

Innovate, participate!

A cultural policy agenda for The Netherlands

Raad voor Cultuur (Netherlands' Council for Culture)
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Foreword

On 6 March 2007, the Council for Culture [*Raad voor Cultuur*] presented the Dutch government with recommendations under the title 'Innovate, participate' [*Innoveren, participeren*] relating to the agenda for cultural policy in the coming years and the government's plans for a new subsidies system.

This publication before you now is an English version of the 'Cultural Policy Agenda' [*Agenda cultuurbeleid*]. This section of the recommendations contains an analysis of current social developments, at both national and international level, followed by recommendations for future cultural policy. The document is intended as a source of inspiration/input for the new Minister of Education, Culture and Science, who took office in February, Mr Ronald Plasterk. During the course of 2007, the Minister will publish his policy document on cultural policy for the years ahead.

The Council for Culture is receptive to everyone, whether at home or abroad, who is interested in cultural policy. If you would like to respond to this document, please do so via info@cultuur.nl

This translation is limited to the general ideas which formed the basis for analyses of developments in specific sectors of the arts, heritage and the media. The full text of the recommendations, of which the agenda below is just a part, was too extensive to have translated into English. The Dutch version can be found at www.agendacultuurbeleid.nl.

Summary

Under the guiding principle of cultural citizenship (section one) this agenda plots a timeline for the coming years which will lead to more participation in art and culture in the widest sense of the word. The five following sections clarify the current state of affairs and identify relevant developments which determined how the agenda items were chosen. These developments offer the prospect of success, but also entail certain risks. For example, the increased heterogeneity of the Dutch population, as examined in the second section, has meant that cultural institutions have been faced with questions to which no satisfactory answers have yet been found – there are opportunities as well as risks. One thing that is clear is that a one-sided emphasis on ethnicity does not work well. There are a lot more differences between people which are important to bear in mind in the context of cultural policy.

Section three deals with the country and its administration. The large-scale building activities which have been planned, including those within the framework of a new approach to water management, raise new questions in relation to spatial planning. The architectural policy is intended to ensure that most is made of the opportunities for spatial, cultural and socially responsible solutions. As commissioners of such initiatives, the various authorities bear a considerable responsibility. They are also responsible for the way in which the country is run, and this includes cultural policy. Cultural policy is characterised by the continuous search for complementarity between various government layers. There is little legal basis and, as a result, there is a continual need for precise administrative coordination.

Sections four to six identify developments which are closely related to each other. Digitisation and medialisation have initiated a social process which is having a significant effect on the way in which people relate. More and more often, cultural consumers are becoming cultural producers. Digitisation is making new forms of cultural participation possible. A very promising development is the creation of new distribution relations which, in turn, lead to all kinds of new possibilities for cultural niche markets. Cultural institutions will have to adapt the way in which they function and are organised. The same is also being demanded of those who provide subsidies and their attitude towards the institutions. The links between the business community and culture have improved particularly due to the effect of the growing need for knowledge and creativity. The Ministries of Culture and Economic Affairs have responded by drawing up a joint policy programme. It is clear, however, that the economic potential of culture is only partly being used. More is required, and this theme is examined in the tenth section, which focuses on innovation. Digitisation has made the world both larger and smaller. The resulting tension is evident in international treaties and conventions. The liberalisation of world trade has considerable consequences for copyright. The general pattern, that those responsible for policy at European level, and local mayors, are gaining in influence at the expense of the State, is also reflected in international cultural policy. This links up perfectly with the repositioning of our cities as international cultural refuges, which serve for example as an arena for an open debate on the contribution that culture can make to a proper conclusion to the European adventure.

The six subsequent sections examine the opportunities which the identified developments present, and include a concrete specification of what must happen to take advantage of these opportunities, or to ward off the dangers that have been observed. Together they make up the agenda for cultural and media policy. Section seven repeats an earlier view of the Council, namely that media wisdom is required to find a way through a media-dominated world. Cultural institutions are going to have to fulfil a different role. The dominant sectoral thought within a demarcated cultural domain, a certain cultural expression or cultural practice will make way for a structure whereby the orientation of an individual, a group or a social grouping is at the fore. In this context, de-partitioning and cooperation, not only in the cultural sector but elsewhere as well, are the main challenges. Digitisation also faces considerable risks: undesirable use of copyright and a reduced accessibility of the public domain. These related issues are high on the Council's agenda. The point of departure is already being formulated that everything created by public means must, in any case, be and remain accessible to the public.

Section eight confirms that culture transfer inside and outside the school environment continues to be crucial for broad cultural participation. In that context, the renewed attention for the *Bildungsideal* (from the German meaning "educational ideal"), which has been embodied in a new approach in primary and secondary education, is promising but not sufficient. Education in Dutch as the key to further cultural development and education in art-related subjects is often below par. The Council advocates the setting up of a new fund for amateur art and cultural education to reinforce the link between the two, to encourage innovation and to invest more in extracurricular art education. Talent development, the theme of the ninth section, also requires special attention. The position of vocational art education in the context of visual arts needs improvement. In addition, amateur art is a generally accepted breeding ground for talented people who are able to progress, thanks to specialised institutions. Culturally oriented schools and preparatory training also fulfil that function. There are still grounds for the fearful assumption that in some disciplines young talented Dutch talented start vocational training so far behind in comparison to foreign students that they are barely able to catch up. The recommendations on this issue by the Education Council [*Onderwijsraad*] and the Council for Culture therefore still apply.

In the tenth section, on innovation, the ideas presented in the passages on technology (section four), the economy (section five) and e-culture (section seven) lead to the conclusion that the culture sector has to be involved more actively in the general innovation agenda. It is for this reason that the Council advocates more time and money being devoted to innovation and more control on the basis of an ambitious innovation programme, participated in by various departments and for which consortia of different parties can register. The Council plans to consult with other bodies regarding the points of departure of such an innovation programme, which should also offer space for social innovation.

Before ending in section twelve with some administrative and technical information, which provides a link to the Council's recommendations on the proposals for a basic cultural infrastructure, the eleventh section makes a case for more historical awareness and the restoration of continuity. The arts, our heritage and the media can make an important contribution in this context. In the culture sector, and elsewhere, dividing lines are created all too often between the past, the present and the future and these tend to have a disruptive rather than a stimulating effect. For example, there are scarcely any real differences between monuments policy and architecture policy. De-partitioning will also blur the dividing line between eras and will make the continuity more apparent.

Introduction

1. Cultural citizenship

The society formed by the residents of the Netherlands is under pressure. Many people are uncertain about their future, dissatisfied about everything that is taking place over their heads and frequently intolerant and lacking in mutual respect. As a result, these people are building barriers around themselves from behind which they can watch things unfold with a certain air of resignation. As one century passed into another, the Social and Cultural Planning Office [*Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau*] (SCP) warned that dark clouds were appearing on the horizon in more ways than one.¹ After all, our weakened dykes are no longer able to keep out the outside world, which is regarded as undesirable, and all that is going on in it. This inward-looking attitude is also completely at odds with the national tradition of cosmopolitanism, entrepreneurship, tolerance, democracy, freedom and innovation. Although, whether rightly or not, this image has been battered in recent years, it still applies and still reflects the most important ingredients with which we will have to tackle the adventure that is the future. That links up closely with the appeal for a 'national participation strategy' that Alexander Rinnooy Kan made upon his installation as chairman of the Social and Economic Council [*Sociaal Economische Raad*] (SER). The aim is to create new self-confidence, as exhibited by spirited citizens who, thanks to a continuous process of education and training, manage to find their way in a changing world.

Policy

The point of view of the Council for Culture is different to that of the SER, despite the affinity between the two advisory bodies. For the near future, this cultural agenda nevertheless also places considerable emphasis on the theme of citizenship. Incidentally, this theme is not new to the Council. It was dealt with in detail in the 'Media wisdom' [*Mediawijsheid*] recommendations.² The Council grouped digitisation and medialisation in the category of developments which affect the way in which form and substance is given to the notion of democracy. Partly as a result of the government adopting a less and less representative stance and a growing belief in the ability of participating citizens to do things independently, the Council regarded it as essential that citizens have sufficient "media wisdom" to be able to function within the new social reality which came about as a consequence of digitisation and medialisation – and which continues to develop. Since the publication of the recommendations in 2005, the importance of media wisdom has only grown. This is no coincidence. The signs have turned to red both as regards culture in the widest sense of the word, which the SER chairman was aiming at – with extra attention for socio-economic factors on account of this job – and in culture in the sense of the domain of intellectual and artistic processes.³ For a large part, this is due to the same, often global developments. In both respects, citizens will have to determine their position themselves and will themselves have to decide how they will respond to those major developments. The main task of policy, and in this case the national government's policy on the arts, cultural heritage and the media, is primarily to create conditions which enable citizens to do this individually and in groups.

Agenda

For this to happen, freedom of expression is required first and foremost. That freedom is wide-ranging and relates both to processes of production and distribution and of participation – a distinction that is incidentally becoming less and less well-defined. Freedom also means free access to the public domain which is undergoing considerable change due to the effect of digitisation. In the public knowledge domain, information has to be independent and reliable. However, the national government's task goes beyond providing free access and safeguarding reliability and independence. Another of its tasks involves familiarising citizens with the public domain. In addition, the national government creates conditions for the preservation of existing and the creation of new cultural

¹ Social and Cultural Planning Office (SCP), 'In view of the future. Social and Cultural Report' [*In het zicht van de toekomst. Sociaal en Cultureel Rapport 2004*], The Hague, 2004.

² Council for Culture, *Mediawijsheid. De ontwikkeling van nieuw burgerschap*, The Hague, 2005.

³ In the points of departure of the Council for Culture's 'Multi-year Work Programme' [*Meerjarig Werkprogramma*] for the period 2006-2009, culture is defined as 'the whole of practices and customs with which members of society attach meaning to their historical and social existence'.

expressions which are regarded as having special meaning. The value of these is, in the first place, intrinsic. That intrinsic value acquires more meaning as cultural expressions are used more effectively and intensively. Intensive use creates a lively and cosmopolitan cultural climate with space for innovative, conceptual creators, cultural pioneers and for fully participating and culturally involved citizens. This is the core of this policy agenda for culture, art and media, which is intended to make the world safe, sustainable, exciting and beautiful – starting in the Netherlands. This will ensure a continuation of the work already started on the points of departure and themes of the Council's multi-year work programme.⁴

The arts, our heritage and the media

A society which wants to progress is well advised to look backwards as well as forwards. The past must not be forgotten. Instead it should be refined and re-used. Without any continuity we lose our way and stumble from one incident to another. Our collective memory, of which significant parts have been stored in archives, museums and libraries, forms a vital basis for that continuity. This does not stop culture creators and artists from exploring the future under the traditional Dutch motto of 'investigate everything and retain what is good' and from designing appropriate new concepts and perspectives. In that sense, the 'artistic dimension' of our culture, as the 'Canon of the Netherlands' [*Canon van Nederland*] calls it, acts not only as a treasure house but also as a national laboratory for research and development. Certainly in an economic context in which the scarcity of knowledge and creativity is only becoming more and more acute, a flourishing arts and culture sector makes an invaluable contribution to future prosperity and welfare. At present, culture is invaluable as a source of mutual ties and meaning. In order to function properly, whether alone or in a group, people need a frame of reference – a link which is experienced as meaningful amidst the continuing stream of experiences and impressions of everyday life. In search of a meaningful existence people resort to ordered patterns such as religion, ideology, doctrine, morality, language, art and cultural heritage, or combinations of these. Such a system creates a bond between people and often acts as a basis for shared values, expectations and rules of life. Art primarily stimulates people's imagination and creates unprecedented and inspiring views – sometimes it even offers an insight into the meaning of life. Our heritage shows us where we have come from and also sharpens our view of the future. The media primarily influences the issues people discuss with each other, the material and immaterial matters which they consider to be important. In other words, things which bind them together or indeed distinguish them from each other. A recent investigation by the Scientific Council for Government Policy [*Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid*] (WRR) established that church-related religion is drying up as a source of meaning and is making way for various lifestyles in which religion is being transformed and in which other sources of meaning have a place.⁵ The category which was labelled "citizenship style" [*burgerschapstijl*], is distinctive due to its pronounced feeling of responsibility for public affairs. The survey on which the report is based shows that, for those included in this category, the media are an important source of meaning.

Cultural citizenship

The term "cultural citizenship" was coined to reflect the increased importance of cultural practices and institutions in society and the greater interdependence of politics, the economy and culture. It may even be better to talk of an increased insight into the importance of culture for the functioning of society. Citizenship and social participation are not simply a question of – once acquired – formal rights and economic independence. They are issues which have to be fought for and lived up to day in day out, and culture and cultural participation play a crucial role in this. Globalisation, migration and the emergence of a global popular culture have put pressure on the automatic identification of

⁴ In its work programme the Council identified seven themes: intercultural, international, regional cultural policy, e-culture/the influence of the media, cultural education, the instruments of cultural policy and culture and the economy.

⁵ Gerrit Kronjee and Martijn Lampert, 'Lifestyles and interpretation' in 'Believing in the public domain: exploration of a dual transformation' [*Leefstijlen en zingeving, in Geloven in het publieke domein: verkenningen van een dubbele transformatie*], Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR), The Hague, 2006.

citizenship with a certain, nationally-bound, political community, as reflected, for example, in the diligent search for a national canon. The citizen is not just a member of a national community but is, at the same time, a consumer of a worldwide cultural heritage, from Microsoft to Nissan, and from capoeira to yoga. In economic terms, attention is growing for corporate cultures and the influence of a creative class. Besides ordinary capital we now also speak of cultural capital and we designate our cities as cultural capitals. The classical model of an active cultural and artistic elite versus a receptive and passive mass audience – and therefore a conflict between high and low – is gradually making way for a much more differentiated view of cultural participation, exchange and interactivity. The term "cultural citizenship" is not intended as a clarification for this increased significance of culture, but must be seen as an indication of and emphasis on the complexity and the stratification of citizenship as such – and with that the indisputable meaning of the arts, cultural practices and institutions for the flourishing and development of the national political community in a global economic, political and, above all, cultural context.

Descriptive

2. The people

The population

The composition of the Dutch population has changed dramatically in a relatively short space of time. This is due, in particular, to the arrival of non-Western migrants who live primarily in the country's four major cities. With populations consisting for 35% of migrants, Amsterdam and Rotterdam are the leaders in this respect. On average, slightly more than half of the young people in the four major cities belong to this group. They develop their own culture which is characterised by, among other things, their own views and interpretations of the concept of artistry, with the classic distinction between high and low culture not playing a role. For many immigrants, a dual cultural background continues to have an influence on the way in which they shape their lives during the course of successive generations – and these can be numerous. Increased opportunities as regards travel and exchanging information at global level are leading to transnational cultural communities in which Dutch people from elsewhere will continue to focus to varying degrees on the culture of the region, or that of their country of origin. The degree of social acceptance of new Dutch citizens by the native Dutch population will partly influence the way in which, and the degree to which, the culture of origin continues to determine their identity.

In the meantime, the population is ageing. Currently, 14 percent of Dutch people are over 65 years old. However, this is still under the European Union average. Due to an unexpected significant decrease in population growth, the ageing process is set to take place more quickly than was expected, particularly when the baby boom generation has reached pensionable age after 2010.

Diversity

The differences in lifestyle between the various population groups appear to be increasing rather than disappearing. Our complicated society is exhibiting numerous fault lines and barriers between citizens and these carry over into the participation in established cultural life, and particularly in its many subsidised elements. Cultural policy has, for years, taken account of some demographic differences based, for example, on level of education or income. However, this does not mean that sufficient solutions have been found. Let alone solutions for the geographical, social, age and gender-related differences in the heterogeneous society. The term 'intercultural' has been used in recent years to focus attention particularly on ethnicity in combination with a low level of education. One-sided representation has meant that policy has focused on a limited ethnic minority group. This has had undesirable side effects such as the exclusion of other groups and insufficient attention for the role that interculturality already plays in various areas of art, culture and the media. In order to eliminate the hurdles and exclusion mechanisms in the wider context of cultural life and public participation, a much broader and more flexible approach is needed than interculturality indicates.

In addition, there is a need for policy based on the permanence of diversity at the level of the national government and that of the institutions, as the Council has argued on previous occasions. The diversity policy must put an end to a one-sided incidental, project-based approach. Projects must continue to exist and must be embedded more effectively into a structure. Knowledge and experience gained during various projects must not be lost, but must be embedded in wide-ranging cultural practices. More space must also be created for reflection on the nature and the implications of cultural diversity. Sector institutes, funds and umbrella organisations are driving forces in this respect. Artists, bearers of culture and cultural institutions must not, in advance, be pigeonholed into an ethnic definition. A category-based approach, for example on the grounds of ethnicity, often has an impeding effect on the interplay between established and non-established, Western and non-Western cultural expressions. Artists determine their position in relation to the changing society primarily within the context of their own sector or discipline.

The appeal not to refer to artists primarily on the basis of their ethnicity does not, by any means, imply disapproval of those who use ethnicity as a source. In the recent past, various provisions were made, primarily on the grounds of ethnicity, which are still useful and important and which cannot simply be discontinued. The artists, bearers of culture and cultural institutions involved acknowledge the tension

which exists between the objections to a special position based on grounds other than artistic ones, and the effectiveness of specific policy. The Council is convinced that, more than in any other field, desirable changes do not occur of their own accord. Programmes and other provisions which create space for cultural expression and participation by new Dutch citizens therefore continue to be necessary.

Similarly, a new focus on cultural diversity does not mean that every subsidised institution has to make radical changes. However, it does mean that they have to re-determine their views on the theme based on their own social role and their own responsibility. Moreover, within the context of the institutions as a whole, a greater balance needs to be created between organisations which work on the basis of different beliefs. Institutions in which the State is involved directly or via the funds are expected to focus fully on the demographic changes in the Netherlands in their activities, their attitude to the public and their personnel policies. A specific personnel policy can, in particular, achieve a great deal, provided it receives structural attention, the work is carried out in accordance with realistic expectations, and all levels within an institution are involved in the process. Diversity can also be used as a theme for cooperation between the various authorities. After all, diversity is revealed primarily by the growing pluriformity of local communities. With this in mind, an active policy is often pursued to include art and culture in social processes. In this respect, the Cultural Outreach Action Programme [*Actieplan Cultuurbereik*], in which the various authorities collaborate, has also often had a stimulating effect.

Education

The level of education of the Dutch population has increased considerably over the past few decades and this trend is still continuing. According to the SCP, the upper limit has almost been reached. The SCP suspects that significant potential for growth exists primarily among ethnic minority groups.⁶ It was once thought that more education would lead automatically to increased participation in cultural activities. The available quantitative data does not really demonstrate whether this has been the case. The definitions have changed drastically over the years. The effect of successive innovation programmes means that current education is almost incomparable with that of 30 years ago. Moreover, cultural life has become a lot broader and more accessible – with pop concerts, dance parties, musicals, games, an abundance of books and magazines, an abundance of shows and concerts, films on TV and DVD, the affordability of modern design, etc.

Although the level of education of the population has increased, the amount of time reserved for historical-cultural education has decreased, both in general education and in teacher training. The term 'general education' is being interpreted differently. The transfer of knowledge has lost some of its value and has partly had to make way for skills training.⁷ The nature and quality of the education carry more weight as explanatory factors for cultural participation than the quantity. As far as cultural participation is concerned, a not very encouraging observation is that, in spite of token lip service, culture generally has little status also in education. The amount of teaching time allocated to historical and cultural subjects is limited. A lot of teachers have insufficient knowledge. In recent years, schools have become more and more autonomous and now determine the specifics of the teaching programme themselves.

The Culture and School programme stirred up a lot more attention for art and culture in primary and secondary education. However, the long-term effect is uncertain. Cultural education is a matter for the long haul. In only a few years time will it be possible to measure whether pupils who have participated in the programme have more cultural baggage than those that have not. Incidentally, a focus on culture

⁶ Social and Cultural Planning Office (SCP), 'The social state of the Netherlands' [*De sociale staat van Nederland*], The Hague, 2005, p. 48-50.

⁷ The Education Council makes recommendations to reinforce knowledge in education in its recent survey entitled 'Reinforcing knowledge in schools' [*Versteviging van kennis in het onderwijs*] (2006). The Council argues for, among other things, a better system for recording educational content and maintaining and strengthening the level of knowledge of teachers.

in education is not a cure for all evils. Even in the best case scenario, no more than a couple of lessons per week are devoted to culture. The influence of the family and of the dynamics of one's own group is much greater.⁸ Nevertheless, a good and well-trained teacher can work wonders. That is why the Education Council and the Council for Culture advocate in their joint recommendations that students at primary school teacher training colleges must be able to develop into teachers with plenty of cultural baggage. With this in mind, the primary school teacher training curriculum must focus structural attention on art and heritage education, local studies, media education, film education, literature education and reading promotion.⁹ Because the situation as regards literacy and literary competencies has only become more urgent, the Council advocates the drawing up of a renovation plan to reinforce literature education.

3. The land and the water

Layout

Al Gore's film, *An Inconvenient Truth* presents the Netherlands as one of the first countries to flood if global warming continues at the current rate. Even if environmental pollution is drastically reduced, the earth's temperature will still increase by two degrees Celsius during the coming 50 years. According to Al Gore, flooding will have occurred in the Netherlands. Leaving aside the question of whether this prediction is true, it is still patently obvious that curbing the effects of a rising sea level, increases in other water levels and even more rainfall will, to a large extent, determine our country's future layout. Living in a time in which the HSL (high speed rail link), the Betuwelijn freight line and Vinex house building schemes homes are important issues, we appear to have forgotten that a large proportion of the population live, quite simply, in a delta which is below sea level. If we want to prevent flooding, sustainable solutions for protection against, and the management of, water will have to be central to any plans relating to our country's layout in the near future. Viewed from a long-term perspective, this is nothing new. After all, water has determined the layout of our cultural landscape throughout the centuries and still does so. The way in which we deal with water is both a technical and a cultural matter. The same applies to sustainability. Social issues of this scope cannot be ignored if the credibility of architecture as a cultural expression is to be preserved. The profession, specialised in tackling spatial problems, will have to help tackle subjects such as limiting the environmental burden caused by the construction of infrastructure at local, regional and global level – and the long-term effects of interventions in the towns and the landscape.

New accents

Apart from water and the environment, the amount of attention paid to other subjects has also dwindled in recent years, for example for housing construction, the layout of open countryside and the quality of public spaces. It is time to breathe new life into the design work as a whole. Architecture, urban planning, landscape architecture, the preservation of monuments and archaeology must be applied forcefully and coherently in efforts to create a beautiful country, which is a pleasant place to live and work, which is an attractive place to invest and which has plenty of features to admire and learn from. After all, an architect is a lot more than a brand and a building is a lot more than a product in a project developer's portfolio. Certainly with regard to the massive water-related problems, architecture has an influential and essential role to play in the public domain. On the basis of this role, architects must again investigate what should and can be done given the present social conditions. It is primarily the task of specialists to ensure that designers are assigned a key role in complicated spatial transformation processes. To achieve this, architects are required to be committed and have a thorough knowledge of society. Or, as architecture theorist Anthony Vidler recently described in an interview in *De Architect*: 'They ought to adopt the attitude of active citizens who develop buildings. Architects

⁸ See, for example, J. de Haan en W.P. Knulst, 'The range of the arts' [*Het Bereik van de kunsten*]. SCP, The Hague, 2001, p. 141.

⁹ See the recommendations in 'Education in culture, reinforcing culture education in primary and secondary education' [*Onderwijs in cultuur, Versterking van cultuureducatie in primair en voortgezet onderwijs*] by the Education Council and the Council for Culture, The Hague, 2006, p. 40-43.

must again take the position of advocates for a better environment.’¹⁰ A lively country can only be achieved if social tasks, design practice and the way our heritage is dealt with are inextricably linked. The participants in this process – the creators, the administrators, the principals and the users – each play their own individual and unmistakable roles as cultural citizens.

Neither can the government shirk its responsibilities. The Dutch government has a specific responsibility for the cultural quality of large-scale projects such as dyke construction, power stations, Vinex neighbourhoods, the North-South metro line, station sites, etc. As a frequent and influential principal, the government ought to adopt an inspiring attitude, with a keen eye for the general importance of high quality architecture. Sensible principals are characterised by a powerful vision of what has to be achieved, are closely involved in the design process and are prepared to engage in a dialogue with designers and possible users. The government should take more account of the social, cultural and political functions of architecture (in the broadest sense of the word) in its role of designer and implementer of architectural policy as well.

The growing importance of Europe and the region is clearly noticeable in the layout of the Netherlands. ‘The region’ has become a shifting concept, with the demarcation of boundaries being dependent on the task set. The State must again review its own role and interpret it differently wherever necessary. That may result in the State having to take a step backwards in favour of the region and Europe.

Administration

The founding of the Batavian Republic more than two centuries ago marked the end of the fragmentation of the national system of administration. Although a more robust central authority was created, various regional institutions, like the water boards, still retained some of their powers and the decentralised united State came into being. The modern Kingdom of the Netherlands slowly expanded and parallel to this, the central or decentralised involvement of the various layers of government developed. While central government was the first to take primary responsibility for the country’s heritage, the towns were the first to do the same for the arts, for example through support for orchestras. Now, two centuries later, there is a good balance between the influence and power of the national government and that of the other administrative layers. The motto by which the Dutch have divided their polder is ‘Decentralised wherever possible, centralised wherever obligatory’.

Other authorities

Cultural citizenship is shaped in people’s own living and working environment. That is rarely or never the country as a whole, but almost always a town, village, area or region. Cultural policy is, therefore, not a matter for the State alone. What is more, the joint budget of the other authorities is more than twice that of the State. That is why, when drawing up this cultural agenda, a lot of effort went into coordinating the formation of ideas within decentralised authorities. This also ensured the fulfilment of the explicit request in the application for advice to take account of the points of view of the towns and regions. The point of departure consisted of the three major cities and the five country subdivisions which agree a covenant with the Minister for Culture every four years in relation to a joint cultural policy effort.

In mid-December 2006, a delegation from the Council held talks with administrators and representatives from the culture sector of the five country subdivisions and the major cities. There is general satisfaction with the composition of the country subdivisions. The exception is the West country subdivision, where the cooperation is not generating much synergy. The absence of links with the major cities in that area appears to be the most important reason for this. A solution will have to be sought in the period ahead which, incidentally, must not have a detrimental effect on the harmonisation with the rural area. In the future, the State will also have to take greater account of the

¹⁰ Harm Tilman, ‘Architects must become advocates of a better living environment’ [*Architecten moeten pleitbezorgers worden voor een betere leefomgeving*]
Interview with Anthony Vidler, in: ‘The Architect’ [*De Architect*] 1, January 2007, p. 18-21.

priorities of the local and regional cultural policy in the way it views the country subdivisions and the major cities.

Various formalised municipal partnerships for culture exist at a different level to that of the country subdivisions. Five major cities in the province of Brabant, each with its own profile, are considering nominating themselves as candidates for designation as the European Capital of Culture. In the South, the cities of Maastricht, Heerlen and Sittard/Geleen are cooperating formally under the name 'Tripool'. Cooperation between towns and cities is not the only way to bring about cultural profiling. Numerous municipalities and provinces are presenting themselves individually with references to one or more special aspects of their own culture. Each region has its own unique characteristics. For example, the 'open' cultural infrastructure of the three northern provinces contrasts with the 'more compact' cultural infrastructure of the urbanised areas in Brabant and Southern Limburg. Those different characteristics mean that the regions' needs and ambitions are also different. The State is expected to acknowledge this differentiation and to take it seriously. The general view is that it should be taken more into account, or even make the differences an aspect of policy.

In all the country subdivisions, cultural institutions perform different functions at the same time. Usually, the State only finances one. If the related subsidy is discontinued, the basis for the other functions also disappears, for example in favour of amateur organisations or education. In addition, there is not only a cohesion of functions within one institution but also between institutions themselves. The more open the cultural infrastructure becomes, the more important it is that institutions exist which can fulfil these additional functions. In the country subdivisions, artists' initiatives, production houses, workshops and so-called cultural breeding grounds play a key role in the development of the arts. Institutions which are part of this middle segment often cooperate in an innovative manner with other parties. The existence of festivals and institutions for vocational art education in a country subdivision also reinforces the mutual coherence and continuity of the middle segment. The preservation of a robust middle segment is the main concern of the country subdivisions as regards a development which they refer to as the "fundification" of long-term subsidised institutions.

The covenant partners want to uphold the covenant as a basis for the cooperation with the State. However, they fear erosion of that instrument as a consequence of the changes in the system of culture memorandums. This would reduce the active scope of a covenant. A situation could arise in which the institutions lose their subsidy and that this would lead to the disappearance of the range of functions that they fulfil in a particular area. The artistic-substantive consideration continues to dominate but the Council can imagine that, in exceptional cases, important factors may be instrumental in producing a decision in favour of a subsidy. It appears to be difficult to make comprehensive agreements between local and provincial administrators and those responsible for State funds. The culture sector rightly fears losing the involvement of its own administrators as a consequence of this "fundification". Given the complexity of the material, the Council suggests that, during the next subsidy round, covenants are entered into in the conventional manner which provides a direction for the following three years.

Decentralised wherever possible, centralised wherever obligatory

The State is taking more and more steps backwards and is making citizens responsible wherever possible, or is shifting the responsibility to organisations or authorities which have closer ties with the population. Under the motto 'decentralise unless' the State is creating more and more space for local and regional authorities. Whenever other authorities or parties are at least as capable as the State of carrying out tasks or working out the specifics of policy, responsibility should be shifted to those levels. After all, that is where more tailor-made solutions can be created and more effective action can be taken. That sounds simple and efficient but putting it into practice is another matter. What happens in policy practice is that the reduced involvement of the government is accompanied by an increasing urge to control risks in order to safeguard certain outcomes. This causes what is known as the "Peper"

paradox¹¹, whereby national government simultaneously steps back and intervenes. The previously regulating and caring government is, from now on, going to act as a controlling and supervising authority. As far as subsidy relationships are concerned, this form of deregulation, whereby regulating and administrative burden is lightened at the beginning of a process, frequently means an accentuation of accountability at its end. In addition, it needs to be pointed out that, although a great deal can be decentralised in cultural policy as well, it is still debatable whether this is preferable in all cases. Once again, policy practice is stronger than the law.

In cultural policy practice, a hybrid has come about in recent years which appears to work well and have a favourable effect on administrative cooperation. The Council therefore advocates a subtle approach and, depending on what is required in a sector, sometimes argues in favour of more centralisation, and sometimes for more decentralisation. In sectors which are largely decentralised, the archives and libraries, there is, for example, a clear need for more central control in connection with processes of digitisation and medialisation. In the visual arts sector, Visual Arts and Design Funding [*Geldstroom Beeldende Kunst en Vormgeving*] play an important role. These days, the subsidies are paid out as a specific payment by the government to the municipal and provincial authorities. However, there is no proof that this construction has any added value and that is why a review ought to be considered. This funding can be more effectively distributed among the art and culture organisations that are active in the various covenant areas. This would guarantee a more effective use of resources and the State could reduce its involvement with confidence.

The Cultural Outreach Action Programme¹² is also a collective instrument financed by the State and the municipal and provincial authorities in which context State resources act as a *multiplier* and an incentive. The action programme has been in existence since 2001 and the parties involved are still enthusiastic about this form of cooperation, as was evident during the Council's round of talks. Nevertheless, this form of cooperation is under constant pressure because, following on from the recommendations by the Brinkman Committee¹³, the State is trying to reduce the number of specific payments to the municipal and provincial authorities. A suitable solution needs to be found for this as well which creates an optimal balance between central control and decentralised responsibility.

In the context of cultural policy, functional decentralisation has existed as a phenomenon alongside territorial decentralisation for some time. Setting up the culture funds was an important step since it meant that cultural institutions could approach sector funds in order to acquire project subsidies, rather than the ministry itself. The proposed review of the culture memorandums system even goes a step further by stating that institutions will soon be able to approach the funds themselves for four year subsidies as well. In the near future, only a limited number of institutions will be required to apply for subsidies directly to the minister. The question is how much freedom this new system will allow the funds for the development of their own policy. This is examined in more detail in the passages on the basic infrastructure.

4. The technology

Developments in society, technology and the media have initiated a fundamental, wide-ranging and self-reinforcing social process, as a result of which we have ended up in a different world almost without realising it. Technological developments like those related to genetics and nanotechnology have not, as yet, had any major influence on culture and media. The same cannot be said of the development of information and communication technology. We can no longer limit ourselves to the view that we have to apply these innovations in the old context. The effect of digitisation changes the

¹¹ Bram Peper, 'Searching for coherence and direction' [*Op zoek naar samenhang en richting*]. An essay on the changing relationships between national government and society, The Hague, 12 July 1999.

¹² The resources for the Cultural Outreach Action Programme are issued by means of a specific payment to 30 towns and cities and to the provincial authorities, who then match the amount made available.

¹³ The steering committee on reviewing specific-purpose grants, better known as the Brinkman Committee, presented its final report to the government in 2004.

way in which we create, distribute, preserve and participate in culture. This applies not only to cultural expressions of digital origin. In our changing society, digitisation and medialisation play a major role in determining the context in which practice acquires form and meaning. Reflecting on the opportunities and risks is therefore an issue which concerns all sectors and ought to form the basis for a future-resistant and coherent cultural policy. Digitisation is both a technological and a social development. It has been made possible by the development of computer technology and telecommunications networks and its real meaning lies in the way in which new media and information technology are adapted to and used in social practice. Not only is the technical infrastructure becoming digitised, but also society and culture, hence the coining of the term e-culture¹⁴.

Digital technology is also the basis for the development of networks between people and organisations. Knowledge and information are shared 'horizontally'. Communication within networks is relatively free of hierarchical relationships and in a digital culture it is less and less important who has actually supplied the network with which information. Citizens interested in culture can access information from a number of different websites. The authoritative site *Arts & Letters Daily*, with references to articles, essays and discussions on politics, art and society that are updated daily in such respected publications as *The Spectator* and *The New Statesman*, are shining examples.

Further developments

In the meantime, developments are continuing at a fast pace. There are more and more opportunities for active and independent cultural participation through the use of the content managed by the cultural institutions themselves. They rightly expect those institutions to respond accordingly. As a dynamic and interactive network, the Internet offers all kinds of possibilities for doing so. In the words of Lawrence Lessig, we are progressing from a *read-only-culture* to a *read-and-write-culture*.¹⁵ This development is breathing new life into an old phenomenon, namely what is referred to as the *sharing economy*, in which information, knowledge, media and culture are shared and used without, in principle, there being any direct return. Often, the organisations linked to this phenomenon are already household names, such as the online encyclopaedia Wikipedia, the video clip site YouTube, and MySpace, which is used for promotional purposes by, for example, musicians. A fairly new development, and one which is particularly interesting in the context of a cultural agenda, is the Stuart (derived from *student art*) site, on which art students can post their work, discuss it with each other and build a network. In principle, the site allows everyone to create and publish, to find out about the experiences of others and share their own experiences. Those processes are also being facilitated further using profiles which people with comparable cultural preferences can use to contact each other and set up virtual reading, film, music and heritage groups on the basis of shared interests. This type of sharing economy encourages culture-oriented citizens because, in an affordable way, it increases enormously the potential for creativity and the possibilities for participation. The quantitative relations which apply at global level are different to those which exist at national level. This, for example, means it is possible for a surfing composer who is little known in the Netherlands to attract a much larger group of admirers and, by doing so, share experiences and a common enthusiasm for their art. They can even exchange musical ideas which can then be used as a basis for their own individual compositions.

Cultural institutions

As has happened on previous occasions in history, for example when printing, photography or film were invented, scholars and engineers have shaken up the world of art and culture through the

¹⁴ See Council for Culture, 'e Culture: from i to e. Recommendations on the digitisation of culture and the implications for culture policy [*eCulture: van i naar e. Advies over de digitalisering van cultuur en de implicaties voor cultuurbeleid*], The Hague, 2003. And D. De Wit en D. Esmans, *eCultuur*. 'Building blocks for practice and policy' [*Bouwstenen voor praktijk en beleid*], Leuven, 2006.

¹⁵ Lawrence Lessig, keynote speech at the conference entitled 'Media wisdom, living in a medialised society' [*Mediawijsheid, leven in een gemedialiseerde samenleving*], organised by the Council for Culture and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 12 October 2006.

discovery, development and application of the possibilities offered by electronics. The fact that it is possible to save hugely different sorts of information in the form of bits and bytes has also drastically changed the existing relationships in the world of the arts, heritage and the media. It would not be an exaggeration to say that digitisation has caused a revolution in the world of archiving. The fact that many now regard the Internet as the primary source for almost any kind of information has affected the *raison d'être* of public libraries. As far as broadcasting is concerned, digitisation has facilitated the more effective implementation of the functions of a public broadcasting company as described by the Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR), such as the provision of news, opinions and background information, and art and culture.¹⁶ Digitisation is changing the film industry and film making in all its facets, from financing and production to distribution and screening. Film has become part of a single huge digital image culture within which it is, in effect, having to be re-invented. More and more news and other information is being sent to us via the Internet via non-authorised or non-institutionalised news sources, such as weblogs or *user generated platforms* and this is casting new light on the function of an independent and reliable press. Sources of news, information and entertainment, such as newspapers, magazines and various radio and TV channels are now also accessible via the Internet. In the world of museums, digital network structures offer excellent opportunities to take advantage of possibilities of offered by digitisation and medialisation. New forms of communication are particularly evident in the pop music industry with bands and the public being able to form new close-knit musical communities. They use the Internet to establish links with each other, exchange information, and, of course, as a place where music can be downloaded. In this way, they can control things more effectively and circumvent the music industry. Orchestras and other musical ensembles can learn from these developments. In the theatre, experiments are being carried out with multimedia applications and with the exchange between theatre companies of live recordings performed at different locations.

Limits

If there is one thing that this survey reveals, it is that people are struggling with comparable problems on a variety of fronts and that multidisciplinary and close-knit cultural networks, which are also linked to similar networks in the worlds of education and science, are essential if a solution is to be found. At the very least, this process will have to be started in the near future in a way that eradicates, or in any case overhauls, all kinds of demarcations which, although familiar have become less relevant due to recent developments. To begin with, the differences between producers, distributors and users has become less clear-cut. On the other hand, the importance of expert, reliable and independent reference and intermediary parties is increasing. The difference between sectors and disciplines has become partially clouded. Creators and users are often not bothered whether digitised image, sound or text material has come from a paper archive, a library, a museum, a sound archive, an image archive, an architecture archive or a film collection. The demarcation lines are becoming finer all the time. In time, ideas and creations will be based on concepts and no longer on platforms which are linked to a certain discipline. The task of cultural institutions is not only to act as good stewards of the cultural treasures they have in their care and which largely belong in the public domain. It is just as important for them to use the new opportunities to maximise the availability of these treasures for social and - subject to certain conditions - economic use. The users, and not the material, are the priority. Cultural institutions will therefore have to act more like guides or mediators in order to show users the way.

Long tail

Digitisation has also created new opportunities for the physical availability of cultural expressions. Completely new quantitative distribution relations form the basis of the phenomenon for which Chris Anderson coined the term *long tail*.¹⁷ He used it to refer to the often numerous publications in, for example, book or record shops of which only a few are sold. These belong at the tail of the turnover graph of books, CDs or DVDs which may be culturally very interesting but painfully long from the commercial point of view. By swapping the limited physical space of a shop for the unlimited virtual

¹⁶ Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR), 'Focus on functions: challenges for a future-resistant media policy' [*Focus op functies: uitdagingen voor een toekomstbestendig mediabeleid*], The Hague, 2005.

¹⁷ Chris Anderson, *The Long Tail: Why the Future of Business is Selling Less of More*, New York, 2006.

space of the Internet, even those unpopular items become commercially attractive. Sales via Internet by distributors such as Rhapsody for music, and Amazon for books, show that a substantial proportion of their turnover is not made up of hits and bestsellers. Around 20 to 40 percent of the publications in the physical shop are not even available due to insufficient print-runs. Digital distribution channels do not have to deal with this problem and offer new opportunities for cultural niche markets. The fact that the availability of every imaginable cultural expression via Internet promotes demand is also demonstrated by the course of the number of loans by the Centrale Discotheek Rotterdam.¹⁸ Since 2002, when the collection became available online, the number of loans has more than doubled. It is a good example of the way in which cultural institutions can use the Internet to promote less accessible work alongside the everyday favourites. The smart use of profiles and preferences makes it possible to draw the attention of cultural citizens to cultural expressions which they are not yet familiar with but which they are likely to be receptive to, or for which they may develop a liking once they have found out about them. If used with care, this is a more effective marketing instrument than a middle-of-the-road strategy.

The *long tail* analysis is intensely interesting for both policymakers and cultural entrepreneurs. It allows them to disregard the set view that the general public is only really interested in what is popular. The idea of popular taste either appears not to exist or is by no means as average as was always thought. The right conclusion is that 'Popular taste was the result of the limited supply & demand system'.¹⁹ Those who delve deeper into catalogues find more and more, and more and more interesting, variety.

5. The economy

Digitisation has helped to improve links between culture and the economy in the Netherlands as well. Worlds which were often – and not always justifiably – seen as opposites, are overlapping or adopting new positions in relation to each other. Creative businesses are producing more and more of the Dutch national product and the 'experience economy' is a favourite sound bite for modern day marketing experts. Knowledge, experience, ideas, talent and artistry are the scarce raw materials of our time and there never seems to be enough of them. New life has been breathed into the debate among economists regarding the legitimisation of government support for culture with more light being thrown on, for example, the spin-off effects, employment, the intrinsic value of irreplaceable goods and growth potential.²⁰ Cultural institutions have become more receptive to a businesslike approach to their activities. The economy of non-profit institutions is a separate discipline, which is a qualification that can just as easily be applied to cultural entrepreneurs. More cooperation is taking place with, and there is more co-financing by, the business community, particularly in the case of cultural events. Cultural tourism is a booming business.

The Ministries of Culture and Economic Affairs have been cooperating since 2005 on a programme for the creative industry which is the result of the joint memorandum entitled 'Our Creative Ability' [*Ons Creatief Vermogen*]²¹. However, the programme is not enough to have a substantial strengthening effect on innovation in the creative sector. Private investors also focus rarely on innovation, cultural and artistic experiments, research or reflection. Nevertheless, there are numerous points of departure which could lead to both a positive financial yield and the desired spin-off effects. More space for research and innovation, plus more structure for the many small ad-hoc initiatives –

¹⁸ Located in the city's public library.

¹⁹ Peter Buckingham, *Film and the Internet: What might happen? What might need to happen?* Lecture, organised by the Netherlands Federation of Film Professionals [*Federatie Filmbelangen*], 8 October 2006.

²⁰ See Rick van der Ploeg, 'In Art we Trust', in: *Culture, Ethics and Economics, extra issue on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of The Economist*, volume 150, October 2002 or Bart Hofstede, Stephan Raes (red.), 'Creative ability' [*Creatief vermogen*], The Hague, 2006.

²¹ Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and the Ministry of Economic Affairs, 'Our Creative Ability, letter on culture and economics' [*Ons Creatief Vermogen, brief cultuur en economie*], The Hague, 2005 (parliamentary document 2005-2006, 27406, NO 57).

which sometimes offer a lot of economic potential but insufficient financial-economic support – are required to enable us to make much better use of our cultural capital (see section ten).

Commodification

The growing economic value of culture contributes to the influx of products from cultural industry into the commercial domain to be subjected to the economic processes which are at play there. Against that background, there has recently been a considerable focus on the phenomenon of ‘commodification’.²² Commodification implies that culture is made available purely as a commodity intended for mass consumption. That would be undesirable if commodification was synonymous with vulgarisation and if the quality of culture suffered as a result. However, this is by no means inevitable. From the cultural and artistic points of view, commodification also implies more quality for more people in the form of design, CDs, DVDs and other information carriers, as well as high quality films in cinemas and blockbuster exhibitions in prestigious museums. Mass production and competition often result in a drop in price and there can be little objection to that. This does not mean, however, that it is not a drastic change for artists and artistic and cultural institutions, as well as for culture participants. Although it is not always obvious, a similar process is taking place in almost all disciplines. Literature, which has traditionally had strong ties with the world of commerce, clearly shows how a harmonious process can be disrupted. As participants in the literary system, publishers did not publish books, but authors, writers did not write books but bodies of works, bookshops did not sell books but offered a range and readers did not read books but put together a personal library. Of course, this was never a true reflection of reality. However, it does contain an element of truth.

Judging

As far as the Council is concerned, the cultural consequences of commodification are therefore more important than the economic aspects. Although avoidable, there is a risk that, in the event of insufficient dimensioning, commodification will erode the position of cultural institutions as centres for cultural confrontations and forums for the exchange of ideas. Care is therefore advised, particularly on the part of the cultural institutions whose survival depends on the government. In order to avoid sending them - inadvertently - down this road, it is important to counteract undesirable forms of competition between comparable institutions, to safeguard their independence and to promote them sufficiently. Cultural institutions should not be encouraged to include risk-avoidance behaviour in their programming by judging them on the basis of the number of visitors or viewing figures, or by judging cultural centres purely on the number of people participating in the activities. The main focus should be on the quality and the impact of the cultural processes of discovery, recognition and awareness to which they contribute or which they initiate. Otherwise they will be inadvertently guided towards becoming event locations rather than the cultural factories they want to be. Creators, working as individuals as creative artists so often do, can also come into contact with undesirable forms of commodification. Both the State and other authorities tend, in fact, to exchange direct investments in the practical work of artists and designers for a policy in which profiling, producing and facilitating institutions play a greater role. Although this, in theory, reflects an understandable strategy – after all it places the work in a broader context and makes it easier to reach target groups – it is possible that the individual ambitions and the potential of creators will be excessively influenced by institutions and their policy.

Incidentally, the notion that true-born economists are only interested in matters which can be expressed in cash and/or hard figures is a stubborn misconception. The doctrine of unweighable factors, referred to as “imponderabilia”, has been around for some time. Unfortunately it is not very popular. ‘Not everything of value has a price’, was the clever parting remark with which economist Arnold Heertje left the faculty of law at Universiteit van Amsterdam.²³ It will hopefully ring long in

²² In his own day, Johan Huizinga used the term ‘mercantilism’ for a similar phenomenon which was already occurring at that time.

²³ Arnold Heertje ‘Mien, you can bake new ones: Einstein and the economic science’ [*Mien, je kan toch nieuwe bakken: Einstein en de economische wetenschap, Amsterdam*], 1999, valedictory speech, Amsterdam, 26 November 1999.

the ears of many an economist. However, there are other reasons why it is difficult to measure participation in culture using visitor figures. After all such an approach does take into account the quality, in the form of the inspiration, perception, insight, vision and experience which cultural participation offers people, and in which a lot of the power of culture can be found. Approaching the perception of culture purely as a form of recreation generates a comparable methodological opportunity.²⁴ It narrows the insight into the actual social effects of cultural participation and therefore guides policy in a direction which is not always the right one.

6. The world

Uniformity and diversity

Mobility and immigration, the fading of physical, political, social, economic and cultural borders, more intensive contact between cultures and peoples and increasingly close trade relations have led to a communal, internationally shared global culture. According to the SCP, 'Japanese people no longer regard classical music as exotic, Dutch people no longer regard rock and blues as an expression of American cultural imperialism'. However, the organisation has identified some 'nationalist preoccupations' 'at a slightly higher cultural level', particularly in the field of cultural heritage.²⁵ Perhaps this is where tension exists between the growth towards global cultural uniformity and a richly patterned cultural diversity, particularly at local and regional level, which together form a much richer cultural world. This tension is forcing artists and institutions to reflect on the points of departure and design of national, and particularly of international, cultural policy both now and in the future. What do we do where, with whom, why and how? Are the concepts and instruments which we use still sufficiently consistent with the changing practice of international exchange and cooperation?

Europe

Culture has been assigned an important role in the process of European unification. Knowledge of, and participation in, the cultural practices from a variety of European origins increase mutual understanding and appreciation and can therefore contribute to the creation of new political and economic agreements and arrangements. For the cultural climate in the countries of the European Union it is even more important that there are useful opportunities to find out about and relate to cultural diversity in one's immediate vicinity and to establish links with the growing diversity at home and in the rest of the world. A uniform European culture does appear to be imminent. This is altered little by the fact that decisions which partially determine the way in which people live together in the Member States (and therefore in the Netherlands as well) and which apply throughout the whole of the Union are being taken more and more frequently in Brussels. Neither is European cultural diversity affected by collective incentive programmes such as Culture 2007.

It is time that the Netherlands gets more actively involved in the debate on how culture can contribute to the success of the European adventure and makes more use of the possibilities and instruments the European Union offers for mutual cultural cooperation. Although "Brussels" is becoming more and more important for the cultural climate as well, Europe has scarcely had any effect as of yet on cultural institutions in the Netherlands as regards shaping their activities. The cultural policy lacks a clear vision of what the Netherlands wants to achieve in a European context. As a consequence, the Netherlands does not have an incentive policy for European cultural cooperation either. Besides a change in attitude in the cultural field, a broadening of the possibilities for pursuing a European cultural policy in an EU context is also desirable, based on the premise that the principle of subsidiarity continues to be valid and that European cultural initiatives must continue to be created first and foremost from the bottom up. This requires a larger European cultural budget than is currently available. The Council calls on the government to cooperate. Subject to the condition of

²⁴ For example in the investigations into how people spend their time by the Social and Cultural Planning Office (SCP).

²⁵ Social and Cultural Planning Office (SCP), 'In view of the future' [*In het zicht van de toekomst*]. 'Social and Cultural Report' [*Sociaal en Cultureel Rapport*] 2004, The Hague, 2004, p. 62.

transparent expenditure, the EU can show that it can be more for the arts, heritage and the media than a bureaucratic entity which is felt predominantly as a burden.

Global

These days, European borders are also open. In its recommendations regarding authors' contract rights dated November 2006, the Council highlighted the fact that numerous goods and services are now being offered on a global market. Besides this having resulted in citizens throughout the world having access to a greater variety of choices, it has also led to a feeling of uncertainty regarding the meaning and significance of cultural values which form the basis of local, regional and national communities. The key question is how societies can cope with the consequences of globalisation in such a way that they can continue to develop a vision of their own culture without excluding the rest of the world. The answer to this question is essential for future cultural policy. The management and the ownership of digital infrastructure, on which the various media and networks depend, also mean that attention has to be paid, at an international level, to opportunities to safeguard autonomous expressions and independent opinions. The influence that globalisation has, in the medialisation epoch, on creativity, on the creation and development of cultural industries, on cultural heritage, on copyrights, and also on how we deal with different cultures, will have to be steered in the right direction.

In this context, it is perhaps crucial whether a workable balance can be created between the liberalisation of services within the framework of the 'General Agreement on Trade and Services' (GATS) and the need countries have to promote their cultures vis-à-vis foreign competition, as expressed in Unesco's 'Convention on the protection and promotion of diversity of cultural contents and artistic expressions'. This Unesco convention underlines the dual nature – that is cultural and economic – of cultural goods and services, and the right of countries to pursue their own cultural policy. It confirms the importance of cultural values and cultural diversity in a world in which economic power ends up being concentrated within a small number of large multinationals. The extent to which government policy on cultural heritage, the arts and the media is affected in practice by the GATS depends to a large extent on the content assigned to the concept of 'public service'. The outcome of the current discussion on the subject can have far-reaching consequences for the culture policy pursued by national governments.

Towns and regions

In response to the globalisation process, cultural citizens and cultural tourists are rediscovering and learning again to appreciate the individual character of towns and regions, inherent in, for example, their heritage. Erasmus, who did not come from the North of the Netherlands but from the city of Rotterdam, and who lives on as an icon of European humanism, shows how complicated patterns of regional, national and international identifications can be. International developments, and the increased importance of the cities and regions as economic and cultural focuses, have caused people to realise that, from the cultural point of view, the nation state often has an artificial feeling to it. It is particularly apparent in the towns how the mobility of artists is leading to new transcultural and often interdisciplinary ties which inspire new cultural processes and practices. More and more often, links between cities and regions determine the way in which artists and cultural institutions meet for the purpose of exchanges and cooperation. In this context it is interesting that international film co-productions often turn out to be regional ones, for example between areas in the East of the Netherlands and the West of Germany. Theatrical cooperation takes place with Flemish towns. European cooperation often begins between cities which are situated in the same European region. This also has consequences for international cultural policy which, to date, was based on a national approach. Towns and regions need to be more involved in policy development in this area and the coordination of national and local strategies is advised.

Free port

Despite the appropriate scepticism as regards the concept of a national cultural character, the outside world regards the role of free port in international cultural traffic, which we have played successfully for some time, as being typically Dutch. In recent years, the free port has started to resemble a specially fortified fortress inside Fort Europe. While mobility is increasing and is unstoppable at a

global level, artists, bearers of culture and art students are quite often confronted with Dutch business licensing legislation and taxation regulations which discourage them from setting up shop in the Netherlands at all. That lack of openness and generosity has indisputably detrimental effects for artists who are active in the Netherlands and for art, culture and educational institutions which become isolated from global developments, as a result of which the tendency towards isolation is only increased.²⁶ This situation can be changed if the consultation which is currently taking place between the cultural community and the government on the subject of accelerating and simplifying authorisation procedures across the board starts producing results quickly. In the meantime, it is still high time to deepen our cultural free port. Cultural institutions can breathe new life into the concept by developing a vision of their own free port role so that the international cultural community can stop by the Netherlands more frequently and rediscover it as a tolerant, interesting and receptive breeding ground for art and culture, where particular attention is paid and special provisions are available for innovative and conceptual creators. This is both a strategic and practical international cultural policy. From both perspectives, the import of ideas, viewpoints, visions, interpretations – and above all of artists and bearers of culture and their work – is at least as necessary in the period ahead as the export of Dutch cultural heritage.

A cosmopolitan attitude and active participation in international cultural processes in the form of, for example, debates, exchanges, co-productions and festivals are indispensable elements of the Council's vision. It is, of course, a good idea to add some distinguishing features – certainly if this is possible without any contrived solutions. Internationally, the Netherlands has a good reputation for its architecture, its unique animation films, its contribution to the discovery of 18th century music and the development of jazz, its literature which is available in translation and a great deal more. Our old masters, and Van Gogh and Mondriaan as well, have become part of international cultural heritage. They are part of the global canon, but have still retained their typically Dutch features. Across the globe, there are archives and monuments which are now regarded as the collective cultural heritage of the Netherlands and the society in which these cultural roots of Dutch history can be found. Incidentally, it is not by definition a shortcoming that we, as a relatively small country, are not in the vanguard on all cultural fronts. In the context of international cultural policy as well, there are good reasons for opting to specialise.

International cultural policy

The implementation of the international cultural policy of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, and partly the policy development as well, has for a large part become an independent operation. This applies primarily to practical international cultural policy represented by the activities of funds, sector institutes and umbrella organisations. Strategic international cultural policy, in which cultural dialogue, cultural export and international profiling of Dutch art and culture are key points for attention, is still in its infancy. In their policy document entitled 'Choosing a course' [*Koers Kiezen*], the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs made a good start towards a more detailed interpretation of this policy which would involve other ministries as well, and particularly the Ministry of Economic Affairs and the Ministry of Social Affairs. That multi-ministerial involvement confirms the fact that culture affects government policy over a wide area. The call by the Council for a coordinating ministry for culture, media and communication is also intended to generate better cooperation between the departments involved. Despite the intensified cooperation between the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during the past decade, the clout of international cultural policy is still suffering from arguments between these ministries on the subject of competencies. A shared vision and respect for each other's specialist expertise are essential for a successful cultural policy as a response to rapid international developments.

The growing importance and increasing scope of international cultural exchanges and cooperation demand a substantial expansion of the resources for international cultural policy. That applies to both

²⁶ Ben Hurkmans, et al (ed.), 'All that Dutch. About international culture policy' [*All that Dutch. Over internationale cultuurbeleid*], Rotterdam, 2005.

the contribution from the culture budget of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and the HGIS culture budget which is an important instrument for the execution of strategic cultural policy. In recent years, the HGIS culture budget has been steadily reduced, while ambitions have grown. Apart from more money, there is also a need for more transparency when determining which projects are eligible for support from this budget. The Council is going to use the multi-year programme for strategic international culture policy, which is currently being prepared, and the current evaluation of the HGIS culture programme, as a basis for advising on the substantive objectives of the programmes and their structure. This will link up with its involvement in programme budgets in general, as explained in the Council's response to the memorandum 'Making a difference' [*Verschil maken*].²⁷

²⁷ Council for Culture, response to *Verschil maken*, The Hague, 6 October 2006.

Compiling an agenda

7. E-culture

Media wisdom

The fact that, thanks to digitisation, the role of citizens in the world of the media has drastically changed, was confirmed in an inimitable way by the international magazine *Time* when, during the traditional elections for man or woman of the year, a prize was awarded to 'You' the public. The reason given was²⁸:

'For seizing the reins of the global media, for founding and framing the new digital democracy, for working for nothing and beating the pros at their own game, Time's Person of the Year for 2006 is you.'

Perhaps because it did not want to spoil the festivities, the jury was quite happy to ignore the fact that this 'You' does not represent everyone. It really refers to a select group of people with media wisdom: the entirety of knowledge, skills and mentality with which citizens can consciously, critically and actively relate to a complicated, changing and fundamentally medialised world. Those who are not media-wise are excluded. This represents the first barrier to a socially desirable use of the new media. Cultural citizenship is not something that just drops into your lap while surfing the Internet. You have to find the right path through a virtual labyrinth almost bereft of any reliable signposts. Thanks to the active participation of citizens on the Internet, social relationships are becoming increasingly informal. The growing level of participation in knowledge, information and culture production requires new forms and models of production, editing, testing and correction of which most still have to be invented. The relationship between the physical reality of people and their environment is influenced by what is happening online and in various media. Many people are unclear on how processes of editing, orchestration and reflection can influence the welfare of people who participate in communities. It is of particular importance that children realise that zapping and chatting are by no means the only or always the best ways to establish relationships with your environment. A balanced development of the cultural citizens of tomorrow not only requires insight into and skill in using technology but also an insight into when and how this technology is suitable for use in a certain situation.

Role change

According to a recent investigation, the cultural institutions in the Netherlands belong, like its citizens, to an elite group of European digital sprinters.²⁹ The question is whether they are already approaching the finish line. There are a number of different aspects which make up the digitisation process: improving what is already being done; develop and implement new activities; an entirely different way of working linked to a different organisational structure and organisation.³⁰ The main aim of most of the websites examined by the SCP is to provide a better service for physical visits. However, the second aspect is often missing, for example provisions for interested virtual culture participants that live too far away or do not have time to visit a theatre or museum. The third aspect, namely role and organisational changes, is even rarer. The necessary switch represents a process spanning many years and is therefore a subject that belongs on an agenda. The first change that will have to be made is to imagine a different approach and to implement this in practice. The users, and not the material, are the priority. A greater focus on demand instead of on supply means looking for ways to cooperate, including in areas beyond cultural borders and being prepared to act as mediator between all kinds of obvious and unusual partners. Society and the public are demanding not only resolute artists and collection managers but also creators and institutions which can act as intermediaries, which can cooperate, which want to experiment and dare to adopt a flexible and creative approach to re-using their own content and that of others. In order to exploit the available opportunities for new and

²⁸ Lev Grossman, *Time Magazine*, 13 December 2006.

²⁹ Jos de Haan, Renee Mast, Marleen Varekamp and Susanne Janssen, 'Visit our site; about the digitisation of the available culture' [*Bezoek onze site; over de digitalisering van het culturele aanbod*], Social and Cultural Planning Office, The Hague, 2006.

³⁰ See Council for Culture, *eCultuur: van i naar e. Advies over de digitalisering van cultuur en de implicaties voor cultuurbeleid*, The Hague, 2003.

familiar forms of cultural participation, a number of different barriers need to be removed. Partitions must be removed between the various disciplines whose function is now defunct and which stand in the way of the required structural cooperation. This does not mean there will no longer be any good reasons, at least not temporarily, for continuing to distinguish between disciplines. However, that distinction is no justification for putting up unnecessary boundaries.

De-partitioning

The first step towards de-partitioning involves cooperation between the various networks of cultural institutions. One condition for success is being prepared to share every bit of knowledge with each other and to keep on the lookout for meaningful cross-overs. Above all, cooperation has to be made the structural core of all the activities. Cultural institutions will then be able to acquire different roles than those of mediator and can develop into reliable and influential bodies whose aim is to facilitate social participation and debate, tap into creative capacities, and use these democratically. Comparable issues are being tackled on all kinds of different fronts. The solution always starts with de-partitioning and cooperation by means of changing and structural links and alliances between institutions, including those from the worlds of education and science. At the very least, this process will have to be started in the near future.

Copyright

Clearly, a creator needs copyright to be able to reap the financial rewards of his creativity. This is of fundamental importance for a society's artistic and intellectual creativity. On the other hand, both the creator and the public can benefit from the public accessibility of culture, since it allows the creative products of others to be reused and redeveloped. Such is an inherent feature of a creative process which builds on what already exists. *Sampling* is a generally accepted reusing method. Reusing used to occur in the old days, despite it meaning a greater effort on the part of the artist because he had to keep to the original work which was perhaps located hundreds of kilometres away.

Globalisation and digitisation heighten the need for effective and balanced copyright arrangements. Large media conglomerates become monopolists that buy up copyrights in bulk. This can hinder the process of making culture broadly accessible to the public via Internet and other digital means. The Council is of the opinion that anything that is created using public resources should be and remain accessible to the public. An approach such as 'Creative Commons' (CC), whereby rights are selectively issued under the motto 'not all rights reserved, but some rights reserved', could provide a solution.³¹ That would give the creator more freedom to use his work more freely. Since the option of CC licences has existed, there have been around 140 million back references worldwide. In the Netherlands there have been almost 200,000 since 2004.³² Creators are themselves not always able to determine whether or not they should make their work available under such a licence. Musicians who, for example, have become affiliated to a collective rights organisations such as Buma/Stemra, have to transfer the operating rights for their entire repertoire and are not allowed to use CC licences. The Council has placed the changing attitude to copyright in a digital society on its agenda. It is going to issue recommendations on the issue, with an explicit focus on copyright in relation to the public domain.

Public domain

Digitisation and medialisation not only create new opportunities for culture but for commerce as well. The Internet means you have the world at your fingertips. However, real access to that world is in the hands of a small number of people. Whether you take software news, entertainment, advertising, search engines or chat sites: the market leaders operate on a global basis and are few in number. They have laid their claims to information and expressions of art and culture. Exclusive rights are linked to

³¹ Lawrence Lessig, keynote speech at the conference entitled *Mediawijsheid, leven in een gemedialiseerde samenleving*, organised by the Council for Culture and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 12 October 2006.

³² Syb Groeneveld, 'The democratic paradigm of copyrights' [*Het democratisch paradigma van het auteursrecht*], Open Source Jaarboek, 2006.

these organisations, sometimes unnoticed and usually unwanted, in the public and private domain. This constitutes a major risk for archives, libraries, broadcasting companies and the press. To them, free access to high quality information and culture is an essential condition for their proper functioning. Only then can they identify, monitor and structure that same high quality information and culture in a reliable manner and make it meaningfully accessible to as many people as possible and therefore allow it to fulfil the role entrusted to them in a democratic society.

Public content as stored in museums and various sorts of archives must therefore be protected against usage which is oriented primarily around making profit via the Internet or other digital channels. As far as libraries are concerned, a solution must be found for the problem that copyright protection of publications via loan fees and licences for digital material causes cost increases that they cannot pay and result in access to this material being limited to, for example, members of a university library. Only then will a virtual public space be created within the digital domain to which everyone has access, on account of the basic right to information, and where quality, reliability, completeness, authenticity and diversity of culture and information are guaranteed.³³ If the WRR adopts the attitude that a number of functions in a democracy have to be safeguarded at all times, that will also have consequences for the institutions which carry out these functions, or fulfil an essential role therein. Democratic and cultural citizenship is dependent for success on well-informed citizens and, following on from that, with institutions which offer unrestricted and mediated access to sources of culture and information. The national government holds responsibility. Digitisation considerably accentuates the exchange based on that responsibility. This means that everything which is created by public means in a digitised environment, in the widest possible sense, must be and remain available and accessible. The Council will investigate the public domain in more detail during the course of 2007.

Attention will also have to be paid to managing the digital infrastructure. That infrastructure is in private hands and commercial parties are the ones that have access to the Internet and can regulate the communication that goes on there. Providers play a role in determining which information reaches us, or rather, which information can or cannot be located. Hardly any democratic control is possible over the practices of those providers and the infrastructure managers, and especially of the choices they make. That is why it is in the public interest to have more of a say regarding the management of and access to the Internet.³⁴

8. Culture transfer

Process

Culture, the entirety of practices and applications with which the members of society give meaning to their historical and social existence, is omnipresent. This not only means in schools, in theatres, libraries or museums, but also in sports halls, in homes for the elderly, at the station, in department stores and in public spaces. Artistic expression thrives in many kinds of substrates, including those outside the realm of the arts, heritage and the media. The culture transfer process is not therefore tied to a particular place or time. It is never-ending. Culture transfer is not based on hierarchical and paternalist one-way traffic. Each culture is hybrid and pluralistic. People play different roles in society, and have equally different stories to tell. Starting within the confines of their families and then during the course of their later lives, people acquire their own, very personal cultural equipment from an enormous number of different phenomena, experiences and possibilities. That enables them to co-exist as cultural citizens and to also be themselves in such a communal context. The stimulation of cultural interest and activities is therefore not based on some traditional idea of edification, but on a social

³³ The WRR determined in 'Focus on functions' [*Focus op functies*] that, in a democracy (the access to, and quality and diversity of) a number of functions must be safeguarded at all times. This includes art and culture, in addition to news and public opinion.

³⁴ In that context, it is interesting to point out the initiative of Prof. Uw, a professor at the ChungCheng University in Taiwan. He proposes the creation of Web 3.0, a new infrastructure used which is, managed and owned by the users themselves.

necessity. In an increasingly complicated society, there is a growing need for meaning and depth, and for beauty, fun and entertainment. In this context, art, heritage and the media play a leading role, albeit not an exclusive one. Policy based on culture transfer helps to broaden the basis for talent and talent development and greater diversity as regards cultural participation. Against this background, almost all cultural institutions have treated public relations as a priority in recent years.

In addition, the Cultural Outreach Action Programme offered new opportunities for cultural participation. Recently, the Lower House also advocated an action programme for amateur art. In order to reinforce the cohesion between amateur art and cultural education, to promote innovation and extra investments in extracurricular art education, the Council supports the idea of setting up a separate fund for amateur art and cultural education. This fund can also be used to implement an amateur art and cultural participation action programme in the future. Now is the right time to take a decision on this matter. The alliance between the various performing arts funds is threatening to marginalise amateur art.

The Lower House has pressed for experiments to be carried out relating to providing free access to the permanent collections of museums subsidised by the State. The expectation is, however, that this expensive method for reaching new sections of the public will generate a relatively minimal effect. Investments in special programmes and marketing instruments have a greater impact. From that perspective, free access for young people aged up to 18 is a good idea. It would encourage school visits to museums and the costs are relatively low.

At school

It is encouraging that attention within the educational system for the traditional *Bildungsideal* is flourishing again after a couple of decades of neglect and with it, a focus on the related transfer mechanisms. The subject of education in arts and culture (CKV) has been introduced into secondary education, and its effects are not yet fully visible. In primary education, 'art orientation' is an obligatory subject area, for which three (brief) attainment targets have been compiled. At secondary and higher education levels there are a large number of programmes aimed at creators and implementers of art and culture. During the last ten years, the Culture and School programme has resulted in significant investments. The recommendations entitled 'Education in culture' [*Onderwijs in Cultuur*], which were published in 2006, stress the importance of cultural education in education, and indicate how the quality and effect thereof can be increased. The improving of course programmes for art, heritage and the media is a long-term undertaking. That makes it all the more essential for the recommendations to be developed and implemented, for example with regard to cooperation between educational and cultural institutions. Incidentally, the activities of cultural institutions represent a significant contribution to cultural education.

Education in Dutch is an obvious cultural education arena in which the performances are, unfortunately, far from exemplary. In its recommendations on reading promotion which were issued in 2005, the Council advocated that new policy development initiatives should focus on strengthening literature education with an emphasis on knowledge acquisition and the laying of a foundation for becoming well-read. A greater emphasis ought to be placed on so-called cultural core knowledge and pupils' cultural and literary reading experience. In this context, the Council advocated a cultural canon, which would primarily be used to initiate a discussion. This canon was duly compiled. In general terms it had the desired structure although it slightly disappointingly focused too little on the 'musical dimension'. Having said that, sufficient attention is still paid to literature. The other reading promotion recommendations, which clarify the importance of teaching literary competences in education as a springboard for further social and cultural development and participation, still apply although most have not been implemented. The same applies to the recommendation relating to media wisdom, in which the Council argued that, in a medialised world, children must also be media literate, and it highlighted the role that schools can play in that respect. That role can often be fulfilled on the basis of mutual cooperation, with partnerships with media organisations outside education perhaps also being productive.

Despite the goodwill of many, the state of musical subjects at school is woeful. Limited attention is paid to the traditional art subjects such as music and song, dance, drama and drawing and film education is even rarer. Interest has only recently increased in cultural heritage. Teachers specialised in art are hardly ever used. In addition, the teaching programme often consists of little more than a series of incidental activities. As a result pupils do not, or only scarcely, get the chance to expand their creative talent and develop their knowledge in the field of art and cultural heritage. The Council has previously recommended the setting up of a coherent series of artistic activities which are consistent with the developmental phases of pupils. This will create a continuous learning route with the possibility of making suitable use of the cultural environment during each phase.³⁵

Outside school

As mentioned above, cultural education is not reserved for schools. Outside school hours, a lot of children attend individual or group lessons at centres for the arts, schools of music or dance, schools for youth theatre or creativity centres, or lessons provided by private individuals or amateur associations such as brass bands, dance groups and choirs. Adults also work in all kinds of ways to reinforce and expand their cultural equipment – either individually or in groups. They often do so in order to improve their qualities as amateur artists. A lot of adults also take courses, visit art cinemas or attend lectures to increase their knowledge and understanding of art and cultural heritage.³⁶ However, there is less and less money available for cultural education and amateur art outside of school and for cultural education for target groups other than children and young people. The one-sided focus on cultural education for children and young people and cultural education in schools means less attention is being paid to extracurricular cultural education and amateur art.³⁷ That is a regrettable because close links between culture lessons at school and extracurricular art education and amateur art in fact pave the way to arts centres, youth theatre schools or an amateur arts associations for children who have become interested at school for a form of art or a cultural activity. Community schools offer opportunities in this context. Other forms of cooperation between education and culture are imaginable as well. Investments are urgently required so that educational institutions get the chance to innovate as regards both their organisation and content.

Culture transfer techniques

The Council's recommendations on e-culture dated July 2005 was one of the documents to point out that the new media and the way in which they are used have largely superseded the usual techniques used to transfer culture. For example, text, sound and images feature more and more frequently in all kinds of different combinations and it is becoming increasingly common to use different kinds of media simultaneously. The development of digitisation and new media is running parallel with the growth of what we have now started to refer to as the e-generation, or homo "zappiens". This new generation has a much better feel for the use of discontinuous information. Young people often opt for active participation rather than passive consumption. The traditional media for the production and distribution of culture will have to find new, innovative ways of responding to this. Otherwise tomorrow's cultural citizens will ignore them. At the moment a number of excellent projects are being developed. However, one drawback is that their scope is limited. Often, resources are available for the development of knowledge, but not for knowledge transfer and for research into transfer techniques and the design of new variations on the well-known theme of the 'continuous learning route'. Digitisation has meant an enormous increase in the possibilities for acquisition and participation which have to be made "ready for use" through the development of new forms of culture transfer. In this context, the fact that children have less and less patience will, for example, have to be taken into

³⁵ For information on the bottlenecks and for the recommendations made by the Council for Culture and the Education Council see, 'Education in culture' [*Onderwijs in cultuur*], The Hague, 2006, p. 24-34 and 35-50.

³⁶ For information on the considerable interest in this form of cultural education refer, for example, to the article entitled 'Can it get any deeper?, Cultural institutions dive into courses' [*Kan het nog dieper?, Culturele instellingen storten zich op cursussen*], in the *Volkskrant* newspaper, 30 November 2006.

³⁷ A possible future amateur art action programme, as proposed by the Lower House, which includes proposals to stimulate young people and amateur art, or a broader-based cultural participation action programme can bring about change in this situation.

account. These days, children want to learn something different each year and they want success to come quickly. In order to respond properly, educational institutions will have to innovate, with encouragement and support from the sector institutes concerned.

Arts centres ought to focus more on the professional arts and the related developments. They could, for example, recruit more artists as teachers so as to inspire students. Above all, there is a need for new creative forms of education which can serve as examples. The main idea is to equip people who, as cultural citizens, know where they have to look and how they should choose. This will make reaching the goal a matter of course.

9. Talent development

Cultural citizenship flourishes in an environment of professional expertise and mastery. Talent is the most powerful source of quality artistic and cultural practice in the Netherlands and one which provides a basis for the future of the various disciplines, including the way in which those with talent are nurtured and fashioned into good artists and interesting bearers of culture who are also appreciated beyond the country's borders. Vocational art education also provides a basis for most disciplines on which quality is acknowledged, developed and stimulated. Of course, there are and always will be autodidacts who learn the skills elsewhere. For example, a sound education is still the best breeding ground for talented writers. In the time ahead, the Council is going to examine the issue of whether it is desirable to set up a professional school for writers and/or a university faculty based on the Anglo Saxon model. Incidentally, there are no longer any specialised university courses in translation. This is not only detrimental to links with other literatures. It also means we have less of an insight into the commercial, economic and scientific developments in non-English speaking countries. In the meantime, the Council is preparing recommendations on talent development for screenplay writers and other specialists in the film industry. It is already clear that a strengthening of education, tailor-made supervision, a stronger international orientation, greater flexibility, more freedom for experiments and knowledge in the field of digitisation are essential ingredients when it comes to enhancing the level of Dutch film talent.

The importance of amateur art as a source and a breeding ground for artistic talent has been demonstrated on a number of occasions. Each child deserves the chance to discover and develop his or her own creative talent. There is both an individual and a social interest in this being possible. To safeguard those interests, there needs to be an attractive range of activities and courses that are accessible and give children and young people the opportunity to take part in cultural activities in an appropriate manner. Ideally, school programmes, culture education provisions outside schools and the programme of amateur art institutions would form a coherent whole. It has been found that talented and ambitious young people do not, by any means, always opt for vocational art education. Often, they find other ways into the profession or they develop their talent in some way other than within the framework of formal education. Institutions specialised in developing talent offer young people the chance to gain experience via peer education and peer coaching. This enables them to increase their professional skill and continue developing into hands-on artists or creators of culture. For some of these young talented people, this is a step on the road to vocational art education.

Four factors undermine vocational art education in visual arts. Even though the funding system was improved a number of years ago, the Council is of the opinion that it is still too strongly linked to the training capacity. Such an approach is not beneficial to quality and effectiveness. The same applies to the fact that that visual art and design Master's programmes and workshops are competing with each other instead of dovetailing with and complementing each other. A third point is that the influx of students from senior secondary vocational education [mbo], senior general secondary education [havo] and pre-university education [vwo] have caused considerable differences in standards as revealed in, for example, theoretical education. A final point of concern is that theoretical subjects have, up to now, been almost completely dominated by a Western understanding of art and culture. In the new international and culturally diverse context, and given the increasing number of students with a non-

Western cultural background, that approach is too one-sided. Once again the Council is asking that attention be paid to the problems that have been identified.

Unfortunately, education often lacks the continuity required for proper talent development. It seems as if, in some disciplines, young talented Dutch people find themselves already lagging behind the foreign competition in the initial phase and are not able to catch up later in vocational art education. In its recommendations entitled *Onderwijs in cultuur* the Education Council and the Council for Culture asked for attention to be paid to the financing of the preliminary programmes in music and dance. The Minister of Education, Culture and Science indicated that the results would be made known at the beginning of 2007 of comparative and investigative research into the future of these preliminary programmes. The ultimate goal is to achieve a new and clear division of responsibilities and clear and enforceable agreements on the organisation of the preliminary programmes in dance and music. That research will also form the basis for the future structuring of what are being referred to as culturally oriented schools, which focus specifically on talent development. Just as important as the initial development of young talent are the continued maturing and nurturing of the talent that has already been generated. Certainly in the world of art, heritage and media, the idea is not to remain in a lifelong state of unfulfilled promise. As regards theatre, dance and music, special provisions exist for the continued development of talent with freedom for experiments and special projects which go beyond regular vocational art education. Besides the continued development of talented individuals, the artistic development of the various theatre disciplines is an additional goal. The appropriate facilities are made available via workshops and production houses which occupy a special place in the basic theatre infrastructure.

10. Innovation

Coherence and coordination

The observed upheaval that digitisation and medialisation has caused across a broad social front calls for a Minister of Culture, Media and Communication who is also responsible for innovation and who is also assigned a coordinating task as regards the general government policy in relation to this theme. This is a condition for achieving the necessary coherence in government policy. Compartmentalisation is still ruins the necessary structural connections between various relevant policy areas. A structure is required which consists of both permanent and flexible components. The permanent elements are necessary for coherence, stability and continuity. Flexible elements, such as the programmatic use of resources aimed at themes instead of sectors and institutions, generate dynamism and innovation. With the end of a number of familiar paradigms in sight, innovation appears to be the crucial element of the intended new portfolio.

Experimentation and innovation

In a lot of cultural sectors there is a need for more money and for attention to be paid to innovation, experimentation and renewal. In order to innovate and experiment, sufficient resources have to be available from the funds and institutions. Vernieuwing heeft daarbij een bredere betekenis dan artistieke vernieuwing: since it also covers socialisation. Apart from money, a change in mentality is also required. The need for opportunities to set up cross-border projects has only increased. It is proving particularly difficult to link up projects in the field of new media and e-culture with the culture funds. Although the development of an e-culture centre of expertise has now been given the go-ahead³⁸, no extra resources have been made available for innovative projects. The Interreg scheme no longer exists, although a resurrection of the scheme – on a small scale - is now being considered. However, the Council advocates that a separate budget be created for projects relating to new media and e-culture. On the basis of flexible criteria, this can then be used to support projects which cover preliminary research, investigations and production and which have been initiated by a group of applicants that miss out on sector funding and large innovation programmes. On the basis of the objective of creating a clear infrastructure and for the sake of accessibility, it is recommended that this

³⁸ To the Virtual Platform in Rotterdam.

budget is not accommodated in one of the existing sector funds. It would make more sense to link the budget to the Virtual Platform, the above-mentioned centre of expertise and project bureau in the field of e-culture. The Council regards this as a better instrument than the new version of the Interreg scheme because it does more justice to the urgency and the individuality of the field.

Investing in innovation

In general terms, innovating requires more of a joint effort than experimenting and renewing by which knowledge can be shared and research and development (R&D) combined, with a focus on practical applications. Large companies often set up separate R&D units which are then shielded from the immediate core business pressure experienced at the main place of business. This option is not usually open to small and medium-sized businesses, which covers most of the creative industry. In the case of innovation in the culture and media sector, people tend to focus on non-technological and technological product innovation, on the development of new markets, the development of new business models and on forms of social and societal innovation which are related to culture and the media.³⁹ All this demands considerable investments, both in time and money. The possibilities offered by the existing programme for the creative industry, in which the Ministry of Economic Affairs and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science cooperate, is utterly insufficient to achieve real innovation. The Digital Pioneers project⁴⁰ has proven effective as regards the setting up of small-scale innovative Internet projects. However, it is too small-scale for use in connection with a large-scale innovation programme. The Council supports the appeal by seven new media institutions for the culture sector to be involved much more actively and across the board in the innovation agenda.⁴¹ Special attention would then be paid to innovation-oriented scientific programmes. The Council therefore endorses the request for a culture and science programme made in the letter sent by the new media institutions to the politician in charge of negotiations relating to the formation of a new coalition government.

Structural multi-year approach

The government's innovation policy has, to date, been aimed too one-sidedly at knowledge and technological innovation. Creative technology applications, the exploitation of new markets, the development of new business models and social and societal innovation in relation to culture and the media are still being ignored. Nevertheless, the Ministry of Economic Affairs has set up a number of modest innovation programmes, aimed at sectors which have been designated key areas within the framework of the Innovation Platform. However, the key area of the creative industry is precisely the one that has been left out. Moreover, the Innovation Platform recently observed that the government is still tackling innovation in a too fragmented and incidental manner. A structural multi-year approach is essential. According to the platform, the government lacks an integrated strategy for knowledge and innovation.⁴² The Council wishes to add to this its observation that knowledge is insufficiently exchanged between the parties that could benefit from such exchanges. A trend which has already been around for some time in the United States, and is also starting to have an effect in Europe, is that of open forms of innovation whereby entrepreneurs, researchers, the education sector and the business community cooperate to find innovative solutions. Users can also contribute.⁴³ Last year, the Advisory

³⁹ See for an additional definition of innovation: Social and Cultural Planning Office (SCP), 'Investing in ability' [*Investeren in vermogen*]. Social and Cultural Report [*Sociaal en Cultureel Rapport*] 2006, The Hague, 2006, p. 186-188

⁴⁰ This scheme is aimed at innovative Internet projects with short and simple procedures and small amounts of money which are just enough to get businesses going. Entrepreneurs can also receive expert supervision.

⁴¹ 'ICT & Innovation policy must be receptive to the creative new media sector' [*ICT & Innovatiebeleid moet open staan voor de creatieve nieuwe media sector*], letter from seven new media institutions to Dr H.H.F. Wijffels, 19 December 2006.

⁴² Innovation Platform, 'Knowledge Investment Agenda' [*Kennisinvesteringsagenda*] 2006-2016, 'The Netherlands, the country for talent!' [*Nederland, het land van talenten!*], The Hague, October 2006.

⁴³ Similarly, the research departments of international consumer brand companies use consumers around the world to generate new ideas.

Council for Science and Technology Policy [*Adviesraad voor het Wetenschap- en Technologiebeleid*] wrote to the government to suggest that its innovation policy ought to take more account of this fact.⁴⁴

Programme

The Council for Culture has observed that more control is required in the field of innovation: a lot more money needs to be invested⁴⁵ and the available set of instruments must be used to share knowledge and enter into alliances so that the open innovation referred to can become a reality. In addition, the Council believes that forms of non-technological innovation must also feature prominently in innovation policy. That is why the Council is advising the State to start an ambitious innovation programme. The Council's view is that the resources needed for such a programme should come from various ministries, other government bodies and, of course, the business community. The programme is not intended for individual institutions. Only consortia of cooperating parties, including education institutions, cultural and scientific institutions, and the business community, and perhaps government bodies as well, can jointly register. In consultation with other advisory councils concerned, the Council will examine the points of departure of such a programme.

11. Continuity

There are echoes of yesterday in everything we do today. Tradition and change, the past, present and the future are inextricably linked. Almost all areas of culture are subject to a continuous process in time.⁴⁶ The preservation of monuments and historic buildings and the designing of new buildings are linked together by means of long, continuous lines. In effect, there is therefore no difference between the preservation of monuments and historic buildings and architecture policy. Landscapes, relics and buildings have been and are being appropriated, used and appreciated by society. Therefore, a megalith from the New Stone Age is just as much a feature of architecture policy as a new dyke. There is probably no better symbol for the continuity of the Netherlands than water. It is no accident that of the 50 main subjects referred to in the Canon for the Netherlands [*Canon van Nederland*] three, namely the reclaimed land in the Beemster area, the ring of canals and the great flood are related to water – without even including Dutch naval heroes, merchant shipping and the Vecht river. The image of a cultural free port, with which the Netherlands has promoted itself on the international stage for some time now, refers to a location near water. The image of a port of refuge could be substantiated thanks to such famous historical figures as Erasmus, Spinoza and Hugo de Groot who have also been included in the canon.

That all makes the distinction between what is counted as living art and our heritage somewhat artificial. The difference seems instead to be based on official considerations rather than substantive arguments. As a result, a fairly fruitless, artificial fault line runs through the policy which does not do justice to the awareness of cultural continuity in our society. There are no partitions which are more eligible to disappear, subject to the influence of, and together with the use of, the latest technologies than the partitions between the past, the present and the future of culture. The digital domain has provided examples of how, precisely under the influence of that technology, old concepts can still be alive and kicking. In effect, what is referred to as the read-and-write-culture, in which the roles of creator and user converge, means a return to a situation which existed in the period prior to the introduction of all kinds of processes of labour division and professionalisation. In the sharing economy, in which the emphasis is on sharing between the parties and not on the battle being won by

⁴⁴ Advisory Council for Science and Technology Policy (AWT), 'Opening of issues. Policy for open innovation' [*Opening van zaken, Beleid voor open innovatie*], The Hague, July 2006.

⁴⁵ For an indication of the major investments required, see the *Kennisinvesteringsagenda 2006-2016* published by the Innovation Platform.

⁴⁶ The points of departure of the *Meerjarig Werkprogramma* by the Council for Culture for the period 2006-2009 refer explicitly to continuity and innovation as related concepts applicable to the Council's advisory practices.

an individual party which is smarter than the rest, there are clear signs of an economic order from times long past.

Historical awareness

Historical awareness is the sixth sense of any cultural citizen who realises that innovation is essential and also pointless in the absence of continuity. It is not possible nor worthwhile to save everything. The two have to be in balance. If our heritage is going to continue to be a source of energy and not a burden, selection is unavoidable and not even digital storage can change that. The possibilities for modern use are important when establishing what is worth keeping. The possibility of actively using items from our heritage to increase the cultural dimension as regards spatial planning formed the basis of the Belvedere programme. Since 1999, when this policy strategy was introduced, policymakers, principals and designers have focused increasingly on maintaining and using items from our cultural heritage in new projects.

Stewardship

In numerous collections, museums, libraries, archives and antiquities' rooms of varying sizes across the country, objects, illustrations, texts, documents, books and sound image fragments are recorded, displayed and stored on all kinds of information carriers and together serve to support our national collective memory. Based on the realisation that *a* past and *a* national identity do not exist, this enormous collection is an essential tool for keeping history alive and for using lessons of the past for the further development of a sustainable, attractive, safe and exciting living environment, and also to continue building on the foundations laid by our predecessors. Good stewardship of this enormous collection, which is in the hands of private individuals, institutions and government bodies, is not only a question of proper storage but primarily of proper usage.

National history museum

The political desire to found a national history museum fits in with the renewed social focus on history and the importance of historical awareness. After all, museums shed light, from a historical and local perspective, on a society's development history and continuity. A national history museum provides an opportunity to add a historical dimension to cultural citizenship and to improve the content and coherence of Dutch museums. Of course, whether this leads to an increase in historical awareness depends largely on the interplay between heritage institutions, education and the media. Existing historical museums together tell the story of Dutch history in a rich variety of ways. That multiplicity of themes and perspectives should be cherished. The Council believes that the new museum should primarily be an education-oriented portal to history in which today's political and social events are placed in a historical perspective. The national history museum should also be accessible via Internet. The location where the various collections and the knowledge are revealed to the public is becoming less and less important. In that way, all the regions will benefit from the new policy-based focus on history and the national history museum will also always be within the reach of schools. In short, the museum system must be supplemented with the establishment of a national history museum in the form of another – virtual – 'portal' and a project bureau for existing heritage institutions. The Council would be only too pleased to provide more detailed advice on the matter.

12. Instruments

Generic wherever possible and specific wherever obligatory. That point of departure comes from the motto 'Make a difference' [*Verschil maken*] which applies to the arranging of the government's set of policy instruments: 'Distance wherever possible, involvement wherever necessary'. It is a plausible response by a government which wants to pull back but which realises that too much distance can totally destroy the insight as to the right policy measures. In its multi-year work programme for 2006-2009, the Council announced that it would be examining and developing a number of themes relating to this issue. Then there are matters such as the unexpected connections between culture policy and other aspects of government policy, international comparisons, special purpose grants and other financial instruments.

Should the approach be integrated wherever possible and sectoral wherever obligatory, or vice-versa?

‘Decentralised wherever possible, centralised wherever obligatory’ is an official motto clarified earlier in this document. Another administrative development is towards integrated policy. The issues with which the government is faced are often complicated and multi-dimensional. That makes them difficult to deal with from within a segmented government apparatus. As a remedy, a great deal of coordinating is taking place between the sectors, and there is more and more cooperation on integral policy programmes such as the Jong interdepartmental project or the major cities policy. Harmonisation with other sectors also appears to be essential for culture policy. For example, in section ten, various departments are called upon to start a joint innovation programme which includes space for cultural innovation. After all, culture is important for society as a whole: for education, spatial planning, care, etc. That is why the Council sent a letter to the politician in charge of negotiations relating to the formation of a new coalition government, advocating a coordinating Minister of Culture, Media and Communication who can oversee the embedding of culture policy in other sectors and give culture a more prominent place on the cabinet’s agenda. Incidentally, local and provincial government officials have been working with integrated policies for some time now. Most now use programme budgets, which are beneficial for the cooperation between the different sectors. A lot of culture issues are tackled using an interdisciplinary approach at regional and local levels. Both administrators and representatives from the culture sector in the region refer to de-partitioning as a key concept for new cultural practices. This means the removal of unproductive barriers between disciplines, between cultural institutions and between cultural and other institutions. They have expressed their belief that the State ought to respond more effectively.

From institutional policy to system responsibility

A movement that is linked to the developments outlined above is the shift in the policy of the national government from institutional policy to system responsibility. This has changed the focus of cultural policy. Less attention is now being paid to cultural institutions which are subsidised by the State and more is being paid to systems of related subsidised institutions within a single sector, such as the orchestra system and cultural systems⁴⁷ as a whole. The minister’s aim is to take less and less responsibility for the functioning of individual institutions. Instead, there is to be stricter supervision of the boards of institutions and a number of institutions are to be transferred from the ministry to the funds so that they are no longer a direct ministerial responsibility. This aim is developed in the basic infrastructure outlined in the following section of the recommendations. State policy is to focus primarily on the systems of related subsidised institutions within a single sector but will probably focus more and more on a broader system responsibility, taking non-subsidised cultural activities into consideration as well.

Instruments

The developments also have consequences for the set of policy instruments. Culture policy used to be implemented largely via the allocation of subsidies to institutions. Those State subsidised institutions were obliged, as it were, to implement the minister’s policy priorities. The idea is for this type of policy to be implemented more and more on the basis of programme budgets. Institutions will then be able to choose whether to participate or not. This is comparable with current practice at other government bodies. If this leads to more attention being paid to the non-subsidised section of the cultural system as well, other instruments will be required for the development and execution of the policy. The Council is interested in the reasoning behind this development. Nevertheless, a warning needs to be given with regard to an excessively distant government. Culture policy was a feature of institutional policy for a long period of time with good reason. It is precisely in the culture sector that a good system of ‘remote involvement’ has evolved, largely due to a national government which felt

⁴⁷ Here ‘system’ means the entire culture sector and all directly related artistic and non-artistic activities. This definition has been taken from the ‘Letter with points of departure for the support structure’ [Uitgangspuntenbrief ondersteuningsstructuur] published by State Secretary Van der Laan, The Hague, 2004.

responsible for often vulnerable art and culture institutions and, at the same time, realised that involvement in content was fundamentally forbidden. A system-oriented policy should not cause that involvement to cease.

Instead it can be maintained by means of an intelligent form of decentralisation and deconcentration. Institutions which are funded by both the State and a local or provincial authority face a range of different subsidy systems. It is worth considering, for example, a model whereby settlement of the share of the total subsidy issued to an institution which is paid for by the State is arranged at local or provincial level. The institution in question then only has to go through the settlement and accountability process once. The local or provincial authorities would then settle with the national government. One condition is, of course, that the State and other government bodies would meticulously harmonise their policy programmes. This would also make it possible, in consultation with the other bodies involved, to share what is referred to as 'Visual Arts and Design Funding' [*Geldstroom Beeldende Kunst en Vormgeving*] with private local or provincial institutions which, in turn, ensure further distribution of the resources and give account thereof to the municipal or provincial authorities.

If one takes account of the cultural, social and administrative developments and the resulting recommendations in this cultural agenda and the various sector agendas, one has to conclude that the current set of instruments the national government has at its disposal do not offer sufficient opportunities to flesh out these recommendations satisfactorily. A lot of the recommendations, for example those relating to an innovation programme and to the safeguarding of a digital public domain, require far-reaching cooperation and de-partitioning between various elements of national government. Culture is an important factor in many fields. However, it is being insufficiently interpreted due to national government compartmentalisation. There is also a need for de-partitioning in the culture and media sectors, particularly as a consequence of the digitisation process. More and more interdisciplinary forms of culture are emerging. To the new generation of creators, working in an interdisciplinary manner is second nature. However, the culture funds are still not geared to this approach. A key condition for the setting up of the new fund for Music, Theatre and Dance is therefore that this fund is able to interpret that interdisciplinary concept. Of course, the same requirement applies to the other funds. Administrative cooperation has been structured better in recent years thanks to covenants and programmes. However, both instruments are now under pressure. The review of the Culture memorandum system must not result in the baby being thrown out with the bathwater. The joint agreements between national government and local and provincial authorities can be interpreted in a more modern way and a programme like the 'Cultural Outreach Action Programme' [*Aciteplan Cultuurbereik*] is worth continuing. Incidentally, a great many intelligent forms of decentralisation and deconcentration are possible, as outlined above.

Lastly, culture and the media are mainly located in the private domain. In some sectors, such as film and literature, market parties play very responsible roles. The business community is a logical partner as regards innovations and this trend is increasing in line the number of challenges facing cultural institutions. Creators are keen to take more and more responsibility for their entrepreneurship. All this requires expansions in the set of instruments since it is still focused too one-sidedly on subsidies.

Raad voor Cultuur - Netherlands Council for Culture

Established by legislation in 1995, the Council for Culture is the independent statutory advisory body to the Dutch government on issues of cultural policy. It presents recommendations on both general policy and regulations as well as on the allocation of multi-annual grants.

The Council serves professional arts, amateur arts, music and music theatre, theatre, dance, visual arts and design, heritage, museums and galleries, libraries, archives, archaeology, writing and literature, book publishing, media arts, film, video, television, multi-media, broadcasting, arts education, international cultural policy and cultural diversity.

The Council advises the national government on matters related to the arts and culture on four levels (supra-sectoral, sectoral, institutional, implementational). It evaluates the national policies on arts and culture and conducts research in the arts and culture. Members are appointed by the Crown for a four-year term on the recommendation of the Minister of Education, Culture and Science at the suggestion of an independent committee.

The Council for Culture appoints committees, per sector and for certain areas, which prepare relevant recommendations. A committee is made up of experts on the particular sector or area and is chaired by a member of the Council.

There are a few committees for specific tasks which are statutorily assigned to the Council for Culture: the Archives Executive Committee, the Protected Buildings Executive Committee, the Cultural Heritage Preservation Act Committee and the Allocation of Archaeological Finds Committee.

The Council is supported by a secretariat which prepares and works out the contextual aspects of the recommendations.

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