



29 March 2018, Amsterdam

Ms. Petra Kammerevert  
Chair of Committee on Culture and Education  
European Parliament  
Rue Wiertz  
Altiero Spinelli 12G165  
1047 Brussels, Belgium

Mr. Jens Nymand-Christensen  
Deputy DG EAC  
Directorate General for Education and Culture  
European Commission  
1049 Brussels, Belgium

Dear Ms. Kammerevert and Mr. Nymand-Christensen,

On November 17, 2017, as European leaders were gathering in Gothenburg, our two networks jointly responded to the European Commission's ambition to strive for a European Area of Education and Culture by 2025. On behalf of more than 500 Higher Arts Education institutes, the European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA) and the Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen (AEC) suggest the following amendments to the proposed text for the eight competences, following consultation with several of the leading European Higher Arts Education Institutions.

1. Competence number 8, 'Cultural awareness and expression':

We are convinced that the arts are at the core of this competence. The current wording suggests to primarily address diversity, social cohesion and inclusion. We are missing here the intrinsic contribution of the arts to all parts of society.

Our proposal for rewording:

8. Arts, creative expression and cultural awareness

*Increasing cultural and intercultural skills as well as the ability to express ideas in a variety of ways and contexts*

2. We welcome the proposed change of competence 3 to STEM but encourage going one step further and stressing the needed link between 3 and 8 which will make the potential of STEAM visible. The importance of adding the A - representing the arts - to the skills required for the 21<sup>st</sup> century is widely acknowledged. The World Economic Forum identified creativity as the third most valuable skill of the future and recommended changing curricula radically to focus learning on creative subjects. To us, creativity is unthinkable without the arts. This would also reflect the identified need to break through existing silos.

In the subtext to the eight competences, it must be stressed that culture is the glue that holds all of the other competences together and advances Europe toward being a more cohesive and inclusive society.

A society where the arts and cultural awareness are trained from a young age, will exhibit entrepreneurship, economic growth, resilience, democratic participation and a strong European identity.

With these alterations to the proposed key competences, our sector will feel better positioned to contribute to formulating a common reference framework for education and culture.

Education in the arts is a rich part of European heritage and we celebrate this especially this year. We urge you to consider our input and we are available for questions and further elaboration.

Sincerely yours,

Thomas D. Meier  
ELIA President

Eirik Birkeland  
AEC President