[FR] France calls for European Strategy on Culture

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France's Minister for Culture and Communication Aurélie Filippetti called a meeting of her European counterparts in Paris on 4 and 5 April, as part of the Chaillot Forum on the future of culture in Europe. France's President François Hollande, European Parliament President Martin Schulz, European Commissioners Michel Barnier (Internal Market) and Androulla Vassiliou (Culture and Education), and UNESCO Director General Irina Bokova were also present for a working session. More than 1 200 participants - creators and intellectuals from Europe and further afield, public decision-makers and professionals in the culture sector - joined the Ministers and European Commissioners to discuss the place of culture in Europe. The Minister felt that, as there would soon be a new Commission in place for the period from 2014 to 2019, the time had come for the European Union to adopt a real policy on culture in the digital era, and discussed with her counterparts the broad principles which should form the foundation for such a policy. For Europe, culture is a front-line political and economic issue (3.3% of GDP and 6.7 million jobs throughout Europe). The sector is, however, facing profound changes as a result of the digital revolution (new modes of access to works, changes in cultural and creative habits). Relations between creators, producers and distributors are changing, and the distribution of value is shifting towards new globalised distribution stakeholders, which largely escape European modes of regulation and financing. Even the conditions for creation are changing, particularly with regard to the methods for financing and for remunerating creators. The context raises a number of questions: How should the mechanisms which allow diversity of creation be developed? How can the role of copyright protection be ensured as a means of remunerating creators? How should the conditions for competition and the equitable application of taxation to the various stakeholders be defined? The French Minister called on the EU to make cultural creation in Europe, and cultural diversity, a priority by setting up support mechanisms, particularly for the audiovisual sector and the cinema. She would also like to see discussions on the modernisation of copyright in the digital era guided by the aim of strengthening the creative economy and the remuneration received by creators, including making sure that rights are respected, particularly by combating infringements of intellectual property, including piracy. In this respect, the Minister invited all the stakeholders in the creative digital ecosystem to get involved, in an effort to achieve consistency across all the applicable legislation. She also called on the EU to assist all the stakeholders in cultural content in their digital transition, by stimulating the creation of attractive content

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and the development of innovative services while ensuring a fair sharing of income. A roadmap setting out about fifty specific proposals for action in every field was presented; the proposals include aligning the VAT rates applied in the physical and digital worlds, initiating dialogue on the issue of copyright licences, reaching an agreement with digital stakeholders on respect for intellectual property, accelerating the setting up of the fund to support cultural businesses provided for in the Creative Europe programme, the creation of a European Office for Artistic Distribution, etc. Building on the excellent reception received by France's conclusions and proposals, the work will now be continued within the European Union's institutions, more specifically at the meetings of the Council of Ministers for Culture scheduled for May and November 2014.

Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication, « Aurélie Filippetti engage avec les ministres européens et la Commission européenne la préparation d'une stratégie européenne pour la culture », Communiqué de presse, 4 avril 2014

http://www.culturecommunication.gouv.fr/Presse/Communiques-de-presse/Aurelie-Filippetti-engage-avec-les-ministres-europeens-et-la-Commission-europeenne-la-preparation-d-une-strategie-europeenne-pour-la-culture

Ministry of Culture and Communication, "Aurélie Filippetti embarks, with the European Ministers and the European Commission, on preparation for a European policy on culture", Press release, 4 April 2014

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