



Fylkeshuset,
3706 Skien, Norway
Tel.: +47 35 58 42 00
Fax: +47 35 52 90 44
nsc@northsea.org
www.northsea.org

RESOLUTION FOR THE NSC ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING 18.06.10;

“Creative Industries in the North Sea Region.”

PROPOSED BY REGION VÄSTRA GÖTALAND, SWEDEN.

Background

On April 27 2010, the European Commission launched an online public consultation linked to the Green Paper *Unlocking the potential of cultural and creative industries* (KOM(2010)183 final). A few aspects are especially highlighted as keys to enabling the sector to flourish and to contribute to sustainable and inclusive growth: the need to improve access to finance not least for small businesses, the need to set up spaces for cross sectorial cooperation, the importance of the regional and local levels. The public consultation runs until the end of July, more details can be found on http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-policy_development/doc2577_en.htm

The North Sea Commission was founded in 1989 to facilitate and enhance partnerships between regions which manage the challenges and opportunities presented by the North Sea. Furthermore, to promote the North Sea Basin as a major economic entity within Europe, by encouraging joint development initiatives and political lobbying at European Union level.

Introduction

The North Sea Commission welcomes the European Commission’s publication of the Green Paper *Unlocking the potential of cultural and creative industries*, thus continuing the work in line with what was initiated with the *European agenda for culture in a globalized world*, aiming to broaden and strengthen culture horizontally in society as a whole, and in the internal work of the Commission. The objective to place culture in the framework of the union’s different flagship initiatives (the Digital agenda and the Innovation union) is important to encourage.

We agree on the three identified main factors setting the scene for political measures in this field: diversity, digitalisation and globalization.

Democratic deficit for regions

The dialogue process starting out after the launch of the Culture agenda in 2007 and now resulting in this Green paper, involve the member states in the Open Method of Coordination as well as the civil society (i.e. the players and their representatives) in three so called platforms. One significant partner has however been left out, the dialogue with the regional level is nonexistent. The possibilities for regions to influence the process are not in parity with their financial responsibility for cultural and creative sectors. This lack of regional input can be traced in the focus of the Green paper and is remarkable since one chapter in both agenda and green paper deals with the importance of this level for culture as a driving force in economic development. It is evident that both the reports from the national working groups of the Open method of coordination, as well as the civil society platforms have strongly influenced the content (the latter with their emphasis on intermediaries). Needless to say this is as it should be, had only the regional level been involved.

Tourism should be included in the definition of the cultural and creative sectors

Tourism is excluded in the Green paper's definition of the cultural and creative sectors. This is an inaccurate limitation since culture and tourism are strongly connected, the one depending on the other. Additionally the potential of this sector is huge and could also be a forerunner as an example of cooperation, for more traditional cultural sectors.

Cross sectoral collaborations should be promoted

The spirit of cooperation, holistic views and openness permeating the green paper is a factor of success as the objective is to open up between often separate sectors; be they *triple helixes* or *Public-Private partnerships*. New forms of support within the future EU culture programmes should be shaped, in order to better promote the mentioned "laboratories". That is creative arenas for innovation, where cross sectorial connections can be developed between creators, artists, public sector, enterprises, and academy. These spaces for cooperation are best developed regionally and locally.

Specific measures for Research

In order to be able to strengthen and switch up the spill over-effects of (public investment for) culture, the knowledge level in this area must increase.

Research should be initiated on the effects of public spend on culture, into other parts of society. How can new business models be created in which a part of public investment in culture is circulated back to the development and improvement of cultural core activities?

Strengthen the cultural and creative sectors within the cohesion policy

The EU should strengthen the role of the cultural and creative sectors in the cohesion policy; economically and policy-wise, on a continuous basis.

The initiated work by the Commission to have an internal dialogue between culture and regional policy should be enforced, and involve the regions.

The North Sea Commission promotes the notion of parallel measures. As in the Culture Programme place should be made for both the cultural and creative sectors, it is necessary to open up the structural funds for specific measures supporting culture. Financial support earmarked for culture can readily be linked to the political flagships the Digital Agenda, the Innovation Union and the objective to promote social inclusion.

Diversity and social sustainability leads to enhanced competitiveness and a sustainable development

In the proceeding work a stronger emphasis should be put on the importance of a dynamic cultural and creative sector for the development of intercultural competences as well as for social sustainability in general.