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COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels,
COM(2008) XXX

Proposal for a

DECISION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL

concerning the European Year of Creativity and Innovation (2009)

Text with EEA relevance

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

European Year of Creativity and Innovation (2009)

1. INTRODUCTION

Europe needs to boost its capacity for creativity and innovation for both social and economic reasons. The European Council has repeatedly recognised innovation as crucial to Europe's ability to respond effectively to the challenges and opportunities of globalisation. In December 2006, for example, it noted that "Europe needs a strategic approach aimed at creating an innovation-friendly environment where knowledge is converted into innovative products and services"¹. The modern economy, with its emphasis on adding value by means of better use of knowledge and rapid innovation, requires a broadening of the creative skills base involving the whole population. In particular, there is a need for skills and competences that enable people to embrace change as an opportunity and to be open to new ideas that promote innovation and active participation in a culturally diverse, knowledge-based society.

Innovative capacity is closely linked with creativity as a personal attribute based on cultural and interpersonal skills and values. To be harnessed to full advantage, it needs to be widely disseminated throughout the population. The role of education and training as a determining factor in enhancing creativity, innovation performance and competitiveness was again emphasised by the European Council in March 2007 when it put forward the concept of the "knowledge triangle" comprising education, research and innovation².

The "Education and Training 2010" work programme³ and the Community Action Programmes in the fields of Lifelong Learning and Youth policies, and in related fields such as culture, provide opportunities at European level for exchanging experience and good practices and for deepening stakeholders' understanding of ways of promoting creativity and a capacity for innovation. In particular, the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning⁴ provides a European reference framework covering eight key competences (defined as "knowledge, skills and attitudes") which encompass a broad agenda for education and training at all stages of life. Many of these competences are relevant to creativity and innovation in the personal, interpersonal and intercultural fields, including "mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology", "digital competence", "learning to learn", "social and civic competences", "sense of initiative and entrepreneurship" and "cultural awareness and expression".

Declaring a European Year is an effective way of helping to meet challenges by raising public awareness, disseminating information about good practices, stimulating research, creativity and innovation and promoting policy debate and change. By combining action at Community, national, regional and local levels, and creating openings for participation by interested

¹ Presidency conclusions – Brussels, 14/15 December 2006, paragraph 28.

² Presidency conclusions – Brussels, 8/9 March 2007.

³ *Education and Training 2010 – the success of the Lisbon strategy hinges on urgent reforms*: joint report adopted by the Council and the Commission on 26 February 2004. See also the detailed work programme on the follow-up of the objectives of education and training systems in Europe, OJ C 142, 14.6.2002, p.1.

⁴ Recommendation 2006/962/EC, OJ L 394, 30.12.2006, p.10.

stakeholders, it can generate synergies in information and awareness-raising activities, and help to focus policy debate on a specific issue.

The aim for 2009 is to promote creativity and capacity for innovation as key competences for all. This is consistent with the Commission Communication “*A broad-based innovation strategy for the EU*” which notes that “without education as a core policy, innovation will remain unsupported. It must promote talent and creativity from an early stage⁵.” The Lifelong Learning Programme is thus an important vehicle for supporting this initiative. Other policies and programmes in related domains, such as enterprise, the information society, research, cohesion or rural development, will support this European Year where appropriate.

2. BACKGROUND

Creativity is a human characteristic that manifests itself in many fields and contexts, from works of art, design and craft to scientific breakthroughs and entrepreneurship, including social entrepreneurship. The multidimensional character of creativity implies that knowledge in a wide range of different domains – both technological and non-technological - can be the basis for creativity and innovation. Innovation is the successful realisation of new ideas; creativity is the *sine qua non* of innovation. New products, services, processes, strategies and organisations require people to generate new ideas and associations between them. Competences such as creative thinking and advanced problem-solving are therefore as essential in economic and social as in artistic fields.

The communities of creativity and innovation – those of the arts on the one hand and technology and business on the other – are often not well connected. An important contribution of the Year will be to bridge these worlds, by showing with concrete examples the value of considering the concepts of creativity and innovation together in a number of domains, such as in schools, universities, private and public organisations.

An important and often untapped source of innovation can be found outside of an organisation: the user. User needs can be the starting point for developing, improving and/or designing new, more competitive products and services. With appropriate competences, users can not only provide an innovation-friendly market environment as consumers, but also solve unforeseen problems and participate in the development of products and services themselves. The positive effect of consumer involvement explains why producers of new technologies who work closely with users have a good success rate with innovation.

The relationship between competences and innovation is dynamic: people's attitudes as well as their skills and knowledge help drive innovation, and innovation in turn contributes to changing demand for skills, in a society as well as at company level. No single skills mix is a recipe for successful innovation in all circumstances. Innovation processes are becoming increasingly networked, multidisciplinary and problem-oriented, setting ever higher demands for generic skills such as learning to learn and a capacity to interact effectively with others. Hence the importance of recognising competences as “knowledge, skills and attitudes”, as does the Recommendation on key competences. Attitudes to change may be as important as more formal qualifications.

⁵ COM(2006) 502 final.

A fundamental quality underpinning creative and innovative capacity is motivation and a sense of initiative. The foundations of such qualities are laid in the early phases of personal development. Creativity occupies a significant share of the curriculum in early school years, but its share diminishes drastically in the course of pupils' education. One major challenge facing education systems is, therefore, how to keep the spark of creativity alive in children and young people. The responses have included, for instance, putting greater emphasis on creative subjects, developing new approaches to learning and fostering various extra-curricular activities.

At the same time, intercultural and interpersonal competences are vital to equip individuals to participate in an effective and constructive way in social and working life, particularly in increasingly diverse societies. Civic competence equips individuals to participate fully in civic life, based on knowledge of social and political concepts and structures and a commitment to active and democratic participation. These skills and knowledge sets are therefore also important to foster creativity and a capacity for innovation.

The mounting pressure to develop creative, innovative and critical skills implies that traditional teaching approaches based on direct instruction or lecturing are no longer adequate. They are being replaced by more learner-focused models that are based on the learner's active involvement in the process of reflection and interpretation. Learning is achieved together with others, creatively changing social practices and habits. An organisational culture supporting openness and creativity is a vital precondition for successful learning and innovation.

3. CONSULTATION OF INTERESTED PARTIES AND EXPECTED IMPACT

3.1. Consultation of interested parties

Informal discussions about organising a European Year of Creativity and Innovation, based on existing programmes, have been held with Members of the European Parliament and with the Member States. The substance of the initiative has been widely welcomed, and the growing number of requests for further information received from a wide range of stakeholders indicates that there is strong demand for it.

3.2. Expected impact

The Education and Training 2010 work programme produces many outputs, including biennial reports on cooperation across a broad range of education and training issues and recommendations or other non-binding principles or instruments dealing with specific topics such as recognition of non-formal and informal learning outcomes or lifelong guidance. However, many of its activities and outputs are addressed primarily to practitioners and policymakers, and are not sufficiently visible for a wider audience.

A European Year which focuses on developing creativity and capacity for innovation would provide an opportunity to bring some of those outputs to the attention of the general public in a way which is accessible and can capture their imagination, while drawing on the results of analyses and policy recommendations already endorsed at European level. It would also give stakeholders, including institutions and civil-society organisations operating at European, national, regional or local level, an opportunity to make a greater impact and gain wider recognition for their efforts by participating in a Europe-wide initiative. The Year will therefore help to strengthen the impact of existing processes under the Education and Training

2010 work programme and to generate a critical mass of activities targeting the development of skills related to creativity and innovation. It will also build on the results of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue (2008) by emphasising the importance of interpersonal and intercultural skills in fostering creativity and a capacity for innovation in a culturally diverse environment.

In this way, the Year is expected to have at least as significant an impact as previous initiatives of the same type in the field of education, such as the European Year of Lifelong Learning (1996) and the European Year of Education through Sport (2004). The current focus on competitiveness, knowledge and skills in the context of the Lisbon strategy is likely to provide an environment in which stakeholders will be all the more receptive to the outputs of the Year.

Activities in relevant policy fields other than education, such as enterprise, media, cohesion, rural development and research, are already contributing, directly or indirectly, to promoting creativity and innovation capacity. The Commission will draw on these activities to add to the impact of the Year.

4. LEGAL ELEMENTS OF THE PROPOSAL

4.1. Summary of the objectives of the action and the proposed measures

The overall objective of the European Year is to promote creativity for all as a driver for innovation and as a key factor for the development of personal, occupational, entrepreneurial and social competences through lifelong learning.

In keeping with the concept of lifelong learning endorsed by the Council Resolution on lifelong learning of 27 June 2002⁶, the promotion of creativity and a capacity for innovation will be tailored to all stages of lifelong learning, from early learning through compulsory and post-compulsory education and training, extending through working life to the post-retirement phase. It will apply to formal, non-formal and informal learning environments.

As in other European Years, measures will include information and promotion campaigns, events and initiatives at European, national, regional and local levels to convey key messages and disseminate information about examples of good practice. The Year will be implemented using existing Community programmes, in particular the Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-2013⁷ and the Culture Programme 2007-2013⁸, and other programmes and initiatives within the priorities set for each instrument for the period including 2009⁹. Those priorities include sectorally targeted objectives such as: awakening and reinforcing creativity and innovation or developing innovative pedagogic approaches involving the creative arts and science in schools; promoting the “knowledge triangle” by establishing learning regions centred on universities as a driving force for regional development; supporting the development and transfer of innovation through vocational training; promoting adults’ personal fulfilment by

⁶ OJ C 163, 9.7.2002, p. 1.

⁷ Decision No 1720/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 November 2006 (OJ L 327, 24.11.2006, p. 45): http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/index_en.html.

⁸ Decision No 1855/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 December 2006 (OJ L 372, 27.12.2006, p. 22).

⁹ http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/call08/prior_en.pdf.

developing their cultural awareness and capacity for creative expression and innovation via adult education; and, for all links in the lifelong learning chain, communication activities and events to disseminate and apply the results.

To ensure that the activities organised in the course of the Year are tailored to the needs and circumstances in each Member State and that the maximum impact is obtained from the lessons learned at European level, the Member States are invited to appoint a national coordinator responsible for organising their participation in the European Year of Creativity and Innovation where the national Lisbon Coordinator cannot usefully take over this role. A European steering group, including representatives of the national coordinators, will coordinate activities at European level.

4.2. Legal basis

The basis for this initiative is Articles 149 and 150 of the EC Treaty. These two articles are commonly coupled, in keeping with the lifelong learning approach which has been endorsed in many Community texts over more than a decade, including those mentioned in the recitals.

4.3. Principle of subsidiarity

This proposal is in keeping with the principle of subsidiarity, in the same way as the existing Lifelong Learning Programme, which will be an important vehicle for implementing the Year. As in that case, the objectives of the proposal cannot be achieved to a sufficient extent solely by action by the Member States, because action at national level alone would not benefit from the European dimension of exchanges of experience and good practice between Member States targeted on promoting key competences in the specific field of creativity and innovation.

The objectives of the proposal can be better achieved by Community action because European Years are typically designed to meet common challenges facing Europe by achieving critical mass through a combination of public awareness-raising and promoting policy debate.

4.4. Principle of proportionality

The course of action proposed is simple, relying on existing programmes and on refocusing communication activities on the themes of the Year, and imposes no disproportionate management constraints on administrations implementing it.

4.5. Choice of instrument

A decision of the European Parliament and of the Council is the most appropriate instrument to ensure the full involvement of the legislative authority in designing the Year.

5. BUDGETARY IMPACT

No additional funding is sought for the Year. The flexibility for setting priorities on an annual or multiannual basis in the Lifelong Learning Programme and other relevant programmes provides a sufficient financial margin to support an awareness-raising campaign on a scale similar to previous European Years. The administrative resources necessary to implement the Year can also be found within existing administrative budgets.

Proposal for a

DECISION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL
concerning the European Year of Creativity and Innovation (2009)

Text with EEA relevance

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community, and in particular Articles 149 and 150 thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission¹⁰,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee¹¹,

Having regard to the opinion of the Committee of the Regions¹²,

Acting in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 251 of the Treaty¹³,

Whereas:

- (1) Europe needs to strengthen its capacity for creativity and innovation for social and economic reasons in order to respond effectively to the development of the knowledge society: innovative capacity is closely linked with creativity as a personal attribute, and to be harnessed to full advantage it needs to be widely disseminated throughout the population. This requires an approach based on lifelong learning.
- (2) Education and training systems should cater sufficiently and at all appropriate levels for the development of key competences to support creativity and innovation, with a view to finding innovative and original solutions in personal, occupational and social life.
- (3) The Lisbon European Council (23-24 March 2000) concluded that a European framework should define the new basic skills to be provided through lifelong learning as a key measure in Europe's response to globalisation and the shift to knowledge-based economies, and emphasised that people are Europe's main asset.
- (4) The Commission Communication "Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality" and the subsequent Council Resolution of 27 June 2002 on lifelong learning¹⁴

¹⁰ OJ C [...], [...], p. [...].

¹¹ OJ C [...], [...], p. [...].

¹² OJ C [...], [...], p. [...].

¹³ OJ C [...], [...], p. [...].

¹⁴ OJ C 163, 9.7.2002, p. 1.

identified the provision of “the new basic skills” as a priority and stressed that lifelong learning must cover learning from pre-school to post-retirement age

- (5) The Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning¹⁵ identified, in particular, “mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology”, “learning to learn”, “digital competence”, a “sense of initiative and entrepreneurship”, “cultural awareness and expression” and “social and civic competences”.
- (6) At its meeting of 8/9 March 2007 the European Council noted that education and training are prerequisites for a well-functioning knowledge triangle (education/research/innovation) and play a key role in boosting growth and jobs. It called for particular attention to be given to stimulating the potential of small and medium-sized enterprises, including those in the cultural and creative sectors, in view of their role as drivers of growth, job creation and innovation.
- (7) Declaring a European Year of Creativity and Innovation is an effective way of helping to meet the challenges facing Europe by raising public awareness, disseminating information about good practices and promoting research and policy debate. By creating an environment for simultaneously promoting these objectives at European, national, regional and local levels, it can achieve greater synergy and critical mass than disparate efforts at different levels.
- (8) As the promotion of creativity and of a capacity for innovation through lifelong learning falls within the objectives of existing programmes, in particular the Lifelong Learning Programme¹⁶, such a Year can be implemented by using that programme within the existing margins which it provides for setting funding priorities on an annual or multiannual basis; programmes and policies in other fields, such as enterprise, cohesion, rural development, research and the information society, also contribute to promoting creativity and a capacity for innovation and may support the initiative within their respective legal frameworks.
- (9) Since the objectives of this Decision cannot be sufficiently achieved by Member States and can therefore be better achieved at Community level, the Community may adopt measures, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, as provided for in Article 5 of the Treaty.
- (10) In accordance with the principle of proportionality, as provided for in the same Article, this Decision does not go beyond what is necessary in order to achieve those objectives,

¹⁵ Recommendation 2006/962/EC, OJ L 394, 30.12.2006, p. 10.

¹⁶ Decision No 1720/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 November 2006 (OJ L 327, 24.11.2006, p. 45).

HAVE ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

Subject

The year 2009 shall be designated as the “European Year of Creativity and Innovation”.

Article 2

Objectives

1. The overall objective of the European Year of Creativity and Innovation shall be to support the efforts of the Member States to promote creativity, through lifelong learning, as a driver for innovation and as a key factor for the development of personal, occupational, entrepreneurial and social competences and the well-being of all individuals in society.

2. The specific objectives of the European Year of Creativity and Innovation shall be to highlight, *inter alia*, the following factors which can contribute to promoting creativity and a capacity for innovation:

a) providing an environment which is favourable to innovation, flexibility and adaptability in a rapidly changing world and creative management of diversity; all forms of innovation, including social and entrepreneurial innovation, should be taken into account;

b) stimulating aesthetic sensitivity, emotional development, lateral thinking and intuition and fostering creativity in all children from the earliest stages of development, including pre-school care;

c) raising awareness of the importance of creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship for personal development, as well as for economic growth and employment; and fostering entrepreneurial mindsets, particularly among young people;

d) promoting education in basic as well as advanced mathematic, scientific and technological skills conducive to technological innovation;

e) fostering openness to change, creativity and problem-solving as competences conducive to innovation which are transferable to a variety of occupational and social contexts;

f) broadening access, and reducing disparities in access, to a variety of creative forms of self-expression, throughout formal education, and particularly during young people’s most formative years, so that the personal development of some is not hindered;

g) raising awareness among people that creativity, knowledge and flexibility are important in a time of rapid technological changes and global integration for a prosperous and fulfilling life; and equipping people to improve their career opportunities in all areas where creativity and a capacity for innovation play an important role;

h) promoting closer links between arts, business and schools and universities;

- i) developing creativity and innovative capacity through non-formal and informal youth activities;
- j) encouraging those who are not on the labour market to develop their creative potential for personal fulfilment and those who seek employment to enhance their attractiveness on the labour market;
- k) promoting design as a creative activity which significantly contributes to innovation, as well as innovation management and design management skills, including basic notions of protection of intellectual property;
- l) highlighting openness to cultural diversity as a means of fostering intercultural communication and artistic cross-fertilisation; and
- m) developing creativity and innovative capacity in private and public organisations through training, and encouraging organisations to make better use of the creative capacities of individuals, employees as well as of customers or users.

Article 3

Content of measures

The measures to be taken to achieve the objectives set out in Article 2 shall include the following activities at European, national, regional or local level linked to the objectives and themes of the European Year of Creativity and Innovation:

- a) conferences, events and initiatives to promote debate and raise awareness of the importance of creativity and a capacity for innovation;
- b) information and promotion campaigns to disseminate key messages;
- c) identification of examples of good practice and dissemination of information about promoting creativity and a capacity for innovation;
- d) surveys and studies on a Community or national scale.

In addition to activities co-financed by the Community in accordance with Article 6, the Commission or the Member States may identify other activities as contributing to objectives of the Year and permit the use of the name of the Year in promoting those activities insofar as they contribute to achieving the objectives set out in Article 2.

Article 4

Cooperation with the Member States

Each Member State shall appoint a national coordinator responsible for organising its participation in the European Year of Creativity and Innovation where the national Lisbon Coordinator cannot usefully take over this role. The coordinator shall ensure the coordination at national level of activities relating to the European Year of Creativity and Innovation.

Article 5

Coordination at European level

The Commission shall convene meetings of the national coordinators in order to coordinate the implementation of the European Year of Creativity and Innovation at European level and to exchange information on implementation thereof at national level.

Article 6

Funding

Without prejudice to the support that may be given to the Year by programmes and policies in other fields such as enterprise, cohesion, research and the information society, cofinancing at European level of activities within the framework of the Year shall be in accordance with the priorities and rules applying to existing programmes in the field of education and training, and in particular the Lifelong Learning Programme.

Article 7

Entry into force

This Decision shall enter into force on the day following that of its publication in the Official Journal of the European Union.

Article 8

This Decision is addressed to the Member States.

Done at Brussels, [...]

For the European Parliament
The President
[...]

For the Council
The President
[...]