Recommendation 1059 (1987)[1]

Economics of culture

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Considering the importance of culture in the economy, which provides an economic justification for public and private interventions in the management and financing of culture ;

2. Noting that economic forces have also permitted the rise of new cultural forms and dimensions through the application and marketing of the results of scientific and technological development ;

3. Recalling its Recommendation 1051 (1987) on labour market flexibility in a changing economy, and emphasising the increasing relevance and labour-intensive nature of cultural activity in a society where non-working time is increasing ;

4. Considering that culture is, like education, an important area for national investment and that, therefore, governments have a continuous responsibility in shaping the best possible conditions in which cultural development can flourish ;

5. Realising, however, that the problems surrounding the ‘‘economy" on the one hand and ‘‘culture" on the other are surfacing everywhere in Europe, and that they affect both those who exercise their creative talents and those who fund them, whether in the public or private sector ;

6. Drawing attention to the fact that the survival of certain areas of cultural creation and production - for example the film industry or literature - can be better ensured if they benefit from adequate support by public authorities, through practical and financial measures and, where appropriate, are managed more effectively with a view to attracting greater interest on the part of the public at large ;

7. Believing that special further attention should be given to the fields of major popular culture, such as sport, the mass media, music and the written press, because of the vulnerability of these fields to major investment interests and market forces ;

8. Drawing also attention to the danger that, if their economic impact were to become the primary justification for the arts, those arts and cultural events with the highest economic impact would attract the highest funding, and to the consequent duty of governments to create the conditions in which art creation and production are free from economic constraints ;

9. Considering that culture represents an increasingly important part of industrialised countries' production, and that the interaction between culture and the economy, and in particular the world of industry, is one of the most significant features in the development of our societies ;

10. Noting the reply to Recommendation 1018 on private sponsorship of the arts, in which the Committee of Ministers shared the view of the Assembly that the potential resources for cultural financing can be increased by combining state and private efforts ;

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1. See Doc. 5749, report of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development, and Doc. 5750, opinion of the Committee on Culture and Education. Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 1 July 1987.

11. Welcoming the development of plural funding of cultural activities and the expansion of employment and economic activity in the cultural sector, but insisting that the funding should not become the victim either of economic fluctuations or of government deficits, and that primary responsibility should therefore be retained by governments ;

12. Believing that private sponsorship should provide supplementary funding for cultural activities, not be a substitute for existing resources, and that it should be developed ;

13. Realising, however, that private sponsorship ought to take place in conditions which are widely acceptable as a mutually advantageous liaison between business and the arts for the ultimate good of the whole community ;

14. Expressing its disappointment at the fact that the Committee of Ministers has not deemed fit to draw up guidelines or a code of conduct on the funding of arts or cultural activities by sponsors, for which task the Council of Europe is particularly well suited,

15. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers invite the governments of Council of Europe member states :

15.1. to assume substantial and continuous responsibility in affording possibilities for the development of cultural activities and artistic expression for the benefit of the public at large ;

15.2. to draw up policies aimed at the preservation and creation of employment in the cultural sectors, not only by giving direct assistance to artists who do not receive sufficient economic backing for their production, but above all by promoting social and economic conditions in which the production, distribution and consumption of the arts can develop ;

15.3. to promote, while safeguarding freedom of artistic expression, the development of cultural activities by a better structured financial backing as a major national investment, and/or by adopting legislation and fiscal measures or other rules designed to promote sponsorship of the arts ;

15.4. to step up efforts with a view to fostering a better relationship between the many existing sources of art funding, to improving resource management and to evolving more flexible instruments of funding policy ;

15.5. to invite the competent authorities :

a. to encourage the study of the economics of culture in institutes of higher education and research for the training of subsequent administrators of cultural policy ;

b. to provide facilities for art history students to research into the influence of economic factors on art production, and

c. to promote better instruction for students of art and applied art on the interwoven nature of culture and the economy ;

16. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers :

16.1. draw up guidelines or a code of conduct on the funding of the arts and other cultural activities by sponsors in mutually acceptable conditions guaranteeing the autonomy value of the arts and culture, including the freedom of the artist ;

16.2. initiate statistics relating to the funding of the arts on national and European levels, and to the direct and indirect economic importance of the arts ;

16.3. promote co-operation among member states in order to ensure the survival of threatened areas of cultural expression and creation ;

16.4. follow up the proposal formulated by the Colombo Commission to take action, in co-operation with the European Community, to increase the material resources available for culture, including the setting up of a European arts fund and, along the lines of Recommendation 1018 (1985), to make taxation arrangements to increase private patronage and encourage private initiatives in any form for culture ;and in addition :

16.5. consider ways in which the Council of Europe might itself directly encourage sponsorship of cultural activity on the European level, for example by drawing up a European convention on the international fiscal aspects of sponsorship which might in particular facilitate the transfer of gifts or contributions from one country to another ;

16.6. elaborate appropriate financial instruments promoting the implementation of regional projects of European interest geared to co-operation between regions in different countries.