



ifa-Edition Culture and Foreign Policy

European external cultural relations— Expectations from the outside

Conference Report

Brussels, 12 December 2012

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EUROPEAN EXTERNAL CULTURAL RELATIONS— EXPECTATIONS FROM THE OUTSIDE

How are European external cultural relations perceived in countries outside of Europe?



What is expected of European external cultural relations in countries outside of Europe?



What aspects influence the perceptions and expectations?



On 12 December 2012 around 80 experts from the fields of European cultural affairs and (European) external cultural relations, including representatives of cultural institutions and members of academia, met at the conference “**European external cultural relations: Expectations from the outside**” in order to discuss the perceptions and expectations for European external cultural relations from the outside, in particular in countries in Asia and Africa, since many European cultural co-operation projects focus on those regions.

The conference was divided into three panels. In the first panel, university academics and professionals talked about **perceptions** of European external cultural relations in countries in Asia and Africa. The focus of the second panel, made up of professionals and public intellectuals, was on the **expectations** that countries in Asia and Africa have for European external cultural relations. Finally, in the concluding panel, Heads of the European Union National Institutes for Culture (EUNIC), along with a representative from the European External Action Service (EEAS) and a representative from the European Cultural Foundation, **commented** directly on the findings of the conference.

The following key questions were discussed at the conference: How are European external cultural relations perceived in countries outside of Europe? What is expected of European external cultural relations in countries outside of Europe? What aspects influence the perceptions and expectations? How can EUNIC and other European institutions best use the findings of the conference in their ongoing work in the area of European external cultural relations?

The conference was organised by the Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations (ifa) and forms the basis for the EUNIC-Yearbook to be published in 2013.

Having organised two conferences that focused on the European perspective, *Europe’s Foreign Cultural relations (2010)* and *Conflict resolution through cultural and civil society initiatives? Setting the framework right (2011)*, at this conference ifa sought to gain insight into views and expectations from outside. As ifa Secretary General Ronald Grätz pointed out in his welcoming remarks, although a lot of research has been conducted on how Europeans view the EU, little is known about how the EU is viewed outside of Europe, especially in the area of culture. Delphine Borione, the current EUNIC President, further contextualised the conference topic by illustrating the great complexity of European external cultural relations. Since the EU does not have dedicated instruments for European external relations, she added, EUNIC can come into play as a tool to improve and develop European external cultural relations. More than half of the existing EUNIC clusters work outside of Europe, and the number is growing. EUNIC clusters position themselves as European foreign cultural policy actors in third countries by cooperating as a union of European cultural institutes with local cultural actors in common cultural projects.

Perceptions

Why do perceptions matter?

Perceptions of European external cultural relations are not easily defined and studied, because they depend on and are influenced by a variety of aspects that are very subjective, as Katelijjn Verstraete explained. Verstraete is the regional director for East Asia Arts & Creative Industries at the British Council, and until recently worked for the Asia-Europe Foundation. According to Nannette Abrahams, a PhD student in the Human Geography Department at Goethe University in Frankfurt, external perceptions should not be defined as a medium for transcending euro-centrism but as a means to enable critical self-reflection. Thus, as Natalia Chaban, a Jean Monnet Chair in European Identity and Culture, and Deputy Director of the National Centre for Research on Europe at the University of Canterbury, New Zealand, put it: perception studies of the EU are very valuable because by paying attention to how it is perceived, the self (EU) learns something not only about itself, but also about the other (Asia-Pacific), which creates understanding. Even though the EU does not necessarily need to change anything as a result of learning about how it is perceived and what is important to the other, if it wants to have a stronger presence on the global stage, the key is to be open to listening in the dialogue that is created.

What is shaping perceptions?

Natalia Chaban has been studying external perceptions of the EU for the last ten years. In her keynote address, she presented the results of two surveys conducted in ten Asia-Pacific countries. She showed that first and foremost, people outside of Europe perceive the EU as a unit. In addition, perceptions of people in those countries are focused on the economy and politics, and in regard to Europe, culture holds only peripheral significance. One reason for this is that when it comes to culture, other countries, such as the USA and South Korea, are more present in the respective countries.

In Senegal, perceptions are shaped by the impact of EU politics on personal experiences. Using the Senegalese Hip-Hop milieu as an example, Nannette Abrahams showed that the EU and its member states are seen very critically, particularly because of their cooperation with African leaders who are considered to be more concerned with their personal interests than the welfare of their citizens. In addition, when one analyses rap songs and interviews with members of the Senegalese Hip-Hop milieu, one finds a constantly recurring topic: the double standard inherent in Europe's promotion of itself as a global power that promotes human rights while it simultaneously pursues neo-colonial interests and violates the human rights of illegal immigrants. While these are aspects over which the EU has control, Natalia Chaban pointed out that sometimes (negative) perceptions of, or a lack of interest in the EU are shaped by factors over which the EU itself has only little control. In the case of New Zealand, for example, perceptions are influenced by both history and a prime minister who happens to favour China over other countries.





How are European external cultural relations in practice perceived?

In June, 2012, EUNIC Philippines organised the *Focus on European Contemporary Dance Project* together with Philippine partners. The project, which was comprised of workshops, performances, film screenings and art talks, took place in June 2012. The response of the participants in the *Focus on European Contemporary Dance Project* was very positive. Myra Beltran, one of the Philippine organisers of the Focus on European Contemporary Dance project, explained that although it is very beautiful, European contemporary dance is still very alien to Philippine dancers and audiences. However in the intimate setting of the workshops, she added, they were able to get to know the people and the processes, making the knowledge transfer one of the most important aspects of the cooperation. She emphasised that the organisation of the project was facilitated by the fact that the Philippine side did not have to deal with several different contact institutions, but rather, had one counterpart; EUNIC and the cultural institutes within EUNIC took care of matters such as local visibility and billing. This meant that Myra Beltran was able to concentrate on the artistic side of the project, which is her area of expertise. Among the weaknesses of the project that Myra Beltran mentioned were the lack of time and the overlapping schedule, which made it impossible to participate in all events of the Focus on European Contemporary Dance project.

In Tehran, according to Azita Ebadi, an art and cultural manager from Tehran, and head of the international section of the magazine *Art Tomorrow*, people working in the art and cultural sector view European external cultural relations as being very passive. They expect the EU to recognize Iranian art and culture without politicisation, she

said, and to facilitate spaces in which new strategies can be developed. European external cultural relations actions in Iran are first and foremost represented by the Austrian Cultural Forum, which is the last European cultural institute left in Tehran that is working in the field of culture. The others—the Goethe-Institut and the British Council—focus on language learning rather than on culture. This makes it difficult at present to even come into contact with European external cultural-relation actions.

What needs to be done?

Since only very few studies on the perception of European external cultural relations have been conducted, Katerijn Verstraete sees a potential for EUNIC to initiate studies in the area. She also called attention to the need to consider culture in relationship to other areas, such as tourism and education. She noted that 40% of tourism to Europe is cultural tourism, and 40% of the students at the University of the Arts in London are from Asia. Verstraete raised the question as to whether Europe is taking this interest seriously, and is prepared to deal with it. In conclusion, she emphasised the importance of Europe's being a thought leader. Europe, Verstraete said, needs to "propose intellectual discussions in which thought leadership in the cultural sector is put forward." For people working in politically isolated countries, like Azita Ebadi, opportunities such as the ARThinkSouthAsia training programme, an initiative by the Goethe-Institut and the British Council (as of 2013) that provides training for cultural managers in South East Asia, are very valuable because they allow cultural managers to create places outside of the country.

Expectations

“Do your homework”

Anmol Vellani, the founder and executive director of the India Foundation for the Arts (IFA) illustrated his expectations by telling about a particular experience he had when three European cultural institutions asked the IFA to collaborate. He was initially surprised to be approached by these institutions, and then he learned that the EU had made available some funding for collaboration in India, and the European institutions needed to quickly find an Indian partner. The European cultural institutions had already decided on the projects, and apparently they had not researched IFA very well, since none of the proposals matched IFA's mandate. This left IFA feeling used. Georgina Thomson, the Director of the Dance Forum in Johannesburg and the Artistic Director of the Dance Umbrella Festival in Johannesburg, had a similar experience. She recalled a situation in which a group of about 25 European arts administrators were looking for partners at a dance festival that she had organised. There was never any real conversation about what both sides expected from the cooperation, Thomson said, and that prevented the creation of fruitful relationships. Thus in the end, none of the projects were actually organised, mainly due to the lack of a clear idea or concept for the partnership. In conclusion, Thomson stressed how important it is for both sides to communicate the reasons for a cooperation and what they expect to get out of it, so that art is not relegated to being only a second-hand instrument of development.

According to Anmol Vellani, the lesson that can be drawn from this is that European cultural institutions need to educate themselves about the context they are going into before engaging in cultural relations with countries like India. Also, the artists who are invited by European cultural institutions to third countries should get a thorough orientation on the context that they will be entering. If potential European cooperation partners educate themselves before initiating partnerships, said Farai Mpfunya, the founding and executive Director of the Culture Fund of Zimbabwe Trust, they could avoid situations in which potential European partners wonder about the administrative abilities of African partners, instead of focusing on the actual issue—the cultural exchange.

Long-term cooperation

According to Anmol Vellani, artistic collaborations and partnerships that are mutually culturally rewarding need to be supported in a phased manner, so that the participants can get to know each other during the processes of researching, meeting and sharing expectations. At the same time, Georgina Thomson stressed the importance of having long-term relationships with European partners to really build and foster cooperation. To illustrate a good example for successful and long-term cultural relations, Farai Mpfunya described the cooperation with the *Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)*. When multilateral relations between Europe and Zimbabwe were cut, the Swedish government, through SIDA, continued to cooperate, and met Zimbabwean expectations by investing in long-term support. As a result of the long term support, SIDA could help to create the Zimbabwean Culture Fund to raise funds primarily





from Zimbabweans. This cooperation emerged because Zimbabweans had demonstrated to SIDA that strong institutions in the cultural sector were lacking, and thus long-term institutional support was necessary. Another advantage of this concept is that the Swedish funds are completely managed by the Culture Fund of Zimbabwe Trust, which is managed and administered entirely by Zimbabweans. This enables the Zimbabweans themselves to determine their priorities for development in the arts and culture.

Less Bureaucracy

One of the most important changes that must take place in order to ensure more successful European external cultural relations is, according to Jean Pierre Deru, Director of the Association Marcel Hicter, a decrease in bureaucracy. Farai Mpfunya agreed that if bureaucracy restricts engagement with Europe, or makes it more difficult to connect with people on a personal level, there is too much of it. Another problem he saw with European bureaucracy is that it can be insensitive to the people and processes on other continents, and thus it may complicate the process of cooperation. One example that was mentioned in this connection was the difficulty many citizens from third countries have in getting approved for a visa to travel to Europe. Anmol Vellani, for instance, has experienced that Indian artists who had planned to travel to Europe were unable to do so because they lacked the necessary financial resources needed to get a visa.

Another area where the difficulties with EU bureaucracy have become very obvious concerns applications by cultural institutions from countries outside of Europe for EU funding. For example,

although South Africans have been able to apply for EU funds for about 15 years, funding for the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP) can only be granted for projects taking place outside of South Africa. In addition, it is often difficult to understand who is eligible for funding, and how the funding process works.

Listen and be equal partners

Right in the first panel, Natalia Chaban emphasised the importance for Europe of speaking with and not at the other side, as well as listening intently to the other side. The call for partnerships with European partners in the area of culture that are based on equality was a common theme during the second panel. Many examples depicted European cultural institutes presenting a project to a potential partner without listening to or taking in the ideas, concerns and expectations of the other side. On a more positive note, Georgina Thomson explained how the cooperation with European cultural institutes in the area of dance in South Africa has evolved over the years. In the beginning, it was the European cultural institutes that proposed which dance companies to bring to South Africa. Yet since these companies held only little interest for the South African dance community and audiences, the Dance Forum was able to convince the institutes to bring different dance companies that are of greater interest to South Africans. Thus, a cooperation that began solely as a promotion of European dance companies became a partnership.

According to Anmol Vellani, European cultural institutions should not just aim at transferring knowledge and expertise, and rather than providing solutions, they should share experiences and

leave it up to the partners to decide what they find meaningful for their work environment.

Commenting on the question of the importance of skills, Georgina Thomson said that skills are very important, but how they are taught is equally important. Telling people what to do is, according to her, not helpful. Instead, for example, young South African art administrators should be given the opportunity to attend European universities, which would give them access to a variety of perspectives. Anmol Vellani stressed that for him, what is more important than skills are training opportunities for people from different continents to work together, for example, by co-curating. That way they have to begin to understand each other's perceptions and prejudices, which then can lead to cultural communication and understanding, instead of one partner's telling the other how things are done. When asked what European institutions should do differently, Farai Mpfunya asked for more inclusion in the decision-making process for cooperation projects. He added that there should also be more respect for self-determination—as, for example, in the case of Zimbabweans, because they know the social context and the priorities of their culture best.

Reflection

Comments on the findings of the conference by European (cultural) institutions

For Pál Hatos, the EUNIC Head representing the Balassi Institute, it is still not always clear what Europe actually wants to achieve in the area of external cultural relations. This might be one reason why, although the European External Action Service (EEAS) has not been idle in the area of culture, a lot more can be done in the area of European external cultural relations, according to Séamus Gillespie, Acting Director for South and South-East Asia, EEAS. Thus, there is a lot of potential for EUNIC, as well as for various other players that play a role within the area of culture in Europe, said Isabelle Schwarz, Head of Programmes and Advocacy at the European Cultural Foundation. She and the various EUNIC representatives agreed that first and foremost, two aspects will have to be incorporated into the next steps: more dialogue in partnerships, and the establishment of a framework of standards and codes of conduct designed to ensure successful European external cultural relations. According to Katharina von Ruckteschell-Katte, President of EUNIC sub-Saharan Africa, the European cultural institutes have to revisit the fact that when they approach a local partner, they have often already decided what to do, and have brought their own agenda, without taking the prospective partner's thoughts and expectations into consideration. This re-thinking can be accomplished if the European cultural institutes put the showcasing of national ideas, or what Europe is about, into second place, and focus instead on actually working together



in cultural fields in a sustainable way. For Isabelle Schwarz, co-creation and co-curation were the key ideas of the conference, and she stressed that new forms of engagement require of the partner organisations sensitivities and insights very different from those of the past.

In regard to setting new standards, Andrew Murray, of the British Council Brussels, said that EUNIC should take two things from the conference: First, it should set standards in terms of quality concerning successful cultural relations. Second, the many examples offered by the speakers of what not to do in a partnership could lead to the development by EUNIC of a code of conduct that shows how to build good partnerships in intercultural relations. In order to develop support materials for successful cultural relations, based on examples from concrete cases that people could actually relate to, Isabelle Schwarz proposed the organisation of meetings between representatives from the EU Delegation, from the missions, and from EUNIC clusters and other groups in third countries to discuss European external cultural relations with various players on site.

Conclusion

Based on the final comment by Charles-Etienne Lagasse, the EUNIC Head representing Wallonie-Bruxelles International and the designated EUNIC President, several findings and conclusions may be reached concerning the ways in which Europe in general and EUNIC in particular can and should make use of the results of the conference. Since the surveys showed that overall, the EU is perceived positively, Europeans need to be more confident to

be seen not only positively but as an important global player. Thus the EU needs to build up European foreign policy, including soft power instruments, because building cultural attraction is the key to many other benefits. However, as culture is thus far not a real European competency in the field of external cultural policy outside Europe, EUNIC is a suitable responsible organisation, and could be the arms-length tool for a European external cultural foreign policy. In the work of EUNIC, one focus should be on the promotion of creativity in order for the organisation to avoid being seen only in connection to its cultural heritage. In general, instead of taking the role of a teacher, EUNIC needs to continue to focus on dialogue, so that it is not seen as arrogant or paternalistic. In politically problematic countries, EUNIC needs to learn from institutions that are already engaged in successful projects. Furthermore, Europe needs to highlight its specificity in regard to liberty, equality and secularism more than in the past, and should not be afraid of taking independent European positions in world politics. That is to say, Europe must practice what it preaches in order to be taken seriously. To attract a younger audience, EUNIC needs to make more use of social media. As Europe has been criticised for working only with local elites in Africa, it must continue to target its actions towards broader civil society. Finally, it is important for EUNIC and for the EU Delegations to show that with culture, they are able to foster social and economic development, but they need to do so in egalitarian partnerships that are characterised by an open exchange of ideas, experiences and competencies.



CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

‘Europe from outside’ Conference

European external cultural relations: Expectations from the outside

Time:

12 December 2012, 12.30 pm–5.30 pm

Place:

State Representation Baden-Württemberg to EU,
rue Belliard 60-62, 1040 Brussels

Organisation:

The Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations (ifa)

Whereas a lot of research has already been conducted about how Europeans view the EU and what they expect from it, little is known about how the EU is viewed from the outside in general and concerning the area of culture in particular. Yet with the establishment of the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the creation of institutions and networks such as EUNIC this aspect of the external perspective has become more and more important because any European external cultural relation will only be successful if also the addressees are taken into account from the beginning.

Key questions

How are European external cultural relations perceived in countries outside of Europe? What is expected of European external cultural relations in countries outside of Europe? What aspects influence the perceptions and expectations? How can EUNIC and other European institutions best use the findings of the conference in their continuous work with European external cultural relations?

Conference

By inviting experts to discuss the external perspective on European cultural relations, this conference tries to give insight into how European external cultural relations are viewed outside of Europe and what is expected of them.

The aim of the conference is to provide professionals in the area of European external cultural relations (in this case mainly EUNIC) with ideas so that they can further contribute to the enhancement and improvement of European cultural relations with countries outside of Europe especially in regard to the cooperation of European institutions and networks with local partners.

Moderator:

Andrea Thilo

Order of the day

12.30 pm **Registration and Refreshments**

1.00 pm **Welcome remarks**

Johannes Jung, Director of the Representation of the State of Baden-Württemberg to the EU

1.05 pm **Welcome remarks**

Ronald Grätz, Secretary General, ifa and Delphine Borione, President, EUNIC

1.20 pm **Keynote address:**

Dr. Natalia Chaban, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand

Discussion 1: Perceptions

Nannette Abrahams, Goethe-University Frankfurt a. M., Germany

Katelijjn Verstraete, British Council, previously Asia-Europe Foundation, Singapore

Myra Beltran, Dance Forum Space Manila, Philippines

Azita Ebadi, Head of the international section of Art Tomorrow, Tehran, Iran

Key questions:

- How are European external cultural initiatives perceived outside of Europe? How do perceptions differ? What aspects influence the perception?
- When it comes to external cultural relations is Europe perceived as an entity or is the focus of perception on the single member states? If the latter is the case are there certain European countries which especially stand out?
- How are people and institutions outside of Europe participating in actions and activities which can be ascribed to European external cultural relations?

2.45 pm **Coffee break and snacks**

3.05 pm **Keynote address:**

Farai Mpfunya, Executive Director,
Culture Fund of Zimbabwe Trust, Harare,
Zimbabwe

Discussion 2: Expectations

Anmol Vellani, Executive Director, India
Foundation for the Arts, Bangalore, India

Jean Pierre Deru, Association Marcel Hicter
pour la Démocratie culturelle, Belgium

Georgina Thomson, Dance Forum, South Africa

Key questions:

- What do countries outside of Europe expect from European external cultural relations? Do the perceptions and the expectations differ? What aspects are shaping the expectations? What role do historical and political ties (but also common language, religion, etc.) play regarding the expectations?
- What are the expectations when it comes to cooperation with European partners in the cultural sector? Are there different expectations depending on the nature of the institutions?
- In regard to external cultural relations are there different expectations for different European countries? Is Europe also addressed as an entity? Are there different expectations for European external cultural relations depending on the issue (e.g. development, ecology, etc.)?
- How do expectations differ depending on previous cooperative ventures or other forms of cooperation in the partner country?

4.30 pm **Coffee break and snacks**

4.45 pm **Concluding panel:**

Future application of the conference findings

Seamus Gillespie, Acting Director for
South and South-East Asia, European
External Action Service

Dr. Pál Hatos, EUNIC-Head, Balassi Institute

Charles-Etienne Lagasse, EUNIC-Head, Wal-
lonie-Bruxelles International

Dr. Andrew Murray, British Council Brussels

Dr. Katharina von Ruckteschell-Katte, EUNIC- sub-
Saharan Africa, Goethe-Institut South Africa

Isabelle Schwarz, European Cultural
Foundation, the Netherlands

Key questions:

- What do the conference findings mean to your country in regard to the presentation of its external cultural relations in a European context?
- How can today's findings best be implemented in EUNIC's future work with European external cultural relations in practice?

5.30 pm **End**

Speakers

Nannette Abrahams is a PhD student at the Human Geography Department of the Goethe University Frankfurt. She is part of EuroGaps, a research project on the external perceptions of the EU in sub-Saharan Africa and the Black Sea Region. Her research focus lies on the externalisation of European migration policies to Senegal and the way the Senegalese Hip Hop scene imagines human mobility and performs translocal citizenship. She is a founding member and chair of the association Frei[T]räume e.V. which engages in intercultural exchange projects between youth in marginalised urban spaces in Kenya, Senegal and Germany.

Myra Beltran is a contemporary dancer and choreographer. She is the artistic director of the Contemporary Dance Network Manila and the primary initiator and founding director of Wifi Body Festival and the Contemporary Dance Map Series. The Contemporary Dance Network Manila was the major partner for the EUNIC Philippines event Focus on European Contemporary Dance 2012. Myra Beltran received the 2001 Alab ng Haraya (Flame of Inspiration) for Individual Recognition in the performing arts from the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, Philippines and the Tanging Parangal (Highest Honour) from the City of Manila in 2007 in recognition of her work. She was an Asian Cultural Council Grantee for the years 2011-12 and has completed a three-month residency in New York City in 2012.

Delphine Borione is the EUNIC President for the period 2012/13. Since 2009 she has been the Head of the Department for Cultural Policy and French language at the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In her different assignments as a diplomat Delphine Borione worked as Ambassador of France in Kosovo, as Cultural Counsellor in the French

Embassy in Italy and as a specialist in multilateral and global issues (Advisor to the President of the French Republic, in the United Nations Mission for Interim Administration in Kosovo and in the United Nation World Food Program). Delphine Borione is the author of a guide book on Rome and has published several papers on environmental and cultural issues.

Dr. Natalia Chaban is a Jean Monnet Chair in European Identity and Culture and Deputy Director of the National Centre for Research on Europe at the University of Canterbury, New Zealand. She became a Member of NZ EU Centers Network Executive Board in 2006 and has been a co-editor of the peer-reviewed *Australian and New Zealand Journal of European Studies* since its inception in 2009. Since 2002, she has led a comparative transnational project on EU external perceptions comprising a multicultural team from 20 Asia-Pacific EU locations. She is the co-leader of the ‘mirror’ perceptions project “Asia in the Eyes of Europe” leading a consortium of researchers from eight EU countries. Among her publications is *The European Union and the Asia-Pacific: Media, Public and Elite Perceptions of the EU*, (2008) Routledge, (co-ed with M. Holland).

Jean Pierre Deru is the Director of the Association Marcel Hicter which organises, among other things, the European Diploma in Cultural Project Management supported by the Council of Europe and UNESCO. He holds a law degree and is a Professor at the Open Faculty of Economic and Social Policies at the University of Louvain in Belgium. He has written on training in transnational cultural co-operation projects and is an expert in several training programmes in Africa such as Africreation (Lomé) and Train the Trainers which took place in Kinshasa, Ouagadougou and Dakar.

Azita Ebadi is an art and cultural manager and head of the international section of *Art Tomorrow*, a bilingual quarterly art magazine published in Tehran. Besides this, she works as a freelance coordinator and curatorial assistant for international exhibitions. From 2004-2008 she worked as a film coordinator for the House of World Cultures in Berlin. She is a member of ArtEngineers and a fellow of the ARThinkSouthAsia training programme (Goethe-Institut 2012). She is presently living in Tehran.

Séamus Gillespie, an Irish national, has headed the Japan/Korea and South-East Asia Divisions in the European Commission External Relations Directorate General and more recently in the European External Action Service since 2000. He has long experience in the fields of EU economic, foreign, trade and development policy. Following Irish government service in the Ministry of Finance he joined the European Commission in 1979. Séamus Gillespie has served in various posts in Brussels, in the EU Delegation in Japan as financial counsellor and was deputy-head of the Russia/Western NIS Division. He is also the EU negotiator for a series of comprehensive new partnership and cooperation agreements with a number of countries in the Japan/Korea and South-East Asia region.

Ronald Grätz is the Secretary General of the Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations (ifa). He worked as Division Director for German language at the UNESCO scheme Colégio Benjamin Constant in São Paulo, of which he was also Deputy Director. In 1993, Ronald Grätz qualified as a reader at the Goethe-Institut in Munich, Cairo and Göttingen and worked as consultant for pedagogic support and as a teacher with the Goethe-Institut in Barcelona (1994-1998). From 2002 to 2005, he was a consultant for New Media and the Director for the local

programme activities in Eastern Europe and Central Asia at the Goethe-Institut in Moscow. Before taking up his role at ifa, he was Director of the Goethe-Institut in Portugal.

Dr. Pál Hatos is the Head of the Balassi Institute since 2010. He has a PhD in History and has twice been visiting professor and the holder of the Hungarian Studies Chair at Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, USA. Besides his scientific activity he has worked as legal adviser at the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Hungary and as Head of Department of the Ministry of Education. He was the Director of the Office of the Hungarian Scholarship Board for five years (2002-2007) and served as the Chancellor of the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design, Budapest from 2006 to 2010.

Charles-Etienne Lagasse has been Inspector General of Wallonie-Bruxelles International (WBI) since 2009. He is a professor of Belgian and European constitutional law and Bases of the Law in ISFSC (Brussels), ICHEC (Brussels) and IHECS (Brussels). His most recent publication on Europe has been *Les institutions européennes après le Traité de Lisbonne*, (2010) Erasme. Prior to working for WBI he was Deputy President of Télé-Brussels. Since 2011 Charles-Etienne Lagasse has been Vice-President of EUNIC and for the period 2013/14 he will be the President of EUNIC.

Farai Mpfunya is the founding and executive Director of the Culture Fund of Zimbabwe Trust, the biggest local funding organisation in Zimbabwe's arts and culture sector. He is a member of the board of the Chair of Harare Mayors Advisory Committee on Arts and Culture, the Art Moves Africa (pan-African mobility fund) and the Young Africa Skills Centre. Farai Mpfunya served on the Arterial Network's

Cultural Policy Task Group that created a framework for enabling African governments in cultural policy making. He has also served in leadership positions in the corporate sector and in a number of cultural NGOs such as the Zimbabwe International Film Festival Trust. Farai Mpfunya is a Chevening Scholar, a fellow of the Salzburg Global Seminar (Session 490) and of the DeVos Institute of Arts Management at the Kennedy Center.

Dr. Andrew Murray is the Director of the Benelux and EU office of the British Council. Before joining the British Council in 1988 he was a lecturer in History at the University of Botswana. He has worked for the British Council in Malawi, Romania and Poland as well as in London focusing on strategy and policy development.

Dr. Katharina von Ruckteschell-Katte is the Director of the Goethe-Institut South Africa in Johannesburg and also head of the region sub-Saharan Africa. She has a PhD in Comparative Literature and has worked as an assistant professor. In 1990 Dr. Katharina von Ruckteschell-Katte started working for the Goethe-Institut where she held posts in Moscow, in Bangkok and at the headquarters in Munich before moving to South Africa in 2008.

Isabelle Schwarz is the Head of Programmes and Advocacy at the European Cultural Foundation (ECF) and is leading ECF's programmes, grants and advocacy with special interest in international cultural cooperation and EU cultural policy development. Prior to working at the ECF she was the Executive Director of the European Network of Cultural Administration Training Centres (ENCATC) and worked as a research assistant for the World Commission on Culture and Development (UN/UNESCO). Furthermore her work experience included the

Council of Europe and the Ministry of Culture of France, as well as various NGOs. Isabelle Schwarz serves on different juries and boards, including the steering committee of the More Europe - Culture in the EU's External Relations initiative.

Andrea Thilo is a journalist, facilitator and documentary film producer. After working with television as a reporter, editor and presenter, she has worked as a film producer and freelance print journalist (mostly for *Die Zeit*) since 1998. In 1999, Andrea Thilo founded the production company Boomtown Media in Berlin together with her partners Thomas Grube and Uwe Dierks. In 2005 the producer trio was awarded the German Film Prize for Rhythm is it!. At the end of 2010 Andrea Thilo left Boomtown Media to further connect and communicate in the field of arts, culture, learning and sustainability.

Georgina Thomson, a trained dancer, is the Director of the Dance Forum in Johannesburg and the Artistic Director of the Dance Umbrella Festival in Johannesburg. Dance Forum is a non-profit organisation which manages dance projects and other events. In 2011 Dance Forum was a partner of the EUNIC South Africa event Crossings #2. Georgina Thomson won the Arts and Culture Trust Award for Arts Administration for the Dance Umbrella in 2001 and in 2007. She has been working in the arts industry as an administrator since 1984 including at the Performing Arts Centre of the Free State in Bloemfontein, South Africa and Vita Promotion and has served on the National Arts Council, South Africa.

Anmol Vellani is the founder and executive director of the India Foundation for the Arts, an independent philanthropic organisation. From 1986 to 1995 he was the Programme Officer in the New Delhi office of The Ford Foundation with responsibility

for grant making in the performing arts, folklore and classical learning in South Asia. He has served in an advisory capacity for government departments, civil society networks, international foundations and cultural organisations. He is currently the regional editor for World CP Asia, an initiative to create national cultural policy profiles for Asian countries. Anmol Vellani studied philosophy at the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge and has directed theatre productions in different languages and locations, both in India and abroad.

Katelijan Verstraete is the Regional Director East Asia Arts & Creative Industries at the British Council. From 2006 to 2012 she worked at the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) where she developed multi-stakeholder programmes between Asia and Europe in the areas of cultural policy, artistic exchange, capacity-building and information exchange. Between 2003 and 2006 Katelijan Verstraete developed the communication, training and Asia activities for the International Network for Contemporary Performing Arts (IETM) in Brussels, as well as managing the On The Move portal for artist mobility. She is the main advisor to and co-author of the *Europe-China Cultural Compass*, an orientation for cultural cooperation between Europe and China published by the EUNIC cluster in China.



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