

Report

EUNIC Heads Meeting 2009

17 and 18 June

European Commission, Representation
Copenhagen

Finn Andersen, incoming EUNIC President and Secretary General of Det Danske Kultur Institut, welcomed the participants to Copenhagen. He expressed his pleasure that so many EUNIC members were represented (28 participants from 18 EU member states) and expressed gratitude to Klaus Bischoff of the European Commission for his help and the provision of the venue for the meeting. He introduced Ronald Grätz from ifa (Institute for Foreign Cultural Affairs in Germany) who had been invited to attend as a guest.

The agenda for the meeting was accepted unanimously.

TOP 1 **EUNIC Presidency**

Outgoing President's report

Hans-Georg Knopp gave an overview of the main initiatives of his Presidency, including the start of a structured dialogue between China and Europe on cultural issues, the EUNIC Summer Academy for junior employees of EUNIC members and the establishment of EUNIC Clusters in priority countries such as China, Russia and Brazil. He emphasised the dynamic growth of the network over the last year (there are now 45 EUNIC Clusters in 41 countries) and referred to the newly established EUNIC Presidential Support Team, the idea for which had been developed by the EUNIC Task Force set up at the last EUNIC Heads Meeting. Mr. Knopp expressed his belief that this team would not only support the EUNIC Presidency but also help EUNIC move "from accidental to strategic cooperation".

Mr. Knopp expressed his gratitude that the EUNIC Presidency had been entrusted to him and thanked the Vice-Presidents, Mr. Andersen and Mr. Patapievici, EUNIC members and his colleagues from the Goethe-Institut, Mr. Volker Redder and Ms. Christine Klösch, for their support over the last year.

Mr. Knopp formally passed the EUNIC Presidency to Mr. Andersen.

Incoming President's statement

Mr. Andersen thanked Mr. Knopp for his engagement over the past year and especially for his successful initiative to strengthen EUNIC by establishing a Presidential Support Team, which he considered important as smaller EUNIC members would now take on the EUNIC Presidency and would have to rely on support from outside their own institutions.

He considered it one of his main tasks over the next year to strengthen EUNIC further. He emphasised the need for EUNIC to become a legal entity and to admit Malta, this completing membership at Heads level. Contact had been made with the Maltese Council for Culture and the Arts.

He stressed the importance of a strong EUNIC and the need for cultural institutes to cooperate within Europe, especially in view of developments within the EU such as the (probable) ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, the recent European Parliament elections and the global financial crisis. EUNIC had to continue to speak with a strong, united voice and build upon the status that it had gained, thanks to its worldwide network and partners, as well as unique cultural knowledge and expertise. Latest thinking about the role of

culture in EU external relations had also shown that there was a need for EUNIC and that the European Commission considered EUNIC not just a player, but an important partner.

Election of 2nd Vice President

Simonetta Luz Afonso (Head of Instituto Camões) was elected 2nd EUNIC Vice President unanimously. As Mrs Luz Afonso was not able to attend the meeting, owing to other engagements, Cristina Faustino accepted the 2nd Vice-Presidency in her name.

Mrs. Luz Afonso will become EUNIC President in 2011/2012.

Presentation of EUNIC Presidential Support Team

Volker Redder outlined the genesis of the Presidential Support Team at EUNIC Task Force meetings in Paris and Munich. Three posts had been created for an initial period of two years and the EUNIC Presidency had sent the job descriptions to all EUNIC Heads, who had disseminated them within their institutions. An open and competitive recruitment process had culminated in interviews conducted by representatives of the EUNIC Presidency – the Goethe-Institut, Danish Cultural Institute and Romanian Cultural Institute – and an expert from the Goethe-Institut's human resources department. From over 40 applicants, 12 individuals had been invited to interview in Berlin.

Mr. Redder then introduced the individuals appointed to the three posts:

- Team Leader: Mr. Steve Green, British Council (London)
- Communications: Mr. Robert Adam, Romanian Cultural Institute (Paris)
- Co-ordinator: Ms. Christine Klösch, Goethe-Institut (Munich)

EUNIC Heads and Clusters will be informed about the new team and their specific roles and tasks within the network.

Participants expressed their wish for the team to increase the flow of information within the network and to communicate EUNIC activities to all EUNIC members worldwide. To facilitate this, all Heads will nominate a EUNIC focal point within their institution.

The activities and successes of the EUNIC Presidential Support Team will be evaluated on a regular basis.

Action: All EUNIC Heads to nominate a focal point and inform the EUNIC PST.

TOP 2

Keynote by Xavier Troussard, Head of Unit "Culture Policy and Intercultural Dialogue" at DG "Education and Culture" at the European Commission

Xavier Troussard gave a European Commission perspective on the role of culture, underlining the role it plays in EU external relations where culture has become a vital tool for the strengthening of civil society and promotion of human rights. Culture also has a crucial role to play in conflict prevention and economic development.

He then mentioned the European Commission's current focus on

- EU Neighbourhood (Balkans, Mediterranean, Eastern Europe)
- culture and development
- the role of culture in developing relations with the BRIC countries

and new methods used for the implementation of the European Commission's visions

- consultation for the design of policy
- conference on culture, creativity and development
- platforms for the cultural sector to contribute its views

Mr. Troussard stressed that the European Commission considers EUNIC one of its most important partners. In this context he invited EUNIC to participate in the Multilingualism Platform and to play the leading role in it. He expressed the Commission's desire not only to have a more structured dialogue and cooperation with EUNIC, but a partnership in the areas of capacity building and strategic thinking in EU external relations. As an NGO, EUNIC can be directly involved. He stressed the important role of EUNIC Clusters, on whose experience and knowledge the Commission can draw, especially in shaping cultural relations with Eastern Partnership countries (see TOP 6 below).

It was agreed that further dialogue with the European Commission would be pursued and cooperation explored.

Action: EUNIC PST and EUNIC Brussels Cluster to pursue the Multilingualism Platform.

TOP 3 EUNIC Heads – enhancement of cooperation

Legal status for EUNIC Europe

Andrei Tarnea outlined two options for establishing legal status for EUNIC Europe under Belgian law: the first option being to set up "EUNIC Europe", comprising EUNIC Heads, the second being to set up an international foundation, also comprising EUNIC Clusters.

Participants unanimously agreed that legal status was needed, but lengthy and animated discussion ensued. Some participants supported the option of clusters being integrated into the legal entity, whilst others were explicitly against clusters being part of it. The latter would have the disadvantage that EUNIC would not be able to function as a contractor for the European Commission.

Action: EUNIC PST to review the legal issues, consulting EUNIC members and legal and financial advisers, and report to the EUNIC Heads Meeting in Copenhagen in October.

Vision

It was suggested that EUNIC needs a paper outlining its overall strategic objectives – "EUNIC's vision for the future" – with a view to giving the EUNIC Clusters guidelines for their project work. The strategy of the EUNIC Zagreb Cluster was cited in this context.

It was agreed that this topic would be postponed to a later EUNIC Heads Meeting as EUNIC first has to discuss and reconfirm its strategic themes and priority regions.

EUNIC's strategic themes

Under this topic EUNIC's strategic themes and priority regions were re-evaluated. There was animated debate, especially about "intercultural dialogue" and "climate change". Discussion around "intercultural dialogue" revolved around whether EUNIC should promote "universal values". The term "climate change" was problematic for some participants but "ecology and sustainability" was considered acceptable by all. "Multilingualism" was strongly endorsed as one of EUNIC's strategic themes. Another area for consideration was "capacity building in the arts and creative industries" and there was strong interest in "cultural relations and the financial crisis"

The Presidential Support Team will further elaborate EUNIC's strategic themes for review at the EUNIC Heads Meeting in Copenhagen in October (see TOP 8 below).

Action: EUNIC PST to establish working groups for each theme, with EUNIC members invited to nominate participants.

Review of action plan from EUNIC Heads Meeting 2008

Most of the action points agreed at last year's Heads Meeting have been implemented. Those that have not, e.g. a research project on EUNIC members' institutional structures, will be followed up.

Discussion focused on "Cluster encouragement" and why it had not yet been possible to establish clusters in Egypt, Israel and Palestine. It was accepted that one person alone could not encourage all EUNIC members to form clusters, and that it had to be a joint effort of all the Heads whose institutions are present in a given location. It was agreed to produce an overview of locations where EUNIC is not present, with special emphasis on EUNIC's priority regions. Arthur Sonnen offered to inquire via the SICA network and via the Dutch embassies where EUNIC is not present. Another important point was that Cluster activities should be evaluated on an annual basis.

Action: EUNIC PST to seek an annual report from all EUNIC Clusters and develop draft evaluation criteria.

TOP 4 EUNIC Clusters – development, tendencies and challenges

The EUNIC Cluster network has grown dynamically. Currently there are 45 Clusters in 41 countries. There is a positive tendency of increasing Cluster cooperation, especially for trans-regional projects, e.g. the meeting between the Brussels and Netherlands Clusters, the overview of activities to mark the 20th anniversary of 1989, and workshops where members of different clusters come together to work on the development of common projects, as at the EUNIC Presidency-Cluster Heads Meeting 2008 in Paris.

It was emphasised that all these Cluster activities need to be documented. The EUNIC Presidential Support Team will collect all Cluster projects, document and make them accessible to all EUNIC members, e.g. via the website.

Questions that need to be pursued are the relationship between EUNIC Heads and Clusters and how Clusters on one hand can remain the "creative part" of EUNIC but on the other hand also work to EUNIC's strategic objectives set by the Heads.

Action: EUNIC PST to incorporate the key points from the discussion in the review of themes and strategy.

TOP 5 Report from EUNIC Cluster Brussels

Report from EUNIC Brussels attached.

TOP 6 EUNIC projects

European-Chinese Cultural Dialogue

Olaf Gerlach-Hansen gave an overview of the European-Chinese Cultural Dialogue project. The next conference will take place in Copenhagen from 19 to 21 October.

The following four topics will be discussed at the meeting:

- Creative industries
- Cultural diversity
- State of the arts
- Cultural memory

Expert participants in the dialogue have already been nominated by most EUNIC member institutions but the organisers are still looking for four European key note speakers (one on each of the above mentioned topics). Representative from the EUNIC Beijing Cluster will be invited and Mr. Andersen extended an invitation to all EUNIC Heads to attend the dialogue. An updated conference programme will be sent out in August.

Despite fundraising efforts, there is a shortfall of €65,000. The Goethe-Institut, Instituto Camões and British Council made pledges of additional funding. Austria will talk to Mrs. Ferrero Waldner about possible funding from the European Commission. Finland, Sweden and France will also consider financial contributions and get back to Mr. Andersen.

Action: EUNIC Heads to send a) proposals for key note speakers and b) funding pledges to Mr Gerlach-Hansen as soon as possible.

There was brief discussion of a cultural programme for Asian-European Cultural Dialogue 2010, which will take place in connection with Expo 2010. Mr. Lagasse suggested that EUNIC should present a European cultural programme. He proposed the Belgium Pavilion as a venue, as Belgium will hold the Council Presidency, and presented "Crazy Cinématograph" as a possible project. It was agreed to consider this proposal further.

Climate and arts

Mr. Gerlach-Hansen presented a proposal for a EUNIC project on art, culture and ecology in the context of the UN Climate Summit in Copenhagen in December 2009. Detailed information about the project is attached. Ensuing discussion was brief, owing to the fact that "arts" and "climate change" had already been explicitly discussed in the context of EUNIC's strategic themes. The project will be pursued by the Danish Cultural Institute – also as a possible theme with a view to the Asian-European Cultural Dialogue 2010 in Shanghai – which will keep the EUNIC Heads updated.

It was agreed that EUNIC needed more long-term planning for its strategic themes, and all Heads expressed the wish to be fully involved in the identification of themes.

Eastern Partnership

The British Council presented the European Commission's Eastern Partnership Culture programme. Overall objectives: to support the role of culture for the region's sustainable development and to promote regional cooperation between civil society cultural organisations in the Eastern Partnership region and with the EU. Specific objectives: support cultural policy reform at government level, capacity building, exchange of information and experience among cultural operators at a regional level, support regional initiatives/partnerships. Beneficiary countries: Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia and Belarus. As EUNIC does not yet have legal status, it cannot bid to the European Commission. The British Council offered to put together a EUNIC-led consortium to bid for the Eastern Partnership culture programme. The proposal was well received and the Swedish Cultural Institute, Goethe-Institut and Romanian Cultural Institute will join the British Council in bidding for this project.

Action: British Council to lead development of the consortium

EUNIC Website

The website will be further developed by the Presidential Support Team and EUNIC members will be kept updated.

EUNIC Think Tank

Mr. Andersen proposed setting up a think tank, comprising respected European intellectuals, to address European issues. The outputs of the think tank would guide

EUNIC's strategic themes and project work. In the ensuing discussion participants expressed themselves both for and against. Those against felt that EUNIC had to establish itself and clarify its strategic themes first.

Action: EUNIC Heads to send ideas for following up this discussion to EUNIC PST, which will pursue with the EUNIC Presidency, the Swedish Institute, SICA and British Council.

TOP 7 **Administrative issues**

Membership

Instituto Cervantes asked whether it was possible for the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs to become a full member of EUNIC. The issue arose as Cervantes does not have local institutes in some countries but wants Spain to be represented there as a full member at cluster level. A lively discussion ensued. The general opinion was that Ministries of Foreign Affairs should be excluded, except from countries which have no national cultural institute. It was emphasised that even in these countries Ministries should be encouraged to nominate an arm's length cultural organisation to represent the country within EUNIC.

The Heads welcomed the nomination of two new EUNIC members: ifa (Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations) from Germany, represented by its Secretary General Ronald Grätz and CCRN (Centre Culturel de Recontre Abbaye de Neumünster) from Luxembourg, represented by its special representative Jean-Jacques Subrenat. The CCRN will replace the current member Institut Pierre Werner. Both institutions will officially join EUNIC Europe as full members from 1 July 2009.

Action: a) EUNIC Presidency to send confirmation of membership to ifa and CCRN b) EUNIC PST to prepare a paper on membership to set out ground rules for discussion at the October meeting.

Finances

Several member institutions have not paid their annual membership fees for 2009 and some are still outstanding from 2008. For 2009 this amounts to a deficit of €23,500. Outstanding payments will be chased over the next few weeks.

Mr. Andersen introduced a new model of membership fees that was endorsed by participants:

Institutions with over 1,000 employees: €5,000
Institutions with 200 – 1,000 employees: €2,000
Institutions with 50 – 200 employees: €1,000
Institutions with less than 50 employees: € 500

The new model will be implemented in 2010 and it was emphasised that membership fees are not paid per country but per institution.

TOP 8 **Any other business**

Next Heads Meeting / Next Presidency – Cluster Heads Meeting

The EUNIC Heads Meeting 2010 will take place during the first week of June 2010 (earlier than in 2008 and 2009) in Bucharest.

Participants expressed a need to follow up this year's meeting and specifically to pursue the questions of legal status and membership. This was agreed unanimously. A second

EUNIC Heads Meeting 2009 will take place in Copenhagen, probably on 21 October, after the European-Chinese Cultural Dialogue. Mr. Andersen will confirm the exact date soon and invitations will be sent to all Heads.

The EUNIC Presidency – Cluster Heads Meeting will take place in Stockholm, probably during the first week of December 2009.

Action: EUNIC Presidency to fix a date and inform all EUNIC Clusters.

TOP 9 **Video conference with participants of EUNIC Summer Academy 2009 in Budapest**

As this year's Summer Academy was taking place in Budapest, a video conference was organised at the British Council in Copenhagen to allow the EUNIC Heads to hold a discussion with the Academy participants.

Discussion mainly focused on how EUNIC can strengthen its structures and cooperation within the network. Academy participants proposed to create practical guidelines for EUNIC project implementation to motivate Cluster members to engage in EUNIC projects. The guide should give guidelines on questions of project cooperation within EUNIC, share best practice examples and tips about access to EU funding. The Heads very much welcomed this initiative. Academy participants will draft guidelines and send them to the Presidential Support Team.

Other important points mentioned were the need to increase EUNIC's visibility, strengthen communication between the Heads and Clusters, and the Heads were especially asked to support the work of Clusters by developing and communicating EUNIC's visions and strategic objectives to them.

The Heads were asked to continue the Summer Academy in 2010 as it was considered a very useful tool for young employees of EUNIC member institutions to enhance the internal communication by getting personally acquainted as well as a good method to create and implement EUNIC projects.

Mr. Andersen thanked Academy participants for their constructive review and underlined that these important issues would be taken into account by the Heads.

It was agreed to organise another Summer Academy in Bucharest in 2010 at the same time as the Heads Meeting. It has to be discussed and decided who will organise it, who will finance it and whether it is possible to obtain funding from the EU.

TOP 10 **EUNIC Action Plan 2009-2010**

Action points are listed in this report.

Closing words

Mr. Andersen thanked all for their participation in the meeting, their active engagement and the congenial atmosphere. He was very much looking forward to future cooperation and the results of the discussions had already taken EUNIC an essential step forward in its aim of enhancing collaboration within the network and strengthening it. He stressed that the discussion with the representative of the European Commission had shown what an important position EUNIC already occupied within the cultural sector, and that he strongly believed EUNIC would be able very soon to contribute even more actively to European cultural policies.
