

In from the margins

A contribution to the debate on Culture
and Development in Europe

Summary version

of a report prepared for the Council
of Europe by the European Task Force
on Culture and Development

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**Foreword by
Daniel TARSCHYS
Secretary General of the Council of Europe**

After a long period of divide, Europe is looking to make choices which will determine its future dynamics and stability. It is facing crucial decisions concerning the depth of economic and social integration, the nature of its political institutions, and the contours of its new security system, while trying to sharpen itself for economic and technological competition.

However, this intensive search for new political and economic paradigms may well overshadow the need also to re-consider long-term developmental objectives in the domain of "immaterial" well-being. This danger has been widely recognised; while much work has been carried out at international level in fields pertaining to environment, human rights and social exclusion, the field of culture has yet to be thoroughly tilled.

The report *In from the margins* seeks to fill this gap. It addresses culture (which unlike education is difficult to harness to immediate economic returns) from a wider developmental point of view and offers the Council of Europe and its member states an opportunity to reflect

on the importance they attach to culture from a new, integrated and comprehensive perspective.

As the authors put it, the report's central themes are "two interlocking priorities: to bring the millions of dispossessed and disadvantaged Europeans in from the margins of society, and cultural policy in from the margins of governance". A new alliance between culture and development should enable this change to occur.

The new paths explored by the authors to balance developmental efforts and preservation of cultural diversity may help cultural policy to become more centrally rooted and more pervasively constructive, favouring a harmonious empowerment of people as well as an equitable distribution of life chances. Failure to understand this might well mean jeopardising any developmental effort.

As a political scientist, reading *In from the margins* has given me great pleasure; for the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, it is a challenge. The report is a complex whole combining descriptions of European and global cultural developments with astute policy evaluations; it shows great respect both for the common roots of European culture and for the maintenance of the cultural diversity which provides us with

our intellectual strength; it looks into the past, probes the future and succeeds in welding all components together within a single frame.

The initiative for the report came from the World Commission on Culture and Development, which, after the preparatory work by Unesco and the resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations, was appointed in 1992 to write a world report on culture and development. The Council of Europe decided to support this effort by providing its contribution in the form of a parallel report exploring the relations between culture and developmental efforts on the continent. The task of preparing the report was given to a small independent task force. The task force's remit was to submit its un-moderated conclusions, both as a basis for a wider global debate on culture and sustainable development, and as a stand-alone document on issues specific to Europe.

The World Commission's Report *Our Creative Diversity* is to be discussed at an Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural and Media Policies for Development, to be held in Stockholm in March 1998. The Council of Europe report *In from the margins* will be a major regional contribution to the conference.

I wish to thank the Task Force for their excellent work, as well as governments, organisations and persons who have assisted them both intellectually and materially ¹.

Daniel Tarschys

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Why a report on culture and development?

This is a summary of a report, *In from the margins*, produced by an independent group of policy makers, researchers and cultural managers for the Council of Europe, as a contribution to the debate on culture and development which the World Commission on Culture and Development initiated and should be read as a complement to its own report, *Our creative diversity*. The full report seeks to advise the Council of Europe on some of the key challenges facing policy makers in Europe today and offers suggestions on how best to address the complex cultural challenges and development issues of a continent in transition. At the same time, it is hoped that the report's findings will be of value to member states and public authorities.

Policy-makers all over the world are recognising that culture has a larger place in the governance of human communities than they had thought. It was with this in mind that the General Conference of Unesco, at its 26th Session in 1991, created an independent World Commission on Culture and Development. Its task was to prepare a world report on cultural needs in the

context of development. The United Nations General Assembly endorsed the proposal and a twelve member commission, chaired by the former UN Secretary General, Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, was appointed.

The report that the world Commission produced, *Our creative diversity*, was submitted to the Unesco General Conference in Paris on 2 November 1995 and to the United Nations General Assembly in New York the same year. The World Commission hoped it will prove of real, practical value to national governments and intergovernmental bodies and, further, that it will attract the interest of the general public and stimulate a wider debate. Discussions on the report's findings continue at national level.

In the course of its work, the World Commission sought evidence from each Unesco region – Africa, Asia/Pacific, Central and South America, North America and Europe – in the form of hearings and/or reports. As the European contribution, the Council of Europe in 1994 commissioned its own review of culture and development. A small, independent Task Force was appointed to undertake the work. It was led by Rod Fisher from the United Kingdom and the report was written by Professor Anthony Everitt, also of the UK. Ritva Mitchell represented the Council of Europe and, as an adviser, played a full part in the deliberations

of the Task Force, whose other members were Eduard Delgado from Spain, Professor Ilkka Heiskanen from Finland, who also provided the statistical appendix, Professor Carl-Johan Kleberg from Sweden, Professor Kirill Razlogov from Russia and Jacques Renard from France. The group's expertise lies variously in academic or cultural research and/or cultural administration and policy-making and most of them have been involved with the Council of Europe's programme of national cultural policy reviews. The Task Force's remit was not to represent Council of Europe policy, but to submit its own un-moderated conclusions, both as a contribution to the wider global debate and as a stand-alone document on the issues which are specific to Europe. This summarises some of its findings.

Key themes

There is a growing acknowledgment that, if culture – whether understood as the “whole life of the people” and its values or, more narrowly, as artistic activity of all kinds – is left out of account, sustainable development is likely to fail. A range of cultural transformations is contributing to social, economic and political change in Europe. Globalisation is weakening, or at least testing, national identities. At the same time, a regional and civic renaissance, often led by cultural policy, is under way. The new technologies are not only revolutionising commerce and industry, but are inflecting daily life with an avalanche of images. Individualism and moral relativism are replacing traditional beliefs. Many European societies are riven by exclusion and unemployment and for millions of Europeans the promised “good life” is as far from reach as ever.

It is becoming clear that the undiluted pursuit of economic growth has led to undesirable ecological, social and cultural side-effects and states are becoming increasingly committed to the idea of *sustainable development* – that is, investment in economic growth in ways that do not endanger outcomes in the long term and/or living standards, opportunities and options for

future generations. Culture has a role to play in this process – not just in relation to such aspects of the quality of life as security, equality of opportunity, human rights and the values implied in the term “civil society”, but also as an objective factor of production and an asset for, and an indicator of, positive human growth defined in qualitative terms. Three major aspects are:

- its contribution to the accumulation of human knowledge and understanding (i.e. human growth);
- its economic and social outcomes (with special reference to any changes in value systems);
- its function as human capital and as a means of empowerment and entitlement.

Whether explicitly or implicitly, cultural policy in many European countries over the last forty years or so has been characterised by four key principles – the promotion of cultural *identity*, the endorsement of Europe's multicultural *diversity*, the stimulation of *creativity* of all kinds and the encouragement of *participation* for all in cultural life. The report argues that these are, and remain, of high importance, although they need to be re-aligned and refined to take account of today's circumstances.

The last fifty years have seen a range of achievements. International agencies, such as the United Nations, Unesco, the Council of Europe and the European Union have sought to give cultural policy a solid legal basis in a series of Conventions and Declarations. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which member states of the United Nations recognised in 1948, asserts the right to participate in cultural life as being among those conditions that are "necessary for human survival, integrity and human dignity". In 1954 the Council of Europe promoted a European Cultural Convention which remains the key instrument for cultural co-operation in the larger Europe. The European Union only included culture within its competence and as a field in its own right in the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992 (although the potentially important Clause 4 of Article 128 of the Treaty, which requires the Commission to take into account the cultural dimension of its actions, has yet to be fully tested for its practical effects).

National governments have devoted increasing resources to the development of the arts and the protection of the heritage. They have passed legislation to protect the cultural environment and heritage; provide direct financial assistance; and establish or develop such institutions as archives and museums. The second broad development has been the provision of a con-

temporary cultural infrastructure, such as new theatres, concert halls, museums and art galleries. A new feature of cultural policy since the 1970s has been a recognition of the role of the cultural industries. The economic impact of culture and business sponsorship of the arts has assumed a new importance, fuelled by constraints on public finances.

In recent years governments have devolved some cultural responsibilities to regional and local authorities. Decentralisation is a preoccupation of the post-Communist democracies, although the situation on the ground varies considerably from country to country. In most West European countries regions and cities are increasing their commitment to cultural support and development. Municipalities have increased their efforts to promote culture on their own initiative and often from their own resources. They have devised cultural policies, often within a wider context of strategies for economic development and guided by national cultural policies.

Unfortunately, the implementation of cultural policy in the light of the requirements of sustainable development and of the four key principles has been, in the main, ineffectual. In their search for new orientations to cultural policies, some governments are motivated

by short term economic interests. Too little attention is paid to an explicit definition of basic policy premises, the grounds for intervention and the setting of explicit policy directions and strategies for their implementation. Vision in policy making is noticeably lacking.

Cultural responsibilities are often insufficiently delineated between the different tiers of government and, as a result, policies are fragmented. Strategies that recognise the interconnectedness of culture with development are not easy to implement because, commonly, civil servants are used to working in hierarchical departments and not encouraged or equipped to think in new horizontal ways.

At the intergovernmental level, countless declarations, resolutions and recommendations have been agreed, sometimes after years of preparation, but to uncertain effect. In part this is because of the huge gulf in awareness within the cultural sector and the public sectors at large of the international commitments which their governments have endorsed. But it may also be due to a fundamental flaw in the thinking at international level which gives the impression of always striving for "European" solutions when there is not a single Europe. A common European home may be a desirable goal, but it is not yet a reality. Europe is at best a collection of

countries, Nordic, Mediterranean, Mittel European and so forth, with as many different goals and agendas as common interests.

Europe in transition

The process of change which is transforming other aspects of European life has not left the arts and culture untouched. It has created opportunities, but also serious challenges. The arrival of an all-encompassing, Americanised, global culture threatens local European cultures, although the danger can be exaggerated. As well as its impact on Western Europe, it has made considerable incursions into Central and Eastern Europe, where it represents a very serious challenge to societies in flux and without the public resources for the time being to mount a convincing response. The globalisation of the "American dream" is reflected in the fact that its economic motor is not exclusively American or Anglo-American, as is commonly supposed. It is based on transnational corporations operating from the Far East and Europe as well as the United States. Nevertheless, there is a significant imbalance in audiovisual trade between Europe and the United States.

Linguistic and cultural identities are closely related and the growing dominance of English as the leading global means of communication, while it probably cannot be resisted, needs to be matched by support for other European languages.

Never before has so much knowledge been so readily and so instantaneously available through the electronic technologies and had the potential to empower so many. But this revolution brings with it risks. The most important question to be addressed is whether a schism is being created between low income groups, exiled in the old TV-based entertainment system, and wealthier, "information-oriented" classes. It is possible that many ordinary people will find themselves excluded from access to the new communications systems except as passive, disempowered consumers. This new information underclass could be especially evident in Central and Eastern Europe.

Electronic methods of communication offer new creative opportunities to artists and other cultural producers, but at the same time their commercial exploitation may be at the expense of innovation. Moreover, the nature of the creative process and the notion of a single work of art has changed now that it can be reproduced in a multiplicity of forms, challenging existing copyright regulations in the process.

Instead of a world of satisfying work, increased leisure and affluence, the fate of many Europeans is long term structural unemployment and changing patterns of work. Improvement in the quality of life was one of the most unexpected features of the post-war period in

most Western European countries, but it has been overshadowed by a range of other factors. The globalisation and restructuring of the world economy, the world recession, the rise of the free market and the impact of technological advance on industry's labour needs have led to high levels of unemployment. North/South schisms – global, continental and internal – have stimulated massive shifts of population. Large numbers of individuals have been migrating in an attempt to escape poverty and unemployment, and/or displaced through political crisis and civil strife. As a result many people are excluded from the intellectual and emotional resource which a full opportunity to take part in cultural activity confers.

A range of groups within society suffer from varying kinds of discrimination and disadvantage. They include those marginalised by reason of their ethnic origin or disability; prisoners in corrective institutions and those in hospitals, hospices and the like for health reasons. Lesbians and gays still suffer from discriminatory laws or attitudes. Women are only beginning to break free of their old economic and social shackles. Many young people have a "culture" of their own, but face falling employment opportunities and are often alienated from the social mainstream. The numbers of elderly people are growing, yet too often they are a shamefully

neglected human resource. In all these fields, valuable work is being done to ensure access to cultural participation, but the record as a whole is patchy and often insufficiently acknowledged.

Culture as a contribution to human knowledge and understanding used to embody a generally accepted moral consensus. In the light of today's individualism, this is no longer so. Values are increasingly seen as relative and to be selected at will. Patterns of consumption and taste are also becoming relative. People understand the "messages" they are receiving when they buy goods or services, but do not necessarily accept them. Rather, they put them to the service of their own wishes and in so doing signal their membership of subcultures to which they may belong, or their view of society and established values, or a particular lifestyle they wish to adopt.

Culture can play a useful part in fostering civil bonds and encouraging a creative response to social and economic issues, but only if decision-makers in the public and private sectors are sensitive to its value. The growth of the "third" (or voluntary) sector, in which arts and culture have an important stake, is a key to the maintenance of civil society, especially in Eastern and Central Europe. What is necessary, above all, is the formation of an extensive network of voluntary asso-

ciations and foundations, which in turn presupposes a legal framework recognising their status and tax reforms which give them the concessions they need to attract charitable donations and contributions from the private sector.

Cultural rights, as an aspect of human rights, underpin people's liberties, in so far as they assert the right to identity, the right to language, the right to participate in cultural life, the right to the cultural heritage and the right to education. Many Europeans today are deprived of an identity and there is increasing recognition of the need to protect the right of the individual to choose freely to belong to a community or not, or to claim one or more identities, and the right to be respected for that choice. The seriousness of the daily violations of cultural rights in many parts of the continent demands that the difficulties in balancing individual, collective and state rights be resolved as the basis for a thriving civil society.

There has been a massive expansion of arts and media production in post-war Europe. The number of people who define themselves as creative artists has risen sharply, as have opportunities for consumption. In every artform there have been exciting aesthetic developments. Thanks to modern techniques of audiovisual reproduction, there has probably never been an age in

history when the arts and design have been so universally available. The commercial entertainment industries have massively expanded, more so in some countries than others. Economic re-adjustment in Central and Eastern Europe has meant that the over-riding concern for the traditional arts is survival, but television, film, video and radio have become universal purveyors of cultural goods and services as well as powerful economic players.

The heritage industry is undergoing a phase of exponential growth. However, the heritage ideal is being exploited by commercialism and, while there is greater access than before, it is sometimes distorted by inaccurate recreations of the past. In parts of Central and Eastern Europe, there is a heritage crisis of far greater dimension, for looting of churches, homes and museums, and the unauthorised sale and destruction of artefacts and heritage sites or monuments has reached epidemic proportions.

Above all, however, governments need to address **two interlocking priorities: to bring millions of dispossessed and disadvantaged Europeans in for the cultural debate from the margins of society and cultural policy in from the margins of governance.** These central themes of *In from the margins* underlie the recommendations that follow.

Cultural governance: in from the margins

Culture will have to be brought into the heart of public administration if it is to become more than what it is now – a partial and spasmodically effective instrument of policy. There is hardly a department of government that does not intervene in culture or whose decisions do not have a cultural impact. We should end the isolation of ministries of culture by establishing formal interdepartmental structures which would enable governments to make the most of the multiple interactions between culture and aspects of economic and social development. The interface between cultural planning and educational policy is of especial importance. The principle enunciated at a European level in Article 128 of the Treaty of Maastricht, requiring the European Union to take into account the cultural consequences of its actions, should equally apply to actions at national, regional and local government levels. Only by adopting this approach will it be possible to address the endemic failures of cultural policy.

Both the state and the cultural sector face an uncomfortable paradox if a higher priority is accorded to

culture. Looking for an effective instrument of policy, governments may try to control or manage it. In the search for resources, the cultural sector may consent to justifications of support on non-cultural grounds (e.g. economics, job creation, tourism etc.). However, experience suggests that the utilitarian exploitation of culture will only succeed if, at the level of individual creativity, it is allowed to function outside state control. Freedom of expression is a crucial principle and cultural policies should establish a general framework within which individuals and institutions can work rather than intervene closely in what they do or say. But more than that there is a need for a consistent approach to cultural policy which accepts that culture has its instrumental uses, but also recognises the limits to which this can be applied without endangering it.

Other action points

- **Regional and local authorities** should be given the responsibility to establish comprehensive cultural strategies linked to their programmes of planning, economic, social and educational development
- European cultural research and work on developing cultural indicators should be intensified.
- Cultural subsidies are socially and economically useful and spending levels should rise, or at least remain stable. **Investment in culture** not only underpins the quality of life of Europe's citizens, but, in the longer term, may help to reduce public expenditure on redressing societal ills that flow from unemployment, urban and rural decline and social exclusion.
- If the intention is to leave a **creative legacy for the future**, governments would be wise to review the balance between resource allocations for cultural institutions and that for non-institutional creativity.
- Policy makers and administrators will have to **think creatively about fund-raising**. Options could include: first, finding "new" forms of public support – for ex-

ample, through hypothecated tourism taxes or through “planning gain” (i.e. where public authorities give planning rights for commercial building developments on condition that the developer offers something in return, such as an art gallery, museum or theatre as part of a shopping complex); secondly, through strategic alliances between the public and private sectors.

- Peer group assessment remains the best of the available options to ensure well informed and artistically sound decisions on the allocation of public subsidy. However, governments, or their chosen intermediaries, should ensure that decision making processes are regularly reviewed to ensure there is no circularity of advantage for self-perpetuating elites.
- Arts institutions should be given as much artistic, managerial and financial **independence from governmental control** as is consistent with public accountability.
- While circumstances have forced the arts sector in many parts of Europe to learn business culture, industry and commerce are beginning to recognise that it, in turn, can learn from **the creative skills of the cultural sector**. This development deserves to be encouraged and monitored.

A social and civil contract with Europe's citizens

Civil society is an intrinsic component of today's democratic, market-driven societies. To prevent infringements of human rights, the balance between the state and the individual needs to be carefully set and the role of major corporations monitored and controlled; the laws and regulations which define these matters are what we mean by a "social contract". Culture can make a major contribution to a tolerant and diverse community, partly through the intrinsic value of creative activity and partly through the establishment and maintenance of a healthy "third sector" of voluntary associations and communities of interest which enable individuals to negotiate with one another and with public authorities.

Cultural policy should foster unity while, at the same time, welcoming diversity. For good or ill, culture is a powerful promoter of identity. By emphasising one set of values against another, culture can be divisive and contribute to conflict rather than social harmony and mutual tolerance. It is essential that the development of the arts and the conservation and exploitation of the

heritage not only assert the commonality of European values, but also reflect the multicultural variousness which is characteristic both of Europe as a whole and of individual nation states. Europe is a culture of cultures, but xenophobia and intolerance are the greatest threats to its stability.

The preconditions for a democratic and united Europe must include freedom to identify with the cultural and linguistic communities of one's choice while respecting the diversity of other cultures. Sadly, cultural rights and freedoms, and the value commitments their implementation presupposes, have remained in the European "realpolitik" for too long as empty words despite the honourable intentions and actions of the Council of Europe and other agencies. While recognising the difficulties some governments have in agreeing standard-setting instruments in the field of cultural rights, the need for a European Declaration on Cultural Rights appears stronger now than ever. Access to culture and the free exercise of cultural rights will not solve, but may mitigate, social divisions and help to strengthen the institutions of civil society.

Other action points

- The **role of language in cultural policy** should be fully recognised at supranational, national and regional levels and action may need to be taken to further encourage high quality translation; to use resources or policies in a way that promotes the creative arts; and to support the teaching of other languages. Governments which have not already done so should seriously consider ratifying and enforcing the **European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages**.
- **Municipal authorities** should incorporate the arts, media and the heritage in their programmes of town planning, transport, the environment, and economic, social and tourism development and involve artists in decision-making processes from the earliest possible stage. We would like to see “model creative cities” or “cities of culture” appointed in different countries in which such initiatives are piloted and to test integrated policies that derive from a cultural perspective on city development.
- An environment that is cared for and respected is often a **secure environment**. Yet the role of the arts in this respect is hardly acknowledged in Europe today.

The feasibility of obtaining financial contributions towards the cost of model projects from domestic security budgets should be actively explored.

- In a few countries organisations have been established which seek to influence and encourage potential decision-makers in mid-career outside the cultural sector, through seminars and debates, to recognise the role of culture as **a cohesive force in society**. These are worthy of emulation, and it is suggested that the Council of Europe monitor such initiatives and promote them to national governments.
- **Voluntary associations and foundations** have an important role to play as intermediaries between government and the cultural sector. Government encouragement of their development – through fiscal means and subsidy – would help to foster a thriving civil society and would be an acknowledgement that the voluntary sector can sometimes be a more appropriate vector for cultural action than governments themselves.
- Policies in **rural areas** should integrate plans for ecological conservation with those for the arts and heritage and the arts should be used to help revive an interest in the countryside. Artists and craftspeople have a cultural, social and economic contribution to make and

should be encouraged through support mechanisms (such as money from European Union Structural Funds) to live and work in the countryside.

Culture to mobilise human resources

Europe's most valuable resource is its human capital. In many ways, this is not being exploited to its full – a failure which can be as damaging to economic prosperity as it is to the life of the imagination and the pursuit of happiness. Cultural policy needs to be carefully targeted, reviewing the relation between demand and supply and being sensitive to changing demographic realities. The report cites measures to address the problem of exclusion, to invest in human capital and to implement the cultural rights of a variety of marginalised groups – among them, elderly people, disabled people, those in closed institutions and those excluded by poverty. Cultural minorities, whether indigenous or non-European in origin, should be given the opportunity for self-expression and awarded an equality of esteem by mainstream society. The requirements of young people as well as the imperatives of gender equality should also be taken into account. The report suggests that a new social ethic, obliging cultural organisations to adopt inclusive rather than exclusive policies, would help to ensure access to, and participation in, culture for all.

The arts and culture are essential ingredients of the educational curriculum. The current tendency to place more emphasis on equipping students with skills for a competitive jobs market is often being conducted at the expense of pushing the arts into a more marginal position in school curricula. Yet this is to ignore the fact that the arts are important both intrinsically and for their contribution in motivating young people, deepening their understanding, creativity and interpersonal skills, as well as preparing them for adult life. A more holistic approach to education is needed by transforming schools into culture-centred environments and enabling them to become focuses of cultural life in their local communities. This will necessitate a fundamental re-appraisal of teacher training policies.

Other action points

- Cultural policies will need to reflect the fact that not all elderly people want to be passive consumers and that they have much to give back to society if given the chance.
- Cultural policies should aim to ensure **equality of cultural opportunity**; this means opening up mainstream artforms and institutions to non-European artists and audiences and also making sufficient funds available to allow them to establish and manage their own institutions and so celebrate and share their cultural forms on their own terms.
- Further progress in re-affirming **the position of indigenous peoples** is being undermined, and established mechanisms – conventions, legislation, methods of representation and appeal – are being severely tested. Although there have been studies and reviews of such mechanisms in the past, the authorities should re-examine their operation under these new pressures, identify and monitor conflicts.
- Links should be forged between policy makers in the cultural sector on the one hand, and development aid

agencies and the social welfare sectors on the other, to provide access to cultural experiences as confidence-building measures for the growing number of people in Europe marginalised by **poverty**.

- Inclusive cultural policies should reflect the need for **disabled people** to have access to the arts, whether as consumers or practitioners.
- Governments should consider promoting and supporting networks for **the arts in hospitals** and hospices.
- **Closed institutions** should be encouraged to incorporate access to culture and the arts in their regimes and prison authorities might usefully consider appointing individuals with responsibility for developing and monitoring art work in correctional establishments.
- In common with other minorities which face discrimination, lesbians and gays wish to celebrate the right to the free expression of their sexuality through culture and inclusive policies should acknowledge this.
- The arts should be an element in the social integration of unemployed people – for example, in retraining schemes.
- Policy makers have found it difficult to **attract young people** to traditional arts facilities. Some of the more

successful initiatives have been those which reach young people “where they are”. We commend any innovative ways of engaging with young people; one possible example, is the idea of “drop-in” arts opportunity shops where young people can learn more about how to confront the arts.

- Public authorities should seek to make facilities available for creation and performance which would enable young people to pursue their own cultural interests.
- Cultural institutions in receipt of public funds should be required to adopt appropriate development programmes aimed at ensuring the **greater involvement of women**, whether as artists and cultural producers or as managers.
- Governments should undertake fundamental reviews of current education policies and practices, including strengthening the place of the arts in teacher training.
- In states where military service for young adults is compulsory, there should be an option to undertake volunteerism or community work with a strong cultural component; similar arrangements could be on offer in other countries where there is no conscription.

The drive for creative employment

High levels of unemployment are leading public authorities across Europe to devise new, strategic policies. The cultural sector cannot stand apart from these developments, because its importance as a factor in social life is growing and, from an economic point of view, culture is a potential niche market for jobs.

The cultural industries are important generators of employment and, in recent years, the number of small and often under-capitalised enterprises (SMEs), both creative and technological, has mushroomed, especially in the audiovisual and music industries. We have been impressed by the growth of "cultural quarters" in cities, as identified, for example, in the Council of Europe's Culture and Neighbourhoods project. There is a role for local and regional authorities, within a national framework, to establish development strategies for cultural industries that build alliances between business and culture to their mutual benefit.

These strategies should promote productive relationships between the cultural and corporate sectors and the cross fertilisation of skills and resources, in particular the strengthening of business acumen, the promo-

tion of export marketing opportunities and integration of the arts and cultural industries more closely with trade and business development. Practical measures should be adopted, such as the use for cultural purposes of redundant or empty premises. It is especially important to preserve and transform traditional businesses (bookshops, record shops, independent cinemas etc.) whose disappearance impoverishes cities, as well as stimulating the development of new ones (e.g. recording studios, crafts and design workshops, multimedia etc.), which create employment for young cultural workers. Care should be taken to shield artists and cultural workers from the worst effects of the escalation of property prices that generally follows the creation of cultural industry quarters.

Other action points

- There is a case for research into the feasibility of establishing a Europe-wide market for the products of small and medium-size cultural industries.
- The European Union should explore the feasibility of levying a **special tax** on telecommunications profits which could be reinvested in Europe's audiovisual products and developments. It could also look at ways in which the Structural Funds budget could give greater priority to the development of the cultural industries.
- One of the biggest challenges facing Europe in general, and smaller countries in particular, comes from **economic and cultural globalisation** and the increasing domination of cultural production by global corporations. Governments, especially those of European Union countries, would do well to avoid creating a "Fortress Europe" mentality as a reaction, but it is logical to seek measures, sometimes short term, to ensure that there is a "level playing field" of opportunity for European cultural producers.
- Strategic relationships between government departments responsible for employment and cultural affairs

are essential if the full potential of cultural jobs creation is to be realised, especially in the audiovisual industries.

- Governments should consider establishing specific cultural employment strategies.
- State unemployment budgets should accommodate new policy approaches which take the specific needs of artists into account.

The communication society: creativity in a new creative age

The new technologies are multiplying opportunities for creative expression and blurring the boundaries between the professional and the amateur, and between participation and consumption. The arts, broadly defined to include mass popular culture and the entertainment industries, take up a growing share of economic production. It is time to restore the natural links between the arts and sciences, which were broken in the 18th and 19th centuries. Centres of technological innovation would help to heal the long-standing schism in the industrial world between the so-called "two cultures".

However, there is a danger that a dominant class will emerge, well equipped and at ease with the new technologies, but consigning all those restricted by poverty and lack of training to the role of passive consumers, rather than full and active members of the communication society. This can only be avoided by a substantial technological investment in formal education and the availability throughout adult life of retraining opportunities.

Other action points

- As a complement to the Council of Europe's pilot programme, *Culture, Communication and New Technologies*, there should be a survey of selected artistic fields (e.g. theatre, visual arts, photography, contemporary music, modern dance) with a view to identifying European "**islands of innovation**" (i.e. institutions for advanced research or experiment) analogous to those in the field of scientific research, technology and development.
- A survey should be conducted, supported by the international agencies and followed by systematic monitoring, of the extent to which European artists use the new technologies and on-line nets and of any special needs there may be for investment, training, information systems or archive links. Many artists in mid-career would benefit from an **introduction to the new technologies** and the chance to work creatively with them and training opportunities should be made available.
- Education in the uses of the new media is not only a vital task to combat the emergence of a permanently excluded information underclass, but is also a precondition

tion for creating a generation of **critical and sophisticated consumers**. Governments should seek to make the new technologies available to all through education and vocational training.

- The competent administrative bodies should continue the process of legal harmonisation of intellectual rights and the establishment of internationally agreed conventions which set out clearly the principles of international transmission and distribution; simplify administrative procedures by increasing the role of representative collection societies while at the same time ensuring their responsible management and transparency; and install the technical means to identify those who have rights in works and to control their use. Furthermore, where they have not done so, national governments should explore with collecting societies imaginative ways in which a percentage of **rights money could be reinvested** in support of contemporary creation.

- While the new technologies open a window on the world, they also offer the potential to re-energise cultural production and consumption **at the local level**. Cultural policies need to be devised to facilitate this process and reinforce a sense of place to counter **centralising tendencies**.

Bridging the global gap

The political changes in Central and Eastern Europe, the impulse of the Single Market, the communications revolution and a healthy curiosity in cultures beyond Europe have combined to transform the dynamics of international cultural exchange. The intellectual frame of reference for many artists dispensed with frontiers many years ago, of course, yet barriers remain: the international policies of governments, lack of resources, insufficient acknowledgement of the benefits of networking and transnational funding programmes impede rather than promote exchange.

The dynamics of international cultural interaction and co-operation are undergoing fundamental change. Joint explorations and co-productions produce tangible economic benefits including cost-sharing and access to new international markets, and these complement sound artistic justifications: the exchange of creative ideas, the stimulation of creative growth and professional development, the enriching of audience experience and greater programme variety at venues and festivals. These kinds of cultural exchange are occurring patchily across the continent with the concomitant danger of a two-speed Europe emerging in the arts.

Moreover, it is doubtful whether cultural policies in most European countries recognise this sea-change in international practice. The international cultural policies of most governments in Europe remain inextricably linked to cultural diplomacy, more appropriate to a different age and political climate. If real mobility of arts practitioners is to be achieved, we believe governments will need to re-examine their international cultural policies to reflect more adequately contemporary arts practice and the new political environment in Europe. The Council of Europe could promote a conference or seminar at which these issues could be debated.

Other action points

- If there is one thing the inter-governmental and supranational agencies could do more than anything else to further the cause of international cultural co-operation, it would be to develop strategic support mechanisms that would facilitate contact between artists, administrators, curators etc.
- The funding programmes of the supra-national and intergovernmental agencies in Europe should be re-oriented from one-off projects towards schemes which promote the establishment of more permanent cultural relationships between arts organisations in Europe and which are based on clear and appropriate criteria.
- Cultural globalisation is accompanied by a clearly identifiable resurgence of interest in local cultures. This is leading to what is commonly referred to in Europe and beyond as a “**global-local squeeze**” in which the cultural products and even the policies of nation states are put at risk. We consider research needs to be conducted into the potential implications of the global-local squeeze and suggest this be initiated with the support of the intergovernmental and supranational agencies.

European cultural cohesion

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, in their Resolution 95 (38), stressed three strategic goals for cultural support at inter-governmental level: fostering democratic values and human rights, building confidence and mutual respect; and promoting awareness of the cultural community of the new Europe and its diversity. These are the prerequisites for cultural cohesion in Europe today and tomorrow. Of course, cohesion means something more than co-operation, although the latter is an essential ingredient of the former. It also means solidarity in a Europe that appears to be ending the century much as it began it: in turmoil. It is sometimes feared that closer European contact may threaten national cultural autonomy, but this is by no means necessarily the case. Indeed global media developments are far more likely to have an impact on national and regional cultural specificity. It is perfectly possible, and indeed desirable, to find solutions to what are perceived as European problems without limiting or infringing the principles of subsidiarity and the specificities of national and regional cultures.

Article 128 of the Treaty of Maastricht, which legitimises European Union action in the cultural sector, has aroused a great deal of interest. However, although it promises much, on present experience it is delivering very little. Clause 3, which encourages co-operation between the European Union and other international organisations such as the Council of Europe, makes all the right gestures, but the premises and means of co-operation have never been adequately defined. Clause 4 – arguably the most important part of the article in that it requires the Community to take account of the cultural impact of its actions – has not been put to the test at the time of our research.

However, we welcome the publication of the *First Report on the Consideration of Cultural Aspects of European Community Action (COM(96) 160 final)*, the long awaited draft European Commission Communication on the ways in which Community policies and texts have taken account of culture, as a useful attempt to marshal existing information and chart European Court of Justice decisions. The report's acknowledgement that a great majority of the policies and actions implemented by the Community now include a cultural dimension or have an impact on culture is important. That said, it is no more than a first step and only deals in a tangential way with the question of mechanisms to

ensure compliance with the principle of Clause 4. This needs to be addressed at the next stage. Moreover, we note that “new” programme areas have encountered difficulty in achieving consensus within the EU Council of Ministers. Indeed, it seems to us that the spirit of the article’s provisions has not been realised in practice. One of the reasons for this is the requirement for unanimity in voting, which acts as a brake on the article’s potential. We realise that some governments would have difficulty in agreeing to any relaxation of this requirement, not least on grounds of subsidiarity, but consider that unless this is changed, there is a danger that the article will remain largely ineffectual.

Other action points

- The **absence** of reliable, comparable and comprehensive **statistics and indicators** has been the greatest single obstacle in the preparation of *In from the margins*. Consequently, the Task Force feels the need to accelerate the process of creating a coherent framework and operating system for European cultural statistics.
- A new ethical approach to **Europe's heritage** is called for, which balances an obligation to protect and conserve it while recognising the social and economic benefits that may accrue from careful exploitation.
- The European Union and Council of Europe jointly – with support from the private sector and foundations – could explore the feasibility of financing the production and distribution of a series of **CD-ROMs on culture and development for schools** throughout Europe. The subjects covered could include culture and identity, culture and human rights, a multicultural/multifaith Europe, culture and the environment, Europe's cultural heritage, and the role of the artist in Europe today. Major European creators could be involved in the production process.

- Building on experience in several countries of the Open University model, the Council of Europe and the European Union should explore the feasibility of establishing a **Europe-wide further education system for people of all ages**, using the opportunities offered by the new technologies. A further possibility would be to introduce the museums and archives of Europe into this network.
- Shortage of resources in Central and Eastern Europe and the scale of the conservation challenge in Western Europe is almost beyond the capacity of national governments to handle. One way forward would be the **creation of a European Heritage Bank**, devoted to financing capital investments and providing loans – where possible in association with commerce and industry.
- Although non-governmental organisations, campaigning movements and grass roots associations often share common or related objectives, there is little cooperation among them. Individually they are less effective than if they worked together. A gathering of such groups to discuss the possibility of joint action and other kinds of collaboration, focusing on the role of the arts and culture in the development of European and global civil society, on cultural rights and on cultural

ecology, should be organised under the auspices of the Council of Europe.

- Enhancing solidarity and co-ordination of cultural action at grass roots level is a necessary condition for the construction of a new cultural organisational infrastructure and the fostering of civil society in the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe. The real problems and their cures can be addressed only by enhancing **systematic interaction** – through improved cultural co-operation between regions and municipalities, networking of experts, artistic exchange, promoting new ideas and talents and a concerted effort on the part of all citizens' organisations **for the joint defence of the cultural environment.**
- Artists and cultural workers should lend their support in any way they can to the Council of Europe, the United Nations, Unesco, the European Union and aid agencies to recreate a multicultural environment in **the former Yugoslavia.** Civil engineers and construction workers can rebuild bridges, hospitals, schools and homes; perhaps only artists can rebuild minds.

Follow up: the case for action

In from the margins is addressed to the Council of Europe and the Culture Committee of the Council for Cultural Co-operation. It is a stand-alone document on the situation as the Task Force sees it in Europe and, at the same time, a continuation of a wider debate at a world level that culminated in the World Commission's report, *Our creative diversity*. Therefore, it seems logical that some attempt be made to co-ordinate the follow-up of the two reports in Europe. It is hoped this can be taken on board in joint discussions between the Council of Europe and Unesco – as well as the United Nations, which also has a stake in the World Commission Report. The European Union, which has supported the work of this report, must be involved too, not least because it is in line with the spirit of international co-operation expressed in Article 128 of the Maastricht treaty.

In from the margins is the first sectoral report covering the entire continent on which the Council of Europe has engaged. It provides one of the first opportunities for the Council to reflect on the importance it attaches to culture since the signing of the European Cultural Convention in 1954. More than that, it offers an op-

portunity to look at culture in the context of other development areas with which the organisation is concerned. Such an opportunity may not arise again for years.

The Council of Europe is uniquely placed, within the framework of the Council for Cultural Co-operation, to develop programmes where policy ideas can be tested. Naturally, the extent to which it wishes to pursue some of the suggestions in this report will depend on political consensus and the resources at its disposal. It is hoped that the Council of Europe will also wish to give a lead to national governments to consider, as we argue, placing greater weight on the cultural dimension of their own work. The process of consultation has begun in several member states. It is hoped that it will be accelerated and involve full and open discussions with the cultural constituency and beyond. A summary of member state responses to *In from the margins* would give a useful basis for further action both at national and international levels and indicate the extent to which the Task Force has correctly interpreted the complex European situation.

The World Commission Report proposes (action 10) that the follow-up should culminate in a World Summit at which Heads of State agree a Cultural Development Agenda, on the same lines as Agenda 21 for the Envi-

European cultural cohesion

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