

ANNEX 5

PORTUGAL

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I The context and the policy and structural shifts

The main lines about Portugal that come out from the desk-research on official documents seem not very far from reality. The “positive attitude to co-operation with other European countries vis-à-vis the rest of the world” is certainly true. The absolute priority is the Portuguese speaking countries (the five sub-Saharan African countries Angola, Mozambique, Cape Verde Islands, São Tomé and Príncipe Islands and Guinea-Bissau, plus Brazil in South America and East Timor in South-East Asia) forming the CPLP and, consequently, a great attention to the teaching of Portuguese language is also quite accurate. “With the language goes the culture” expresses what seems to be (still) one of the main lines of the Portuguese policy, but evolving into broader approaches.

Other aspects of the first research document though are not so connected with reality, like the many cultural agreements that have been signed with countries all over the World but, in fact, are not actioned, or the “special attention to reinforce cultural relations” with countries with whom Portugal has special historical links including Morocco, Japan, China and other Asian countries, with still modest initiatives and results.

Although, as said, the main lines of the first study are true, it’s also a fact that reality is progressing inside the Government itself – not only in terms of policy focus and goals, but also in the crucial aspect of articulation between departments – and that other public and private actors already play an important role and will be key partners in a possible cultural component to EU external policies.

During recent years a significant shift in policy targets has occurred, with (outside the EU) a larger attention to the United States of America, Russia and (only in intentions for now) China – following a closer relationship between the Ministries of Culture and Trade – but also a stronger approach to Brazil inside the Portuguese speaking countries, and a still very timid look at the Mediterranean area.

Another relevant aspect on how things are evolving is the clear concern with the promotion of a contemporary Portugal, European and cosmopolitan, thus deviating from its more traditional, post-colonial image. This motivates many of the actions inside (mostly) and outside the EU, and partially explains the renewed attention towards the United States of America and Brazil.

A structural reform of State departments and ministries was recently announced and will introduce important changes also in the departments responsible for cultural foreign affairs. Among many measures of rationalization of the State, the PRACE (Programme for Reestructuration of the Central Administration of the State) intends to terminate 187 structures of the existing 518. This should happen during 2006, as will a clear definition of the responsibilities of each department.

In the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Instituto Camões (IC) will remain an “operational department” although, as announced, the Ministry of Culture will have a joint responsibility in defining its action in what concerns the external cultural policy.

In the Ministry of Culture, the Office of International Cultural Relations (GRCI) is integrated in another structure, the Office of Planning, Strategy, Evaluation and International Relations (GPEARI), defined as a “support department” with, it seems, mostly advisory functions.

Several departments of the Ministry of Culture develop international contacts or actions by themselves, mostly technical and training support, mainly with the Portuguese speaking countries, but also regions formerly under the dominion of Portugal such as Goa in India and Macao in China, where Portuguese cultural centres have been established in recent years. The Institute of Cinema and the Arts Institute also has relations in different countries, according to specific goals or opportunities.

Recent budget restrictions have introduced some changes in the presence abroad of Cultural Attachés (among several other representatives appointed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), reducing substantially the number of civil servants in some embassies.

It is also worth mentioning that inside the Ministry of Foreign Affairs the action of the Portuguese Institute for Development Support (IPAD) recently made public “A strategic vision for Portuguese co-operation”, where concepts like cultural exchange, cultural diversity and multiculturalism are well integrated with the objectives of fostering sustainable development. Its main geographic focus is, again, on the Portuguese speaking countries of Africa and East Timor in South-East Asia. IPAD is very keen to structure its action around the idea of “clusters” of co-operation, putting together for the same objective different partners from a wide range of sectors including the cultural one. Several cultural initiatives (heritage, performing arts, cinema etc.) have been supported by IPAD.

Because of the importance that private or public (but relatively independent) foundations and cultural institutions have in the external projection of Portugal and Portuguese culture, their activities deserve to be considered also when looking at the general panorama. Above all the Gulbenkian Foundation, but to some extent also the Oriente Foundation and the Luso-American Foundation, dedicate important resources and attention to the international scene outside the EU. In this research the questionnaire used for the interviews with the Presidents of these foundations (and of some other cultural institutions) was mainly the same one as that for civil servants, but with elements of the questionnaire for practitioners.

II About the EU role: added value

All interviewees agreed that the EU could have a positive role – important or very important – in complementing and enlarging goals and horizons on international cultural action. They all also agreed that European culture and European values need to have a much stronger presence and visibility outside the EU. Naturally the vision of how important and how it could be done differs very much, as do concerns about what should be the limits of the EU's role.

In general terms, all departments related to the Ministry of Culture, in consonance with the Minister herself, look at the EU role as very useful and do not fear “absorption” in a more extended EU presence. Phrases like “if its good for the EU its good for Portugal” or “our image is made of quality, having the others at our side doesn't harm us” illustrates the very positive attitude. At the same time, connecting the European “label” to an action of Portugal is seen as an “upgrade” that helps gather good visibility and a positive approach, mainly in the “new markets” where Portugal wants to be present (in cultural terms but not only). This goes along with the concern to promote a contemporary Portugal that works also as a window to “export” contemporary creators and artists.

The importance of the EU is also (and especially) stressed when thinking about sustainability and long-term commitments - two key issues that crossed all sectors of interviewees. These seem to be very important goals – for civil servants as for practitioners – and have been identified as the main fragilities of the Portuguese cultural initiatives. For instance, in relation to the built heritage, where nowadays strategies look at sustainability and long-term commitments

as basic goals, a joint action of the EU in that aspect of the national heritage which can be classed as European is seen as an important step for preservation, but even more for a strategic use in cultural projects and initiatives.

Directly related with long-term commitments is the need for multiplying co-productions (cinema, performing arts etc.) – a domain where EU initiatives may be crucial – involving partners from outside the EU, thus helping to strengthen the cultural structures and industries in those countries and contributing to create permanent relations, complicity and a very positive and dynamic image of the EU.

In the Foreign Affairs departments, where the promotion of language is a stronger concern, the EU role is seen as a potentially positive one – including under some conditions, sharing spaces, costs etc. with other countries – although it seems less obvious how it could be implemented. Also, the lack of infrastructures for cultural activities in many poor or less developed countries is an important concern where a joint EU strategy is seen as very helpful.

For the main Foundations active in the cultural field and with a strong international activity, things can be put the other way around: what could be the added value for the EU of a structured strategy that would be able to profit from their activities? If we take into account, for instance, what the Gulbenkian Foundation has been doing in more than 70 countries over the years, with very significant investments, the places where the Oriente Foundation is active in Asia, the work of the Luso-American Foundation with several United States institutions, or of the Serralves Foundation in some of its international co-productions, it seems that there is here, to some extent, a potential that would be useful if co-ordinated with a possible EU strategy. All seem to agree that the EU could have a very positive role in many different ways: helping to structure the action of foundations and universities, among others, in the cultural field (following a “Europe in the World” example), helping to disseminate information etc. and helping to create and disseminate a clear view of “European values”.

The central role of the EU in promoting partnerships and networks, in opening “windows” that allow easy contacts and promote creativity, was also seen as a zone where the added value can be very strong. In this respect there is a total coincidence with practitioners’ views.

In fact, for several practitioners, what comes out after all the experience of many years of intra-EU programmes, is the importance of networks, of permanent relations, of building together, of giving and receiving, of allowing people to contact and know each other, of fostering synergies, of allowing the space and the time for emotions. This implies that the EU must be mostly a facilitator and that those involved in this international dialogue tend to build long-term commitments. Also that great importance should be given to build outside the EU solid, sustainable structures and critical mass. Enlarging (and simplifying dramatically) some of the actual programmes to partners outside of the EU, has been mentioned as an easy step forward. For several interviewees (not only practitioners) an “Erasmus for Culture” comes out as a good example of an efficient way to approach people, build synergies and sow the seeds of good projects.

Another key issue where the EU’s added role was very clearly stressed deserves mentioning: the importance of bringing into the EU the cultures and creators from countries outside the EU, not as ‘exotic’ products in festivals and exhibitions, but with the aim of working together, sharing experiences and knowledge, growing together and building partnerships.

III About the EU role: concerns

As already mentioned concerns about a possible cultural component to EU External Policies are very small. Probably the greatest concern is that it might not happen!

Although at the Ministry of Culture there were no special concerns, at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, on the other hand, while stressing the importance of the visibility of European culture and European values, concerns about further steps came out much more clearly. The need for consensus in any decision, the fear that there might be, in practical terms, a contradiction between the rich diversity of the many cultures of Europe and a joint external cultural policy, and doubts about the legal framework for such a policy were pointed out.

At the civil servants level it worked the other way around: there were more concerns from the cultural side than from foreign affairs. Some pre-conditions for any action were underlined: no hierarchies between the different cultures or motivated by the amount of speakers of each language; no transposition of the EU structure of votes; recognition of an equal contribution of each country.

For the various national institutes, cultural institutions and practitioners the problems are of a different kind: interviewees were mostly concerned with the efficiency of such policies and future programmes, about a more equal access of all countries – not repeating the mistakes of Culture 2000 and other programmes mainly used by the larger and richer countries. Many are suspicious of the Commission as “too bureaucratic” and “not consistent enough” or “shortsighted” in initiatives, both at national and European level.

The need for a different culture in the way programmes are designed, going beyond a logic of subsidies and, instead, helping to build the space for creativity and partnerships, was repeatedly suggested.

It was also stressed that much more should be done inside the EU to have a clearer view of what is and could be its cultural component, and how it could be effective abroad.

IV About the EU role: a broader view

Some interviewees have looked to the theme of this research in a broader approach, going beyond a national perspective into a more European perspective. It seemed worthwhile to take a short note of these broader views, away from considerations of added value and concerns.

“European culture unites much more than divides”: the phrase might be a good starting point to look for what the cultural dimension of EU could be. In a more general approach the statements were as follows:

- “Cultural action is a crucial part of the Foreign and Security policy. Peace and balance have to be achieved with cultural values”;
- “The EU needs to be a strong protagonist...based, above all, in its cultural creativity, in its ability to innovate, and in the capacity to use them as weapons to fight inequalities, finding forms of co-operation that build more equal societies”;
- “The common values of the European civilization – freedom, initiative, creation, etc. – are much beyond the culture products, but express themselves also through art”;
- “This is not the classical subsidiarity. A greater visibility of a Cultural Europe, less limited to each of its Members, would be useful to all Members”;
- “The past, the present and the future of Europe need to achieve a coherent visibility, if it’s true that Europe is above all cultural”;
- “Europeans are leaders in creativity. The European civilizational model is the most avant-garde experience of the 20th century. But we need to prove that it is a visionary one.”

In a more specific approach:

- “People are suspicious about ‘Eurocentrism’ in culture. Competition between cultural institutes is a mistake. Co-operation is essential to assert that our cultures are open to the others”;
- “Co-operation of EU countries acts mostly in parallel, but not jointly. This means in many cases poor results. On heritage it might prevent, for instance, a UNESCO classification”;
- “Much more efficient than giving a block image of the EU is building long standing relations with partners outside, showing the mosaic of different cultures as a point of departure”;
- “If we (EU countries) start working together efficiently outside, communicate and share much more, we will also reinforce cohesion and knowledge inside Europe. We will end up knowing and loving ourselves much more”;
- “The EU strategy must be of an immense variety, of an immense richness. A unified cultural policy is the end of Europe. It’s the mosaic that we have to preserve”;
- “If Europe can export something it’s our knowledge on how to build interrelations, a notion of civil society, of the responsibilities of citizens. It’s the culture inside us”.

v About practical examples

Although Portugal has hosted major international events, e.g. Lisbon 94 European Capital of Culture, the World Fair of Lisbon-Expo 98, Oporto 2001 European Capital of Culture and has been a guest country in European and international events (e.g. Europalia 1991 in Brussels and participation in major book fairs), very few practical examples of Portuguese-European cultural co-operation emerged during the interviews. This reflects partially the reality of the weak involvement of Portugal with the general European programmes, and the unequal access, in practical terms, to these instruments; and if this is true inside Europe, it is naturally much more significant outside Europe.

Bureaucracy, the complexity of all mechanisms – from getting information to involving many partners – and timings were some of the preventive reasons mentioned. Some practitioners were linked to events with EU support seen as “a distant element of subsidy, not distinguishable from other sponsors”. An example that worked well outside the EU was experienced by Associação Alcantara (former Danças na Cidade) that developed in Mozambique, Cape Verde and in Europe (2001/2002) a Festival, including workshops, research and creation residencies in Africa, supported by PAMCE (the Programme for support of ACP cultural events in Europe). Two essential elements were very positive for the organisation: only one structure responsible for the whole operation (and not three or five as in Culture 2000) and 80% of the subsidy was given with the signature of the contract, thus allowing the project to move forward without too many constraints.

Another illustration is the Biennial of Young Creators of Portuguese Speaking Expression, an intergovernmental initiative in Mozambique, most recently in 2006.

vi Practitioner concerns

Concerns expressed by practitioners can be divided into three different areas: Portuguese external cultural policy, EU practice and some basic principles to illuminate cultural initiatives. Not surprisingly, practitioners are very critical about the Portuguese external cultural policy. Critics go from what they see as a “lack of a clear strategy” to initiatives that seem to have little connection with the cultural reality. Money is certainly not the first concern. Articulation between departments,

a clear strategy, good communication and planning several years ahead are referred to as much more important issues.

EU practice, in general, is seen as “too distant from cultural actors needs” and designed for “very heavily organized structures”. “The small don’t enter Europe”, observed one interviewee. This tends to leave out of programmes and actions, some of the more creative people and ideas. This also tends to “export” a more closed, one way view of the reality, a more negative logic, without leaving any productive and sustainable results. For that very reason, there is a concern about the designing of new actions in areas where culture can have very positive effects and is a very sensitive matter.

What principles then should illuminate EU cultural initiatives? Let’s have some practitioner’s direct quotes:

- “Simplicity in procedures and a great effort to ensure that understandable information will reach all potential partners”.
- “Let cultural actors take the lead”, “let them contact, know each other, create complicity, and build programmes bottom-up”.
- “Exchange is a central issue, if things are not built together they fall apart”.
- “Building together means also training, workshops, working together, thinking about the sustainability of our partners”.
- “Long-term commitments, partnerships, co-productions, continuous relations, that’s what can achieve solid results”.

VII About Portugal’s needs and its possible role

Naturally the main needs of Portugal in what concerns its external cultural actions and objectives have very different interpretations and priorities at the different interviewee levels. At a government level, the budget was always referred to first. Budget restrictions were indicated as the main limitation of a more enlarged strategy and as the reason for dedicating to the promotion of the language – “the first priority” – a very high percentage of the resources. For that same reason (but not only), there is a very open attitude towards co-operation with other countries in several domains, and a stronger EU support is welcome. As a second main issue, the difficulties of articulation between departments and the need for a clear joint strategy was underlined (including not only Foreign Affairs and Culture, but also Trade and Tourism). A third issue pointed out by members of government was the need to show a more contemporary image of Portugal, promoting its culture and its creators and artists. In this area, linking strongly the images of Europe and Portugal is seen as very positive, and an important element to get the right attention, to enter easily in some countries and to achieve better results.

For civil servants, better budgets and especially a better use of the existing ones were obviously also important. However a stronger relevance was put on the articulation and co-operation between the various actors, in the planning and in defining clear strategies, and in more persistent and continuous actions. Those can be identified as the issues that were consistently underlined by practically all interviewees.

Other needs clearly defined were having or accessing the necessary cultural infrastructures in several countries - something that is seen as “a natural territory for EU countries to share”. The need for a “great effort to ensure that understandable information will reach all potential partners”, already mentioned above, and also creating mechanisms to help cultural actors in complying with all the technical and financial needs, was referred to by several practitioners, and seems to be a real problem in Portugal and has prevented many participating in EU programmes. This is seen

as a serious contradiction between the goals and the real achievements of such programmes: “if in fact each culture, the creativity of each country, its special characteristics and capacities are necessary to the overall mosaic of the EU, then something was probably lost”. This links directly to a vision of what could be the role of Portugal in an external cultural policy of the EU and the added value for the EU, mentioned by some interviewees of cultural institutions and practitioners.

Discussing what could be Portugal’s strategy during the interview with the President of one of the cultural institutions, a very interesting concept emerged: acquiring visibility and acting as a “soft power” (a concept taken from Joseph Nye’s book *Bound to Lead: the Changing Nature of American Power*, NY, 1990; curiously the same expression used about Europe by sociologist Tzvetan Todorov in *Die verhinderte Weltmacht – Reflexionen eines Europäers*, Munich, 2003 and quoted in Kathinka Dittrich van Weringh and Ernst Schürmann’s study *Does Europe Need a Foreign Cultural Policy?*). “Soft power”, in this particular view, expresses a special characteristic that comes from being a small country with a very rich history, what is seen as an advantage to easily create complicity with countries that react to the “hard power” of others. In his view, the “soft power” helps building networks, partnerships and very balanced relations.

The role of Portugal and its added value to the EU, was also mentioned several times in relation to Brazil and Africa, where not only language, but also a deep knowledge accumulated by the Portuguese for many years can be very useful. The need to concentrate very strongly on the Mediterranean came out, both as a Portugal need and a zone where Portugal’s attributes can be of high use to the EU. “In the Mediterranean we don’t come as colonizers; instead our culture creates bridges very easily”, which could give the Portuguese a useful active role in several domains, including migration problems. This comes also from “the amazing miscegenation that the Portuguese did all over the World, because, in the first place, they were not rich enough to impose themselves”. This capacity for the mixing of races is seen as an important characteristic that all EU action abroad should take into consideration. “We need to create cells with a human scale, to exchange, to experiment and create partnerships.”

VIII Key points

I n s i d e E u r o p e

- Linking strongly the images of Europe and Portugal is seen as very positive.
- Clear concerns with the promotion of a contemporary Portugal, European and cosmopolitan, thus deviating from its more traditional, post-colonial image.
- Articulation between departments, a clear strategy, good communication and planning several years ahead are referred as probably the most critical issues in Portugal.

O u t s i d e E u r o p e

- The importance of the EU is especially stressed when thinking about sustainability and long-term commitments, two key issues that crossed all sectors of interviewees.
- The need for multiplying co-productions involving partners from outside the EU, thus helping to strengthen the cultural structures and industries in those countries and contributing to create permanent relations, complicity and a very positive and dynamic image of the EU, is also considered crucial.
- The central role of the EU in promoting partnerships, in opening “windows” that allow easy contacts and promote creativity was also seen as a zone where the added value can be very strong.

- The importance of networks, of permanent relations, of building together, of giving and receiving, of allowing people to contact and know each other, of fostering synergies, of allowing the space and the time for emotions.
- The EU must be mostly a facilitator
- Great importance in building outside the EU solid, sustainable structures, critical mass.

P r o g r a m m e s & A c t i o n s

- A more equal access of all countries – not repeating the mistakes of Culture 2000 and other programmes mainly used by the larger and richer countries – seems essential.
- Building programmes bottom-up, simplicity in procedures and a great effort to ensure that understandable information will reach all potential partners.
- Programmes and actions designed for “very heavily organized structures” tend to leave out some of the more creative people and ideas and to “export” a more closed, one way view of the reality, a more negative logic, too often without real exchange, without leaving any results behind that are capable of replication.
- Creating mechanisms to help cultural actors in complying with all the technical and financial needs seems to be a real problem in Portugal and has prevented many participating in EU programmes.
- Enlarging (and simplifying dramatically) some of the actual programmes to partners outside of the EU, seems an easy step forward.
- An “Erasmus for Culture” comes out as a good example of an efficient way to approach people, build synergies and sow the seeds of good projects.

M i s c e g e n a t i o n

- The role of Portugal and its added value to EU, was also mentioned several times in relation to Brazil and Africa, where not only language, but also a deep knowledge can be very useful.
- The need to concentrate very strongly on the Mediterranean emerged both as a Portuguese need and a zone where Portugal’s attributes can be of high use to the EU.
- The capacity for miscegenation is seen as an important characteristic that all EU action abroad should take in consideration.

L i s t o f i n t e r v i e w e e s

Members of Government

Isabel Pires de Lima, Minister of Culture

Fernando Neves, Secretary of State for European Affairs

Civil Servants

Simonetta Luz Afonso, President, Camões Institute (Instituto Camões), Ministry of Foreign Affairs; former Director, Portuguese Institute of Museums

Luísa Bastos de Almeida, Vice-President Camões Institute (Instituto Camões), Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Patrícia Salvação Barreto, President, Office of International Cultural Relations (GRCI), Ministry of Culture

Jorge Vaz de Carvalho, President, Arts Institute (IA), Ministry of Culture; former Director Oporto National Orchestra

José Pedro Ribeiro, President, Institute for Cinema, Audiovisual and Multimedia (ICAM), Ministry of Culture

Elíseo Sumavielle, President, Architectural Heritage Institute (IPPAR), Ministry of Culture

Cultural Institutions

Rui Vilar, President, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation

Rui Machete, President, Luso-American Foundation

Carlos Monjardino, President, Oriente Foundation

António Gomes de Pinho, President, Serralves Foundation

José Sasportes, President, Portuguese Commission of UNESCO; former Minister of Culture; former Cultural Attaché in several countries

Maria de Lourdes Lima dos Santos, President, Observatory for Cultural Affairs

Guilherme d'Oliveira Martins, President, Centro Nacional de Cultura and National Committee European Cultural Foundation; former Minister of Finance and Minister of Education.

Practitioners

Miguel Abreu, Artistic Director, Cassefaz, theatre producer

Miguel Lobo Antunes, Artistic Director, Culturgest Foundation; former Artistic Director of Belém Cultural Centre

Luis Correia, Film Producer; former Artistic Director - DocLisboa Festival

Mark Deputter, Artistic Director, Alkantara

Rui Horta, Artistic Director, "O Espaço do Tempo", choreographer

Catarina Vaz Pinto, Consultant, Gulbenkian Foundation; former Secretary of State for Culture

António Pinto Ribeiro, Consultant, Gulbenkian Foundation; former Artistic Director, Culturgest Foundation

Delfim Sardo, Independent Curator; former Visual Arts Director of Belém Cultural Center

Cláudio Torres, Director, Archeological Center of Mértola (CAM); Head of Portuguese network of Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue Between Cultures.