



COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels, 10.11.2006
COM(2006) 682 final

2004/0150 (COD)

OPINION OF THE COMMISSION

pursuant to the third subparagraph, point (c), of Article 251 (2) of the EC Treaty, on the amendments proposed by the European Parliament to the common position adopted by the Council

concerning

**the proposal for a Decision establishing the Culture 2007 programme (2007-2013)
(COM(2004) 469 final)**

AMENDING THE PROPOSAL OF THE COMMISSION
pursuant to Article 250 (2) of the EC Treaty

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1. INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to the third subparagraph, point (c), of Article 251 (2) of the EC Treaty, the Commission delivers an opinion on the amendments proposed by the European Parliament in second reading. The position of the Commission on the amendments adopted by the European Parliament is as follows.

2. BACKGROUND

Date of transmission of the proposal to the EP and the Council (document COM(2004) 469 final – 2004/0150(COD)):	15 July 2004
Date of the opinion of the European Committee of the Regions:	23 February 2005
Date of the opinion of the European Parliament, first reading:	25 October 2005
Date of the political agreement	18 May 2006
Date of adoption of the common position:	18 July 2006
Date of the opinion, second reading:	25 October 2006

3. OBJECTIVE OF THE COMMISSION PROPOSAL

The purpose of the Commission's proposal is to establish a programme which can contribute to the flourishing of shared European cultural values on the basis of cultural co-operation between artists, cultural operators and cultural institutions. It will seek to promote multilateral cooperation within Europe as well as contribute to the bottom-up development of a European identity, thanks to interactions between citizens.

In comparison with the programmes that preceded it, the proposed programme goes further in the reinforcement of cultural cooperation by focussing the EU action on three main objectives which have been identified as having strong European added value: the trans-national mobility of people working in the cultural sector, the trans-national circulation of works of art as well as of artistic and cultural products and intercultural dialogue.

It consists of three strands: i) direct support for cultural co-operation projects, ii) support for European cultural co-operation organisations and iii) support for studies and for collecting and disseminating information in the field of cultural co-operation.

4. OPINION OF THE COMMISSION ON THE AMENDMENTS ADOPTED BY THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

The Commission accepts the three amendments proposed by the European Parliament. These amendments are the result of a global compromise between the European Parliament and the Council in view of the second reading. They are in line with the objectives of the initial proposal of the Commission.

The first amendment underlines the need already expressed in the initial proposal to go beyond a mere project-approach and to support the permanent activities of cultural organisations active at the European level.

The second amendment limits the comitology procedure to one sub-strand of the programme (i.e. multi-annual cooperation projects) and is much closer to the initial proposal of the Commission than the Council common position. The comitology procedure will apply neither to short duration projects (strand 1.2, cooperation measures) nor to cultural organisations (strand 2) so as to avoid a longer internal decision-making procedure for the implementation of the programme with no real added value.

Finally, the third amendment will reduce the number of days between the publication of the Decision in the Official Journal and its entry into force, from 20 to just one, which will speed up the implementation of the programme.

5. CONCLUSION

Pursuant to Article 250 (2) of the EC Treaty, the Commission alters its proposal as indicated above.

6. STATEMENT OF THE COMMISSION

The Commission has made a unilateral statement following the adoption of the common position (see Annex).

ANNEX

Commission statement regarding the budget envelope

The Commission would like to draw the attention of the legislative Authority to the need to have the financial envelope mentioned in the legal act establishing the Culture programme (2007-2013) written in current prices, at the latest when it is published in the Official Journal. This corresponds to the usual budgetary practice and enables to ensure in a transparent way that the Decision of the legislative Authority is adhered to. For the new Culture programme, the financial envelope is EUR 400 million in current prices.