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(Information)

COUNCIL

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

of 24 November 2003

on cooperation between cultural institutions in the field of museums

(2003/C 295/01)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

1. REFERRING to the Treaty establishing the European Community;
2. BEARING IN MIND the Council Resolution of 25 June 2002 on a new work plan on European cooperation in the field of culture ⁽¹⁾, which includes among other priorities
 - (a) circulation of works and persons in the cultural sector;
 - (b) integration and participation of new Member States in the cultural field;
 - (c) enhancing synergies with other Community areas and activities, including for example in the areas of education and training, youth, research and information and communication technology;
 - (d) improving the dissemination of information in order to facilitate access of citizens to cultural action of the Community;
 - (e) cooperation in the different fields of cultural administration, including management and administration of cultural goods;
3. RECALLING the Regulation on export of cultural goods and the Directive on the return of cultural objects unlawfully removed from the territory of a Member State, as well as the Council Resolution concerning the Commission's report on the application of these ⁽²⁾;
4. RECALLING ALSO the Council Resolution of 21 January 2002 on culture and the knowledge society that called, among other things, for digitisation of cultural content;
5. AIMING to intensify further the cultural links between Member States in order to promote knowledge of common cultural heritage and cultural diversity within Europe; and to reflect how to take account of these cross-cutting issues, if necessary, in consideration of the programme to succeed Culture 2000;

6. BEARING IN MIND that 'cultural institutions' in the context of this Resolution comprise a large number of different bodies. These cultural institutions may include, among others, museums, galleries, competent authorities, research, training and restoration institutes as well as university departments;
7. BEARING FURTHER IN MIND that police and customs authorities are important actors in combating illicit trafficking of cultural goods,

STRESSES THE NEED FOR IMPROVED COOPERATION AMONG MEMBER STATES IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS, WHILE TAKING INTO ACCOUNT EACH MEMBER STATE'S LEGISLATION:

A. Cooperation in the field of research and further training in the sector of cultural heritage

1. Exchange of experience in the field of training with the aim of increasing research and cooperation between staff of cultural institutions.

Consideration will be given to the possibility whereby staff working for such cultural institutions can be hosted by the Member States for a period of a few weeks and training seminars can be organised on scientific, administrative, exhibition-preparation and museum-management matters.

2. Standards and good practice applied in various countries in the following sectors:

- protection of heritage;
- conservation and restoration of collections and cultural heritage sites;
- documentation, inventory and digitisation of collections and cultural heritage sites;
- display techniques, methods and interpretation;

⁽¹⁾ OJ 162, 6.7.2002.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 395, 31.12.1992, OJ L 74, 27.3.1993, OJ L 201, 17.7.1998, OJ L 187, 10.7.2001 and OJ C 32, 5.2.2002.

- learning in museums;
- criteria for exhibitions (for example, policy on loans, conditions for circulation);
- management and administration of museums;
- development policies.

B. Cooperation in the field of conservation and restoration and reproduction of artefacts and monuments

1. Conservation and restoration of artefacts (including archaeological finds, paintings, sculptures, etc.) and monuments by joint teams from the Member States, with publication of results making good use of the know-how and technical equipment of each participant and comparing conservation and restoration criteria and methods.
2. Reproduction and digitisation of artefacts for study and teaching purposes.
3. Research of archaeological sites by joint teams from the Member States. Comparative study both on the criteria used for such development and on the relationship between the 'archaeological stock' and the natural environment.
4. Comparative research from different countries on the balancing of infrastructural development with the protection of archaeological and architectural heritage.

C. Cooperation in combating illicit trafficking of cultural goods

1. Protection and recovering of cultural goods, including archaeological assets that have no documentation as to origin.
2. Stepping up joint activity to prevent illicit trafficking in cultural goods.
3. Establishing or reinforcing cooperation among Member State administrative structures in this field, and also between cultural institutions and administrative structures.

D. Cooperation in relation to exhibitions

1. Organisation of exhibitions. Particular encouragement could be given to exhibitions that are organised by joint groups of scholars and experts from the Member States' institutions and dealing with issues concerning the contacts, influences and relationships between the peoples of Europe over the course of history.

Encouragement could be given to exhibitions that are of notable significance in terms of new knowledge and acquisitions and fulfil the relevant protection criteria.

2. Circulation of artefacts, art works and collections. The cultural institutions and museums of the Member States could promote the circulation for exhibition purposes of collections and of individual works of art within the European area, thereby bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore.
3. Comparison of Member State legislation and practices on organising international exhibitions and transporting artefacts and collections, in particular with regard to public guarantees relating to insurance costs as well as provisions for third party claims on lent works.

CALLS ON THE MEMBER STATES TO FOSTER INTENSIFIED CULTURAL COOPERATION WHICH OFFERS:

1. To scholars the possibility of pursuing further the study of the documentation concerning the many facets of works of art, artefacts and monuments, especially digitised and photographic documentation.
2. To staff of the institutions and museums of the Member States — through adequate training programmes and seminars — the possibility of investigating matters of common interest in more depth, making a critical comparison between the various criteria and methods that have been adopted and/or trialled in the various countries and at the same time helping to establish cooperation in the particular sector.
3. To facilitate access, including virtual access, to cultural heritage in order to provide better information and deeper knowledge of cultural heritage and to increase public awareness concerning illegal activities in connection with cultural goods.

Particular care will be taken to ensure that the system of presentation and the facilities for museums, sites, etc. are multi-layered, so as to accommodate the various types of user, including those with disabilities, while ensuring the reliability and verification of information at every level, even the most elementary.

ALSO CALLS ON THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION

To promote, as appropriate, cooperation among Member States' cultural and museum institutions, including through working groups, in order to develop practical follow-up to this Resolution with pilot projects to be implemented by the Member States.

AND AGREES to review the implementation of this Resolution in the course of the first half of 2005.