

**Reaction from the Higher Arts Education Sector on the
*EU Call for Communication on Culture***



The following comments are submitted on behalf of the *European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA)*, which is the main subject association in Higher Arts Education in Europe. ELIA represents 350 higher arts institutions across Europe, providing higher education in architecture, art, dance, design, media arts, music and theatre.

A. Important challenges

Are art and culture linked to the process of European integration and how can they contribute to it?

Immensely popular DJs, Europe's world class musicians, dancers, visual artists, designers and controversial theatre makers shape Europe and Europe's identity more than any formal European policy. Cross-national cultural/artistic production, vibrant artistic communities (traditional, contemporary, and controversial) are essential to build a Europe, which is more than a common market, institutions, and guidelines. Supporting an open and plural climate through EU policies, coordinated member state policy and supportive concrete initiatives will help to make them effective for Europe. There is a strong need for support for mobility, exchange and the EU should strive for shared standards of quality and dignity, mutual understanding and transparency within Europe.

The cultural sector

Which are in your view the most important cultural challenges for Europe and for the European project in the 10 years ahead? Please explain briefly your choice (deepening of European integration, enlargement of the EU, cultural diversity, emergence of a European identity and citizenship, other(s))

- (1) To create conditions for safeguarding, supporting and strengthening an open cultural climate in Europe, with respect for the rich plurality of artistic, political, intellectual, religious and philosophical orientations in today's arts and cultural practice across Europe.
- (2) To further build and deepen the practice and the concept of intercultural dialogue and intercultural diversity as characteristic for Europe, creating digital and real spaces for dialogue through media, the internet, publications and projects.
- (3) To initiate policies that make the UNESCO convention useful for creating new (training, funding, mobility) opportunities for artists, including artists from different ethnic groups, not only within the creative industries but also in the wider cultural sector. Compromises that have a negative impact on cultural and artistic expressions should be avoided.
- (4) To make the arts and culture more central in all EU policies, such as education, regional development, research, local development and to develop instruments that fully exploit article 151, setting specific targets for the cultural dimension in all European programmes, in particular in structural funds, research, education, employment and youth.

Do you think that culture plays a role in individual personal development and social cohesion in Europe? If so, please indicate how this role could be supported at European level?

Arts and culture play a huge role in personal development. In particular children and young people from all cultural, religious and ethnical backgrounds should be enabled to engage with the arts and the own cultural heritage (not necessarily high arts). Widening participation for arts and culture and creativity programmes at all educational levels, further development of creative skills as life skills should be a EU cultural policy objective. New technology, media and the internet create new ways of engaging in creativity, which should be further explored and documented in a European cultural and artistic research programme as part of FP7.

Do you see a role for culture as a stimulus for creativity in Europe and as a catalyst for innovation and knowledge? If so, please indicate how this role should be supported at European level?

ELIA strongly believes the arts and culture have intrinsic value to people and societies and cannot be measured in economic terms. At the same time the arts and culture inject creativity, knowledge and expertise that are also a powerful

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source for economic growth in Europe. Therefore the cultural area should be considered a key economic sector and statistical and comparative information should be the basis for EU/national policies. A European support programme should be developed for young artists to create their own work through professional training, starting up businesses and building international careers. A European leadership programme engaging Europe-wide talented artists from different ethnic backgrounds should be initiated. The Higher Arts Education Institutions contribute through developing the creative potential of future artists and delivering high-level professionals for an international world, not necessarily restricted to Europe.

B. The cultural sector, Community policies and cooperation in the European Union

Which are the most important challenges for the cultural sector in the European Union in the 10 years ahead?

- (1)** The arts and cultural sector should become more relevant in tackling contentious issues such as intercultural dialogue, multi-culturalism, race, ethnicity, combating poverty, education, social change and community development.
- (2)** In a European agenda, arts and education should be a main priority, encouraging children/young people to participate in arts and culture through national action plans and initiatives, taking daily life, own backgrounds and talents as a starting point. Creation of unconventional pathways to arts educational programmes and facilities for artists to work in informal learning environments.
- (3)** Research should be initiated and supported how the arts and culture shape and influence our daily lives through the media, the Internet and the creative industries.

In your opinion, which are the Community policies and their specific aspects that have the greatest impact on the activities of the cultural sector at European level or to which the cultural sector could make an important contribution? How are you affected by these policies, which developments in these policies could contribute to the development of your sector and its cross-border activities, what might this contribution consist of, serving which specific aims and with which partners? Have you identified any concerns or difficulties in relation to these policies? Which European developments could facilitate the involvement of your sector?

The Higher Arts Education sector in Europe is primarily concerned with education, providing a rounded qualification in the art and linking education and culture in its programmes. The sector is fully involved in the Bologna Process of restructuring Higher Education into three cycles, becomes rapidly highly internationalised, and collaborates with a wide range of local, regional, national and international partners. A main concern is how to graduate students who can make a living from the arts. Policies that could contribute to the development of the sector are: Education, Information Society, Audiovisual and Media, Employment and Social affairs, Youth, Regional policy, Research, Development, Technology and Innovation.

C. International aspects and co-operation with international organisations

What is the scope of your activities and/or co-operation with and/or in third countries (outside the EU)? In which geographical areas and in which cultural sector(s)? Which should in your view be the objectives of the European Union in its relations with third countries in the field of culture? Which types of action(s) would contribute to these objectives?

Individual higher arts education institutes and ELIA have developed close relations with Higher Arts Education institutions outside Europe on an equal footing and there is an urgent need for further collaboration in the eastern Balkan and the Caucasian area, also because these countries consider themselves historically and culturally part of Europe or between Europe and Asia. Lack of EU co-funding hampers real involvement of these regions in our work. International collaboration should not be based on selling Europe or selling European culture as a brand. Objectives could be exchange, mutual fertilisation and support for innovation

What is your experience of relations/cooperation with other international or regional organisations active in the cultural sphere, such as UNESCO or the Council of Europe? How do you see the relationship between action at EU level and within the framework of those organisations?

ELIA collaborates with the Council of Europe and to a lesser extent with UNESCO. We make a strong plea for closely connecting the policy areas between the EU, Council Europe and UNESCO. In the framework of the UNESCO Convention ELIA strongly feels that the EU should monitor/coordinate actions at member state level and identify policies and projects

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that breath life in the commitments of the Convention. The EU should strongly resist making commitments that have a negative impact on cultural activities, goods, and services.

D. Arrangements for dialogue and co-operation at European level

Do you think there are particular difficulties in the framework of the dialogue between the cultural sector and the European institutions? If so, what are they? How do you think this dialogue should develop, both with regard to the cultural sector and the European institutions in order to make it more structured and sustainable?

A structured and long-term dialogue involving the European Commission and strategic European partners is needed to shape a European policy in the field of culture on the basis of a shared agenda. ELIA, on behalf of the European Higher Arts Education Institutes, wishes to be involved as a strategic partner and aspires to further contribute to a European 5 – 7 year agenda in the frame of such a strategic partnership. Linking culture and education would be high on our priority list. It would help to get new European initiatives off the ground, could help to convince the member states of the need to support innovation in the cultural sector and to coordinate policy measures, implementing the UNESCO convention.

What could be in your opinion the objectives common to the whole of the cultural sector at European level?

- (1) To initiate European policies in the field of arts and education, e.g. a European programme, similar to the Connect Programme, recognising and deepening creative skills through teaching creativity and teaching in a creative way;
- (2) To foster creative thinking in all forms and levels of education and to coordinate national policies and programmes in a similar way as in the Bologna process.
- (3) To recognise, highlight, and strengthen the contribution of creativity, arts and culture to Europe's economy in the Lisbon strategy, broadening opportunities for young artists, exploring new markets also in new media, partnerships, and creation of businesses and development of new audiences.
- (4) To develop concrete criteria to be agreed with the member states for better embedding culture in other European programmes, in particular in the structural funds, based on agreed targets, for instance 10% for cultural structural development.
- (5) To deepen and extend mobility of artists and artistic production in particular of young artists, also including neighbouring countries.
- (6) To develop a substantial research programme in the arts and culture, supported by FP7, creating a knowledge base and quality in the sector as a whole.

Among the areas of action in which more advanced coordination between Member States of the EU might be feasible, which are the ones with significant European value added for the world of culture? Should this coordination involve all Member States or could it be developed by a group of interested countries?

A coordinated action plan consisting of specific European programmes such as Connect and an arts and culture focus in the 7th Framework programme; agreements such as embedding culture in other European programmes, Lisbon Strategy and exchange of best practice between the member states (peer reviews, thematic meetings, benchmarking progress in the member states through yearly national progress reports). The main priorities would be arts and education, fostering creative thinking across all levels of education, mobility of artists and cultural practitioners, embedding culture in other programmes, proper financing of cultural initiatives with a European impact.

E. Other comments

This concludes the reaction from the Higher Arts Education Institutes in Europe, organised within ELIA. The European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA) founded in 1990, is an independent network of approximately 350 Higher Arts Education Institutes covering all disciplines of the Arts - Dance, Design, Theatre, Fine Art, Music, Media Arts and Architecture - from 47 countries. Please see www.elia-artschools.org for more information.