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# CULTURAL COOPERATION WITHIN THE WIDER EUROPE AND ACROSS THE MEDITERRANEAN

## ISSUES AT STAKE AND PROPOSALS FOR ACTION

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# PREFACE

The European Cultural Foundation is an independent non-profit organization promoting European cultural cooperation. It supports through its grants and programmes innovative work in the field of culture, arts and media, and advocates, in partnership with other stakeholders of European cultural cooperation, the design of new and inclusive cultural policies *for* Europe.

Acknowledging and addressing the cultural dimension of the European integration process, it launched in 2002 the Enlargement of Minds action-line. This initiative explored through action-research, seminars, publications, media partnerships and artistic commissions the cultural consequences of EU enlargement from the perspective of the “insiders” and the “outsiders”.

The inclusion of 10 new countries will have an unprecedented impact on Europe as a whole. New borders will be drawn; new zones of interest be created, new mechanisms of cooperation be defined, and hopefully new and meaningful means be put in place to secure a democratic Europe open to its direct neighbours and the world.

The ECF is fully committed to the notion of Wider Europe. On operational level, it supports since many years trans-national cultural cooperation with and between countries to the South, South East and East of the enlarged EU. On advocacy level, it urges systematically for complementary measures and greater coherence in the implementation of cultural, educational and social actions in these regions provided by European, national, regional, local and private sources.

The creation of a Wider Europe Task Force, development of a Neighbourhood policy and drafting of an action-plan for cooperation with EU neighbours in four key areas (Internal Market; Justice and Home Affairs; Transports, Energy, Information Networks; People-to-People actions), including culture and education, is a momentum not to be missed. It constitutes a unique chance for the European Commission to show vision and leadership, and to associate its efforts and create synergy with other organisations that pursue the same or similar objectives in the countries in question.

In this context, special attention needs to be paid to the countries of the Western Balkans. Although being an integral and vital part of our common European cultural space, they face massively decreasing interest and support from earlier private and governmental investors and risk to be excluded from support and cooperation initiatives, especially in the field of culture, due to their accession perspective within the Association and Stabilisation Agreements. Access to European community programmes has been discussed, as an option only for 2005. This situation, matched with the fact that existing cooperation mechanisms (e.g. CARDS) do not include cultural chapters, argues even more convincingly for prompt and significant action with regard to currently negotiated policy proposals and accompanying plans of actions.

The Enlargement of Minds action-line equally advocates for increased educational and cultural support- and cooperation measures vis-à-vis the new EU-neighbours in the East, and for stronger intercultural initiatives addressing the cross-Mediterranean countries, emphasising the role which civil society organisations have to play, also in the newly created Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for Dialogue between Cultures and Civilisations.

The ECF commissioned the document “Cultural Cooperation in a Wider Europe” to Jochen Fried, policy analyst, consultant in European affairs, director of the Salzburg Seminar, and former director of the *IWM, the Institute for Human Sciences in Vienna*, with the aim of gathering factual evidence and content proposals regarding a strategic cultural policy framework for the Wider Europe. We thank Jochen Fried for his excellent analysis of the role of culture in building a responsible and open Europe and for his forward-looking proposals regarding strengthened cultural cooperation mechanisms with the enlarged EU new neighbours.

The annex contains the memoranda/manifestos of the three Enlargement of Minds seminars and summarizes this action-line of the European Cultural Foundation.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Very soon, the EU will not only have new members, but also new neighbours. The European Commission has acknowledged the consequences resulting from the shifting of the EU axis by developing the *Wider Europe* and *New Neighbourhood* policy framework in which it outlines the directions and instruments for enhanced cooperation with the countries at the EU rim in Eastern Europe, South East Europe and the Southern Mediterranean. At the same time, the European Cultural Foundation (ECF) started a forward-thinking initiative entitled *Enlargement of Minds* focusing on the cultural dimensions of EU enlargement. The main findings and conclusions of this initiative were:

- Enhanced cultural cooperation with the new neighbouring countries can play a pivotal role in fostering mutual trust and understanding, weaken ignorance and prejudice, and celebrate diversity as a vital asset of our common European identity.
- Creating an integrated cultural space beyond the EU of the 25 member states, characterized by a free flow of cultural goods, ideas and debates will require an orchestrated effort of all major facilitators involved: the European Union, national governments, regional and local authorities, public and private foundations, the independent sector as well as the media. Subsidising should not be an excuse for inactivity or lack of collaborative and synergetic engagement.
- Mobility is the key to spirited and consequential international cultural exchange and cross-fertilization. Existing obstacles to increased mobility across the new EU boundaries, notably the scarceness of funding and rigid visa regulations, should be lowered and ultimately removed. Sensible provisions should be taken to extend current and future EU mobility programmes and instruments to the new neighbouring countries.
- Present EU programmes in support of social and economic development in the neighbouring countries do not explicitly include culture as a programme objective. Openly defining the terms under which culture can be funded as part of these programmes would go a long way in clarifying Community policies with regard to

culture; it would also help determine the actual level of EU investment into international cultural cooperation.

- Prudent use of the limited funds for culture that exist is essential: the need for improved cross-border collaboration must be clearly identified and priorities established; duplications must be avoided and the allocation of funds carefully considered (e.g. large amounts for prestigious projects as opposed to smaller amounts for more diverse, spontaneous activities). It would be highly useful to create a common European platform as a means to strengthen the information capacity of the cultural sector and as an interface of communication and consultation.

There is a growing awareness that fostering cultural exchange and dialogue is not an embellishment of foreign relations or a corollary to the 'tough issues' (e.g. economy, trade, security, migration) which dominate the agenda of the EU's relations with its new neighbours. Cultural diplomacy can become a pro-active and influential instrument to further the development of open and inclusive partnerships within the wider European context.





# INTRODUCTION

As the European Union is making a big leap in May this year by integrating ten new member states and is struggling to give itself a comprehensive set of guiding rules and principles for decision making in the format of a Constitutional Treaty, new tasks and challenges are looming over the horizon. The expansion to the East and to the South necessarily requires the EU to rethink and redefine its relationships to those countries that see the borders of the Union move closer and that aspire to become members of the Union (or in other cases form special trade and aid linkages) in the foreseeable future. The countries affected are stretching from Belarus and the Ukraine in the Northeast to the Western Balkan region and further on to Turkey and the Southern shore of the Mediterranean, with the Russian Federation being a case of its own.

The European Commission has acknowledged this situation as a consequence of the shifting of the EU axis and has set out a policy framework aptly named *New Neighbourhood* in which it outlines the instruments and parameters for enhanced cooperation with the countries at the EU rim. At the same time, the European Cultural Foundation (ECF) started a forward-thinking initiative entitled *Enlargement of Minds*, which focuses on the cultural dimensions of EU enlargement<sup>1</sup>.

The present report attempts to draw the conclusions of the *Enlargement of Minds* project by:

- providing a concise summary and an analysis of the main issues and statements that have been highlighted by the project;
- assessing the primary needs for a more meaningful and sustainable cultural cooperation across the EU borders including a brief review of major existing funding mechanisms and deficiencies;

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<sup>1</sup> The initiative consisted of three seminars in 2003 (*Crossing Perspectives: Cultural Cooperation with South Eastern Europe*, June, Amsterdam; *Moving Borders: The EU and its New Neighbours*, October, Krakow; and *Beyond Enlargement: Opening Eastwards, Closing Southwards?*, November, Toledo), surveys, action-research, media partnerships and commissioned artistic works. More information can be found at [www.eurocult.org](http://www.eurocult.org)

- discussing the next step towards cultural inclusiveness within the wider European context that can help strengthen the cohesion between EU member states and their new neighbours.

## 1. Why Culture?

The EU was not built on coal and steel as one of its founding myths would have it, it was built on the idea of reconciliation and a lasting balance of interests among the European nations for which the economic reconstruction, after the devastation of World War II, was a means to an end. With this as the underlying rationale, the EU became the source of stability that led to an unprecedented high level of prosperity, welfare and security for the citizens of its member states. As an intended consequence, the persuasive logic of the 'unity in diversity' gradually penetrated the minds of these citizens and by now forms a largely undisputed, often even quite casual added identity of 'being European' besides and above being British, Greek, Danish, Portuguese etc – something that was inconceivable only two generations earlier.

In other words, inasmuch as the EU came to strengthen the 'hard sector' of the European economy (mainly by investing into its infrastructure like traffic, telecommunication and information technology, but also by broadening employment opportunities, e.g. via the support of SME's), at the same time it also fostered the 'soft sector' which relates to the civic dimensions of European integration, or (in more technical terms) the social and cultural cohesion among EU citizens<sup>2</sup>. An important milestone for the latter were the big educational mobility programmes (Erasmus, Tempus, Leonardo da Vinci and others – last year the one millionth Erasmus student received a grant) as well as programmes that are more directly related to the sharing of the richness of European cultural diversity and to the nurturing of European awareness (formerly Kaleidoscope, Ariane, Raphael and presently Culture 2000). Of course, the EU was not the sole agent in this regard: National governments, cultural organizations, foundations and grassroots initiatives, contributed substantially to raising an appreciation of a largely culturally defined "Europeanness".

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<sup>2</sup> The terminology is borrowed from Michael Daxner, *Cohesive Policy for the Soft Sectors in South East Europe*, Vienna 2003 (unpublished document)

Therefore, the straightforward answer to the question “Why culture?” as a trajectory to a *Wider Europe*<sup>3</sup> is that culture (in its broadest meaning) conveys a sense of belonging to and of shared ownership that is the glue of social relations. It defines a space within which its members share or negotiate common views, values and visions. This is not to deny that differences among cultures have often been politically orchestrated to legitimise aspirations of supremacy and acts of domination by economic or military power. But within the European Union, culture has predominantly become a tool for inclusion, not exclusion; for opening up the self-referential discourse of nation-state identities which was a source of division and destruction in the first half of the 20th century; and for discovery of the undercurrents that unite the continent. Now, 15 years after the politically and ideologically enforced partition of Europe has come to an end, Europe has a unique opportunity of sculpting a more integral cultural self-concept – an opportunity not to be missed.

## 2. Beyond the New Borders

The Manifestos and other documents that have been adopted at the ECF's *Enlargement of Minds* seminars speak a very clear language. They emphasize the major role of culture in building an inclusive European future and in creating a new space for dialogue and interaction between EU member states, old and new, and proximate non-members. They point out that culture and arts – with the freedom of expression that they bring – can be powerful driving forces in countering prejudice and reconciling differences, enabling citizens to cope with complex environments. Also, they strongly urge that culture is given a more prominent place on Europe's political agenda, hence supporting Article I-56 of the EU's Draft Constitutional Treaty<sup>4</sup>. At the same time, they insist that words will need to be followed and validated by targeted action based on a sound and

sober analysis of the different circumstances in each of the three regions that were addressed by the seminars. In short, these circumstances can be described as follows:

South East Europe has been the ill-fated object of media attention in Europe and beyond since the outbreak of the war in former Yugoslavia in the early 90's which put “the Balkans” on the political agenda as one of the most sensitive trouble spots in Europe. At the same time, there was also a growing international interest in the culture and arts production of this region, partly as a counterbalance to the gloomy image of South East Europe in the media and partly as a genuine discovery of an unknown territory of Europe's artistic riches. However, cultural politics especially in those parts of former Yugoslavia that were afflicted by war have been seriously tainted by nationalistic propaganda which fuelled the violent conflict.

Perhaps the most serious crisis in South East Europe at the moment is the lack of trust in a brighter future that paralyzes large parts of the population in the former Yugoslavia as well as Albania, Romania and Bulgaria. More than a decade of uncertainty, transition, crisis, war, migration, primary and secondary impoverishment have left many feeling helplessly subjugated to forces beyond their control. A distorted representation of the history of this region often contributes to the disorientation. Culture has a pivotal role to play to turn the tide but it is badly underfunded and, as far as the state structures are concerned, still exceedingly bureaucratized.

Artists and advocates for culture in Eastern Europe struggle against a daunting set of challenges: the hardships of the intermittent economic transformation have hit the Russian Federation, Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova in a very severe way and are debilitating the support for culture. Moreover, the overall political climate is often unfavourable to spirited cultural manifestations: principles of democratic governance and the rule of law are not always being respected, censorship is not uncommon, and critical voices are often not being considered for public support. Also, opportunities to take part in cultural exchange and cooperation with old and new EU member countries are very limited which further contributes to the symptom that, with the

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<sup>3</sup> The title of a Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament: *Wider Europe – Neighbourhood: A New Framework for Relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours*, Brussels 11.03.2003 (COM(2003) 104 final)

<sup>4</sup> “The Union shall develop a special relationship with neighbouring states... (aiming to establish an area of prosperity and good neighbourliness, founded on the values of the Union and characterized by close and peaceful relations based on cooperation).” (CONV 724/02, ANNEX 1).

exception of Russia, our new Eastern neighbours are to a large extent a blind spot on the European map.

Integrating Eastern Europe more closely into the European cultural space and emphasizing the role of culture in advancing social development would have far-reaching effects and help bolster a more vigorous civil society underpinning in public life. The relative weakness of civil society structures is one of the major shortcomings of the changes in Eastern Europe compared to other countries that underwent similar transformations after 1989. Particularly in education, but also in other areas, some of the lessons learnt in Central Europe can be useful starting points for cross-border collaboration. European cultural cooperation could also be a precursor to develop a more proactive strategy of bridging the gap that presently separates this region from its Western neighbours – a gap that is not just of economic nature but also caused by an uncertainty about Eastern Europe's place vis-à-vis the EU. This uncertainty plays in the hands of the retrograde forces in Eastern Europe.

With the notable exception of Turkey (which deserves special attention), the situation concerning the countries of the Southern Mediterranean is different in that they are EU neighbours that are not seeking accession. From an EU perspective, cultivating good relationships with these countries is important mainly because of issues related to migration from the South to the North, common interests in developing closer economic ties, but also because of security concerns at the thread line between Western and Islamic civilizations. Will the EU be able to formulate and enact a foreign policy towards Islamic countries that is constructive, non-confrontational but still firm in its principles of adhering to freedom of expression, civil liberties and tolerance?

Cultural cooperation with the Southern Mediterranean region is still on a rather fragmented and sporadic level and even more impeded after the events of September 11. This will hopefully change for the better with the creation of the new Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for Dialogue between Cultures and Civilisations aimed at narrowing the divide between Northern and Southern Mediterranean nations by promoting education and exchange programmes for young people, helping to fight

discrimination and racial and cultural stereotypes as well as encouraging respect for human rights. The need for intercultural dialogue and deeper understanding between the Islamic world and the West is widely acknowledged within the EU countries. But it will take much more than just high-minded agreements between governments on both sides of the Mediterranean to weave a robust and resilient carpet of cultural relations. Whilst the independent sector in the Southern Mediterranean countries is comparatively weak, the more grassroots level cultural cooperation must grow gradually which will require a lot of personal commitment of those involved.

Turkey's latest bid for EU membership is one of the crucial items on the EU agenda for 2004. For right or wrong, the decision will be seen as a statement as to whether or not the EU is culturally inclusive or exclusive, or, more bluntly stated, whether Europe is prepared to accept a country with an Islamic population and a secular constitution in its midst. The implications for the entire Southern Mediterranean region cannot be overestimated. Turkey as a formally acknowledged EU accession country would send a strong and positive signal to those in the region that work to promote cross-border and cross-cultural understanding.

Based on the outcomes of the three regional seminars, the *Enlargement of Minds* action-line of the ECF adopted a number of guiding principles and general recommendations to outline the substructure for enhanced cooperation with the new EU neighbours.

Whether for South East Europe, Eastern Europe or the Southern Mediterranean, in each instance sensitivity to regional and historical variations, which demand different approaches to cultural cooperation, is of utmost importance. At the same time the ultimate goal of any policy initiative vis-à-vis these regions, including cultural policies, must be very clear: they must reflect the values of a new, democratic Europe where participatory democracy, the rule of law, freedom of conscience, respect for the other and a socially responsible market economy are complementing each other as the principles of forward-looking politics. In the age of globalization, the distinctive quality of European (cultural) politics should be firmly grounded in the commitment to advancing the capacity of active citizenship and a vibrant civil society.

Close integrative co-operation with all three neighbouring regions will strengthen democracy and solidarity, security and stability, and will facilitate economic development on our continent. Again, like in the founding days of the European Union, common interests will serve as the catalyst to overcome old divisions. In this context, cultural and educational cooperation across our common borders contributes to a pan-European cultural space of shared values. To activate this potential, all parties involved have their share to contribute:

European Union by showing vision and leadership in securing cultural and educational co-operation by providing the necessary mechanisms as well as financial support.

National Governments and EU Commission by facilitating trans-national (bilateral and multilateral) collaborative endeavours, creating legal, financial and operative frameworks to enable the European cultural space to flourish.

Regional and local authorities by developing specific 'bridging' and cooperation schemes in the fields of education and culture and also advocate for the needs of the region.

The independent sector by supporting and strengthening civil society on both sides of the new border and promoting cross-border networking.

The Media by helping to improve mutual understanding and contribute to an emerging pan-European public space by encouraging the mobility of journalists and cooperating trans-nationally and within the region.

Bearing in mind these principles, a number of key recommendations were put forward at all three of the *Enlargement of Minds* seminars calling for:

- special EU budget lines in support of cultural and educational cooperation and the integration of the new EU neighbours in existing EU cultural and educational programmes;
- provision of a comprehensive mobility scheme for cultural professionals, artists and journalists which would stimulate cultural exchange and exploration between the EU and its new neighbours;
- removal of bureaucratic obstacles to mobility, especially with regard to visa regulations;

- creation of (and extension of existing) regional funds for cross-cultural cooperation and support to platforms and networks providing for cultural cooperation;
- monitoring the independence of the media and freedom of expression.

The *New Neighbourhood* framework put forward by the Commission of the European Union represents a timely and thoughtful approach to consider the implications and opportunities of the EU enlargement from a wider European perspective. However, there are still numerous obstacles that prevent enhanced cultural exchange and cooperation beyond the new EU borders. But given the economic realities in the countries beyond these borders, enhanced cultural cooperation cannot be expected unless the EU provides financial support as an investment into its own future that promises rich dividends to be measured in scales of increased trust, tolerance, stability and cohesion.

### 3. Culture under Constraints

Since the Maastricht Treaty of 1992 when culture first became an active concern of the European Community, the EU is formally committing itself to make "a contribution to education and training of quality and to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore." In addition, Article 151 of the Amsterdam Treaty (1997) requires the Community to take cultural aspects into account in its action under other provisions of the treaty and to promote cultural diversity. As a consequence culture must be taken into consideration when developing activities and policies: for example education, economic and social cohesion among Member States, job creation and eliminating social exclusion. The aim is to encourage the formation of a "European cultural area", as the European Parliament underlined in its resolution of 5 September 2001 on cultural cooperation in Europe<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> For a highly useful and comprehensive overview on the multi-faceted dimensions of cultural policies in the European context, see "Study on Cultural Cooperation in Europe" published by Interarts and EFAH (European Forum for the Arts and Heritage), June 2003 ([http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/eac/sources\\_info/pdf-word/study\\_on\\_cult\\_coop.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/eac/sources_info/pdf-word/study_on_cult_coop.pdf))

Looking at the EU budget figures, there is an apparent discrepancy between ambitious objectives and comparatively weak resources: only about 0.1% of the total EU budget is devoted to cultural programmes per se which is an almost disheartening fraction. The Commissions 'flagship' programme in this area, Culture 2000 which is by and large the EU's first, and only, programme in support of culture, is set to run from 2000 to 2004 with an annual budget of approximately €32 million (since 2001 the programme is also open to most of the candidate countries)<sup>6</sup>. The main reason for this poor state of European cultural affairs is, of course, that many governments of member states remain unconvinced concerning the EU's role in stimulating and supporting international cultural cooperation and are quoting the principle of subsidisation to fence off what they see as an attempt to push for a unified scheme at the expense of national cultural policies of the member states. The EU members are in competition amongst each other when it comes to promoting their own country and its culture as a brand. Thus, demonstrating the European added value of EU activities fostering international cultural cooperation can be a very challenging requirement.

Apart from Culture 2000, there are examples of funding support for multilateral cultural projects through other programmes of the Commission, in particular those dealing with employment, media and ICT as well as education, research and development. Structural funds (intended to harmonize the socio-economic living conditions of citizens of Europe in different regions) are another and potentially much more substantial source of funding for cultural activities to the extent that they can demonstrably promote employment and local development through activities such as tourism or the preservation of the natural and cultural heritage. (For instance, the Interreg III initiative, which concentrates on cooperation between states, regions and cross border areas finances a programme of cooperation between coastal states of the Baltic that includes a cultural dimension.) Since structural funds are administered at the regional level, this should be an advantage, at least in theory, for cultural operators to solicit their

project vis-à-vis regional development planners. But in none of these programmes, the promotion of a European dimension of culture exists as a funding category in its own right. To put it more pointedly, it is a cause that has to hide its real intentions behind the back of other more acceptable objectives and criteria of selection by emphasizing the potential economic benefits of cultural activities and business-related outputs.

A similar observation is true for those programmes that the EU established in response to the momentous political changes in Eastern Europe in 1989, most notably Phare and the Tacis. While the bulk of the funds of these programmes is dedicated to 'hard sector' investments and administrative reform, there are some measures that can serve to support the cultural sector. The Phare Country Ex-Post Evaluation and Capacity Building report for Romania (April 2003), for example, lists two projects, Institutional Strengthening in the Cultural Sector and European Romanian Art Fund, for the programming years 1997-98 with a combined budget of just over €2 million which was equivalent to a mere 1% of the total Phare budget for the country in the given period. Another strand of the programme focuses on forging lasting relationships between border regions: it supports cultural exchange projects and includes cross-border projects (e.g. the organisation of exchanges for young people, art and folk events). Similarly, the Tacis programme can support cultural objectives such as the strengthening of cultural infrastructure, and tourism development, albeit only in small quantities.

Other existing EU cooperation mechanisms with new neighbouring countries like CARDS or MEDA also do not explicitly include a cultural chapter in their mandate. Financing culture under these programmes is more of a by-product (e.g. to enhance regional cooperation) than a strategic objective. At the same time, the single most important supporter for innovative and bottom-up art and culture, the Open Society Institute, is phasing out its programmes and there is no adequate replacement from other foundations in sight that could compensate this loss (which, besides the loss of financial means, is also a vanishing of intellectual and organizational infrastructure represented by the staff and external experts who built up the arts and culture network programme of the OSI).

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<sup>6</sup> It will most probably be extended for two more years (2005/6), with approximately €34 million reserved for each.

Given this rather sobering picture, it would seem sensible to engage in a comprehensive exercise of creating an inventory that systematically collects and assesses comparative data of direct and indirect financial support for international cultural cooperation in the wider European context. This data can serve to provide a more complete analysis of resource flows and constraints specifying the extent of the support that would be required to help sustain (and possibly advance) the cultural capital in, and cultural cooperation with, the East European, South Eastern European and Mediterranean regions. By pointing out trends and benchmarks it could also arrive at some indicative and plausible figures that give a reasonably good idea about funding needs based on factual evidence and relevant parameters. The analysis should take account of the relevant experience in this area, for example Eurostat's work on cultural statistics or the expertise of the Regional Observatory on Financing Culture in East-Central Europe in Budapest.

#### 4. Next Steps towards Cultural Inclusiveness within the Wider European Context

##### 4.1. Priority Areas of Action

There is no lack of ideas and proposals for important and valuable activities to broaden and deepen cultural cooperation across the new EU boundaries. But some objectives take priority over others because they work as general preconditions for the successful and effective implementation of specific programmes and projects.

For example, it is widely recognized that more support for mobility of artists, journalists, educationalists (and students!) and other cultural professionals would be highly desirable. However, the current visa regulations to enter the Schengen zone provide formidable obstacles to the free flow of ideas and intellectual and artistic stimulation.

For a musician from Macedonia (let alone Amman), who is invited to perform at a concert in Rotterdam the bureaucratic hurdles to apply for a visa are discouraging, and the actual process of acquiring the visa are cumbersome and time-demanding. But also the inviting institution or organization in Rotterdam is faced with some considerable challenges: the invitation letter has to include a written guaranty of being solely responsible for the invitee's personal (room and

board) and medical needs during the stay in the Schengen zone, and also for his or her return journey after the expiry of the visa. For many cultural institutions within the EU, particularly the smaller ones or those that have no prior experience in inviting 'complicated' guests from non-EU countries, these stipulations can have a deterring effect and thus prevent cultural exchange and intellectual mobility.

It is not the question whether the governments of the European Union were justified in establishing a rather rigorous visa regime to protect their countries against illegal immigration (they probably were); but the issue here is to find ways of counteracting unintended effects of these regulations and to avoid conflicting policies, in this case of promoting more mobility with neighbouring countries on the one hand, and inhibiting it from happening by rigid entry requirements on the other hand. For artists (cultural operators, journalists, etc.) who are regularly being invited to perform or attend meetings in EU countries, a special multi-entry visa could avoid wearisome and repetitious procedures. For inviting organizations, the perception of risks could be minimized by establishing a liability fund as part of EU mobility programmes that works like an insurance and covers the financial damage in the very rare cases where problems arise. With these two mechanisms, the effectiveness of these programmes would be significantly reinforced.

Another area of strategic priority is the integration of new EU neighbours in cultural and educational programmes of the EU. A close and long-lasting cooperation between cultural magazines, for instance, that includes the editors of such publications in the former Yugoslavia, should be a worthwhile cause to support. But while soon the magazine from Ljubljana will be eligible to the Culture 2000 programme, its counterpart from Zagreb is kept out.

As a remedial influence, the ECF has launched the Forum for Cultural Cooperation with South East Europe (FCC) to address in a proactive fashion the structural deficiencies that limit enhanced intellectual and cultural exchange with the Western Balkan region. This platform between EU and SEE countries was called for by participants of the ECF's seminar *Crossing Perspectives: Cultural Cooperation with South East Europe* (Amsterdam, June 2003). FCC's main aim is to counteract any

possible 'exclusion' of SEE following EU enlargement through concentrating on the participation of SEE countries in existing and future community, cultural and educational cooperation programmes, e.g. by advocating that culture becomes an explicit sector of cooperation under the CARDS programme and is not subsumed under other categories that define the programme objectives. FCC will also formulate plans for regional cultural cooperation, with improved funding for long-term cultural and artistic programmes as a tool to compensate at least in part the dwindling funds for the Arts & Culture Network Programme of the Open Society Institute that has been a vital and in some respects unique source of support and encouragement for new cultural models and alternative cultural initiatives and infrastructures, encouraging intellectual and artistic people to stay and work in their countries. By suggesting solutions on a policy level, the FCC can pave the way for projects and initiatives that would otherwise get caught between rhetorical support and practical lacuna<sup>7</sup>.

With a view to promoting and strengthening regional cultural cooperation mechanism and encourage trans-national partnership building, the development of a Regional Cultural Development Fund could meaningfully help counteracting cultural exclusions and indifference. Regional consortia and partnerships could bridge the divide between the EU insiders and EU outsiders and help the experimentation of an open European cultural space.

Extending existing community policies, programmes and instruments to neighbouring countries not already benefiting from them is also a stated goal of the Wider Europe policy of the Commission. However, the budget for Neighbourhood programmes beyond 2006 is still uncertain. While "people-to-people actions (like cultural and educational exchanges and cooperation)" are indeed mentioned in the relevant documents, it is by no means clear that culture will be acknowledged as one of the main sectors of cooperation (maybe combined with education and media) and whether the funds devoted to it will merely be of a symbolic nature. Again, the decision about the future Wider Europe

budget will be of utmost significance for the advancement of sustainable cultural ties, especially with the countries of Eastern Europe and it should thus be a priority for cultural operators and policy-makers on the European level to use all their influence and persuasion in order to promote this agenda.

As the first partnership institution of its kind in the region, the decision to establish the "Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for Dialogue between Cultures and Civilisations" has created high expectations within the countries concerned regarding its potential to serve as a principal facilitator of consultation, coordination and project support. The decision also sent a strong signal that after years of stagnation of the Barcelona Process, the EU is placing a new emphasis on its trans-Mediterranean relations at a time when interchange and interaction between both shores has been seriously weakened by distrust, suspicion and a new cultural parochialism in the wake of September 11 and its consequences.

There are two key issues that will determine whether the high expectations are justified: one is obviously the level and the sustainability of funding support for the Euro-Mediterranean Foundation. Considering the complexity and scope of the challenges that the Foundation is addressing, the funding that is currently under discussion seems to be inadequate. Secondly, it will be vitally important that in all matters related to its programme structure and funding decisions, the Foundation is acting like a true platform of artists and cultural/educational operators rooted in the civil societies, and not like an inter-governmental agency. Thus, it must be granted a maximum degree of autonomy and independence and the partner governments that came together to set up the Foundation should limit their role to a supervisory function making sure that public funds are properly used. Through the involvement of civil society representatives on all levels of decision making the Foundation can ensure its legitimacy and transparency.

#### 4.2. A New Interface

Apart from (and complementary to) defining priority areas of action, stocktaking and information dissemination are important elements to generate a closer understanding of

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<sup>7</sup> For more information, see the FCC's first information bulletin [www.eurocult.org/pdfdb/news/Bulletin1.pdf](http://www.eurocult.org/pdfdb/news/Bulletin1.pdf)



the emerging European cultural area and to facilitate cross-fertilization. The ECF has proposed the establishing of a "European Laboratory of Cultural Cooperation"<sup>8</sup> to enhance trans-national information capacities in culture. The planning of the pilot project for the Laboratory is already well underway including a business plan for the first year that outlines the main tasks and goals and gives a financial forecast. For the longer-term funding of the Laboratory, an innovative public-private partnership is being negotiated with European foundations, expertise organizations, ministries of culture, and the European Commission. Concrete commitment (financially and in terms of content) has been achieved, and others are seriously investigating possible ways of supporting the Laboratory. Next steps will include the appointment of a steering-committee; development of an online 'portal' as the Laboratory's principal tool of communication; commissioning of research projects; the launch of pan-European cooperation projects. The vision for the Laboratory is of a central reference point for European cultural cooperation which not only shares good practice but is itself capable of stimulating innovative approaches and initiatives.

#### 4.3. Towards a European Cultural Foreign Policy

There are many commendable activities, initiated and supported by private foundations, national governments and trans-national institutions/agencies as well as the EU, to strengthen the cooperation and dialogue among artists, intellectuals and cultural operators on a pan-European level. Individually, they all make sense and pursue meaningful goals; but seen in their entirety, one often cannot help feeling that these are but dispersed activities, more a symbolic gesture than a well-articulated and consistent effort. This is in no way a criticism of the individual donors; it is just to indicate the deficiency of a common direction that could considerably augment the impact of the now more or less insulated projects. For very good reasons, all eyes turn to Brussels when it comes to proposing such a common direction.

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<sup>8</sup> European Cultural Foundation: From a „European Observatory of Cultural Cooperation“ to a “European Laboratory of Cultural Cooperation”. The Case for a Pilot Initiative, 29 September 2003

But unfortunately, the EU is still lacking an explicit and co-ordinated cultural foreign policy, despite the pronouncement and programme which addresses culture as a valid dimension of European integration and of the EU's relations to third countries. However, these programmes seem to be of marginal relevance compared to the 'big issues' like security, trade, migration etc. To put it differently: the potential of leverage of cultural diplomacy has not yet been fully realized by the EU.

For example, the absence of a tangible accession perspective for the countries of Eastern Europe in conjunction with authoritarian political regimes in some of these countries are posing the threat of a new bipolar Europe which seemed to be a matter of history after the end of the Cold War. Involvement and mutual commitment on a people-to-people level in the areas of arts and culture, education and media would be a promising long-term strategy to counteract these tendencies. Similarly, policy programmes of the EU directed to the countries of the Western Balkans have been mainly built around the goal of post-conflict reconstruction and stabilisation and have helped to contain the danger of new outbreaks of ethnic hatred and violence. But beyond the containment policy, positive efforts now need to be made to bring the Western Balkans back on the European map not as a post-war zone, but as a very special and in many respects unique element of European cultural diversity. It would be a genuine task of cultural foreign policy to lead the way for integrating the civil societies of the Western Balkans into the EU before this is possible for the countries themselves. Needless to say that with regard to the countries of the Southern Mediterranean the bottom-up foreign policy of cultural exchange and cooperation (both on a North-South Mediterranean and an intra-regional level) is of particular relevance: the 'big politics' that hits the headlines of the media produces the image of an agonistic confrontation of Western and Islamic cultures and of the Arab-Israeli conflict in particular. It is Europe's role to raise the voice of reason, advocate the awareness for a more differentiated view of Islamic cultures (and accordingly the need for a more differentiated policy towards Islamic countries), thus trying to defuse the lingering crisis.

Cultural policy should be seen as central to the geopolitical agenda of the enlarged Europe, both



from the perspective of the individual member states as well as of the EU. To bring this policy into focus, it would seem advisable to supplement the *New Neighbourhood* framework paper with a document that explicates the pivotal role of culture in broadening and deepening the relations within the *Wider Europe*. In this context, it may be useful to highlight the example of the European "Higher Education Area" that defines the eventual goal of the so-called "Bologna Process" and that will allow unrestricted mobility of students and faculty, transferability of academic degrees and a common understanding of quality standards. What is remarkable about this Process is its European inclusiveness: right from the beginning it was designed to embrace member and non-member states of the EU which commit themselves to the common objectives and agree to certain measures of accountability regarding these objectives. The example of the Bologna Process could be valuable in defining the next step towards the creation of a "European Cultural Area" that the European Parliament has called for in its resolution of 5 September 2001 on cultural cooperation in Europe.

One of the next steps will be the commissioning of a complementary paper mapping out the facts and figures of funding for culture in the EU's new neighbouring countries and means for trans-national and regional cultural cooperation with and between them. Both documents will feed the conference *Sharing Cultures: a contribution to cultural policies for Europe* (11-13 July 2004, Rotterdam) that will present the main results and outcomes of selected cultural policy research, consultations and practice that are key to European cultural policy making in a wider European perspective.

Systematic advocacy work needs to be pursued on all decision-making levels, regular dialogue and interaction with the European Commission, the *Wider Europe* Task Force and the European Parliament strengthened, thematic continuity between EU Presidencies sought and partnerships with stakeholders in European cultural cooperation furthered to allow the design of a coherent, consistent and meaningful cultural policy strategy for *Wider Europe*.

## 5. Conclusions

There is growing awareness that fostering cultural exchange and dialogue is not an embellishment of foreign relations or a corollary to the 'tough issues' (like economy, trade, security, migration) that dominate the agenda of closer integration within the wider European context; combating cultural ignorance and ensuring closer cultural ties among EU members and their new neighbours would significantly further the development of open and inclusive European space, and thus enhance the citizens' of Europe's sense of "Europeanness" beyond EU frontiers.

The European Cultural Foundation, through its *Enlargement of Minds* action-line and continued advocacy for a strong democratic cultural policy for Europe, has during the last two years explored the cultural consequences of EU enlargement, facilitated the exchange of thoughts on cultural cooperation in a wider European context, produced a series of policy papers and recommendations for action and launched new initiatives that foster through art, culture and media an open and inclusive European cultural space.

# MANIFESTO FOR CULTURAL COOPERATION WITH SOUTH EAST EUROPE

*This Manifesto was adopted by the participants – policy makers, cultural professionals, artists, and representatives of European institutions and cultural networks – in the first ‘Enlargement of Minds’<sup>9</sup> seminar, ‘Crossing Perspectives’ (Amsterdam, 16-18 June 2003).*

## Background

The 2004 enlargement of the European Union presents new challenges and opportunities to the countries of South East Europe (SEE). These countries – the enlarged EU’s neighbours – already belong to the common European cultural space. It is now vitally important to acknowledge their cultural contexts, vitality and diversity. The underlying values and practice of cultural cooperation in Europe also need to be better understood and promoted.

We firmly believe that culture has a major role to play in building Europe, in creating a new space for dialogue and interaction both within the SEE region and between SEE and the EU. Culture and the arts – with the freedom of expression that they bring – can be powerful driving forces in countering prejudice and reconciling differences, enabling citizens to cope with complex environments.

Culture should therefore be more prominent on Europe’s political agenda. We fully support Article I-56 of the EU’s Draft Constitutional Treaty<sup>9</sup>. Nevertheless, it is important to point out that existing EU cooperation mechanisms regarding South East Europe – e.g. the Stability Pact and the Commission’s CARDS programme – do not include a cultural chapter in their mandates. Private donors and foundations are also currently *reducing* their support for arts and culture in the region.

## PROPOSALS

We propose the establishment of a sustainable platform for developing the policies, practices and tools required. In order to ensure an inclusive agenda of cooperation for and with SEE, a forum for cultural cooperation should be set up, one that would gather together public and non-governmental institutions, art institutions and artists’ associations, as well as experts from the EU and SEE.

We must work now to establish:

- Ø The participation of SEE countries in existing and future Community cultural and educational cooperation programmes.
- Ø Regional cooperation mechanisms, with improved funding for longer-term cultural and artistic programmes.
- Ø Continued support for independent cultural organisations in SEE in terms of training and capacity building; and the extension of such support to SEE cultural institutions so that they can become sustainable and able to compete in the marketplace.
- Ø The removal of bureaucratic obstacles to mobility (such as visa issues) and the provision of a comprehensive mobility scheme for cultural professionals, artists and journalists which would stimulate cultural exchange and exploration between SEE and the EU; as well as funding travel, the scheme should facilitate intellectual mobility, exchange and artistic creation.
- Ø Enhanced media cooperation with SEE and within the region.
- Ø Incentives for improving access to information (regarding best practice projects, for instance); new possibilities for disseminating such information – such as the proposed European Cultural Observatory – should be explored.

WE, THE PARTICIPANTS OF THIS SEMINAR, ASK THAT ALL RELEVANT ACTORS IN SEE, THE EU AND THE ACCEDING STATES – POLICY MAKERS, PRACTITIONERS, EXECUTIVES AND OTHERS – ASSUME THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACTIVELY INVEST IN CULTURAL COOPERATION. NOT ONLY FUNDS ARE NEEDED, BUT POLITICAL WILL AND A NEW SHARED COMMITMENT.

# MANIFESTO ON CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL COOPERATION BETWEEN THE ENLARGED EU AND ITS NEW NEIGHBOURS

*This Manifesto was released at the Seminar "Moving Borders: The EU and its New Neighbours", organised by the European Cultural Foundation in cooperation with the VILLA DECIUS ASSOCIATION. It was held on 24-26 October 2003 in Villa Decius (Krakow, Poland) with the support of governmental and non-governmental participants from 21 European countries and in the presence of a representative of the EU Commission.*

*This seminar is part of the ECF action-line 'Enlargement of Minds'.*

## CONTEXT

On 1 May 2004, the European Union will take an unprecedented and historic step. Its greatest enlargement ever will have major repercussions, externally as much as internally. One of the challenges facing the enlarged European Union is to deepen and expand co-operation with its eastern neighbours. We believe that close integrative co-operation with Eastern Europe will strengthen democracy and solidarity, security and stability, and will facilitate economic development on our continent.

Cultural and educational cooperation across our common borders contributes to a European cultural space of shared values. Better communication and deeper collaboration are required, as well as new means and resources needed to address these challenges.

Expectations were expressed concerning clear European prospects for the countries concerned.

## SOME GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The enlarged EU and its new neighbours have to find ways of transforming new common challenges into benefits. The political will to achieve this objective – accompanied by sensitivity to regional and historical variations, which demand a variety of instruments of co-operation – needs to gather momentum. Common interests deserve real commitment from all sides. The evident importance of a strong civil society underlines the need for special efforts to invest in cultural and educational co-operation and exchange.

With regard to new initiatives and measures for encouraging regional and cross-border cooperation in culture and education, the Commission's communications on "Wider Europe" and on "New Neighbourhood Instruments" provide a good basis for implementation.

## RECOMMENDATIONS TO VARIOUS STAKEHOLDERS

1. The European Union should show leadership in securing cultural and educational co-operation by providing the necessary mechanisms as well as financial support.
2. National Governments and EU Commission should facilitate trans-national (bilateral and multilateral) collaborative endeavours, creating legal, financial and operative frameworks to enable the European cultural space to flourish.
3. Regional and local authorities should develop specific 'bridging' and cooperation schemes in the fields of education and culture and also advocate for the needs of the region.
4. The independent sector should support and strengthen civil society on both sides of the new border and assist cross-border networking.
5. THE MEDIA should help to improve mutual understanding and contribute to an emerging pan-European public space by cooperating transnationally and within the region.

*We propose the following measures for enhancing cultural, educational and media co-operation between the EU and its eastern neighbours:*

- support arts management training
- support restoration and the creative use of heritage sites in the border regions

## GENERAL PROPOSALS

- establish special EU budget lines in support of cultural and educational cooperation in order to prevent isolation
- integrate new EU neighbors in EU cultural and educational programmes
- support mobility across the new borders, and facilitate positive visa regulations
- take measures to strengthen civil society and to create an open space for mutual understanding and recognition
- create new instruments – such as a "European laboratory of cultural cooperation" – which can map, analyse, promote, and intensify cultural cooperation
- forge close cooperation between Ministries of Culture/Education and European and Foreign Affairs

## ARTS AND CULTURE

- support/set up mobility schemes in order to stimulate mutual interest and cross-border cooperation; for example, study visits by cultural professionals, artists' residencies in Eastern European countries
- support the work of artists in Eastern European countries and their presence at major European artistic events
- establish (and extend existing) regional funds for cross-cultural cooperation
- foster EU support for European cultural networks and the integration of members from Eastern European countries

## EDUCATION

- support/launch special scholarship, internship and study programmes for students and young graduates from Eastern European countries
- support/launch European Studies departments and programmes in Eastern European Universities, as well as cooperation projects with EU Universities
- facilitate the training of representatives of local governments and of cultural and educational NGO's
- invest in educational reform in both the formal and non-formal sector
- support language teaching; stimulate cross-perspectives history teaching and learning; produce creative educational material and shareware, especially on multicultural issues

## MEDIA

- extend/set up training and mobility schemes for young journalists and civil society actors
- monitor the independence of the media and freedom of expression
- increase the circulation of media products, making quality products mutually accessible

# MANIFESTO TOWARDS ENHANCED EURO- MEDITERRANEAN CULTURAL COOPERATION

The 2004 EU enlargement will change perspectives in the EU and affect relations with its neighbours. Among the many challenges, intercultural cooperation with the Eastern and Southern Mediterranean will be of vital mutual importance. In spite of the troubled international context, the principle of the EU's neighbourhood policy provides opportunities – including cultural opportunities – for a new quality of cooperation. Artists, cultural operators, foundations, networks, cultural and research institutes, together with national and intergovernmental institutions, have to play a role in shaping new instruments at all levels – bilateral and multilateral, public and private.

The European Cultural Foundation, in cooperation with the Escuela de Traductores de Toledo, wanted to contribute to this exploration of new venues and alliances for an unbiased sharing of cultures across the Mediterranean.

*The following manifesto was released at the end of the seminar “Beyond Enlargement: opening Eastwards, closing Southwards?” organized by the European Cultural Foundation and the Escuela de Traductores de Toledo (13-16 November 2003, Toledo). The seminar forms part of the ECF action line ‘Enlargement of Minds’. Opened by a representative of President Prodi’s cabinet, the seminar gathered experts and representatives of governments, intergovernmental institutions, and cultural organizations active in the region. For two-and-a-half days they worked together, reflecting on their experiences and considering the future prospects for cross-Mediterranean cooperation in the context of EU Enlargement. This Manifesto is based on their shared experience and propositions.*

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Euro-Mediterranean cooperation involves tasks and challenges for Europe as a whole and the Mediterranean as a whole. Regional, decentralized, flexible cooperation schemes should be explored.
- Inclusive Euro-Mediterranean cultural cooperation should be a tool for replacing mutual stereotypes and imposed ‘exoticism’ by a realistic recognition of common ground, differences and inequalities. It can counter perceptions of ‘two blocks’ facing each other.
- Euro-Mediterranean cooperation should be based on genuine partnership. The international community should not compromise with democratic values and freedom of expression; neither should it with the standard of evaluation of artistic quality.
- Dialogue and cooperation need mobility in all directions, and the international community should oppose the building of both real and mental walls which prevent such mobility. Cultural operators, artists, intellectuals, educators, researchers and journalists often lead the way in the process of understanding. Their mobility has to be facilitated and supported.
- Migration should be approached in a way which stresses mutual benefits. Intercultural competence should be valued in cultural policies and programmes.
- Cooperation and the sharing of knowledge should contribute to the development of cultural policies and sustainable cultural infrastructure, especially in regions where cultural policies are presently weak, or where cultural infrastructure is or has been destroyed.
- Open debates need (Euro-Mediterranean) open spaces. Dialogue between civil society and local, regional, national and intergovernmental representatives in the region should be encouraged. Spaces for cultural interaction and artistic creation should be multiplied and supported.
- Media cooperation on contemporary cultural issues (throughout the region and between the region and Europe) needs to be supported.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. SHARING OF KNOWLEDGE

The development of intercultural competence, the sharing of knowledge, and capacity-building are essential for strengthening a genuine Euro-Mediterranean cooperation.

- The EU should support long-term schemes for capacity-building among cultural operators from the Middle East and North Africa. These schemes could complement and broaden the initiatives of foundations and networks. They should involve countries which have experienced or are experiencing conflict situations and are in a period of transition; include cultural operators from the Middle East and North Africa; incorporate the training of trainers, organized in the region.
- Capacity-building programmes should involve trainers from Europe and the Mediterranean region and reflect the cultural diversity of both.
- The national governments of EU countries should be encouraged to connect their bilateral training programmes whenever and wherever it is possible and desirable.
- The EU should join forces with foundations in order to realise cultural policy development initiatives (which should include the independent sector and public institutions in North Africa and the Middle East).
- Universities and relevant institutions should encourage research into Euro-Mediterranean cultural issues. A strong Mediterranean dimension should be given to the activities of any future European Cultural Observatory/Laboratory.

### 2. MOBILITY AND NETWORKS

Euro-Mediterranean mobility schemes and networks contribute significantly to the creation of an open Mediterranean space and deserve long term support.

- The EU-Med partnership should give basic support to Euro-Med cultural platforms and networks, and match other funders in order to broaden the support for existing mobility schemes. South-South as well as South-North

mobility should be supported. North-South mobility needs to be stimulated.

- The EU and national governments should facilitate positive visa regulations and the removal of obstacles to mobility, especially in the Palestinian territories.

- European networks and platforms should develop policies which would open their membership to non-European Mediterranean members. They should also include representatives of immigrant communities, fostering their role as a bridge between their countries of origin and the European countries in which they live.

### 3. ARTISTIC CREATION, CULTURAL

#### *INTERACTION*

Cross-Mediterranean artistic interaction needs to be encouraged. Independent artists and intellectuals from the Mediterranean deserve recognition and support from the European artistic community.

- Foundations and cultural representatives of national governments should jointly support new independent spaces for artistic creation and debate, facilitating networking and partnership in the Mediterranean region as well as with Europe.
- National governments should cooperate with foundations in supporting artist residencies in North Africa and the Middle East. European curators and art critics should be encouraged to become acquainted with contemporary creativity across the Mediterranean.

### 4. COMMUNICATION

Cultural operators and NGOs on both sides of the Mediterranean should be encouraged to recognize the importance of media exposure in raising the profile of their work and contributing to an improved understanding.

- Art critics and cultural journalists should be included in Euro-Mediterranean training and mobility schemes.

- Translation of contemporary works has to be stimulated has a mean for recognizing the linguistic diversity of the Mediterranean and a unique way of fostering the dialogue between societies.

## 5. FUNDING AND PARTNERSHIP PRACTICES

Cultural NGOs from Europe should reflect upon and develop practices and instruments for cooperating with partners across the Mediterranean on an equal basis while taking economic and market differences into account:

- European foundations and agencies working in the Mediterranean region should strive to include professionals who live in or are from the region among their staff and Board members.
- European funders should apply criteria of excellence when selecting or evaluating artistic projects from across the Mediterranean.
- European and cross-Mediterranean foundations should consider how best to improve mutual awareness between funders and fund seekers (e.g. through partnerships and meetings): in this way, funders would have a better and evolving understanding of the real needs of the field while fund seekers would have better access to guidance and explanations of the funders' policies and motivations.

Lack of funds, especially for local and long-term funding, is one of the biggest problems facing cultural operators across the Mediterranean:

- EU-Mediterranean partnership programmes should develop specific instruments for supporting the initiatives of small and middle-sized cultural NGOs.
- The EU should progressively open its cultural programmes to participants from North Africa and the Middle East.

## SPECIAL RECOMMENDATION CONCERNING A FUTURE EURO-MED FOUNDATION

A Euro-Med Foundation could be an important instrument for fostering dialogue and cooperation.

The European Cultural Foundation and the Escuela de Traductores de Toledo support the recommendation expressed by the Euro-Med civil society platform concerning the future "Euro-Med Foundation for the Dialogue of Cultures": independence, transparency, civil society building, and dialogue between societies should be its guiding principles.



*The patron of the ECF's 'Enlargement of Minds' action line is Pat Cox, President of the European Parliament*

## AN EXPLORATION OF THE CULTURAL DIMENSIONS OF EU ENLARGEMENT

Europe is on the move. The ECF intends to rise to the challenge this presents and has therefore launched the action-line *Enlargement of Minds*.

*Enlargement of Minds* constitutes a substantial cultural response to the issues raised by EU enlargement. It also looks beyond the 2004 round of enlargement to consider the cultural cohesion of Europe as a whole.

The notion of European cultural citizenship applies to all Europeans. Ethical standards of good neighbourliness should not end at Europe's borders either: cross-Mediterranean relations, for instance, need to be improved.

Enlargement of Minds pursues 4 objectives:

- Ø To present the bigger picture of Europe after enlargement, including its cultural dimension.
- Ø To help safeguard cultural diversity while illustrating the value of 'Europeanness'.
- Ø To encourage the creation of innovative tools for cultural cooperation.
- Ø To bring Europe closer to its citizens.

*In 2004 the European Union will have ten new member countries, its first constitution and a revised political structure: an enlargement and 'deepening' unprecedented in EU history.*

In 2004 the ECF will celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and the EU Presidency will be held by the ECF's host country, the Netherlands.

*The ECF intends to use this 'window of opportunity' to strengthen culture and promote cultural cooperation on the European agenda.*

## Ü STUDIES AND ACTION-RESEARCH

- *Alter Ego*

A series of interviews and essays on the political and cultural implications of the EU enlargement (with the Swedish Riksbanken Tercentenary Foundation et al). To be published in 2004.

- 'Cultural Cooperation of Foundations for Europe'

A study (launched by four foundations in Europe) which aims to create synergies between foundations so as to give fresh impetus to European cultural cooperation.

- Development of innovative tools for European cooperation

The ECF supports the complementary initiatives of cultural networks (e.g. EFAH); participates in the enlargement initiatives of its partners (e.g. Koerber Stiftung); jointly investigates a possible 'European Cultural Laboratory'; and involves itself in specific projects of the main European political institutions.

## Ü THREE SEMINARS:

### *Crossing Perspectives: Cultural Cooperation with South East Europe*

Focus: the sharing of knowledge, experiences, ideas and concrete policy proposals for sustainable cultural cooperation between South East Europe, the accession countries, and EU member countries.

*Amsterdam, the Netherlands, 16-18 June 2003*

### *Moving Borders: The European Union and its New Neighbours*

Focus: cultural and societal relationships across the EU's future eastern border, with proposals for creating innovative forms and instruments of cultural cooperation for and with countries that are not part of the enlargement process.

*Krakow, Poland, 24-26 October 2003*

### *Beyond Enlargement: Opening Eastwards, Closing Southwards?*

Focus: the cultural impact of enlargement on the Mediterranean in the current international context, with proposed new tools, schemes and possible partnerships for strengthening cultural cooperation across the Mediterranean.

*Toledo, Spain, 13-16 November 2003*



- Quality TV in Europe: an ECF/Prix Europa contribution to 'media and enlargement', with programme screenings and panel discussions. (7 March)
- Radio Day of European Cultures (with the European Broadcasting Union, Prix Europa, and public broadcasters). (12 October)
- Presentation of the One Minutes Junior awards at the annual One Minute Movie Festival in the Netherlands (with UNICEF and the Sandberg Institute, Amsterdam). (16 November)
- Preparation of the 'New European Deal' initiative for cross-border journalistic exchange (in cooperation with editors and journalists from a number of major newspapers).

The ECF's Media partnerships also include co-productions of publications and cultural magazines, including:

- Confluences
- Transeuropéennes
- Culture Europe
- Lettre Internationale, Hungary
- Observator Cultural, Romania

## Ü SHARING CULTURES IN AN ENLARGED EUROPE

Cultural Cooperation in the New Europe  
Final conference, within the Dutch EU Presidency and in conjunction with the meeting of the EU Ministers of Culture in Rotterdam.  
*Rotterdam, 13-15 July 2004*

'Sharing Cultures' has 3 main objectives:

- Ø To highlight the need for a new cultural policy for Europe.
- Ø To underpin the advocacy of such a policy with specific examples.
- Ø To launch new initiatives and indicate future commitments.

The final *Enlargement of Minds* conference will share the main findings and results of the ECF action-line.

Participants will include national and European cultural policymakers, the media, artists, cultural operators, networks, and foundations. The conference will be supported by the documentation of the 'Beyond Enlargement' seminars held in 2003, commissioned research, the *Art for Social Change* charter, and various media initiatives.

Special *Enlargement of Minds* publications will be presented at the conference:

The 'Blue Book' will present the action-line's outcomes as well as a manifesto;

*Alter Ego* will present imaginative writing and research on the cultural implications of enlargement and 'beyond'.

The ECF's new programmes, currently in preparation, will be announced at the conference.

An action plan, based on pledges of commitment to joint initiatives (e.g. mobility grants, special contributions by networks, foundations, and the ECF's National Committees), will also be presented.