



COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES  
GENERAL SECRETARIAT



PRESS RELEASE

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1320th meeting of the Council  
and the Ministers responsible for Cultural Affairs

Brussels, 18 May 1989

President: Mr Jorge SEMPRUN  
Minister for Culture  
of the Kingdom of Spain

The Governments of the Member States and the Commission of the European Communities were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Mr Valmy FEAUX	Minister-President of the Executive of the French-speaking Community
Mr Bruno FAGNOUL	Minister for Culture of the German-speaking Community
Mr Marc LEPOIVRE	Deputy Permanent Representative

Denmark:

Mr Ole VIG JENSEN	Minister for Culture
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Germany:

Mr George GOELTER	Chairman of the Conference of Ministers for Cultural Affairs of the Länder
Mr Jochen GRUENHAGE	Deputy Permanent Representative

Greece:

Mrs Melina MERCOURI	Minister for Culture and Science
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Spain:

Mr Jorge SEMPRUN	Minister for Culture
Mr Miguel SATRUSTEGUI	Under-Secretary for Culture

France:

Mr Jack LANG	Minister for Culture, Communications, Public Works and the Bicentenary
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Ireland:

Mr Noel TREACY	Minister of State at the Ministry of Finance
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Italy:

Mrs Vincenza BONO PARRINO      Minister for the Cultural Heritage  
Mr Franco CARRARO                Minister for Tourism

Luxembourg:

Mr Robert KRIEPS                Minister for Culture

Netherlands:

Mr L.C. BRINKMAN                Minister for Culture

Portugal:

Mrs Teresa GOUVEIA              Secretary of State for Culture

United Kingdom:

Mr Richard LUCE                 Minister for the Arts

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Commission:

Mr Jean DONDELINGER            Member

AUDIOVISUAL SECTOR CONCLAVE

The Council and the Ministers responsible for Cultural Affairs held a preliminary discussion on the Audiovisual Sector Conclave which will be held in Paris at the end of next September.

The Conclave is a follow-up to the conclusions of the Rhodes European Council, according to which it is for the Commission to initiate the procedures necessary for preparation of this Conclave.

The discussion led to the clarification of certain organizational matters and of the content of the Conclave.

BOOKS AND READING

The Council and the Ministers adopted the conclusions and the resolution set out below, with a scrutiny reservation by one delegation.

Conclusions  
of the Council and of the Ministers responsible for Cultural Affairs  
meeting within the Council  
on books and reading with a view  
to the completion of the internal market in 1992

The Council and the Ministers responsible for Cultural Affairs meeting within the Council held an exchange of views on the subject of books and reading with a view to the completion of the internal market in 1992.

With regard to taxation on books, after hearing a statement from the Commission they noted that the Commission was reflecting on the possibility of revising its present proposals on indirect taxation and excise duties in a manner which would, inter alia, provide scope for the lowest possible rate of VAT on books.

For the same reasons, they considered the prices of books and, in the absence of an alternative system acceptable to all, decided in favour of continuing national policies intended to ensure a balance between the interests of authors, publishers, booksellers and the public, while complying with the rules of competition.

In the same context, they stressed the role of small and medium sized publishing firms that cared about publishing quality books, in order to ensure the vitality, originality and pluralism of publishing.

As regards questions of copyright affecting authors, they noted a statement from the Commission concerning its Green Paper on copyright and its intentions in this field.

By way of encouragement to authors, the Council and the Ministers responsible for Cultural Affairs meeting within the Council decided to create an annual literary prize to be awarded in the context of the European City of Culture.

All general action concerning books should also involve libraries; the Council and the Ministers responsible for Cultural Affairs meeting within the Council await with interest a Commission proposal on the intensification of collaboration between libraries regarding data processing.

The Council and the Ministers responsible for Cultural Affairs meeting within the Council also agreed on the importance of increasing public awareness of books and reading by placing particular emphasis on the use of television for that purpose.

Finally, they were aware that the existence of different language areas was an obstacle to the spread of books and culture in general in Europe, and that it was essential in order to overcome this obstacle to derive benefit from the diversity of cultures, and in particular those based on the less widely-known languages in Europe. They drew attention to the practical actions agreed on 18 May in the Resolution of the Council and of the Ministers responsible for Cultural Affairs meeting within the Council concerning the promotion of books and reading. In particular, they noted the creation of an annual prize for the best translations of literary works, also to be awarded in the context of the European City of Culture.

Resolution of the Council and the Ministers responsible  
for cultural affairs meeting within the Council  
concerning the promotion of books and reading

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THE COUNCIL AND THE MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR CULTURAL AFFAIRS MEETING WITHIN THE COUNCIL,

Having regard to the priority which they attached to books and reading in their conclusions of 27 May 1988 concerning future priority actions in the cultural field,

Having regard to the part concerning books of the Resolution of the European Parliament of 17 February 1989 on a fresh boost for Community action in the cultural sector and the Opinion of the Economic and Social Committee of 14 April 1988 on the same theme;

NOTE the general thrust of the Commission communication of 26 April 1989 on books and reading;

REAFFIRM, whilst respecting their Resolution of 27 May 1988 on the future organization of their work, their will to co-operate in the promotion of all the elements of the book chain leading from the author to the reader;

DECIDE that European countries which are not members of the Community and organizations concerned with European cultural co-operation, especially the Council of Europe, can be invited to participate in certain specific actions of common interest;

APPROVE the actions set out in the Annex and instruct the Committee on Cultural Affairs to draw up and agree on the details of their implementation, including the financial aspect, as speedily as possible;

AGREE to review the progress made with respect to this Resolution in two years' time on the basis of a report from the Committee on Cultural Affairs.

BOOKS AND READING : ACTIONS

1. Guide for authors and translators

- this guide, to be presented by the Commission, will contain information about their legal, social and fiscal status in the different Member States of the Community

2. Programme (1989-1992) for the publication of statistics - book sector

- this programme, put into effect progressively by the Commission, in collaboration with the Council of Europe and UNESCO, will include the publication in 1989 of a first set of European statistics relating to books

## 3. (a) European literary prize

## (b) Prize for the best translations of literary works

- the two prizes will be awarded each year upon the proposal of an independent jury in the framework of the European City of Culture, the details of these prizes to be fixed before the end of 1989

## 4. Pilot project for financial assistance for translations of contemporary literary works

- this project, decided upon in its broad outlines in a Resolution of the Council and the Ministers responsible for cultural affairs meeting within the Council on 7 November 1987, has been launched for a five-year period beginning in 1989

## 5. Scholarships and travel awards for courses at the colleges for literary translators; network of these colleges and other measures to promote literary translation

- an increase in the grants made by the Commission to such courses; encouragement of a network among existing colleges;

## 6. Conservation of books made from acid paper and use of "permanent paper"

- intensified collaboration, to be organized by the Commission and the Member States, among libraries and archives and taking into account the work of specialized international organizations, in favour of conservation of books threatened by the fragility of acid paper; information campaign to be launched by the Commission and the Member States in favour of "permanent paper"

## 7. Comparative study of export aid measures for books

- this study, to be prepared by the Commission, will provide better knowledge of the export aid measures existing in different Member States

## 8. Campaign for raising European public awareness of books and reading

- this campaign, which will include actions using television for raising public awareness, will be carried out in collaboration with the Council of Europe and UNESCO.



CO-OPERATION BETWEEN LIBRARIES IN THE FIELD OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The Council and the Ministers,

expressed their interest in the cultural aspects of the Commission Communication of 26 April 1989 on co-operation between libraries centring on the application of new information technologies;

noted with satisfaction the progress achieved with regard to their Resolution of 27 September 1985 on that subject and to the objectives set out in the Resolution;

requested that the Commission submit specific proposals to the Council as soon as possible for study by the competent authorities, including the Committee for Cultural Affairs.

EUROPEAN CITIES OF CULTURE (1)

The Council and the Ministers responsible for Cultural Affairs confirmed the nomination of Dublin as European City of Culture for 1991, and that of Luxembourg for 1995.

The Council agreed to nominate Copenhagen as European City of Culture of 1994.

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(1) European Cities of Culture: 1992 - Madrid;  
1993 - Antwerp.