policy initiatives have already been developed or are planned in member states to combat this trend:

- increasing cooperation between schools and sporting associations
- promoting the role of parents and top athletes as role models
- developing new and innovative methods for physical education classes
- giving incentives to "active" schools and pupils
- taking advantage of major sporting events in Europe to increase motivation of young people

Other business

– *World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) meetings*

The Council was briefed by the EU representative at the WADA Foundation Board (Luxembourg) on the meetings that took place in Paris on 15 and 16 November 2014. The main subjects on the agenda were funding, data protection and anti-doping issues.

The EU member states coordinate with each other and represent their joint concerns at each meeting of the Foundation Board of the World Anti-Doping Agency, usually in May and November. The EU is currently represented in WADA by the Belgian, Luxembourg and Malta Sport ministers.

The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), set up in 1999, is a private foundation (although half of its board members represent governments) whose mission is to promote, coordinate and monitor the fight against doping in sport in all its forms.

WADA is composed of a Foundation Board, an Executive Committee and several Committees. The 38-member Foundation Board is WADA's supreme decision-making body. It is composed equally of representatives from the Olympic Movement and governments.

– *Council of Europe Convention on the manipulation of sports competitions*

The French delegation wished to encourage other sports ministers of the EU to join the eight member states (Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Lithuania and the Netherlands) that already signed the Convention of the Council of Europe against the manipulation of sport competitions.

The convention brings real added value in many areas: it facilitates international cooperation and exchange of data between public authorities, the sports movement and betting operators. Furthermore, it helps legal prosecutions to be brought in order to sanction conduct undermining the integrity of competitions.

Following ratification by at least five signatories (three of which must be members of the Council of Europe), the Convention can come into force. This will probably happen some time in 2015 or 2016. The Commission is expected to adopt proposals for EU accession to the Convention towards the end of 2014.

– *Work programme of the incoming Presidency*

The Council took note of the incoming Presidency main priorities for next semester presented by the Latvian delegation:

- The role of grassroots sports in enhancing young people's employment
- Healthy lifestyles (HEPA)
- Progress on the ratification of Council of Europe Convention on the manipulation of sports competitions
- Anti-doping issues

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

EMPLOYMENT

Support for Finland and France under the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund

The Council adopted two decisions releasing a total of €2.34 million under the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF), providing support for workers made redundant in Finland and France.

An amount of €1.43 million will be released after 634 workers of a Finnish enterprise operating in the manufacture of transport equipment were made redundant as a result of major structural changes in world trade patterns due to globalisation. A further €918 000 will be paid out following the announcement of 760 redundancies at a French food-production company.

The EGF helps workers to find new jobs and develop new skills when they have lost their jobs as a result of changing global trade patterns, e.g. when a large company shuts down or a factory is moved outside the EU, or as a result of the global financial and economic crisis. Help provided by EGF consists in co-financing measures such as job-search assistance, careers advice, tailor-made training and re-training, mentoring and promoting entrepreneurship. It also provides one-off, time-limited individual support, such as job-search allowances, mobility allowances and allowances for participating in lifelong learning and training activities.

APPOINTMENTS

Committee of the Regions

The Council appointed Ms Ruth DOMBEY (United Kingdom), as a member of the Committee of the Regions for the remainder of the current term of office, which runs until 25 January 2015 ([15434/14](#)).
