



## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate-General for Education and Culture

Lifelong Learning: horizontal Lisbon policy issues and international affairs

**Lifelong learning: innovation and creativity**

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## **European Year of Creativity and Innovation 2009 – Information Note**

### **Introduction and summary**

#### **What purpose is to be achieved?**

The purpose of this European Year is to promote creativity and innovation among individuals, enterprises and organisations as a response to a range of personal, economic and social objectives.

#### **Why a European Year?**

A European year is an effective means of effecting change by raising public awareness and generating a policy debate.

To achieve a lasting impact it should deal with topics of current relevance and be linked into political processes.

It should as far as possible be based on sound evidence and/or stimulate further research where needed.

#### **What themes?**

At the level of the individual, creativity and a capacity for innovation are related competences, which can be promoted through lifelong learning and are relevant both to cultural self-expression and to economic goals.

This European Year will address a wide spectrum of related themes.

#### **Who is responsible for implementation?**

To be effective in reaching a wide public, the European Year needs to be taken up by relevant public and private agencies and stakeholders, combining top-down and bottom-up approaches.

#### **Resources available for implementation**

The Year will be implemented using existing programmes and budgets whose purposes are relevant to the themes of the year, within their margins for prioritising specific themes.

## How the European Year of Creativity and Innovation 2009 will be implemented

### Policy background

The following texts are of particular relevance and provide an established basis on which the messages for the European Year can be built:

- Proposed Council decision concerning the European Year<sup>1</sup>
- Council and EP recommendation on key competences for LLL<sup>2</sup>
- Council conclusions on a broad-based innovation strategy<sup>3</sup>
- Council conclusions on creativity and innovation through LLL<sup>4</sup>
- Council Resolution establishing an European Agenda for Culture, endorsed by the European Council in December 2007<sup>5</sup>

The fact that this European Year is timed for 2009 is significant: it provides an opportunity to ensure that creativity and innovation receive greater prominence as the European Union reflects on its strategic orientation for the post-2010 decade, building on, strengthening and sharpening the focus of the “knowledge-based” aspects of the Lisbon strategy.

### Themes

The decision establishing the Year provides an evident starting-point for identifying themes, in particular Article 2, which sets out the objectives. These objectives are linked to lifelong learning, and cover a range of issues. It is clear from the institutional debate and preparatory consultations with stakeholders that there is wide support for a broad-based initiative covering a spectrum of themes which may be either cultural (creativity as a human value in its own right) or utilitarian (innovation as key to Europe’s economic competitiveness) or a mix of the two (e.g. creative industries, design etc.).

The communication effort undertaken throughout the Year will therefore have to take account of the breadth of scope of the themes, and combine broad messages with more specific messages targeting specific publics.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2008:0159:FIN:EN:DOC>

The definitive text of this Decision, including amendments introduced by the European Parliament and the Council, will be available shortly in all the official languages of the EU.

<sup>2</sup> [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2006/l\\_394/l\\_39420061230en00100018.pdf](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2006/l_394/l_39420061230en00100018.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/en/intm/91989.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/intm/91989.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2008:141:0017:0020:EN:PDF>

<sup>5</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2007:287:0001:0004:EN:PDF>

The Year could develop a number of thematic strands such as

- fostering artistic and other forms of creativity through pre-school and primary and secondary education, vocational streams as well as informal and non-formal education
- maintaining engagement with creative forms of self-expression throughout adult life
- cultural diversity as a source of creativity and innovation
- information and communication technologies as media for creative self-expression
- ensuring that mathematics, science and technological studies promote an active, innovative mindset
- developing a wider understanding of the innovation process and a more entrepreneurial attitude as prerequisites for continued prosperity
- promoting innovation as the route to sustainable development
- regional and local development strategies based on creativity and innovation
- cultural and creative industries – where the aesthetic and the economic coincide
- innovation in public and private services.

## **Implementation**

### ***Interested parties***

The themes of the year are relevant to many policy domains beyond education and training and culture, and to reflect this the Commission is promoting cooperation between departments and agencies responsible for the relevant policy domains including enterprise and innovation, communication, regional, social and employment policies, rural development, research and the information society. It will also maintain an active partnership at European level with the other Institutions and consultative committees to implement the Year. The Commission will also mobilise the support of relevant European-level stakeholder groups.

The proposed decision calls on each Member State to designate a national coordinator. It would be helpful if national arrangements would include interdisciplinary support similar to that planned at European level, including relevant Government departments and agencies and national stakeholder groups. In addition, given that some of the themes are of interest to or the responsibility of regional or local authorities, national coordinating arrangements are likely to involve regional or similar bodies. This is to be welcomed, even where it is not a legal requirement, as it broadens the support base for implementation of the Year.

## ***Implementing mechanisms***

### *Planned activities*

This European Year is novel inasmuch as no separate budget allocation has been requested from the Budgetary Authority. Instead, existing budgets and programmes will be used within the scope which they already have to identify specific themes as priorities from time to time. There will therefore be no specific call for projects at European level. In all other respects, however, this Year can be implemented using the types of mechanisms and processes which are commonly applied for European Years (e.g. conferences, information and promotion campaigns, surveys and studies etc.).

Work is already well in hand to develop a programme of European-level events and processes spread over the year, including opening and closing conferences. Some of these should involve the presence of Commissioners and/or Government Ministers. Member States and other interested authorities are encouraged likewise to plan events which may be either national, regional or local in scope, or which where appropriate have a cross-border focus, and which will ensure visibility throughout the year and throughout their territory.

Apart from events whose main object is communication, conferences should be used as an opportunity to raise awareness of relevant research results and to highlight topics on which further research is required.

A number of “ambassadors” will be designated at European or national level to endorse key messages associated with the Year.

Member States could also encourage public-service broadcasters, public cultural institutions etc. to integrate relevant themes of the Year into their programming, and/or to highlight the Year itself, particularly at key moments such as New Year's Eve or New Year's Day..

### *Stakeholder participation*

The proposed decision provides that the Commission or Member States may identify activities as contributing to the objectives of the Year and permit the use of its name (which would include use of the logo etc.). Many stakeholders who have heard of the proposal currently before the Parliament and Council are keen to have their planned activities associated with the Year. In addition, many organisations hold annual conferences or other events which focus from year to year on a different theme, and they could consider choosing a theme for 2009 which reflects the objectives of the Year ("theming").

A website will be put on line shortly giving information on planned events and processes, and national coordinators are encouraged to provide full information on their plans to the Commission so that this can be shared with other countries and interested parties. The website will be developed and continually updated both in the run-up to 2009 and throughout the year itself. In the meantime, enquiries can be sent to the following email address: [EAC-EYCI@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EAC-EYCI@ec.europa.eu)