

ANNEX 7

THE EUROPEAN UNION NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF CULTURE (EUNIC)

Text taken from two papers presented to the meeting of EUNIC Heads held in Prague, 18-19 May 2006

I Constitutional, organisational and administrative arrangements for EUNIC

P u r p o s e o f E U N I C

EUNIC aims to create effective partnerships and networks between EU National Institutes for Culture in order to improve and promote cultural diversity and understanding between European societies and to strengthen international dialogue and cultural co-operation with countries outside Europe.

This will be done through:

- discussing issues of common interest
- sharing best practice
- collaborating on joint projects that promote a better understanding of European culture in its diversity - both in Europe and outside Europe
- acting as a partner of the European Commission in defining and implementing European cultural policy
- undertaking joint research that will be of value to the European Commission and to other organisations (e.g. the Council of Europe) in furthering understanding of European wide cultural issues
- acting as an advocate of the value of cultural relations in promoting better international understanding and, as part of this, argue for a strong and independent voice for the cultural sector.

P a r t i c i p a t i n g o r g a n i s a t i o n s i n E U N I C

These should be organisations that:

- are national bodies based in EU Member States
- are engaged in activities beyond their national borders
- have a degree of autonomy from their national governments.

EUNIC undertakes to maintain communication with national institutes of culture in all EU Member States and with relevant organisations in those Member States that do not have national cultural institutes and are therefore not formally part of the EUNIC network.

G o v e r n i n g c o n s t i t u t i o n

EUNIC should operate on three different complimentary levels:

EUNIC Heads

There will be a President and two Vice Presidents. The President and two Vice Presidents will be elected by the Heads of the EUNIC member organisations.¹

EUNIC Brussels

This is composed of the current CICEB members plus new members such as EU cultural institutes that do not have a representative office in Brussels. EUNIC Brussels is governed by its own constitution. It has an important role in providing the EUNIC Heads with intelligence and information about policy and project developments in the cultural sector in the European Institutions. The President of EUNIC Brussels will participate in meetings of the EUNIC Heads.

EUNIC National Networks

EUNIC networks can be established in any country where at least three member state cultural institutions or local representatives agree to meet formally and collaborate on joint activities. In order to formally use the title EUNIC, the network must agree to notify the EUNIC Heads Executive of its existence and to abide by any rulings from the Executive relating to any overall activities and branding established by EUNIC. National EUNIC governing constitutions will be established locally.

EUNIC is currently not a legal entity but this may need to be explored further if EUNIC is to bid for work funded by other organisations such as the European Commission.

F u n d i n g o f E U N I C

It is agreed that an annual membership fee should be paid by all EUNIC members. This will provide a fund for the creation and running of a EUNIC website (to be maintained by the President's Executive Office) and for the local costs of annual Heads' meetings. The annual membership will be Euros 3,000 for large organisations (1,000 staff and over) and 1,000 Euros for smaller organisations (under 1,000 staff).²

E U N I C M e e t i n g s w i t h t h e E u r o p e a n C o m m i s s i o n

The President and the two Vice Presidents will undertake to meet senior officials in the European Commission at least twice a year to discuss issues of mutual interest and to communicate the results of these meetings to all EUNIC Heads within 5 working days of the meetings.³

II EUNIC activities

The following is a list of agreed EUNIC activities.

F o r u m f o r d i s c u s s i o n

EUNIC will provide opportunities for EUNIC members to discuss issues of shared interest and concern, both in terms of working together, but also as regards EU and national cultural policies and strategies. There will be at least one annual meeting of all EUNIC Heads organised by the EUNIC member holding the Presidency. National EUNIC networks will meet on a more frequent basis.

S h a r i n g o f b e s t p r a c t i c e

EUNIC members – both at Heads and national network levels - will share best practice and ideas on projects, research, organisational and administrative issues. This can involve all members, but

any grouping of members is free to share best practice and ideas as deemed appropriate. The website and the intranet will be one of the tools available for the sharing of best practice (see Para 3). Meetings and placements/visits will be another way in which this can be done.

There is an obligation on all EUNIC members to ensure that at least 2 examples of best practice are shared with other members during the year.

P l a t f o r m s f o r c l o s e r c o l l a b o r a t i o n

EUNIC will encourage closer platform collaboration in the following ways:

- establishing a website to provide public information about its activities and an intranet for use by members. This will be set up and maintained by the President's Executive. The website will provide information on all EUNIC member organisations, contact details, programmes and activities. The intranet will provide a secure area where confidential documents can be stored;
- seeking to share physical premises for cultural centre activities where this is desirable and feasible. This can range from using each other's facilities for seminars, exhibitions, and arts events through to sharing common premises and office space. In addition national cultural institutions could use each others' facilities for the teaching of languages;
- a newsletter (e-zine) will be produced by the Presidency. Frequency and format to be agreed;
- EUNIC members will support the EUNIC member state holding the EU Presidency through innovative partnerships that demonstrate the value of cross-European working and the diversity of European cultures.

A c t i v a t e n e t w o r k s f o r j o i n t p r o j e c t s a n d r e s e a r c h

EUNIC will encourage the creation of national networks of European cultural institutions in order to carry out joint projects financed by EUNIC members or through co-financing from the European Commission and other European organisations. In addition, EUNIC will support research projects that relate to European cultural issues. Again these may be totally funded by EUNIC members or may be co-funded with the European Commission and other European organisations. Where networks of national institutes for culture currently exist in countries they should be encouraged to adopt the EUNIC brand and name. Local flexibility on membership is permissible.

C r e a t e o p p o r t u n i t i e s f o r s t a f f e x c h a n g e s

EUNIC Heads will actively seek to promote and support the exchange of staff in order to increase both an understanding of each others' institutions and practical co-operation between each others' institutions. These staff exchanges could range from short working visits of one to five days to more substantial placements lasting up to a year. The financial implications of these visits will need to be agreed by the institutions participating in the staff exchange visits and will not be regulated by EUNIC.

P a r t n e r f o r t h e E u r o p e a n C o m m i s s i o n i n h e l p i n g t o d e f i n e a n d i m p l e m e n t E u r o p e a n c u l t u r a l p o l i c i e s

EUNIC Heads will ensure that there is a clear strategy in place for engagement with the European Commission. This strategy will define how EUNIC will work with the Commission as a partner in helping to define and implement European cultural policies. This will include ensuring

that EUNIC comments, as requested, on Commission cultural policies at the appropriate consultation stage. The EUNIC Heads, represented by the three Presidents, will commit to meeting with the European Commission (DG, Education and Culture) at least twice a year for formal discussions and an exchange of views on both cultural developments in Europe and the promotion of European culture. The EUNIC Heads will also agree with EUNIC Brussels how best to use the Brussels EUNIC network to support the relationship with the Commission.

A c t a s a n a d v o c a t e o f E U n a t i o n a l
i n s t i t u t e s f o r c u l t u r e t o t h e
E u r o p e a n C o m m i s s i o n

EUNIC needs to make sure that it maintains a strong profile with the European Commission and that it acts as an advocate of the EU National Institutes for Culture to the European Commission. The EUNIC Presidency undertakes therefore to represent the interests of all participating members in its discussions with the Commission.

Notes

- 1 This text has been shortened.
- 2 This text has been shortened.
- 3 This text has been shortened.