EU Cultural Policy: Divided institutional interrelationships and strategic changes in policy development

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Abstract
The EU has engaged with cultural policy especially after the Maastricht treaty in 1992. To compare the division within two EU institutions, this paper mainly analyses the EU official documents: the "European Agenda for culture in a globalizing world", published by the European Commission in 2007 – which was the first "Communication" regarding cultural policy – and "Work Plan for Culture" which was published as "Conclusions" by the Council of the European Union. The aim of this paper is to reveal that the Council focus only on a part of the policy of the European Commission on culture. It also concluded that the main strategies of the EU cultural policy have changed to incorporate some non-profitable aims.

Keywords: EU, cultural policy, European Commission, Council of European Union

Introduction

Fifteen years after the Maastricht Treaty first incorporated a provision on culture at the European level, the "European Agenda for culture in a globalizing world (Agenda 2007)" was published by the Commission of the European Communities (European Commission) in the form of a "Communication". Although cultural programs have been implemented since 1992, Agenda 2007 is noteworthy as it is described as the EU's first "Policy for culture" (Gordon, 2010, p. 102). The Council of the European Union adopted its own "Work Plan for Culture", in which member states would set priorities for EU cultural policy for the following years. This Work Plan incorporates the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) as one of its "Instruments and working methods".

Much of the existing literature on EU cultural policy refers to the Agenda 2007 (Kandyla, 2015). One, for example, investigates the OMC itself in the cultural sector (Psychogiopoulou, 2015); another aims to reveal the adequacy of the OMC in the cultural sector (Psychogiopoulou, 2017); from the perspective of the European Commission and its role in the operation of the cultural OMC, Mattocks concludes that it is "more developed and stronger than what might be expected" (2018, p.327). However, this conclusion is questionable as Mattocks mainly analyses the personal communications about the role of the European Commission in cultural policy "co-ordination" with the individuals engaged in cultural OMC such as EU Commission's

policy officers and officials and Member state experts and representatives, but not the Work Plan itself. [1]

The divisions between the Commission and the Council on this issue suggests that there may be differences in policy direction or emphasis in the policy. Through a detailed and comparative analysis of the Agenda 2007 and the Work Plans for Culture (2008-2010 and 2011-2014), this paper elucidates the ways in which the European Commission's targets, indicated in the Agenda 2007, for cultural policy are integrated and implemented by the Council of European Union in the form of a Work Plan, and how the main strategies of the EU cultural policies have changed.

The European Agenda for culture in a globalizing world (Agenda 2007)

The introduction to the Agenda 2007 states that centuries of migratory flows and exchanges have led Europeans to share a common cultural heritage (Commission of the European Communities, 2007, p. 2). It demonstrates how Europeans have historically had common cultural roots as a result of the flow and exchange of people prior to integration. In addition, this Agenda states that the EU is not merely an "economic process of a trading power" but is exemplary of soft power in its "unprecedented and successful social and cultural project (Commission of the European Communities, 2007, p. 3)." It asserts that the EU is willing to emphasise and focus on the cultural sector as an entity alongside the economic sector. This is evident from the statement that "creative entrepreneurs and vibrant cultural industries are a unique source of innovation for the future" (Commission of the European Communities, 2007, p. 3).

The objectives of this Agenda are:

1. Promotion of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue
2. Promotion of culture as a catalyst for creativity in the framework of the Lisbon Strategy for growth and jobs
3. Promotion of culture as a vital element in the Union's international relations (Commission of the European Communities, 2007, p. 8)

To achieve these objectives, this Agenda states that the EU is to be more actively involved in cultural diversity with the background of exchanges between different cultures, free mobility of artists and cultural experts, promotion of cultural exchanges with countries outside the EU, and the cultural sphere at international organizations. Moreover, this Agenda indicates that it would be better served to take cultural aspects into account in implementing various policies (Commission of the European Communities, 2007, p. 14). It can be inferred that the EU is aware of the increasing number of people with diverse cultures from Central and Eastern European countries after 2004 and responds to this situation by paying more attention to cultural diversity.[2]

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[1] Mattocks alters the names used in the article for the sake of privacy and security.
[2] In 2004, eight Central and Eastern European countries, Malta and Cyprus newly joined the EU and later in 2007, Bulgaria and Romania entered.

In addition, based on the research report "Economy of Culture in Europe"[3], this Agenda indicates the extent to which the cultural industry and the creative sector make a significant contribution to Europe's GDP, growth and employment with concrete figures, and notes that they are essential to Europe's economy and its competitiveness in a globalizing world (Commission of the European Communities, 2007., pp. 8-11). On the other hand, the concepts of "European identity," and the notion that "culture" can establish a shared identity or a sense of belonging are not prioritized in this Agenda (Commission of the European Communities, 2007, pp. 1-15). These deficiencies in tandem with the emphasis laid on issues such as cultural diversity, mutual understanding and cultural contribution to the economy, suggest that the primary interests of this Agenda are diversity in culture, and economic contribution such as job creation, but not the creation of unity.

What is remarkable about this Agenda is that the utilisation of culture for the Lisbon Strategy is one of the above three objectives, and that it proposed to incorporate the OMC to further develop policies in the cultural field (Commission of the European Communities, 2007, p. 12). The OMC is a form of intergovernmental policy-making which does not result in binding EU legislative measures and it does not require EU countries to introduce nor amend their laws. It was originally created in the 1990s and was defined as an instrument of the Lisbon Strategy, providing a new framework for cooperation between the EU member states. The European Commission is only responsible for supervision, and the EU member states are evaluated by one another (peer pressure) under the OMC (EUR-Lex, n.d.).

The roles of the OMC are principally based on:

1. jointly identifying and defining objectives to be achieved
2. jointly established measuring instruments
3. comparing EU member states' performance and exchanging best practices (Commission of the European Communities, 2007)

This Agenda states that the OMC has already been implemented and has been successful in areas such as employment and social protection, and that it also needs to be implemented in the cultural sector (Commission of the European Communities, 2007, p.12). It is pointed out as important that, notwithstanding being limited by the principle of subsidiarity, the European Commission's proposal to introduce the OMC in the cultural sector showed that the EU was interested in promoting EU cultural cooperation within its authority (Mattocks, 2018, p. 323). Staiger also highly evaluates the introduction of the OMC into the cultural sector, as more important than the three main objectives of this Agenda (2013, p. 32). Theses analyses make clear how the OMC is used in the EU cultural sector requires further attention which this paper will expand upon later, and that culture was expected to contribute to economic and social policies, leading to similar treatment as those in other fields. This was because this Agenda incorporates the OMC, which was introduced to achieve the Lisbon Strategy, into the cultural field and tries to utilise culture to achieve this Strategy.

The policy officer of the Directorate-General of Education and Culture (DG EAC) of the European Commission, noted in an interview that

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[3] This report was prepared by an external research organization specializing in the field of culture at the request of the Directorate-General of Education and Culture (DG EAC) of the European Commission in 2006.

> The first ever European Agenda for culture gave a policy background to the cultural actions managed by the EU. And cultural policy of the EU developed on the basis of the first ever European Agenda for culture. And the European Commission, until 2007, had managed programmes funding cultural projects without any policy background.[4] (Interview with Ms. Urian, Policy officer, Directorate-General of Education and Culture of the European Commission, on 11 November 2019 by Skype).

However, the Maastricht Treaty had incorporated a provision on culture in 1992. Additionally, at the inauguration of this Agenda, José Manuel Barroso, the then President of the European Commission, mentioned that culture and creativity are important drivers of personal development, social cohesion and the economy. He also emphasised that they are "Core elements" for European projects (European Commission, 2007). It shows that this Agenda and culture were recognized as important also to the then President of the European Commission.

The Agenda 2007, then, which provides a "policy background" to the cultural actions of the EU, includes objectives such as the promotion of cultural diversity, the growth of economy, the introduction of the OMC in the cultural sector, and the aim of influencing the policies written by other departments with cultural policy. The EU thus attempted to provide a more compelling basis for promoting cultural policy at the EU level by reframing the need for a diverse cultural policy on the basis of economic benefit.

Work Plan for Culture 2008-2010

Adopted in the form of Conclusions of the Council of the European Union, the "Work Plan for Culture 2008-2010" was scheduled over three years by the Cultural Affairs Committee of the Council of the European Union, and later approved by the Ministers in the field of culture from the Member States (Council of the European Union and European Council, 2017).

The Work Plans contain several priority areas requiring the implementation of certain sub-themes — among them, some employ the OMC as a working method. In the Work Plan 2008-2010, five priority areas are presented, and some sub-themes implement the OMC to bring together experts from the Member States. This means that the introduction of the OMC into the cultural field proposed in the Agenda 2007 was immediately implemented. The OMC has the role of building a common understanding of a problem, consensus on solutions, and helps to implement them. In the field of culture, the OMC meets five to six times over an 18-month period with experts from cultural ministries and national cultural institutions to develop policy manuals and toolkits. The European Commission is responsible for the operation of the OMC, holding meetings and supporting its members (European commission, n.d.).

The five priority areas of this Work Plan are as follows:

    I.   Improving the conditions for the mobility of artists and other professionals in the cultural field

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[4] Urian, M. (2019). Policy officer, Directorate-General of Education and Culture, European Commission, Interview by Skype, 11 November 2019, (C. Yasuda, Interviewer).

II. Promoting access to culture, in particular through the promotion of cultural heritage, multilingualism, digitization, cultural tourism, synergies with education, especially art education, and greater mobility of collections

III. Developing data, statistics and methodologies in the cultural sector and improve their comparability

IV. Maximizing the potential of cultural and creative industries, in particular that of SMEs[5]

V. Promoting and implementing the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (Council of the European Union, 2008).

Items I to III aim to improve the accessible environment in the cultural field, IV aims to disseminate the economic effects of cultural sector, and V aims to implement the UNESCO Convention. This Work Plan marks a total of four OMCs to be enacted, one in priority area I, two in II, and one in IV as showed in the Table 1 below.[6]

Table 1

	Priority Area	Number of the OMC used
I	Improving the conditions for the mobility of artists and other professionals in the cultural field	1
II	Promoting access to culture, in particular through the promotion of cultural heritage, multilingualism, digitisation, cultural tourism, synergies with education, especially art education, and greater mobility of collections	2
III	Developing data, statistics and methodologies in the cultural sector and improve their comparability	0
IV	Maximising the potential of cultural and creative industries, in particular that of SMEs	1
V	Promoting and implementing the UNESCO convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions	0

Note: Compiled by the author based on the "Work Plan for Culture 2008-2010"

Table 2 below explains which of the sub-themes using the OMC were adopted by certain priority areas.

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[5] SMEs mean "Small and medium-sized enterprises" which represents 99% of all businesses in the EU.
[6] The term "OMC" is not directly used in the column showing each priority area of this Work Plan 2008-2011. Instead, at the end of the document, it is referred to as a "working group" comprised by MS experts that is set to be implemented. In addition, the Work Plan 2011-2014 uses the name "Working group of Member State Experts (OMC)". Therefore, it can be fairly assumed that the Work Plan 2008-2011 was indeed referring to the OMC. Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on the Work Plan for Culture 2008-2010, 10 June 2008. Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on the Work Plan for Culture 2011-2014, (2010/C 325/01), 2 December 2010.

Table 2

Priority Area	Title of sub-themes using the OMC as a method
I	Mobility of artists and other professionals in the cultural field
II	1, Mobility of collections and activities of museums 2, Pursuing stronger synergies between culture and education
III	-
IV	Cultural and Creative Industries
V	-

Note: Compiled by the author based on the "Work Plan for Culture 2008-2010"

In other words, the OMC was not installed in the two priority areas. In addition, although various sub-themes have been raised regarding priority area Ⅱ, the OMC is set up only for the above two sub-themes. It might not be possible to establish a working group using the OMC for all sub-themes, but this Work Plan was implemented shortly after the Agenda 2007 had introduced the OMC into the cultural field. The Agenda 2007 stated "The work plan now needs to be renewed and the Commission believes that the time is ripe for Member States to take their cooperation one step further, by using the open method of coordination (OMC) as a mechanism to do so (Commission of the European Communities, 2007, p. 12)". It indicates that the Commission wants the Work Plan to use the OMC. In other words, the sub-themes chosen to implement the OMC, which is a new arena in EU cultural policy, are emphasised the most among the five priority areas.

Based on the three selected priority areas (I, II, IV) and the sub-themes of the working groups using the OMC, it becomes clear that this Work Plan stresses the more accessible environment in the cultural field (movement of artists and works) and economic growth. It shows that this Work Plan was attempting to implement the purpose of the Agenda 2007 which described the movement of artists and works, incorporation of culture into education, and the economic aspects of culture. However, regarding cultural diversity and the utilisation of culture in diplomacy outside the EU, which was also defined as an objective of the Agenda 2007, this Work Plan only mentions holding a meeting on the implementation of UNESCO's Convention and holding of meetings of senior government officials in the field of culture, but does not plan to establish a working group using the OMC. In short, not all the goals of the Agenda 2007 are emphasised by this Work Plan for Culture.

The Council of the European Union thus focuses more on the accessible environment for people/artworks in the cultural field, and on the economic effects of culture rather than on cultural diversity and the use of culture in diplomacy. The next section will pay close attention to and compare the number and fields in which sub-themes using the OMC will be set up in the next Work Plan for Culture.

Work Plan for Culture 2011-2014

The beginning of "Work Plan for culture 2011–2014" evaluates the impact of the "Work Plan for culture", explaining that the "Work Plan for culture 2008–2011" was a new and important step in the development of cooperation between Member States in the cultural sector, improving the coherence and visibility of European action (Council of the European Union, 2010). As in the last Work Plan, priority areas have been set, and sub-themes to be implemented in each area have been decided. The major difference from the last Work Plan is that some sub-themes specify the submission of deliverables such as reports, handbooks, and manuals. The number of priority areas have increased to six comparing with the last Work Plan (Council of the European Union, 2010). These are as follows:

> A: Cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and accessible and inclusive culture
> B: Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs)
> C: Skills and mobility
> D: Cultural heritage including mobility of collections
> E: Culture in external relations
> F: Culture statistics (ibid)

Compared to the priority areas of the last Work Plan, the titles of the areas differed in some areas: "Cultural diversity" is taken up as a title of priority area A, not only mentioned in the context of encouragement and implementation of the UNESCO Convention as in the last Work Plan; "Cultural heritage" is treated more centrally than before being mentioned as a title of priority area D. Moreover, a major change exists in that "culture in external relations" was also elected as a distinct priority area compared to only being taken up incidentally within one priority area in the last Work Plan. Area C, D and F are for the purpose of creating a more accessible environment in the cultural field, and B is for the purpose of disseminating the potential of cultural industries on economy. These are nearly the same as the last Work Plan.

Regarding sub-themes using the OMC, nine of them in some priority areas implemented the OMC as follows (ibid).

Table 3

	Priority Area	Number of the OMC used
A	Cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and accessible and inclusive culture	2
B	Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs)	3
C	Skills and mobility	3
D	Cultural heritage including mobility of collections	1
E	Culture in external relations	0
F	Culture statistics	0

Note: Compiled by the author based on the "Work Plan for Culture 2011-2014"

However, the OMC was not implemented for the two priority areas. The OMC was set up under sub-themes as follows.

Table 4

Priority Area	Sub-themes using the OMC
A	1, The role of public arts and cultural institutions in the promotion of: (i) better access to and wider participation culture (ii) cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue 2, Development of the key competence 'Cultural awareness and expression'
B	1, Strategic use of EU support programmes, including structural funds, to foster the potential of culture for local and regional development and the spill-over effects of CCIs on the wider economy 2, CCI export and internationalization support strategies 3, Good practices on financial engineering for SMEs in cultural and creative sector
C	1, Mobility support programmes 2, Promotion of creative partnerships 3, Artists' residencies
D	1, Examination of ways and means to simplify the process of lending and borrowing
E	-
F	-

Note: Compiled by the author based on the "Work Plan for Culture 2011-2014"

Compared to the last Work Plan, it is confirmed that the number of sub-themes has increased, the content of each sub-theme has become more specific and narrowed, and sub-themes that promote the contribution of culture to the economy have been added: counting all the sub-themes under all the priority areas, those related to cultural utilisation to the economy have approximately doubled (Council of the European Union, 2008; Council of the European Union, 2010). It is important to note that priority area A has two sub-themes using the OMC. This shows that the Council started focusing on cultural diversity respecting the Commission. What should also be noted is that each priority area (A-F) describes which of the three objectives of the Agenda 2007 they follow (such as "Promotion of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue"). This is different from the last Work Plan. It indicates that this Work Plan directly shows the Council's selection from three objectives decided by the Commission.

In summary, the features of this new Work Plan were:

- having more specific contents as a whole
- having the priority areas covering a wider range while following the last Work Plan
- characterized by the increasing number of sub-themes using the OMC
- emphasising the promotion of the cultural contribution to economy

Conclusion

We can conclude that the Council of the European Union accepts the basic principles of the policy of the European Commission on culture but in practice focuses only on specific parts: the Council, from 2008 to 2010, emphasises issues in cultural sectors which are more familiar to EU citizens such as the free movement of artists and works in the cultural sector, and the economic effects of culture. Moreover, the division between these two institutions became clearer from 2011. Since then the Council has been placing greater emphasis on the cultural sector's contribution to the economy. Further, each priority area in the Work Plan 2011-2014 specifically and clearly indicates which objective from the Agenda 2007 it aims to accomplish. These findings point to the institutional division in which the Council did not entirely follow the cultural policies once intended by the Commission and only adopted the Agenda 2007 in part. Nevertheless, the Council also moved to increase the focus on promoting cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue while utilising culture in diplomacy. The EU overall has been moving to use cultural policy in relation to issues which are difficult to immediately measure with indicators since 2011. This shows, to some extent, a transition of the EU cultural policy's target. Future research will focus on the reasons for this transition.

Acknowledgements

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