

EACH MINUTE BELGIAN ART CHANGES THE WORLD



BELANGRIJKE MEDEDELING:
OOSTENDE BEVINDT ZICH OP 397.320.000.000.000 KM
VAN PROXIMA CENTAURI

MESSAGE IMPORTANT:
OSTENDE SE TROUVE À 397.320.000.000.000 KM
DE PROXIMA DU CENTAURE

WICHTIGE MITTEILUNG:
OOSTENDE BEFINDET SICH AUF 397.320.000.000.000 KM
VON PROXIMA CENTAURI

IMPORTANT MESSAGE:
OOSTENDE IS SITUATED AT 397.320.000.000.000 KM
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DUQUES CHARLIER MAI 2000

CULTURE COUNCIL'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2006

Flemish government



Culture Council's annual report for 2006





'Monsieur Heureux' Vossenplein, Brussels (2004)

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Word from the president

Dear Reader,

This report for 2006 is presumably the Culture Council's final annual report, as a strategic advisory council is due to take over the duties within a few months' time. The Better Administrative Policy (BAP) project involves an administrative reform where policy planning, implementation and policy advice are assigned to separate entities and the Flemish administration is divided into 13 policy areas.



Foto: Syb'1 S.-Pictures

Against the background of the Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media policy area, policy planning is assigned to the Culture, Youth, Sports and Media Department. Policy implementation is the responsibility of the Agency for Arts and Heritage, the Social-Cultural Work Agency, the BLOSO Agency (for the Promotion of Physical Development, Sports and Open Air Recreation) and the Flemish Media Regulator. Policy advice will be the task of a strategic advisory council, which should be launched this autumn, if everything goes to plan.

The creation of the Council for Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media will lead to a root-and-branch reform of the advisory opinion process we have known for a few years now. The Arts Council, the Council for Adult Education and Cultural Diffusion the Flemish Media Council and the Flemish Sports Council are set to disappear as well. The Flemish Youth Council is continuing to operate because its responsibilities cover a wider field than the Culture, Youth, Sports and Media policy area. The strategic advisory council will have a legal personality, its own financial grant and its own secretariat. In other words, the advisory task will be amplified with a managerial one.

The Culture Council has made a detailed review of the proposed change in consultation with the other advisory councils. And it has to be acknowledged that the two relevant ministers have been attentive

to our comments and suggestions. The way in which the consultations have been conducted may serve as a model. The councils were heard even before the preliminary draft Decree was finalised and the outcomes of the hearing were reflected in the wording of the preliminary draft.

If the proposed timetable is observed, the Flemish Parliament will review the Decree before the summer recess or shortly afterwards. Once the Decree has been approved, the members of the council may be chosen. Independent experts will be recruited via an open call for expressions of interest. Half of the members will be nominated from those involved in the field. The relevant ministers should then present a composition proposal to their colleagues in the Government of Flanders.

The plan to set up the strategic advisory council was already announced in 2006 but as the mills of government grind slowly we could have and have had to work for a further 12 months. We achieved this as correctly as possible. Correct for us means no longer personally broaching specific themes and no longer helping to manage the agenda, as this is up to our successors. Setting the agenda and highlighting what is regarded as important represents a key component of the advisory tasks. We thought it better in this final stage to refrain from seeking to 'harvest success', while making it perfectly clear that this period has to remain time-limited.

In all our endeavours we have observed the working method we adopted in 2005. As in the previous year, the Culture Council has followed a multi-stage system so as to carry out its advisory role. Apart from a few ritual advisory opinions required by decree, the Council also joined forces with ad hoc working groups this year to prepare substantive advisory opinions. In the case of a (preliminary) advisory opinion on proposals involving the creation and composition of a strategic advisory council for the Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media policy area, it was clear the Culture Council could use this channel to set its stamp on the policy being conducted in this realm. The continuing application of a written procedure boosted the efficiency of its activities.

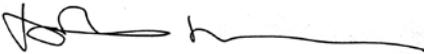
The activities formulated in 2005 are now seen to be bearing fruit, as reflected by the fact that a few of the Culture Council's advisory

opinions have formed the background to discussions by the Flemish Parliament's Committee for Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media. This was particularly true of advisory opinions the Council issued about the abolition of the culture pact, the international cultural policy and the cultural industries. Other stakeholders, such as the various support structures and campaigning organisations, are finding the Culture Council's advisory opinions more accessible. The impact the Culture Council has made with its advisory opinions this year and 12 months earlier are listed further on in this annual report.

Lastly, the Culture Council is delighted with the enthusiasm shown for the annual report in 2005, which was published for the first time in and French and English versions. This "tradition" is being continued in 2006.

From now onwards, the Culture Council is now only managing current affairs. Requests for advisory opinions are of course being answered, but no more own-initiative opinions will be issued.

Later on in this annual report we will be taking a brief look at the potential factors for guaranteeing the success of a council issuing policy advice, factors which the present Council members have identified in the light of their experience. A heritage to some extent



Bart De Baere
President of the Culture Council

Meetings

The Culture Council was convened three times in 2006. Full reports on the meetings are available for consultation on our website www.raadvoorcultuur.be. The Council's main concern during this year was the follow-up by way of a forthcoming strategic advisory council for the Culture, Youth, Sports and Media policy area.

9 March 2006

1. The President welcomed the participants and the report for 8 December 2005 was approved
2. A review was made of the discussion paper on cultural expertise
3. A review was made of the policy planning process, also taking account of the role played by a strategic advisory council, the support structures, expertise centres, campaigning organisations, the Policy Division...
 - a. Defining the problem
 - b. Start of the debate
 - c. Summary and agreements
4. Advisory opinions timetable for 2006
5. Miscellaneous

1 June 2006

1. The president welcomed the participants and the report for 9 March 2006 was approved
2. Formal validation of advisory opinions via the expedited procedure
3. Advisory opinion on the strategic councils
 - a. Working group and workshop

Against the background of the new strategic advisory council due to be created for the policy area, a working group met on 21 April 2006. A workshop was also held on Friday, 12 May 2006 when members of this council together with people from the Flemish Community's Personnel and Development Division made a review of the organisational side of things.
 - b. Contributions made by the Sports Council and the Youth Council
 - c. Discussion framework : general comments
 - d. Discussion framework : item-by-item review
 - e. Advisory opinion about cultural expertise
4. Miscellaneous

18 September 2006

1. The president welcomed the participants and the report for 1 June 2006
2. Advisory opinion about the preliminary draft Decree to create the Council for Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media
3. Timetable
4. Review of feedback about the advisory opinions issued
5. Review of the draft of annual report for 2006
6. Miscellaneous

Advisory opinions

The Culture Council issued six advisory opinions in 2006. They were broken down according to the procedure the Culture Council applies. A working group was set up for three advisory opinions. Consequently, the preliminary advisory opinion about the creation and composition of a strategic advisory council for the Culture, Youth, Sports and Media policy area was adopted, along with the final advisory opinion about this matter. Owing to the relevance of this advisory opinion for the Culture Council and particularly for its successor, the text is reproduced in full in this annual report. The working groups, aided by a coach so as to ensure the proceedings are properly conducted, comprise representatives of all the relevant councils, in order to boost the base of support for the advisory opinion. On the basis of a request from the Flemish Parliament, an advisory opinion on cultural expertise has also been formulated by a working group.

Three advisory opinions have been approved via an expedited procedure, i.e. via a plenary session review. These are an advisory opinion about the status of travel agencies, one about the preliminary draft Decree establishing flanking measures for adjusting the 2006 budget and one about the draft Decree approving the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, and the annex, established in Paris on 20 October 2005.

The advisory opinions are listed below, apart from the advisory opinion on the creation of the strategic advisory council for the Culture, Youth, Sports and Media policy area, which is reproduced in full. The complete texts of all the Culture Council's advisory opinions are available on the website www.raadvoorcultuur.be, click on 'raden en commissies Cultuur'

| Advisory opinions in 2006 | Subject | Date of approval |
|---------------------------|---|-------------------|
| C01/06 | Advisory opinion on the status of travel agencies | 2 May 2006 |
| C02/06 | Advisory opinion on the preliminary draft Decree establishing flanking measures for the adjustment of the 2006 budget | 4 May 2006 |
| C03/06 | Preliminary advisory opinion on proposals for the creation and composition of a strategic advisory council for the Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media policy area | 1 June 2006 |
| C04/06 | Advisory opinion on strategies for enhancing cultural expertise | 21 June 2006 |
| C05/06 | Advisory opinion on the preliminary draft Decree for the creation of the Council for Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media | 18 September 2006 |
| C06/06 | Advisory opinion on the draft Decree approving the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, and the annex, established in Paris on 20 October 2005 | 7 November 2006 |

SUBSTANTIVE ADVISORY OPINIONS FORWARDED BY A WORKING GROUP

Preliminary advisory opinion on proposals for the creation and composition of a strategic advisory council for the Culture, Youth, Sports and Media policy area.

C03/06 – 1 June 2006

INTRODUCTION

During its 9 March 2006 meeting, the Culture Council set the record straight to some extent about the form the forthcoming strategic Council for Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media is likely to take. The information available was considered in the Council forum and resulted in a preliminary advisory opinion reflecting five of the Council's key concerns.

In the light of the draft (s) due to be submitted to the Council for an opinion, the Culture Council will subsequently issue a more detailed

and comprehensive advisory opinion about the policy lines for the creation and composition of the strategic advisory council for the Culture, Youth, Sports and Media policy area (see advisory opinion C05/06, reproduced in full in this annual report.)

PRELIMINARY ADVISORY OPINION

1 horizontal structure

As well as involving the overall Culture, Youth, Sports and Media policy area, the strategic advice also has to allow for as much strategic and operational consultations between the various policy areas as possible. We may refer to five current strategic advisory councils: the General Council for Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media, the Council for Social-Cultural Work for Adults and Young People, the Arts and Heritage Council, the Sports Council and the Media Council.

2 composition

The councils need to comprise 15 -20 members so they may formulate advisory opinions that enjoy broad support. The Council agrees with the idea of having a mixed council: representatives of the various sectors, on the one side, and specialists with reliable expertise concerning the policy area and/or policy responsibility (ies) on the other. The General Council is keen to have a mixed composition, with a balance being struck between representatives of the other strategic councils and experts with a broad range of knowledge.

3 need for support

The Culture Council stresses that because of their legal personality, the councils should not be (over) burdened with all kinds of legal, administrative and other types of logistical woes. Consequently, the Council is anxious to point out that the future councils should be able to count on a significant level of formal and financial support. A reliable secretariat that operates effectively in terms of both logistics and content is a precondition for the success of the councils' terms of reference.

4 contact with Ministers and the Parliament

The Culture Council takes it as read that advisory opinions should be provided at the request of the Parliament or Flemish Ministers, especially the Minister(s) responsible for the policy area and various policy issues. It also accepts that the council should be able to issue own-initiative opinions for the relevant Minister(s) and the Flemish Parliament. Towards this end, it is important that the councils should enjoy direct contacts

with the Minister(s) and the Flemish Parliament.

5 effective distribution of information

The Culture Council is eager for there to be an effective and comprehensive flow of information from the division and the autonomous agencies to the councils. It is advisable for this to be confirmed in an agreement between the councils and the government executives. In the context of the strategic advisory opinions, relevant policy information formulated within the advisory and assessment committees should be formally provided to the individual advisory councils. Towards this end, it has to be carefully ensured that the autonomous composition of the advisory and assessment committees is not adversely affected.

Advisory opinion on strategies for enhancing cultural expertise C04/06 – 21 June 2006

INTRODUCTION

At the request of the Flemish Parliament's Committee on Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media, the Culture Council is issuing an advisory opinion on strategies for enhancing cultural expertise. The Council takes as its underlying principle the idea that strategies developed for enhancing cultural expertise should be proportional to the varied and extensive range of cultural services on offer in the broad sense of the term. Consequently, the Council's advisory opinion does not regard it as the Council's task to list all potential measures and responses but to map out the various lines of inquiry.

ADVISORY OPINION

The Council believes it is important for a policy to be implemented right across the board. First of all initiatives have to be taken on a comprehensive basis, i.e. for as many people and in as many ways as possible. This wide-ranging approach is a key dimension of the culture policy for enhancing cultural expertise. It may also be worthwhile using an incentive policy to reach out to specific target groups and target sectors.

Cultural expertise involves a set of (preliminary) items of knowledge about art and culture, an open-minded attitude and an appreciation of art and culture, plus the capacity to seek, associate with and personally create art and culture. The first level corresponds to an identification with a specific group and the relationship with social circum-



'Pushcart' The HISK end-of-year exhibition (2006). Curator: Sven Vanderstichelen.



stances. Following on from this more reproductive dimension, new cultural expressions may be developed at a second level, where a search may be made for new connections. Cultural expertise covers the whole range of items.

The Council first of all asserts the need for the policy to pay attention to a general cultural environment. An aesthetic, creative environment may form the basis for specific initiatives. The emphasis is then on a few strategies for enhancing cultural expertise in the light of four factors that impinge upon cultural participation: the home environment, education, the social network and free time. In the case of each of these groups of factors, enabling measures or responses have to be discovered in a comprehensive context and for specific groups of people.

Flanders succeeds quite well on this score, and this process has to be able to rely on further support, while successful policies in other countries should inspire us to look for effective measures. Lastly, there has to be an awareness of the kind of culture and cultural expertise involved. Diversity is ubiquitous (age, social and cultural backgrounds), so it might be just as well to talk about intercultural expertise. Redefining what culture is can break down barriers between different worlds and significantly lower the barriers for many people.

Advisory opinion on the preliminary draft Decree for creating the Council for Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media C05/06 – 18 September 2007

1. The preparatory process

The Culture Council has thoroughly prepared the advisory opinion on the preliminary draft Decree for creating a strategic advisory council for the policy areas of Culture, Youth, Sport and the Media.

During the 9 March 2006 Culture Council meeting, some light was thrown on the potential form that the strategic advisory council for Culture Council, Youth, Sports and the Media will take in the future. Within the framework of a working group on strategic advisory opinions, the available information was assessed in the light of the experience built up by members of the various advisory councils. Comprising independent experts and representatives of the Arts Council, the Adult Education and Culture Diffusion Council, the Flemish Sports Council, the Flemish Media Council and the Flemish Youth Council, the Culture

Council is an appropriate platform for this purpose.

Reflecting the contribution made by a preparatory working group, the Culture Council held a constructive debate 1 June 2006 about the impending reform of the advisory opinion system.

The discussions gave rise to a preliminary advisory opinion featuring five or so of the Council's key concerns. The preliminary advisory opinion was presented to the Flemish Minister Bert Anciaux without further delay.

Minister Anciaux organised a consultation meeting on 27 June 2006 with representatives of the Culture Council, the Arts Council, the Adult Education and Culture Diffusion Council, the Flemish Sports Council and the Flemish Youth Council.

The preliminary draft Decree for creating the Council for Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media was submitted on 5 September 2006 for the advisory opinion of the Culture Council.

The text was considered in detail on 8 September 2006 during a meeting of the working group on strategic advisory opinions, which delivered a draft opinion.

The Culture Council examined this opinion during its 18 September 2006 plenary session and formulated a final advisory opinion.

This advisory opinion recalled five key issues for the Culture Council as formulated in the preliminary advisory opinion. All five are featured in the preliminary draft Decree.

2. the preliminary draft takes ACCOUNT of the Culture Council's demands

The Culture Council is delighted that the present texts broadly match the provisions in the preliminary advisory opinion and the agreements reached during the consultation meeting with the Minister.

The Council refers to the horizontal structure, where the strategic advisers are involved in all the policy areas of Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media. On top of this the structure provides a means of issuing strategic and advisory opinions about the various policy fields in question. Comparable with the advisory opinion system within the Flemish Education Council there are five strategic advisory councils: the

General Council for Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media, the Sector Council for Social-cultural activities for Adults and Young People, the Sector Council for Arts and Heritage, the Sector Council for Sports and the Sector Council for the Media.

Further on in this advisory opinion, the Culture Council seeks the opportunity to ensure that each Council can decide its own designation on the basis of the rules of procedure. The aim is for the term 'Sector Council' to be dropped and replaced by a more appropriate name (such as Flemish Sports Council).

The composition of the councils is most important. In order to be able to produce an advisory opinion enjoying broad support the councils need to comprise a sufficient number of members. The proposal for a minimum of 13 up to a maximum of 19 individuals is acceptable for the Council. The Culture Council also backs the idea of having a mixed composition: a) representatives of the various sectors of civil society, and b) experts with extensive expert knowledge about the policy area(s) and/or policy field(s). It is a good idea for the General Council to include two members from each of the four Sector Councils.

The future strategic advisory council will have a legal personality. The Culture Council is worried that the councils (particularly the General Council) could be (over)loaded with all kinds of legal, administrative and other logistical concerns. Consequently, the Council stresses the need for the future councils to enjoy broad substantive and financial support. A fully-fledged secretariat operating on a firm logistical and tangible basis is a precondition for the success of the tasks assigned to the councils. The Culture Council has expressed the need for the various councils to be able to operate with a single general secretariat.

The Culture Council thinks it stands to reason that advisory opinions should be provided at the request of Flemish Ministers, especially the Minister(s) responsible for the policy areas and various policy fields and at the request of the Flemish Parliament. The Council believes it is just as self-explanatory that the councils should be able to issue own-initiative opinions for the benefit of the minister(s) responsible and the Flemish Parliament. Against this background it is vital for the councils to enjoy direct contacts with minister(s) and the Flemish Parliament as provided for in article 14, §2 of this Decree.

The Culture Council is banking on having an effective and full-scale

flow of information from the department and autonomous agencies to the councils. This is best established in an agreement concluded between the councils and government executives. As part of the strategic policy opinions there is therefore a need for policy-relevant information developed in the context of the advisory opinion and evaluation committees to be made formally available to the individual advisory councils. Towards this end, a close eye will be kept on ensuring the autonomous status of the evaluation and advisory committees is not undermined.

The protocol to be concluded with the policy council pursuant to article 15 will have to pay heed to this issue.

All these priorities, which the Culture Council has highlighted on the basis of its expertise and experience, are reflected in the preliminary draft Decree.

At the same time as the debate about the principles and frames of reference for the new strategic advisory opinion system, the Culture Council also concerned itself with putting the new structure into operation. During a learning platform organized by the Flemish Authorities' Personnel Division and attended by members of the Culture Council's working group on strategic opinions, a structured debate was held on the potential approach to organizing the future Council for Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media. These operational items do not form part of the advisory opinion but may undoubtedly be valuable when the new Council for Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media starts operating.

As a result of the proactive attitude adopted and the policy-makers willingness to listen, the advisory opinion is focused on making technical improvements and tabling a few proposals on content-based adjustments, primarily aimed at making some of the items in the text sufficiently transparent.

3. Technical comments

3.1. Operative part

Article 4, 2°: replace the reference to article 16 by article 14.

Article 6, §4: replace the word 'subcouncil' by 'Sector Council'.

Article 8: in the second sentence replace the word 'regulate' by 'regulations'

Article 12, §3: replace the reference to article 7 by article 6.

3.2. Explanatory Memorandum

Page 7:

In the fourth section replace the sentence 'On the other hand, of four members who have a more general approach' by 'On the other hand, of four members ...and a representative of the Flemish Youth Council.'

Page 13:

Article 9, §2: replace 'five' autonomous experts by 'four';

Article 12: add the definite article 'the' before the word policy area in the second sentence;

Article 12, §3: replace the reference to article 7 by article 6.

4. Substantive comments

Chapter II. Task description

Article 3:

Add: "5° deliver own-initiative or request-based advisory opinions about the proposals for a Decree;"

Justification:

This task is provided for in the framework Decree of 18 July 2003. Towards this end, the role of the Council for Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media is aligned with the approach specified in the Explanatory Memorandum (points 2.2.4 and 2.3) that strategic advisory councils should also play a part in advising the Flemish Parliament.

Chapter III. Composition and organisation

Article 4:

In the Explanatory Memorandum's article 4 it should be specified that both the General Council and the Sector Councils should be able to choose their own designation on the basis of the rules of procedure.

Justification:

The scope for choosing one's own name via rules of procedure allows, for example, the Sector Councils to enjoy a clearer position in their policy fields. This scope does not affect the provision that this concerns a single strategic advisory council (Council for Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media) comprising a General Council and four Sector Councils. The Sector Council for Sports, for example could be called 'Flemish Sports Council' to avoid any confusion with municipal or provincial sports councils. The specific character of the various policy fields and potential future developments highlight the need for the choice of name to be governed by rules of procedure. The rules of procedure for the General Council and Sector Councils will be submitted to the Government of Flanders for approval (article 14, §1).

Article 6, §2 and §3:

Merge the paragraphs into a single paragraph reading as follows: 'The composition has to pay heed to the question of social diversity, as provided for in the various legal provisions, viewpoint presentations and action plans of the Government of Flanders. The Council also has to offer a balanced reflection of the various levels of governance, types of activity and promoters with regard to Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media'.

Justification:

The Culture Council is not seeking to call into the question the spirit of these paragraphs detailed approach also fails to take account of the dynamics. The composition of a subsequent council may take another form. Nor is the Explanatory Memorandum clear. Take as an example the term 'work disability'. Without relating to the policy context, it is not clear whether this refers to people with few labour market opportunities or disabled people.

Moreover, so many different requirements are combined that it becomes almost impossible for a council to be formed. More and more dimensions are added that have to be catered for. It is obviously important for the various types of activities or (sub) sectors to be involved in a balanced way.

Article 6, §4:

Change the order of the paragraphs so that paragraph 4 becomes paragraph 2.

I. WHAT HAPPENED IN 2006?

Justification:

It is vital for the members of the strategic advisory council to have knowledge, expertise and experience about the relevant matter. As a result of reversing the order of the paragraphs this factor is clearly highlighted.

Article 7, §2, 2°:

Replace the text by: ' [...]the status of member of staff in support centres, establishments with a comparable role or funds that have concluded an administration agreement with the Authorities of Flanders, and [who] are active within the policy areas of Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media. The Government of Flanders will determine what organizations are intended.'

Justification:

It was not clear if the staff of the Flemish Literature Fund and the Flemish Audiovisual Fund could be members of the Council. This is why a provision for the fund is added and the words 'as support centre' are deleted in the final sentence.

The Culture Council recommends maintaining the incompatibility solely for members of staff and not for executive members. Accepting responsibility as an executive member with one of the establishments referred to means a civil commitment for the party concerned. Moreover, the establishments referred to should ideally include in their administrative authorities people likely to make a significant contribution to the strategic opinions. Pursuant to the civil commitment and the choice of establishments referred to, it would be advisable to discontinue this incompatibility. Executive members therefore have the opportunity to reply to the open calls for expressions of interest, as provided for in article 12, §1. The autonomy provided for while carrying out an activity within the strategic advisory council is also stressed in § 1 of this article.

Article 8:

Replace the words '...may ...provide for...' by '...provide for...'

Justification:

The provision to have the replacement system governed by regulations is welcome, which is why it is proposed to express the provision more affirmatively.

Article 9 § 1, 3°:

Replace the text by: two representatives for each Sector Council including the president or the vice-president.

Justification:

Experience with the multi-stage system where a member of an advisory council is supposed to serve by rights on another council shows that the party concerned is sometimes placed in a difficult position. The party is fully prepared to make a commitment to one council but does not always have the time required to take on a 'secondary' commitment as well. This is why it has been decided to refrain from managing the representation of the Sector Councils in the General Council by rights. Hence, representatives may be appointed who have the profile and motivation to accept a commitment within the General Council and are prepared to devote the time required. The Sector Council may obviously be represented within the General Council by the president or vice-president but this does not necessarily have to be the case. However, it is important for it to be a permanent representation and for the interested parties to be actively involved in the proceedings of the General Council.

Article 12 § 1:

Replace the word 'proposal' in the first sentence by 'designation proposal'.

Justification:

The adjustment is proposed so as to clarify the wording.

Chapter IV. Operation

Add an article: (therefore becoming "Article 16"). In support of its assignments, the Council for Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media offers a public forum for consultation and debate to stakeholders involved in the policy fields of Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media. The terms for organizing this forum will be determined in the rules of procedure."

Justification:

In addition to the general provision in the framework Decree, this article provides for a specific consideration in the context of the operation. One of the key tasks of the strategic advisory council is to contribute to the shaping of a policy approach to Culture, Youth,

Sports and the Media, so as to keep track of and interpret social developments in this area, while offering ideas about the policy reports and documents presented to the Flemish Parliament about Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media (article 3, §1, 2°, 3° and 6°). The uniform policy area concerning Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media is part of a steady process of change. In this context, the Council requires an incentive to carry out these tasks. Such an incentive is created by providing, pursuant to a Decree, a public forum role for the Council. What is more, the Council for Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media is the sole public body where representatives of civil society and autonomous experts in the various policy fields and (sub)sectors within the policy areas serve together. Hence the Council is the ideal platform for initiating both the process for detecting and interpreting social developments and the process for policy interaction and reflection. It is also perfect for providing them with a framework and reflecting them in a political approach, in recommendations and policy opinions. The public forum allows all this to be undertaken in complete transparency, with due regard to all the dimensions, based on a broad degree of acceptance.

The way in which the forum role takes shape will depend not only on progress in the policy areas and in the policy fields but also on the resources available to the Council. Hence the subsequent developments will be defined in the rules of procedure where all these items can be taken into consideration.

Chapter VII. Final provisions

Article 30:

The text may lead to confusion, hence the proposal to use the Explanatory Memorandum to confirm that this involves a technical adjustment. Where decrees still refer to councils discontinued under this Decree, the designation must be adjusted.

5. Conclusion

The extensive tasks assigned to the new advisory council underscore the public authority's high expectations.

The Culture Council believes the preliminary draft Decree offers opportunities for the new strategic advisory council to develop into an autonomous and transparent advisory body offering advisory opinions of a high standard. Whether the Council can take the step towards

a body that determines the agenda and explores new horizons will depend on the support it enjoys and the willingness of the public authorities to establish a proactive form of cooperation.

It will also depend on the future Council itself, which has to adopt a customer-oriented, communicative attitude based on constructive loyalty.

ADVISORY OPINIONS ACCORDING TO AN EXPEDITED PROCEDURE

Advisory opinion on the status of travel agencies

C01/06 – 2 May 2006

INTRODUCTION

The Flemish Minister for Tourism is proposing a draft Decree to guarantee the consumer-cum-tourist the availability of competent, solvent and honest partners as a result of compelling intermediaries in the travel industry to meet specific quality requirements. The draft Decree makes an attempt to spell out the exemption scheme, where the cultural sector is also a stakeholder. This is why the Culture Council has been requested to deliver an advisory opinion.

ADVISORY OPINION

This draft Decree effectively takes account of the questions and comments made by the cultural sector. It is a good idea to allow an explicit exemption from the licensing requirement for the cultural sector.

The Culture Council's advisory opinion primarily focuses on the provisions bound up with the exemption enjoyed by the cultural sector. The Council calls for a more detailed definition to be used for the cultural sector, one that is broader than the one now featured in the draft Decree, and to include people from the cultural sector in the advisory committee concerned with licensing.

The Council is also calling for the explanatory memorandum to specify that the exemption for organisations in the culture, youth and sports sectors is valid not only for national non-profit-making bodies but also for regional and local sections (generally de facto associations). The Culture Council is also keen for the explanatory memorandum to spell out that these organisations may also allow non-members to join the trips they arrange.

The Culture Council also offers advice to organisations that are exempt from the licensing requirement but still wish to seek a licence. In the case of diploma-related conditions, the Council recommends that as a transitional measure account should be taken of the expertise built up in existing non-profit-making bodies so that new staff do not have to be appointed but there can be no derogation from the relevant qualification requirement.

Advisory opinion about the preliminary draft Decree establishing flanking measures for the adjustment of the 2006 budget **C02/06 – 4 May 2006**

INTRODUCTION

The Flemish Minister for Finance and Budgetary Matters, and Town and Country Planning has asked the Culture Council to deliver an urgent advisory opinion about the aforementioned Decree.

The Council would like to stress beforehand that seeking an urgent advisory opinion in an advanced stage of the policy preparation process makes the Council task difficult if not impossible. This task involves using substantiated and reasoned advisory opinions as a contribution to an ambitious Flemish policy. As soon as an advisory council is involved in a policy process it is vital to be able to carry out this task.

ADVISORY OPINION

The advisory opinion applies to Chapter III: Culture of the aforementioned preliminary draft Decree.

Article 27

Pursuant to the Law on copyright and neighbouring rights and in consultation with the Communities, the Federal Government had developed a lending rights scheme. It is welcome news that the Authorities of Flanders has decided to accept full responsibility for the lending rights issue, so that there is less of an administrative burden for public libraries and users than would have been the case with an individual collection system.

Article 28

The Infrastructure Cultural Fund (FoCI) is a public service responsible for funding cultural infrastructure construction or purchasing investments by the Flemish Community and taking charge of investment grants for

the cultural infrastructures of third parties. This preliminary draft Decree offers the FoCI the opportunity from now on to pay hire and rental charges, long leases and other expenses for the Flemish Community's cultural infrastructures.

The Culture Council acknowledges the technical need for the provisions in Article 28. The Council stresses that it does not reach any conclusions on the Authorities of Flanders' investment policy for the cultural infrastructure.

Article 29 and Article 30

The Decree covering the granting of financial grants to organisations coming within the jurisdiction of the Joint Committee for the Social-Cultural Sector now includes a provision catering for the recovery of advances made, when these are higher than the actual costs or higher than the justified expenditure. These supplements mean the financial cases of former third labour circuits (this scheme is meant for long-term jobseekers who are employed exclusively in the non-commercial sector) can be processed more quickly and the relevant organisations can be made more customer-responsive.

[Advisory opinion on the draft Decree approving the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, and the annex, established in Paris on 20 October 2005](#)

C06/06 – 7 November 2006

In answer to the request for an advisory opinion on the aforementioned draft Decree, the Culture Council refers to its advisory opinion of 27 October 2005 entitled 'The cultural dimension (in) Europe: consciously associating with diversity'.

The Council is calling for a Flemish cultural policy that exploits the social opportunities of cultural diversity to the hilt. The Council's advisory opinion describes cultural diversity as diversity between, in and on the basis of individuals and groups, a comprehensive, well-thought-out form of diversity. The Council lends its support in particular to the principles of and the link between diversity and fundamental rights, democracy, dialogue and development, as enshrined in the founding principles of the Convention.

I. WHAT HAPPENED IN 2006?

The Culture Council's advisory opinion also stresses the importance of the Convention for Flanders insofar as it acknowledges the right of states to continue to apply their own cultural policies.

Feedback

Letter from the Minister

In a letter to the President, Bert Anciaux, Minister for Culture, Youth and Sports, has spelled out his positions on the advisory opinion about the creation of a strategic advisory Council for Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media. The full version of the letter is featured below.



Mr President,

Some time ago, your Council delivered an advisory opinion about the new strategic advisory Council for Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media.

Allow me to express my sincere appreciation of the positive and constructive approach reflected in the advisory opinion. Our conversation in late June and the subsequent correspondence and ad hoc consultations established a firm basis for the broad themes and priorities of the new strategic advisory council.

I am writing this letter to let you know about the reaction to your latest advisory opinions.

The structure of the council, which, apart from a general council, comprises four sector-specific councils that may directly issue advisory opinions, is closely in line with the administrative framework established by the Authorities of Flanders and the needs and requirements of the various sectors. The present proposal now allows progress to be made on the basis of an integrated and specialist approach.

The sector-specific councils are an integral part of the strategic advisory council but may develop with a specific identity. As expressly requested by the Flemish Sports Council, the sector-specific councils may choose a specific name consistent with their rules of procedure. This combination of representatives of community-based organisations and outside experts, plus the large number of members, will guarantee a balanced yet operational composition.

I am delighted we have succeeded, in consultation with the Flemish

I. WHAT HAPPENED IN 2006?

Youth Council, in including guarantees for efficient cooperation offering opportunities for the viewpoints of children and young people, also in the context of the general council.

I am pleased to be able to lend my support to a large number of the proposals made by the Culture Council, the Arts Council and the Council for Adult Education and Cultural Diffusion, where valuable adjustments to the wording of the preliminary draft have been recommended.

The job description for the Council for Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media is amplified with the opportunity to issue own-initiative or requested opinions about the proposals for Decrees. This provision was also provided for in the framework Decree concerning strategic advisory councils.

The provisions for the composition of the council have been worded in a more straightforward manner, without affecting the need for diversity in terms of the levels of governance, the types of activities, promoters, men and women and ethnic-cultural diversity.

I also go along with the arguments raised about membership of a strategic advisory council and membership of a supporting structure board being incompatible.

I agree with the proposal to minimise potential automatic representations in the case of the delegation of sector-specific councils in the general council.

The strategic opinions concept makes a distinction between policy planning and policy implementation. This carries the risk that the experience and knowledge built up as a result of implementing the policy will not be conveyed to those who reflect upon the policy and deliver opinions. Hence I agree with the advisory opinion seeking to formalise exchanges of information between the strategic advisory council and the policy enforcement review panels. Timely, comprehensive information is vital for issuing relevant advisory opinions that may enhance the value of the policy.

I have decided against backing certain items in the advisory opinions.

I do not agree with the proposal to have the presidents of sector-specific councils appointed by the Minister. I am anxious for the sector-specific councils to enjoy full autonomy and am absolutely confident that the sector-specific councils will make well-considered choices. They have every interest in doing so.

The list of candidacies for independent experts obviously has to be publi-

cised and the final choices have to be accounted for. This is generally consistent with the principle of administrative openness. Consequently, I do not regard it as advisable to include provisions along these lines in the Decree.

Nor do I go along with the proposal to use a decree to grant the strategic advisory council the right to act as a forum. The framework Decree does not provide a forum-related role for strategic advisory councils in the nonetheless broad task descriptions. However, this does not prevent the council from taking its own initiatives and therefore setting up a forum but I am above all anxious for the strategic advisory council to focus on the decretal tasks.

In the case of formal and financial support for the strategic advisory council, I would like to highlight the Euro 65,000 financial grant I have included in the 2007 budget. 2007 is a year of transition because the council cannot yet operate for a full 12 months. I will adjust the financial grant in 2008 to a full working year.

The council will also have a permanent secretariat at its command with five full-time employees.

I am planning to submit the draft Decree as soon as possible so it can be reviewed by the Flemish Parliament. A few preliminary advisory opinions are required, including the one from the SERV (Flemish Economic-Social Council) but I hope the text may still be reviewed before the summer recess. The open call for applicants may then be made and the community-based organisations can then nominate their representatives. Once the Government of Flanders has approved the composition, the first strategic advisory Council for Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media policy area can make a start on its key tasks. It is the beginning of a new chapter but I have high hopes and trust we can continue working together on a compelling narrative.

I would like to pay sincere thanks to you and the members of the advisory council for the efforts you have made and will continue to make. There is every chance that I will be meeting you again with your colleagues in the context of a high-power, high-performance strategic advisory council and sector-specific councils.

Best regards,

Bart Anciaux

Flemish Minister of Culture, Youth, Sports and Brussels

In the Flemish Parliament

Some of the advisory opinions issued in 2005 and 2006 were mentioned - be it direct or indirect - in the Flemish Parliament. They became Parliamentary Documents or formed a source of inspiration for Parliament debates. An overview is listed below.

| Date of appearance in Flemish Parliament | Advisory opinion | Parliamentary Documents | Context |
|--|---|-----------------------------------|--|
| 20 January 2006 | C03/05 Ratification of Unesco '70 Convention Issued: 15 March 2005 | Document 666 (2005-2006) – Nr. 1 | The 'Draft Decree approving the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, established in Paris on 17 October 2003' reproduces the advisory opinion of the council. |
| 5 January 2006 | C13/05 The Significance of Federal Cultural Institutions to Cultural Policy in Flanders. | Document 50-A (2005-2006) – nr. 1 | The advisory opinion was issued at the request of the Flemish Parliament |
| 23 februari 2006 | Issued: 8 December 2005 | Document 704 (2005-2006) | Stefaan De Clerck requests an explanation from Bert Anciaux, Flemish Minister for Culture, Youth, Sports and Brussels, about the relevance of the federal cultural institutions for cultural policy in Flanders. The advisory opinion of the council forms the direct reason for the question. |

| Date of appearance in Flemish Parliament | Advisory opinion | Parliamentary Documents | Context |
|--|---|--|--|
| 18 April 2006 | <p>C12/05</p> <p>A Flemish Cultural Policy for Cultural Industries</p> <p>Issued: 8 December 2005</p> | <p>Document 50-B (2005-2006) – Nr. 1</p> | <p>The advisory opinion forms the background to: Steven Vanackere's question to Bert Anciaux, Flemish Minister for Culture, Youth, Sports and Brussels, about the newly created CultuurInvest, a cultural investment fund, being restricted in scope to the companies within the Flemish Region and Talks with Bert Anciaux, Flemish Minister for Culture, Youth, Sports and Brussels, about the implementation of a set of policy instruments for the target group of cultural industries: creation of CultuurInvest.</p> |
| 18 April 2006 | <p>C02/05</p> <p>Repeal of the Culture Pact. A Plea for Diversity, Openness, Participation and Involvement</p> <p>Issued: 15 March 2005</p> | <p>Document 50-A (2004-2005) – Nr. 1</p> | <p>Proposal for a Decree tabled by Rob Verreycken and Erik Arckens for amending and supplementing the Decree of 28 January 1974 concerning the Culture Pact for introducing a new Flemish Culture Pact Committee. Advisory opinion C02/05 on the Culture Pact is annexed hereto.</p> |

I. WHAT HAPPENED IN 2006?

| Date of appearance in Flemish Parliament | Advisory opinion | Parliamentary Documents | Context |
|--|--|--|---|
| 17 May 2006 | C02/06 Preliminary Draft Flemish Parliament Act containing Provisions to accompany the Budget Issued: 4 May 2006 | Document 844 (2005-2006) N°1 Document 19 (2005-2006) N°4d | 'Draft Decree establishing flanking measures for the adjustment of the 2006 Budget' reproduces the advisory opinion. The Parliamentary Committee on Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media is discussing the matter. |
| 22 June 2006 | C04.06 Advisory opinion on strategies for enhancing cultural expertise Issued: 21 June 2006 | Document 50-C (2005-2006) – Nr.1 | The advisory opinion was issued at the request of the Flemish Parliament |
| 12 October 2006 | C05/05 Towards a coherent international cultural policy Issued: 15 March 2005 | Document 50-B (2004-2005) - Nr. 1 Document 1364 (2005-2006) | The advisory opinion was issued at the request of the Flemish Parliament Johan Verstreken's request for an explanation from Bert Anciaux, Flemish Minister for Culture, Youth, Sports and Brussels I, about the international cultural policy. The advisory opinion is annexed hereto. |

Press reviews

De Morgen, 7 January 2006 – “Flanders now has 13 ministries”

The reform of the Flemish administration has not gone unnoticed. The newspaper De Morgen explains that from now on there will be one strategic advisory council for each policy area, with specialists and representatives of civil society.

Gazet van Antwerpen, 21 February 2006 – “Anciaux sets himself quotas for ethnic minorities”

By 2008, 10% of the members of the new strategic Council for Culture Council Youth, Sports and the Media should be from diversified ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

De Standaard, 24 February 2006 – “Importing the Flagey model into the Monnaie Opera House and the Brussels Fine Arts Centre”

The Brussels museums (all federal establishments) and their Flemish counterparts differ in terms of dynamism and expertise, according to the Culture Council's advisory opinion about the federal cultural institutions¹.

Others

Support structures and campaigning organisations

Apart from a detailed review of all the council's advisory opinions, the website of the campaigning organisation for the social-cultural sector, the *Federatie van Organisaties voor Volksontwikkelingswerk (FOV - Federation of Adult Education Organisations)* also has an effective news monitoring system, spelling out very many of the Culture Council's advisory opinions. The Council's advisory opinion on diversity (C11/05) was mentioned on 18 January. FOV also spoke at length about the strategic advisory council on 16 May 13, June 21, June 6 July and 3 October 2006. For one thing, a list of key points is considered. The advisory opinion about the budget, including the three major themes, was reviewed on 17 May 2006. Lastly the FOV 'News bulletin' of 10 July 2006 featured the advisory opinion on cultural expertise.

The website of the support structure *Muziekcentrum Vlaanderen (Flanders Music Centre)* refers to an advisory opinion about the cultural

¹The advisory opinion C13/05, "The Significance of Federal Cultural Institutions to Cultural Policy in Flanders View on a Workable Structure" (8 December 2005), can be found on our website www.raadvoorcultuur.be.

industry and the advisory opinion on the federal cultural institutions. There is a link to all advisory opinions (16 January 2006). On 24 July 2006 there was a further reference to all the advisory opinions published on the website hitherto, via a link.

The website of the *Initiatief Audiovisuele Kunsten (Audiovisual Arts Initiative)* refers to this advisory opinion and the one on the cultural industry, with a link to all the advisory opinions, (1 February 2006). The website of the *Initiatief Beeldende Kunst (Visual Arts Initiatives)* mentions the advisory opinion on diversity in the context of the day of action on inter-cultural relations (23 February 2006).

CultuurNet Vlaanderen (Flemish Culture Network) provides a link to the advisory opinion on 'Strategies for enhancing cultural expertise' and a summary in the 'Online Bib'.

Miscellaneous

The "Flemish Action Plan for the Intercultural Relations of, for the benefit of and via culture, youth work and sports" includes a summary of the advisory opinion on diversity.

Correspondence with Bernard Focroulle, head of the 'De Munt – La Monnaie' Opera House, about the advisory opinion concerning federal cultural institutions.²

Positive feedback about the Annual Report 2005 from:

- Brussels Capital-Region, 27 April 2006
- South Africa, Ministry of Arts and Culture, 21 April 2006
- France, Ministry of Culture and Communication, 13 April 2006
- Belgium's French Community, 13 April 2006

²The advisory opinions can be found at our website www.raadvoorcultuur.be. The advisory opinions are: C11/05, "Cultural Life in Europe: Awareness of Diversity" (27 October 2005) and C13/05, "The Significance of Federal Cultural Institutions to Cultural Policy in Flanders. View on a Workable Structure" (8 December 2005)".

Culture Council's annual report for 2005

| Annual reports Culture 2005 | Number of orders |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Dutch | Distribution in Flanders : 2.345 Distribution abroad and Brussels: 24 Additional orders: 17 Total: 2.386 |
| English | Distribution: 179 Additional orders: 4 Total: 183 |
| French | Distribution: 135 Additional: 7 Total: 142 |

Analysis of the website's visitor statistics

A review was made in 2006³ of the statistics about the number of visitors to the councils' website, www.wvc.vlaanderen.be/cultuurbeleid/raden_commissies, plus a lot of other useful information. A number of conclusions may be drawn from this review.

Conclusions

The website is primarily used in a work-related context: during working hours, with the number of visitors peaking at the end of the working day and rarely at the weekend. The number of visits was fairly steady during the period under review. An average of 13 people a day visits our website, most of whom log-on via a computer belonging to the Ministry of the Flemish Community. The servers and providers of support structures and campaigning organisations also account for a fairly large number of visits.

Amongst the leading servers, providers and reference sites (websites visitors access before reaching the site under review), key cultural players, such as support structures and campaigning organisations, also play a key role in disseminating information about the councils. News reports or references to new advisory opinions on a website are responsible for a significant increase in the number of visitors to the website. The interest shown by overseas visitors may be due in part to the fact

³The analysis was performed at 26 September 2006 and includes the period from 13 September 2004 to 31st August 2006.

that the annual reports for 2005 have been translated into English and French.

A final significant conclusion is that most visitors to the website arrive as a result of looking for the name of a person, which refers them to the composition of the councils, advisory and assessment committees. This thus appears to be information of great interest to the visitors.

Priorities for the future

A website is becoming increasingly important as a source of information for and an access port to an organisation and thus has to comply with the corporate identity of an organization. If we wish to continue fine-tuning the information available on the website in future, thereby offering users a better service, a number of items have to be considered.

1. A wider range of information

A review of the most popular and most consulted pages shows that visitors are not only looking for advisory opinions. This is why it is essential to offer a wider range of information. There appears to be particular interest in the names of specific individuals and the composition of the councils and review panels. The future council may have to adopt a position on this issue: whether to respond to the development of the personality cult or otherwise?

2. Link with the Ministry

A new structure will be created in the future, thereby offering us the opportunity to operate on a more autonomous basis but the findings show how important it is to maintain links with the Minister over the Internet. The link between the councils and the Ministry continues to be important, particularly for the outside world. Visitors mainly reach use via a website of the Flemish Community, while most visitors are employees of the Flemish Community. A suitably prominent link in a few strategic places should also to improve user-friendliness.

3. The user-friendliness of the website

Making a website user-friendly is a key stage in the bid to attract and cater for visitors. This issue can be addressed on several fronts.

- a) An effective home page with clear references to other pages of the Ministry is the first major step. The website of the councils and committees is currently a bit hidden among other links on the home page devoted to 'cultural policy' (www.raadvoorcultuur.be).
- b) Second, the structure of the website has to incite visitors to continue reading. A clear and efficient reference has to be made to where the information may be found. The information then has to be easily accessible, comprehensive and clear.
- c) The main concern of course is for the information to be relevant for those undertaking a search. See also 'A wider range of information' concerning the kind of information.
- d) The website layout can make a large contribution in this respect: it can guide visitors in a user-friendly way to the information being sought.

4. Network building

As the conclusions also showed, the support structures and campaigning organisations, too, have an important part to play in spreading information about the councils and their advisory opinions. This shows how important it is to build an information network to ensure our advisory opinions are effectively disseminated. This role may certainly be extended.

The idea that the new strategic advisory council may act as a forum (see the Culture Council's advisory opinion on the creation of the Council for Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media), is perfectly relevant. In the future, the council should operate as an intermediary between organisations, universities and municipalities, thereby acting as a forum for the Flemish culture, youth, sports and media policy.

EACH MINUTE BELGIAN ART CHANGES THE WORLD



BELANGRIJKE MEDEDELING:
OOSTENDE BEVINDT ZICH OP 397.320.000.000 KM
VAN PROXIMA CENTAURI

MESSAGE IMPORTANT:
OSTENDE SE TROUVE À 397.320.000.000 KM
DE PROXIMA DU CENTAURE

WICHTIGE MITTEILUNG:
OOSTENDE BEFINDET SICH AUF 397.320.000.000 KM
VON PROXIMA CENTAURI

IMPORTANT MESSAGE:
OOSTENDE IS SITUATED AT 397.320.000.000 KM
FROM PROXIMA CENTAURI

JACQUES CHARLIER MAI 2000

'Message'

Work by Jacques Charlier during the Talent 2005 exhibition in 'Thurn und Taxis', Brussels.

The Council for Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media is set up.

Debate on the activities of a strategic advisory council

Over the past year the advisory councils for the Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media policy area⁴, which have been phased out to make way for the new strategic advisory council, have gathered together in a spirit of constructive loyalty to discuss the Authorities of Flanders' administrative strategic advice scheme.

The Administrative Affairs Department and the *HayGroup* consultancy firm have lent their support, while a learning platform was tasked with considering the organisational dimension of the advisory council for Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media.

The debate was apparently effective in setting the stage for issuing an advisory opinion on the preliminary draft Decree on setting up the Council for Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media.

The conclusions reached during the debate have been included in this annual report in the hope that they may be useful to our successors.

What is changing?

Below is a summary of the changes due to appear in the advisory process:

1) inclusion in the policy chain: in its capacity as an autonomous policy advice body the strategic advisory council is a link in the policy chain. It operates alongside agencies in charge of policy implementation and alongside the department responsible for policy planning. The Flemish Parliament, too, can turn to the council for advice.

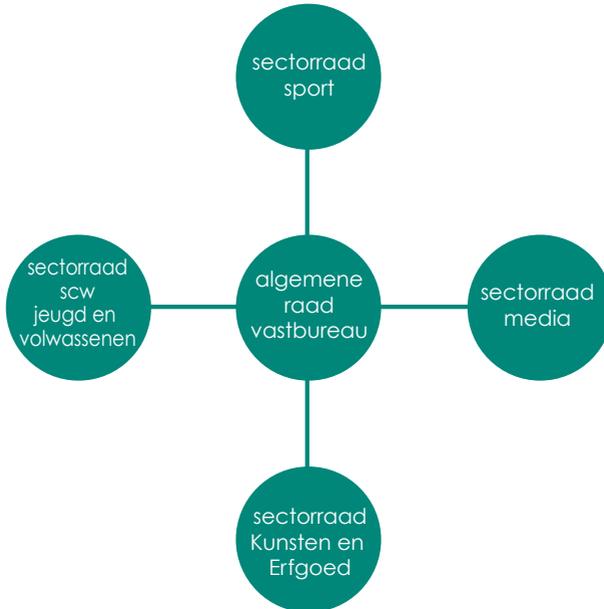
2) legal personality: the council has its own financial grant and a secretariat responsible solely for lending support to the advisory council. This means the council is allowed to act autonomously and personally organise its activities but it also implies that the council is responsible and accountable for the way the resources are deployed. The

⁴The Culture Council, the Arts Council, the Council for Adult Education and Cultural Diffusion, the Flemish Media Council and the Flemish Sports Council. The Flemish Youth Council was also involved although it continues to operate as an advisory body for its category, responsible for youth issues in various policy areas.

II. WHAT IS CHANGING IN 2007?

management tasks resulting from this autonomous status are assigned to a permanent bureau.

3) one advisory council for the Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media policy area in contrast to the earlier situation where there was at least one council for each component. The council comprises a general council, a permanent bureau and four sectoral councils (see figure).



4) key activities as assigned by the Decree:

- issuing own-initiative opinions or requested opinions
 - Preliminary draft or draft Decrees
 - Main policy themes
 - Draft decisions of the Government of Flanders
 - Policy intentions, plans and regulations being prepared at European Union level and in the case of international conventions
- Contributing to the development of a policy concept
- Keeping track of and interpreting social developments
- Giving careful consideration to the policy documents the Flemish Parliament presents

The Government of Flanders is required to seek opinions about any

preliminary draft decrees and draft decisions deemed to be strategically important⁵.

5) mixed composition, half of the members are representatives of civil society, proposed by representatives of campaigning organisations, and the other half are independent experts, proposed after an open call for applicants.

6) right to information established in a protocol concluded between the strategic advisory council and the policy council⁶.

How can the council organise itself?

The changes are quite significant ones that raise various questions.

What are the implications of the autonomous status? Is too much being asked of the members of an advisory council that apart from being called upon to act as advisor also has a managerial role?

Will the council be able to enjoy enough human and financial resources?

Are there any advantages to be discovered in the new situation?

Is it feasible to operate with just one advisory council?

And what basic organisational conditions have to be met for the strategic advisory council to successfully fulfil its mission?

During a learning platform held by the Administrative Affairs Department and supervised by the *HayGroup*, a review was made of the options available for the new strategic advisory council to organise itself so the key activities it has been assigned can be brought to a successful conclusion.

The remit and concept referred to below are drawn from the basic texts dealing with a better administrative policy.

⁵As a result of being involved for 30 years with the Culture Pact, the sector has built up a quite a lot of experience with the advisory opinion formality.

⁶A policy council, chaired by the minister, is created for each policy area. The policy council is the forum for political and administrative debates leading to policy making. Within the policy council and against the background of a give-and-take discussion, the Minister has direct consultations with all senior managers coming within the scope of the policy area for which the minister is competent: not only those from the departments but also those from the internally autonomous agencies, internally autonomous agencies with a legal personality and externally autonomous agencies. The policy council lends support to the high-level policy-making process, while primarily operating as policy integration and coordinating platform, where, in particular, consultations are held about strategic objectives and their implementation, and policy intentions and innovative projects are tested.

II. WHAT IS CHANGING IN 2007?

The Council for Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media is a permanent body set up by decree for the purpose of advising the Flemish Parliament, the Government of Flanders or individual ministers about strategic policy issues. The council offers expert, evidence-based advice about policy matters in the light of its independent status.

As the strategic advisory opinions form part of the policy planning process, the council is anxious to adopt a proactive and forward-looking stance. The council is eager to operate as a sounding board for rudimentary ideas and themes.

The strategic priorities decided on are:

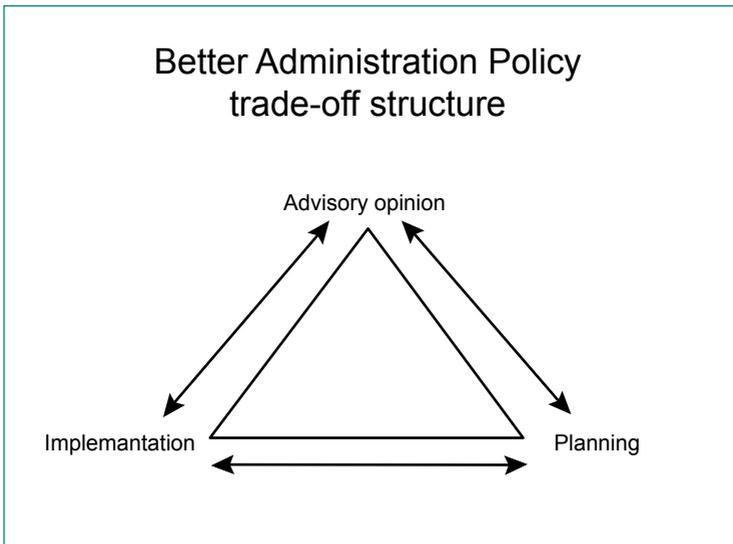
- independence,
- reliability,
- agenda-setting and horizon-exploring approaches,
- advisory opinions meeting high standards, creating a base of support and making an impact

The focus next turned to finding the keys to success and criteria for organising the project and a potential concept for the permanent secretariat. Under this heading account was taken of the structure of the sector (and its sectoral councils) and the secretariat's planned establishment plan (5 full time equivalents: 1 supervisor, 2 strategic and 2 administrative employees). The process resulted in two options.

Option 1 involves opting for an 'advice'-based organisation concept where the staff take on different roles. Option 2 entails deciding on a project-based approach focused on 'fields of activity'.

The learning platform conclusions may be summarised as follows.

Strategic advisory council learning platform: conclusions



Keys to success

- Managing the trade-off
- Managing the flow of information (appropriate timetable and effective guidance)
- Harmonisation between the Culture, Youth, Sports and Media policy areas
- Providing an input (developing substantive expertise)
- Developing an adequate level of authority and credibility

Keys to success for the secretariat

- Ability to develop a knowledge network and to harness knowledge swiftly - networking
- Transparent and effective work processes
- Ensuring integration and coordination
- Firmly-based planning and a proactive approach
- Adequate base of support and authority
- Ability to cater for the needs of the various groups of customers
- Firmly established project management (each advisory opinion is a project)
- Continuity, constant interchangeability

Organisation of the project criteria

- Contact point for the sectoral councils
- One supervisory system with a flat structure
- Networking (with a straightforward and effective system for identifying knowledge)
- Firmly established project management (structure lending the best possible support to project management)
- Continuity, constant interchangeability

Roles - Option 1

- Administrative supporter
- Coordinator
- Networker
- Budget manager
- “Contact point” per council
- Managerial role: planning, coordination, management, follow-up
- Staff manager
- Logistical supporter
- Reporter
- Signalling role
- Knowledge manager

Organisation Model - Option 1

Departmental manager: manager, network, coordinator



Knowledge management / Contact points/ Networkers / Rapporteurs

Logistical and administrative support

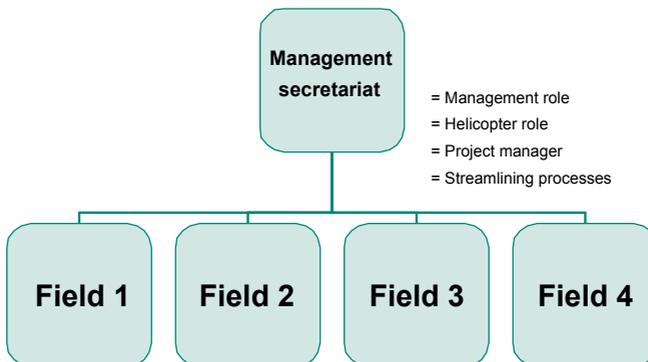
Budget Management

Agenda Management

Roles - Option 2

- General management (=secretary)
 - Contact point (outside world)
 - Tactical and operational management
- Management tasks: staff, logistics, administration, budget follow-up
- Networking: who has what expertise?
- Substantive expertise together with a general concept
- Designing processes and process monitoring
- Communication and public relations
 - Publishing the advisory opinions
 - Projecting an image as an autonomous entity
- Project activities
 - Roles and responsibilities

Organisation Model - option 2



Theme option 1 and 2

- “Management tasks” are undertaken by the secretariat
 - Finance
 - ...
- The secretary is responsible for coordination
- One contact point per sectoral council
- Expertise building takes place in the secretariat
- Information gathering and transferral
- Signalling role for the permanent bureau

Important for implementation

- Suitable expertise
- Number of people
- Preventing silo formation (for example, contact points in tandem)
- Realist concept of the skills required
- Promoting people’s expertise
- Physical location
- Staff mobility (networking support)
- Result-orientation and quality (explaining what a good advisory opinion is)
- Organising performance management (what is expected from staff, how to follow up, who follow up...)
- Clarity about contracting authority (ies) and delegations to the secretariat

Conclusion

The learning platform turned out to be a rewarding and far-reaching experience. Apart from the two options that were formulated (option 1 based on 'advise' and option 2 on 'fields of activity'), other initiatives may be available for making the secretariat operational.

Irrespective of the new advisory council's organisational system, these five factors obviously have to be taken into account.

1) High standards have been set for the strategic advisory council. They ensure a social-based system of advice, one that is not cut off from the world nor compartmentalised but reflects the specific features of the various strands of the policy area.

2) The new council has to operate according to an integrated and specialist approach. This is the reason for the specific structure attributed to the Council for Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media: invested with a general council and four sectoral councils with all the councils being entitled to issue direct advisory opinions. This provides a means of operating on an adaptable and flexible basis, thereby avoiding any going-through-the-motions approach. The challenge involves striking a balance between centralisation and deconcentration so as to maximise the interaction between the general council and the sectoral councils and between the sectoral councils themselves.

3) Criteria such as expertise, involvement and representativeness have to be to the fore when the members are being nominated. Success depends on being able to exploit the know-how, experiences and networks of the members and tapping into their willingness to invest in their advisory activities. It is also vital to have a structure that is independent from the administration and from the individual organisations.

4) The expertise of the secretariat staff is also crucial. They will have to show loyalty and adopt a result-oriented approach.

5) The protocol with the policy council should ideally ensure that the council is involved in the early stages of the policy planning process so that there is more chance of the 'strategic' advisory opinions being issued 'on request' rather than just being a question of going through

the motions (because of the duty to provide opinions) and being meaningful for all stakeholders.

Those from the current advisory councils taking part in the learning platform:

Sigrid Bousset, vice-president of the Culture Council

Johan Thielemans, president of the Arts Council

Hugo De Vos, a member of the Council for Adult Education and Cultural Diffusion and the Culture Council

Jan Korthoudt, a member of the Flemish Sports Council

Pepijn Deboscher, coordinator for the Flemish Youth Council

Iris Van Riet, secretary with the Culture Council and the Arts Council

Guidance:

Marleen Roggeman, Administrative Affairs Department

Simona Hollinger, *HayGroup*

The Culture Council has been established by the 19 December 1997 Flemish Parliament Act (Belgian Official Gazette of 11 April 1998), modified by the Flemish Parliament Acts of 30 March 1999 (Belgian Official Gazette of 27 August 1999), 18 May 1999 (Belgian Official Gazette of 15 July 1999), 2 April 2004 (Belgian Official Gazette of 6 July 2004) and 7 May (Belgian Official Gazette of 9 July 2004).

Flemish Government Decree of 5 May 1998 (Belgian Official Gazette of 25 June 1998), modified by the Flemish Government Decrees of 20 October 1998 (Belgian Official Gazette of 5 December 1998) and of 15 December 2000 (Belgian Official Gazette of 1 February 2001).

Mission

The Culture Council provides independent and expert advisory opinions and recommendations on cultural developments and the coherence and efficiency of cultural policy at its own initiative or at the request of the Flemish Government or the Flemish Parliament

The mission of the Culture Council is laid down in Article 5 of the 19 December 1997 Flemish Parliament Act and goes as follows:

“The mission of the Culture Council within the framework of policy preparation and policy evaluation is:

1° to provide, at its own initiative, or at the request of the Government or the Flemish Parliament, independent and expert advisory opinions and recommendations regarding:

- cultural developments in the Flemish Community;
- an inclusive cultural policy, aimed at promoting the quality of cultural life from many social angles;
- the intersectoral cultural policy in all matters specified in Article 2 (reference to cultural matters);
- the promotion of cultural participation and the elimination of the cultural deprivation;
- the evaluation and provision of advice on international cultural co-operation;
- the promotion of the creation, production and preservation of cultural products;
- the possibly direct or indirect effects of policy proposals and their connection with the entire cultural policy;
- the coherence and effectiveness of cultural policy as such.

2° to organise debates and workshops on policy-relevant themes in co-operation with the Government.

Advisory Deadline

If the Flemish Government asks for advice, the Culture Council is to provide advice within the deadline set by the Government. The Culture Council has at least 30 days to provide advice requested by the Flemish Parliament.

Public nature

Five days after the advisory opinions and reports have been submitted to the Flemish Government or the Flemish Parliament they shall be made public.

Rules of Procedure

The functioning of the Culture Council is laid down in rules of procedure. It was adopted by the Flemish Government on 12 March 2004.

History

On Friday 12 December 2003, the Flemish Government appointed the new members of the Culture Council (Belgian Official Gazette of 14 January 2004 – Ed. 2).

On Friday 14 May 2004, the Flemish Government appointed three members, representatives of the Council for Adult Education and Cultural Dissemination and of the Flemish Media Council as members of the Culture Council (Belgian Official Gazette of 7 June 2004 - Ed. 2).

Composition

The Culture Council is composed as follows:

- 13 members who are experts in cultural matters;
- 7 members of the Arts Council: chairman + 6 chairpeople of committees;
- 7 members of the Council for Adult Education and Cultural Dissemination: chairman + 4 chairpeople of committees + 2 members;
- 2 members of each of the following councils:
 - the Youth Council for the Flemish Community;
 - the Flemish High Council for Sport;
 - the Flemish Media Council;
 - the Flemish Council for Tourism.

Who is who?

The current members, in alphabetical order, are:

1. Mr Patrick Allegaert, curator for temporary exhibitions at the Dr. Guislain Museum, Ghent, in charge of communication
2. Mr Herman Baeten, Director of Musica vzw, Impulscentrum voor Muziek
3. Mrs Sigrid Bousset, Vice-Chairwoman of Culture Council, programme maker of Het Beschrijf
4. Mrs Moniek Bucquoye, exhibition maker, author Design en Architectuur
5. Mr Bart De Baere, Chairman of Culture Council, Director of MuHKA
6. Mr Jan De Braekeleer, Director of Wisper
7. Mr Piet De Gryse, curator of the Royal Army and Military History Museum, Brussels
8. Mrs Chantal De Smet, professor, head of the Communication and Culture Department, Hogeschool Gent

9. Mr Hugo De Vos, Director of the Federatie van Organisaties voor Volksontwikkelingswerk
10. Mr Bart Doucet, cultural policy co-ordinator of the City of Ghent
11. Mr Eddy Frans, General Manager of vzw De Rand
12. Mrs Anjes Goris, Chairwoman of the Cultural Centres and Community Centres Committee of the Council for Adult Education and Cultural Dissemination
13. Mr Frank Herman, co-ordinator of heritage policy, Antwerp Heritage Unit
14. Mr Gi Mateusen, founder-partner of PICS bvba, audio-visual production company
15. Mrs Jorijn Neyrinck, Tapis Plein vzw
16. Mr Johan Notte, Director of Vermeylen Fund
17. Mr Rik Pinxten, professor at University of Ghent
18. Mrs Marleen Platteau, Chairwoman of the Council for Adult Education and Cultural Dissemination, Ternat cultural policy co-ordinator
19. Mr Harold Polis, publishing editor with Meulenhoff/Manteau
20. Mr Geert Puype, General Chairman of VVBAD, librarian at the Public Library in Menin
21. Mr Johan Swinnen, senior lecturer at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, professor at Hogeschool Antwerpen, Chairman of the Vlaamse Dienst voor Filmcultuur
22. Mr Johan Thielemans, Chairman of the Arts Council, guest lecturer Instituut Herman Teirlinck, Hogeschool Antwerpen
23. Mrs Leen Thielemans, co-ordinator of Kunst in Zicht
24. Mrs Leen Vanderhulst, former Chairwoman of the Flemish Youth Council
25. Mr Joannes Van Heddegem, honorary director at Hogeschool Sint-Lukas Brussel
26. Mr Bart Vanreusel, Chairman of the Flemish Sports Council, professor in sport sociology at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven
27. Mr Peter Vantuyghem, Head of Culture and Media with De Standaard
28. Mr Jan Van Vaerenbergh, Director of Public Libraries in Antwerp (on a career break since October 2005)
29. Mrs Martine Verheyen, sports-technical co-ordinator of FROS, Amateur-sportfederatie vzw
30. Mr Luk Verschuere, Chairman of the Centrum voor Arbeidersvorming en Cultuur, the cultural umbrella organisation of the ACW
31. Pepijn Debosscher, co-ordinator of the Flemish Youth Council).

The Culture Council's secretariat is the responsibility of the strategic advisory councils unit attached to the Flemish Ministry of Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media. This Unit supports as well as provides a framework for the activities of the Arts Council and the Advisory Appeal Committee on Cultural Matters.

Composition of the Unit for Strategic Advisory Councils

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The aforementioned members of staff are employed as the unit's director, assistant director, expert and administrative officer respectively.

The Secretariat has many tasks. In this respect we can refer to the tasks of the Culture Council as specified in Article 5 of the 19 December 1997 Flemish Parliament Act. It concerns more specifically: co-ordinating activities, preparing discussion notes and (draft) advisory opinions, following the progress of projects and work groups, carrying out limited study contracts, monitoring the field, establishing contacts, taking care of external communication, reporting and all related administrative tasks. The secretariat also guides the reorganization to a strategic advisory council for Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media.

⁷Belgisch Staatsblad van 11 april 1998.

Website

All reports, advisory opinions, positions and publications of the Culture Council may be consulted at the following address: www.raadvoor-cultuur.be.

The Culture Council's publications may also be ordered via 1700, what used to be the Flemish Help Line. Further details are available on the website of the Authorities of Flanders, www.Flanders.be.





Editorial process

Flemish ministry of Culture, Youth, Sports and the Media (since April 2006)

Strategic advisory councils unit

Responsible editor

Bart De Baere

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Flemish government, Communication's section

Ingrid Van Rintel

The photographer: Jo Voets

Jo Voets (°1958) always searches for a balance between two values: there exists no beauty without content, nor the other way round. Each element must find its place and meaning in the composition and has a link with the other elements and with the whole. The photographs of Jo Voets are indisputably realistic and are very imaginative. His work distinguishes itself by an interest for the composition in itself, borrowed from modern abstract art. The key to his work is the use of the space in order to build relations which are sometimes suggestive and sometimes surprising.

His fascination is with producing reports about social injustice, and the people who are sidelined in our society. He spent four years off and on in Bucharest, Romania, working with street children and families who literally lived underground in tunnels beneath the city. 'Bucuresti Underworld' was selected for the first Berlin Photography Festival, in 2005.

Even if he makes use of reality, Jo Voets has admitted that he is, in his heart, an ironical player. The results can be alarming, but he guards us for the stereotypes. However we do not react less strongly to the represented tension.

Johan Swinnen, art critic (VRT and <H>art)

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