

Brussels, 15 November 2006

## **Culture contributes to 2.6% of EU's GDP and employs at least 5.8 million Europeans, says a study published today in Brussels**

*In a study presented to the EU's Ministers of Culture on 13 November, the European Commission shows the importance of the culture sector for the EU economy, and underlines its potential for creating more and better jobs in the future. With its 5.8 million employees, the Culture sector employs more persons than the total employed in Greece and Ireland put together. Further, the culture sector accounted for 2.6% of EU GDP in 2003, and experiences higher growth rates than the average of other sectors of the economy.*

The independent study, commissioned by the European Commission, was published on 13 November. In presenting the results to the EU Member States' Culture Ministers, Ján Figel', European Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture, and Multilingualism, said: *"This study helps break the conventional wisdom on the culture and creative Sector. It confirms that the arts and culture are far from being marginal in terms of their economic contribution. Indeed, they are a major employer, and as a sector, the culture and arts contribute to innovation and the economic and social development of the EU, its regions and cities. The culture sector is the engine of creativity, and creativity is the basis for social and economic innovation. As such, I firmly believe that the EU's arts and culture are a dynamic economic and social driver for achieving more growth, and more and better jobs."*

The document highlights the direct (in terms of GDP, growth and employment) as well as the indirect (links between creativity and innovation, links with the ICT sector, regional development and attractiveness) contribution of the cultural and creative sectors towards the Lisbon Agenda. The main findings of the study include:

### **In economic terms:**

- the sector contributed **2.6% of EU GDP in 2003**, exceeding the contribution of the chemicals, rubber and plastic products industry (at 2.3%)
- it is performing well by increasing its share of economic activity;
- the sector's growth between 1999 and 2003 was 12.3% higher than the growth of the European economy in general;
- its **turn-over** was more than **€ 654 billion in 2003**.

### **In social terms:**

- **5.8 million people** - in 2004 - worked in the sector, equivalent to **3.1% of total employed population** in EU-25, more than the total employed in Ireland and Greece put together;
- whereas total employment in the EU decreased in 2002-2004, employment in the sector increased (+1.85%) over the same period.

The study proves therefore that spending money on culture is a sound investment.

The study also calls for a **coherent strategy for the creative sector** and includes a **set of policy recommendations** intended to unleash the "Lisbon potential" of the cultural economy in Europe.

The proposed future strategy is composed of three main strands:

- to **improve intelligence gathering of statistical evidence** on the importance of the cultural sector in Europe;
- to **increase its contribution to the Lisbon strategy's goals through a more intensive use of the EU's programmes**, fostering creativity, clustering technology and creation in joint platforms, promoting investment in cultural industries, and integrating the cultural dimension in international cooperation agreements between the EU and third countries;
- structural reform via strengthened coordination of activities and policies impacting on the cultural and creative sector within the European Commission.

The study will feed into the **Spring European Lisbon Summit in 2007**.

This document will also be a key input in the forthcoming Communication on the role of Culture in Europe to be adopted next year.

The study's executive summary as well as the full text are available at :

[http://ec.europa.eu/culture/eac/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/culture/eac/index_en.html)

For more information on the EU's actions in the cultural area:

[http://ec.europa.eu/culture/eac/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/culture/eac/index_en.html)