

THE CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES

Resolution 291 (2009)¹ Creative cities – managing the cultural activity of cities

1. In the European Year of Creativity and Innovation 2009, the role of cities as centres of cultural creativity is in the spotlight.

2. Cities and towns function as centres of culture, repositories of knowledge and places where people can meet together and express themselves in the public space, can learn and explore their multiple identities and at the same time be entertained, stimulated and invigorated by the contributions of others.

3. Cities which are culturally creative can become a driving force for their regions. By tapping into the huge reservoirs of talent of their diverse populations, they can stimulate economic development and social cohesion and act as magnets for tourists and investors alike.

4. To make best use of this huge potential, the right policies need to be put in place, carefully drawn up and supported by all parties concerned – the city authorities, local artists and creative industries, and the different sectors of the population. The policies can only be drawn up after a thorough evaluation has been carried out to identify the specific cultural identity and profile of the city.

5. “Agenda 21 for culture”, adopted in Barcelona in 2004, is a valuable resource in this respect and can serve as a key reference document for the cultural policies of Europe’s cities.

6. The cultural programme is a key element for the cultural development of the city. It needs to accurately reflect the diverse characteristics and cultural needs of the population and at the same time package and promote cultural activities in order to reach a wide audience.

7. In the light of the above, the Congress, bearing in mind the Council of Europe’s White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue, calls on local authorities to:

a. seize the opportunity of the European Year of Creativity and Innovation to undertake a thorough review of their

cultural policy, with a view to releasing and harnessing the creative talents of their populations;

b. adopt “Agenda 21 for culture” and use it as a reference document for cultural policies and activities and ensure that it is implemented by the municipality;

c. ensure that their cultural policies encourage creativity and are based on the understanding that cultural pluralism can be a source of strength and vitality and that cultural activities can effectively contribute to social cohesion;

d. take into consideration the lessons learnt by the Council of Europe’s programme “Intercultural cities: governance and policies for diverse communities”, notably Resolution 280 (2009) of the Congress on intercultural cities;

e. take measures to brand their towns and cities, exploring and promoting the unique identity of each and ensuring that this identity fully reflects the diversity of its population;

f. take into consideration the models used by the successful applicants for the “capital of culture” label, ensuring that cultural policies are properly managed and involve public participation, proper evaluation and impact assessment;

g. make full use of local consultative bodies, in line with Congress Recommendation 115 (2002) on the participation of foreign residents in local public life: consultative bodies, to ensure that all age, language and ethnic groups participate in the municipal cultural programme, and that special attention is accorded to increasing participation among groups which tend to be marginalised;

h. work closely with regional authorities to ensure that the cultural programme serves the needs of the wider region;

i. support local artists and provide incentives to encourage individual artistic creativity in a broad range of cultural activities;

j. support the development of artistic neighbourhoods and recognise their role in urban regeneration.

1. Debated and approved by the Chamber of Local Authorities on 15 October 2009 and adopted by the Congress on 15 October 2009, 3rd Sitting (see Document CPL(17)3, explanatory memorandum presented by K. Dombrowicz, Poland (L, ILDG), rapporteur).