



**Chair's Statement of the 6th ASEM
CULTURE MINISTERS MEETING
Rotterdam, the Netherlands
19-21 October 2014**

The Sixth Meeting of the ASEM Culture Ministers was held in Rotterdam on 19-21 October 2014. The theme of the meeting was *Creative Industries*.

The meeting was attended by delegations from 43 ASEM Partners and the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF). A list of participants appears as Annex 1.


On Monday the 20th His Majesty King Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands opened the official session with an inspiring speech.


The ASEM Culture Ministers' Meeting built upon:

- the Fifth ASEM Culture Ministers Meeting on *Managing Heritage Cities for a Sustainable Future* (Yogyakarta, Indonesia, September 2012), which introduced culture and heritage as resources and a potential basis for creative economy in the context of national, regional and local development planning.

The following events were also important in providing a strategic context for this meeting:

- The Sixth ASEF Experts' Meeting and Public Forum on *Creative Economy in Asia and Europe: Emerging Pillar of Economic Growth and Development* (Hanoi, Vietnam, December 2013). This stressed that the creative industries are increasingly driving innovative solutions across a range of social agendas and emphasized the value of cross-sectoral collaboration and the integration of arts and culture as core agendas for sustainable and inclusive city planning.
- The Third UNESCO World Forum on Culture and Cultural Industries *Culture, Creativity and Sustainable Development. Research, Innovation, Opportunities* (Florence, Italy, 2-4 October 2014), which underlined the value of cultural and creative industries as sources of creativity and innovation for sustainable development and the opportunities they provide for future generations.

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- The Model Asia-Europe Meeting 2014 (Milan, Italy, 8-12 October 2014) organized by ASEF, which was attended by 118 Student Representatives from ASEM partner countries. They emphasized the significance of the creative industries in terms of job and wealth creation, sustainable development, social inclusion and local regeneration.



Furthermore, the Ministers referenced the United Nations *Creative Economy Report 2013: Widening Local Development Pathways*. This publication confirms the creative economy as one of the most rapidly growing and value-adding sectors of the world economy. It also emphasizes how unlocking the potential of the creative economy involves promoting the overall creativity of societies, affirming the distinctive identity of the places, improving the quality of life, enhancing local image and prestige, and strengthening the resources for the imagining of diverse new futures.

The ASEM Culture Ministers reiterated their commitment towards further promotion of cultural co-operation of the peoples of Asia and Europe, in the spirit of mutual respect and equal partnership. Building on the outcomes of previous ASEM Meetings, they wish to contribute further to a shared future. The Ministers acknowledged that Asian and European countries alike have experience in using the creative industries for job and wealth creation and for promoting sustainable development, social inclusion, regeneration and empowerment. They used the sixth ASEM CMM to exchange experiences and best practices and discuss the benefits and challenges of creative industries.

Societal progress depends on innovation, new ideas and solutions for the major problems of our time. The start of the 21st century has required Asia and Europe to employ development strategies in order to foster human creative potential which can respond to the cultural, economic, social and technological shifts taking place. The ASEM Culture Ministers believe that the creative industries have the ability to make use of culture to provide new insights and new solutions to benefit both societal and economic goals. They agreed that creative economy is part of the world development agenda. And they believe that, adequately and appropriately nurtured, creativity fuels cultural development, infuses human-centered growth and is key ingredient in job creation, innovation and trade, while at the same time contributing to social inclusion, cultural diversity and environmental sustainability.

The ASEM Culture Ministers acknowledged the challenges faced by many countries where the creative industries are part of the policy agenda: such as how to create links



between different creative entrepreneurs and between entrepreneurs in creative and 'non-creative' sectors, how to broker opportunities for education/science to interact with creative industries, and how to make these developments reinforce initiatives at regional and city level reciprocally. The Ministers agreed that a clear link should be created between the creative industries and the social goals that they can help achieve. They underlined that this requires the value of the creative industries for competitive advantage to be recognized. Innovation does not come through technological advancement per se: technological advancement can be traced back to imagination, creativity and craftsmanship.

The ASEM Culture Ministers took into consideration the varying levels of policies with regard to creative industries between Asia and Europe and recognize the alignment of policies in the field of creative industries. This will include a focus on the required institutional capacity to build stronger collaboration between partner countries. Therefore they encourage all partner countries to introduce and develop international cooperation as well as concrete actions especially in the following fields..

Creative Skills


The ASEM Culture Ministers emphasized that innovation is a key prerequisite to meeting the societal challenges of the 21st century, such as health care and ageing, youth unemployment and the management of natural resources. They encourage the convergence of art, business, creativity, innovation, engineering and science. The creative industries, as no other, are capable of fostering innovation. Creative skills are increasingly in demand in business, being indispensable to finding new solutions to problems and to facilitating growth and acceleration. The Ministers underlined the key contribution of education to the development of these skills, which is illustrated by recent curriculum reforms in some countries, as well as the importance of cross-fertilization between Europe and Asia through student mobility programs such as Erasmus+ and the ASEAN International Mobility for Students (AIMS) program. The Ministers believe that, from a cultural policy standpoint, the contribution of arts education to the development of these skills, which also promote entrepreneurship and ensure competency with the evolving needs and opportunities of creative industries, is particularly important.



Conclusions and recommendations

- A partnership of equivalence between the cultural, creative industries and education sectors. This in turn will enable the co-creation of a creative skills agenda and a more inclusive, entrepreneurial, confident and resilient creative workforce.
- Productive use of internships, apprenticeships and other mechanisms which connect teaching, learning and creative practice.
- To share best practice governance models which enable effective creative education to be more effectively delivered and widely adopted.

Creative Entrepreneurs



Creative entrepreneurs are the lifeblood of the creative industries and play a major catalyzing and value-adding role across the economy. They need to be able to lead change, to do business and to work with different kinds of people. Much of (government) policy for the creative industries is focused on supporting the enabling conditions for creative entrepreneurs to develop their potential. The ASEM Culture Ministers believe that in order to tap the full potential of creative talent, it is important not only to develop artistic quality, but also entrepreneurial skills and leadership. They underline the importance of providing artists, creative practitioners and cultural and heritage professionals from a range of disciplines with the right tools to enable them to transform a creative idea into a product that meets the demands of the consumer, or to invest in talent and form an intermediary link between producers and consumers. They also encourage efforts to broker connections between creative entrepreneurs and entrepreneurs across the economy – such as technologists, engineers and sustainability experts.

Conclusions and recommendations

- The creative industries provide a platform for development and transformation and are positively expressive of our cultural heritage. The creative industries are vital to the development and expression of our diverse identities – individually and collectively.
- An important role of government is to generate the enabling conditions for creative entrepreneurs to be able to compete in the market.






- The creative industries is predominantly a micro and small business sector. Support and regulation needs to attend to this reality.
- Creative entrepreneurs require a more effective support and regulatory environment to allow for the effective protection of intellectual property rights.

Creative Cities

Over half of the world's population lives in cities. The ASEM Culture Ministers believe that (re)developing cities is one of the pressing questions, in which several perspectives have to be taken into account to foster a sustainable and balanced outcome. They acknowledge the fact that both in Asia and Europe strategies are being developed to address this issue. With traditional top-bottom processes wearing thin, local and national governments are looking for new ways to address the questions of today's cities. The ministers reiterate their support for the establishment of an Asia-Europe creative city network as agreed in the fifth ASEM Culture Ministers Meeting in Yogyakarta (in 2012). The Ministers emphasized that the creative industries have an important role in mobilizing and engaging talent, applying technological innovations, accelerating new IT solutions, and connecting commercial and social outcomes. They agreed that the overall goal is the enhancement of the sustainability and the quality of life in our cities.


Conclusions and recommendations

- Be people-centered, inclusive and socially engaged. Key is delivering the enabling conditions for creativity to flourish – from citizen and community participation to mobilizing creative businesses.
- Cities are in continual processes of transformation; the creative industries are a positive driver here – ensuring cities leverage their distinctive assets, be active custodians of our heritage (built, tangible and intangible) and never stand still in their pursuit of sustainable development, resilience, competitiveness and harmony.
- The crafts sector can be positioned as a more productive and value-adding sector overall. This includes nurturing a contemporary role for traditional crafts and enabling the crafts sector to drive innovation more holistically.
- Governance needs to be open, inclusive, inter-ministerial and an effective blend of national and local. Top down solution and bottom-up solutions need to be combined and new tools and mechanisms should be encouraged – e.g. local intermediary structures and agencies.

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- Cities of different sizes in different contexts face diverse challenges and opportunities. At an Asia / Europe level we need more effective mechanisms for the co-creation of knowledge and exchange of best practice.

Closing remarks

The Sixth Meeting reaffirmed the ASEM Culture Ministers' commitment to continue stepping up cultural exchanges and cooperation in all cultural fields between Asia and Europe. Please refer to Annex 2 for the full list of actions.



The ASEM Culture Ministers welcomed the outcomes of the Asia Europe Creative Industries Network Program that was organized in the framework of their own Meeting by Het Nieuwe Instituut, the Dutch institute for creative industries, architecture, design and media cultures (please refer to Annex 3). They believe that this event created a fruitful meeting place and knowledge exchange opportunity for international professionals in the creative industries, which can support practice and strategy and stimulate interactive policymaking in this sector.

The Ministers valued positively the Seventh ASEM Public Forum: Creative Industries in Asia and Europe – Enabling Crossovers, that was organized in cooperation with Het Nieuwe Instituut and the European Cultural Foundation (ECF) and formed the opening of this Network Program, as well as the mapping Enabling Crossovers: Good Practices in the Creative Industries that ASEM has made as an input for the Sixth ASEM Culture Ministers' Meeting (please refer to Annex 4).

The ASEM Culture Ministers acknowledged the ASEM as the permanent institution of ASEM and recognized the important role of ASEM in facilitating bi-regional cooperation in arts and culture by promoting the exchange of ideas, information and cultural professionals in ASEM countries; and, in particular, in translating key recommendations of the Sixth ASEM Culture Ministers' Meeting into concrete activities such as the ASEM Experts' Meeting and Public Forum series.

They also acknowledged the role of ASEM's culture360 web portal – an Asia-Europe cultural web-portal set up to connect cultural practitioners of the two regions and the Asia-Europe Museum Network (ASEMUS).



The ASEM Culture Ministers thanked the Netherlands for their hospitality and the provision of an inspiring and enriching programme.

The ASEM Culture Ministers welcomed the Republic of Korea's offer to host the Seventh ASEM Culture Ministers' Meeting and look forward to meeting again in 2016.

The ASEM Culture Ministers wish that the conclusions of this declaration be taken into account in the preparation of the Eleventh ASEM Meeting of the Heads of States and Governments to be held in 2016.

