COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

Brussels, 4 February 2008

5790/08

CULT 10
EDUC 32

INFORMATION NOTE
from : General Secretariat of the Council
to : Council
Subject : Designation of the 2009 European Year of Creativity and Innovation
- Information from the Commission

Delegations will find attached an information note from the Commission on the above subject which has been put on the provisional agenda, under "other business", for the forthcoming Education, Youth and Culture Council meeting on 14 February 2008.

________________
Designation of the 2009 European Year of Creativity and Innovation

The Commission has raised in previous meetings of the Council the idea of designating 2009 as the European Year of Creativity and Innovation. The aim of the Year should be to promote creativity and innovation as key competences for the personal fulfilment and well-being of all individuals in society. It would recognise that promoting these competences can have economic outcomes, whether through direct participation in artistic activities, through their applied use, for example in design, or more generally through the development of a more creative and innovative mindset as a generic competence among learners of all ages.

The Commission's initial suggestion, presented to the Council and the European Parliament, was to rely on a non-legislative instrument, namely an interinstitutional declaration, as the basis of the Year. However, the European Parliament decided on 15 November 2007 that it required a formal proposal based on the co-decision procedure.

The Commission is therefore taking the necessary steps to bring forward a proposal for a decision by the Parliament and the Council. It is envisaged that the proposal be adopted by the Commission in March.

As already agreed in principle, it is not intended to seek the establishment of a specific additional budget line. The Year will be implemented by using existing programmes, in particular the Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-2013, within the priorities established on an annual or multiannual basis. The Commission hopes that the deliberations in the Council and the European Parliament will quickly lead to a consensus on the draft text of the decision to allow an agreement as early as possible in the second semester of 2008. Adoption as early as possible is necessary to enable the preparations to take place with national coordinators to ensure the success of the Year.