



# **Research Report: EUNIC - Crossroads for Culture**

**Centre for Cultural Relations**

**University of Edinburgh**

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The Centre for Cultural Relations (CCR) was established in 2013 as an interdisciplinary research centre based at the University of Edinburgh.

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## 1. Objectives and scope of the report

The objectives of the report, as commissioned by EUNIC Global, were to:

- ... Observe and record to what extent EUNIC members incorporate EUNIC ideas and the European agenda for culture objectives in their strategies (national, European and international level) leading to a pragmatic research baseline, which can be built on in the future for further research and strengthening of EUNIC;
- ... Observe and identify how, when, and in which priority areas EUNIC members can enhance their cooperation and combine their efforts; and
- ... Collect and analyse EUNIC project success stories and failed or flawed examples.

The scope of the report as determined by the objectives was to:

- ... Present factual insights into EUNIC members' strategies for cultural relations, with a focus on what this entails in practice. The report does not therefore extend to recommendations as to future action;
- ... Analyse responses from EUNIC members to questionnaires and interviews; and
- ... Throughout the report, give due consideration to differences in responses which reflect the diversity of EUNIC members.

As part of the *Crossroads for Culture* project, The Centre for Cultural Relations at the University of Edinburgh (hereafter, CCR) has conducted research to collect and analyse EUNIC members' cultural relations strategies and experiences.

The *Crossroads for Culture* project seeks to address existing challenges to the EUNIC network and Member States' national and multilateral strategies in the field of culture, in order to reinforce and build the EUNIC network and the capacity of its members. The project aims to strengthen EUNIC's capacity to become a partner of choice for the European Union in European external cultural relations.

Research conducted by CCR therefore sought to identify what EUNIC membership means *in practice* as well as members' recommendations for future engagement with EUNIC Global and in clusters.

Insights derived from the research and compiled in this final report will be presented to EUNIC members in Madrid in June 2015. These insights are intended to provide a baseline understanding, which can be built upon in the future, by means of further research, to assess progress in strengthening the EUNIC network.

## Executive summary

EUNIC is at a crossroads. There are, today, both opportunities and challenges, and EUNIC has strategic choices to make, which have the potential to affect both its development as a network, and the future direction of EU policy on culture in external relations.

### *EU Policy*

As a network of National Institutes of Culture, EUNIC is well placed to contribute to the evolution of:

- ... The EU Work Plan for Culture (2015-2018) which invites Member States to collaborate on priorities including culture in EU external relations and mobility,<sup>1</sup> and
- ... The EU Preparatory Action 'Culture in External Relations' which recommended that the EEAS work closely with partners at EU level, and with Member States and their leading cultural organisations and networks such as EUNIC.<sup>2</sup>

This policy framework provides a clear opportunity for EUNIC, as a network of Member States, to respond with positive proposals which demonstrate how collaboration on culture in external relations can contribute to the goals of both cultural and external relations policy.

There were indications from the research that this may be possible. There was support from members, at the level of principle, for collaborating with each other as part of a European platform for culture.

There was support for the EUNIC brand, which was seen as helpful in cultural relations outside the EU, particularly for its added value in "challenging" countries (eg China).

However, the research identified a range of challenges:

- ... There was a lack of consensus on EUNIC's relationship with other European institutions, in particular the EEAS, where members were split roughly 50-50 on the value of EUNIC as a "broker" of influence on the EEAS;
- ... Support for collaboration between members was weak – although this was seen mostly as a question of resources. Collaboration via EUNIC was seen as valuable where diplomatic relations (not just cultural relations) were weak in a country considered a strategic area of interest;
- ... There was significant variation in levels of activity among clusters; and
- ... There were different emphases between smaller and larger members - larger ones tended to see EUNIC's added value as its contribution to the EU policy framework. Smaller members tended to see added value in sharing best practice.

### *EUNIC as a network*

A sense of common vision is fundamental to the development of a strategy. Members did not, however, report a shared view of the nature or purpose of cultural relations. There was a divide between members who focused on national projection through traditional arts and others who wanted to develop longer term programmes of cultural relations.

There were signs, however, that this was changing and more members were starting to consider a broader role for themselves – and that this broader role was more consistent with EU policies for culture in external relations. There is an opportunity for EUNIC to discuss and agree a shared vision for cultural relations and develop a strategic plan.

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<sup>1</sup> Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on a Work Plan for Culture (2015-2018), (2014/C 463/02)

<sup>2</sup> Page 9, Preparatory Action "Culture in EU External Relations", Executive Summary, (2014).

Members valued a great deal about EUNIC and its activities, in particular:

- ... Cluster activity where there was scope to identify common organisational priorities of local relevance;
- ... Opportunities for networking between members, sharing information and best practice, and training for staff; and
- ... EUNIC Global's:
  - Assistance to members who were looking for funding;
  - Provision of news, information and information about funding calls; and
  - Provision of expertise to help members access the EEAS.

There were opportunities to develop EUNIC's role, both at cluster level and at EUNIC Global, particularly to:

- ... Access resources - seen as *the* key constraint on collaboration by members<sup>3</sup>;
- ... Develop EUNIC's advocacy activities by:
  - Clarifying priorities for advocacy in terms of the target of activity and the purpose of engagement;
  - Clarifying EUNIC's position in relation to other European institutions (especially the EEAS, both in Brussels and in delegations) and to member states;
  - Developing a coherent framework for the evaluation of activities in order to be able to demonstrate added value; and
  - Improving the sharing of information, both internally to EUNIC members and externally to stakeholders;
- ... Ensure clear accountability of EUNIC to members – to ensure that all members of the network realised the benefits of membership.

The challenge for EUNIC will be to develop a plan which addresses opportunities at 3 levels:

- ... Its contribution to the EU policy framework, and its role in relation to culture in the EU's external relations;
- ... Delivery of demonstrably effective collaboration, especially through cluster activity, and
- ... Strengthening the network, to ensure that members value their membership, share a common purpose and derive benefit from collaboration.

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<sup>3</sup> Members saw lack of resources as the main challenge to the development of effective collaboration. Institutional arrangements (ie whether a member was part of a Ministry of Foreign Affairs, or a more arm's length body) were not seen as having any significant impact.

## 2. Key findings: opportunities and challenges for EUNIC

Section 2 of this report summarises the key findings of our research. It is structured into 4 sub-sections:

- A. **Members' vision for culture in external relations:** the extent to which members shared a common understanding of, and approach to, their activities;
- B. **Culture in EU external relations:** members' views on EUNIC's existing and potential contribution to EU policy on culture and external relations, including members' attitudes to EU policy as a driver of EUNIC activity, and the extent to which members incorporated EU policy into their existing strategies and plans;
- C. **Collaboration:** the areas where EUNIC members currently worked together, and future prospects;
- D. **EUNIC as a network:** the value members saw in EUNIC, and the scope for development.

Each section consists of short summaries of:

- ... The evidence from the research;
- ... Opportunities for EUNIC, and
- ... Questions raised by the findings.

### A. Members' vision for culture in external relations:

We asked members what they understood by culture and external relations. This was important as in our view, the responses would show what business they saw themselves in – and that this vision would drive the development of their strategies for EUNIC.

Responses indicated that members were evenly split:

- ... 52% of respondents primarily operated in terms of national projection through traditional arts, language education and exchange programmes, and
- ... 48% of respondents have begun to develop a broader approach for long term international cultural relations.

The latter approach was increasingly pursued by means of multilateral work with other EUNIC members, regional partners, clusters and other EU institutions. There were significant variations within this broader approach, for example, in terms of whether members primarily pursued instrumental political and economic objectives, a value based 'soft power' approach, or a more nationalist or EU focused agenda.

However, as many members' responses to the research were unclear, it was often hard to connect their rhetorical commitment to culture in external relations to organisational priorities or activities.

The research showed that there was a question to be addressed: the extent to which a sense of common purpose regarding the nature and role of culture in external relations was desirable or necessary for EUNIC, given that it is a network whose accountability is to its diverse members.

If, however, EUNIC aspires to become an effective EU level advocacy and delivery body, and to address resource questions for members, then there would be advantages to a shared vision based on collaboration rather than on national interest. The question of EUNIC's EU role is addressed in the following section.

## B. Culture in EU External Relations

As outlined in the European Commission's Communication on a European Agenda for Culture in a Globalizing World (2007) and the European Council's Work Plan for Culture, 2015-18<sup>4</sup>, the EU Strategy for Culture features four broad priority areas: diversity, dialogue, creativity and international relations. International relations includes development, civil society and local partnerships as priority areas.

The European Council's conclusions on the Work Plan for Culture (2015-2018) specifically invited Member States to work together on a wide range of areas relating to EU cultural cooperation including cultural cooperation between the EU and non-EU countries.

The Work Plan for Culture also incorporates an agreement by Member States to continue working in this area, in cooperation with the European External Action Service and the Commission. Member States were also invited to foster cooperation with third countries, in particular candidate countries, potential candidate countries and countries of the European Neighbourhood Policy and with competent international organisations in the field of culture.

All EUNIC members, both national institutes for culture and the ministries of Member States, are addressed by the EU Strategy on Culture. It was therefore important to determine the extent to which members' strategic priorities incorporated EU policies.

Many members did not, however, provide a response when asked how the Work Plan for Culture impacted on their organisational strategy, projects and priorities, and whether this posed opportunities. The responses which were received were often general, and many did not constitute meaningful answers.

It could therefore be said that there was a broad awareness of the EU Work Plan for Culture, but in the majority of cases, it could not be established *how* this impacted on practice.

We did, however, identify a split between larger and small members:

- Larger EUNIC members were aware of the EU Work Plan for Culture and were more likely to incorporate its priorities within their work;
- Smaller EUNIC members who reported a lack of resources to support activities in third countries, also indicated less capacity to relate the Work Plan for Culture and its priorities to their work.

We looked at other factors which described the context within which members' strategies were developed to see whether there was a pattern which might affect their attitude to EU policy. This included institutional arrangements; levels of delegation and how much discretion staff working in clusters had to engage with EU policy and activity.

### *Level of engagement with EU policies*

In every case, members' senior staff were aware of EU policy and were responsible for receiving and reading EU policy documents. It was possible to conclude that members were all aware, at an appropriate level, of the objectives and content of EU policies. It was not possible to determine, however, how such attention informed practice.

### *Institutional arrangements*

National priorities played a role for all members. This was regardless of whether members operated at arm's length or were part of Ministries. There was no evidence that these different institutional arrangements affected members' views of EUNIC; their ability to collaborate on EUNIC activities, or participate in international cultural relations. It was clear that financial and staff resources were much more important constraints.

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<sup>4</sup> (2014/C 463/02)



### *Levels of discretion*

The research found that levels of delegation to clusters varied widely. These variations reflected the culture and national framework within which members worked, and variations in practice, according to the context and priorities applicable in particular regions.

While this finding was interesting, it did not allow us to establish whether levels of delegation affected the incorporation of the objectives of EUNIC (or the EU agenda on culture), or whether it could be said that any particular arrangement would allow us to predict that delegation would facilitate collaboration with other EUNIC members.

It was clear, however, that members did allow local offices in clusters to decide the nature of their engagement with EU delegations. The nature of the relationship depended, in part, on how the particular delegation interpreted its priorities and role regarding culture. There was consensus that building effective relationships with delegations over time constituted good practice.

There was a clear opportunity for EUNIC members to work together to make a positive contribution to the development of both policy and practice of culture in external relations at an EU level. The EU policy framework exists and is evolving in ways which encourage and support collaboration.

Questions for members include:

- ... Member states have all signed up to the EU policy framework – and EUNIC members are all aware of it at senior level. To what extent are members willing to incorporate EU policy into their own strategic plans and actions?
- ... How can members assess the balance of costs vs. benefits of collaboration on EU policy via EUNIC?
- ... How can EUNIC best help members make these strategic choices?

### **C. Collaboration**

We looked firstly, at the nature of current collaboration between EUNIC members.

#### *The degree of cooperation between EUNIC members*

The EU policy framework strongly encourages collaboration between member states. Disappointingly, however, we found it hard to come to definite conclusions as response rates to our questions were low.

Of those who did respond, half of member Heads (n=5) were involved in joint planning with other EUNIC members in third countries, and expressed support, at least in principle, for working with other EUNIC members as part of a European platform for culture.

The factors which led them to support collaboration included:

- ... Opportunities to learn through collaboration;
- ... Scope to increase projects' impact; and
- ... Opportunities for cost saving or staff efficiencies.

When asked what would encourage collaboration, the main factor was the extent to which members could identify shared organisational priorities for areas of activity in a specific place. This was most likely to occur where there was clear and effective cluster leadership and local demand for EUNIC involvement – this demand coming either from the EU delegation or from local partners.

A caveat is necessary, however, in that the number of responses on which the above is based, was very low. Again, disappointingly, 43% (n=10) of the strategists who responded did not or could not articulate any ideas for how collaboration with other EUNIC members could be enhanced.

While the evidence was slight, it was possible to identify a tendency among smaller EUNIC members to value collaboration in order to gain expertise and experience;

Strategists' views on how collaboration with other EUNIC members could best be enhanced were varied and diverse. However, the following emerged:

- ... Cluster leadership must be clear and effective (n=3);
- ... There must be clear local demand for EUNIC involvement, including opportunity to promote EU values or to work with the EU Delegation (n=3);
- ... Smaller members voiced need for greater support with developing contacts, organisation and capacity to identify local partners and sources of funding.

A primary objective of the research was to observe and identify how, when, and in which priority areas EUNIC members could enhance their cooperation and combine their efforts. Given the objectives of EUNIC, cooperation between members is integral to its function and future growth. As such, a series of questions were posed to members about the extent and drivers of current cooperation with other members, as well as areas where they may be interested in working together more in future.

#### *Geographical priorities*

It was not possible from this exercise, to map the geographical priorities of members, or the extent to which EUNIC supported collaborative engagement in specific areas, as the data which would enable us to describe and analyse geographical priorities simply does not appear to exist. There is a clear need for baseline data.

It was also not possible to assess whether statements of EUNIC cluster engagement provided an indication of collaboration 'on paper' or in practice. This was due to variation in levels of activity between clusters, as well as varied levels of engagement between different members within each cluster.<sup>5</sup>

It was possible to say, however, that while some members were pro-active, others felt constrained by resources. This sense of constraint did not necessarily correlate to willingness on the part of members to pursue European and EUNIC objectives in collaboration with other members. In other words, while some members lacked resources for collaboration, they could nevertheless see value in it.

The data we received was not sufficient to allow us to do any quantitative analysis. It did, however, shed light on some geographical areas where there was an existing interest in collaboration. These were: MENA; China; India, and countries where members were not currently represented.

In relation to future plans, less than one third of respondents expressed no interest in further collaboration, or emphasised a need to focus on existing cluster activity. One quarter, however, did have plans to increase cooperation in future. One specific idea which was broadly supported was to consider sharing premises in priority areas, and a third of respondents were interested in piloting a European House of Culture in Brussels.

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<sup>5</sup> For further insights on cluster activity, please refer to *Working Package 2 – EUNIC Clusters & Collaboration: EUNIC Cluster Quality Assessment*. The advice from the team working on *Working Package 2*, however, was that it would be hard to identify, from the fact sheets supplied by members, what their priority countries and regions were.

### *Opportunities for EUNIC*

There are clear opportunities for EUNIC through enhanced cooperation and collaboration, especially if priority is given to those countries and areas where collaboration would meet the needs both of members and of the EEAS.

These countries (eg China, India), and regions (eg MENA) were identified as “challenging” and are also strategic partners, or priorities (eg through the ENP) of the EU. Support is available for activity in these areas – there is therefore the potential to access resources and improve the effectiveness of EUNIC’s advocacy to the EEAS at the same time.

Members identified benefits for them in such contexts. Collaboration could simultaneously deliver enhanced benefits, and help mitigate the risks and entry costs of non-collaborative activity. More impact and visibility could be achieved through use of the EUNIC brand, and members would benefit from better market information, opportunities for learning, and the potential for cost savings eg through shared premises.

The challenge would be develop strategies for collaboration in such areas, which would be seen to deliver tangible benefits both to the EU’s strategic engagement, and to members. The case for culture as a vector of external relations policy could be made, but would have to be based on a clear view of what success would look like, both for the EEAS and for members. Crucially, in respect of the latter, it would be important for all members to have an opportunity to realise the benefits of collaboration, even if they were not directly involved on the ground. Such benefits could come from some element of resource distribution through access to learning and training opportunities or through improved information sharing.

#### **D. EUNIC as a network**

This report focuses on here on the role of EUNIC Global and on members’ views of EUNIC as a network.<sup>6</sup>

##### *EUNIC Global*

The role of EUNIC Global in relationship to its members and cluster activity, as well as relationships with other EU institutions were considered in relation to 2 main objectives of the *Crossroads for Culture* project, ie:

- ... To strengthen EUNIC members’ capacity, and
- ... To strengthen EUNIC’s capacity to become a partner of choice for the European Union in the EU’s external cultural relations.

##### EUNIC Global: capacity building

There was evidence that Members wanted EUNIC Global to help them in a number of activities:

- ... Acting as a hub for exchange of information, advice and assistance;
- ... Particular emphasis was placed on the added value of networking opportunities, and
- ... Support in enhancing funding for clusters and members’ activities.

EUNIC Global was generally well appreciated, particularly in relation to:

- ... Staff training and capacity building;
- ... Advocacy on behalf of EUNIC members; and
- ... Specific initiatives: the EUNIC Academy; handbook; updates and staff mobility schemes.

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<sup>6</sup> *Working Package 2 – EUNIC Clusters & Collaboration: EUNIC Cluster Quality Assessment* focuses on cluster activity.

There were 4 main areas, however, where members wanted additional assistance from EUNIC Global:

- ... Funding and resources;
- ... Strategic delivery – especially monitoring and evaluation;
- ... Internal and external communications; and
- ... Advocacy.

**Funding** was identified by members as the main constraint facing them in developing plans for collaboration. They identified a number of activities where EUNIC Global could help them access EU funding opportunities:

- ... Identify, assess and disseminate EU funding opportunities;
- ... Advise members on application processes for EU cultural programmes;
- ... Help develop funding applications, and
- ... Ensure that smaller EUNIC members were included.

They also thought it would be possible for EUNIC Global to use the EUNIC brand to help leverage support from private donors and sponsors.

It should be noted, however, that a majority of Heads did not envisage a “brokerage” role for EUNIC Global as an advocate for members wishing to access funding opportunities. A minority of Heads, however, did see EUNIC Global as offering potential value. It was hard to interpret this finding, but it did indicate that opinion was divided and that the key issue of EUNIC Global’s potential to address funding needs should be discussed.

**Strategic delivery:** there were 3 areas where members saw an enhanced role for EUNIC Global as valuable:

- ... Help develop members’ capacity in project design;
- ... Develop strategies for sharing best practice, and
- ... Development of a coherent and consistent system for monitoring, evaluating and reporting on cluster activities. This related to the need for effective advocacy.

**Internal and external communications:** again there were 3 priorities identified by members:

- ... Support with media coverage of projects in the local area and internationally;
- ... Information management: EUNIC Global to maintain a database of expertise to be consulted by members and outside partners planning collaboration across the network;
- ... Fuller reporting: a quarterly status report on projects implemented by EUNIC Clusters, highlighting best practices and cluster returns on experience, in addition to the existing Newsletter.

**Advocacy** is considered in the following section.

#### Strengthening EUNIC’s capacity to become a partner of choice for the European Union

It was felt that for EUNIC to become a partner of choice for the EU in culture in external relations, EUNIC Global’s advocacy role was crucial.

Some key actions to strengthen capacity were identified above, particularly these related to delivery and effective collaboration.

Advocacy, however, was required, particularly to influence decisions taken by the EEAS by making sure that the EEAS was fully aware of EUNIC’s activities, especially best practice examples of projects implemented by clusters and EUNIC members for, and with, EU delegations and other institutions.

Heads were asked to comment on how EUNIC's advocacy could best influence the EAS and Commission towards development of recommendations for culture in external relations. Neither a definitive trend nor clear divisions between members with regards to enhanced engagement with EU institutions could be identified from analysis of research responses. However, it was possible to draw out the responses below, which came from EUNIC's most active members. The responses applied mostly to EUNIC Global:

- ... Ensure that members' knowledge of cultural exchange and education contributed to the debates and activities of EU institutions;
- ... Record and promote good practice in collaborating among members to enhance visibility;
- ... Strengthen EUNIC's influence and presence in Brussels networks and EU processes as:
  - o An advisory body;
  - o Project delivery vehicle;
  - o Source of advice to the EAS on engaging EUNIC member expertise and to members and clusters on engagement with the EAS and other EU institutions.

Members also suggested that EUNIC should:

- ... Consider how to remain at 'arm's length' from EU institutions;
- ... Devise and secure opportunities for EU funding of ambitious collaborative projects which include as many members as possible, and
- ... Consider acting as an applicant for grants, or support coalitions of members.

The diversity of opinions expressed, the lack of specificity and degree of tentative speculation involved in members' responses to questions in this area meant it was hard to draw any clear conclusions. The contrast in responses in relation to the role of EUNIC Global acting for the network in relation to funding was notable. There was a clear division of views here, which would benefit from further discussion.

Fundamental to effective advocacy was the ability to agree and communicate a shared vision of *why* the EEAS should view collaboration with EUNIC as making a positive contribution to delivery of its priorities. This would require, above all, a coherent framework for the evaluation of EUNIC collaborations which would provide an evidence base for external reporting and advocacy.

#### Opportunities for EUNIC Global

These can be simply stated: EUNIC Global is in a unique position to help members develop a virtuous circle of continuous improvement: strategic central support → better access to funds to support collaboration and build members' capacity → improved delivery → demonstrate success through evaluation → better access to funds...

The challenge for EUNIC Global is to identify the key strategic interventions it can make which add value. Members' responses confirmed that they welcome initiatives in relation to training and capacity building, but they want to see more in terms of advocacy and access to resources.

It was clear from the research that members felt more needed to be done at all levels: centrally, in clusters, and with EU partners, but also that the case for doing more needed to be made to funders and those in control of members' resources, but also to the members themselves if the network was to realise its potential.

#### *EUNIC as a network*

The opportunities and challenges facing the network described above reflect the state of the EUNIC network today identified through this research. EUNIC activity was a part of the range of activities

carried out by members, and there was therefore dependent on the extent to which members were committed to it in practical terms.

#### Value of EUNIC to members

The research started with attitudes as to the perceived added value of EUNIC membership. Heads valued EUNIC's provision of opportunities to network and share best practice. As noted above, they took different views about how EUNIC could add value in relation to funding.

Strategists (as noted above) saw value in the EUNIC brand in non-EU countries, particularly in "challenging" countries, and the support of EUNIC Global in information sharing, access to resources and engagement with the EUNIC network.

#### Impact of EUNIC membership on organisational strategies and practice

It should be noted that incorporation of EUNIC activity within members' strategic operations was often expressed as still at an 'experimental' phase. The responses therefore reflected work in progress. Perhaps unsurprisingly therefore, there was significant variation between members at the strategic level:

- ... 12% of respondents (n=4) indicated that they had directly or explicitly incorporated EUNIC membership into their strategic planning and official organisational guidelines;
- ... 44% of respondents indicated either that membership was considered to be a function of cluster or project related work – and could therefore be said to impact at that level;
- ... 39 % of respondents, however, reported only the simple fact of their membership of the network or stated principled support for its activity in general terms. In these cases, it could not be said that EUNIC membership had any impact on strategy or practice.

This variation did not reflect the size of members or their institutional status.

In terms of practice:

- ... 50% of respondents indicated that their primary support for EUNIC activity was at the level of clusters;
- ... While Heads or specified strategic staff were involved in EUNIC activities in 58% of members, only a very small minority indicated having specifically apportioned staff time to this;
- ... All members reported 'routine' support for EUNIC in the form of membership fees and financial support for programmes, such as Crossroads for Culture.

Constraints to support:

- ... 44% reported limited funds and staff availability as constraints on involvement in EUNIC activity.
- ... Smaller members reported that EUNIC's place within their work was mostly based on membership privileges: participation in meetings and conferences; receipt of the EUNIC yearbook; training opportunities – although, despite this, a high level of senior level attention and interest in EUNIC work was often reported.

#### EUNIC engagement in practice: its 'translation' into daily work

Members' strategists were asked a series of questions which sought to get beneath rhetorical commitment to EUNIC goals, to identify structures in place to implement EUNIC work.

The key findings confirmed that strategies, where they existed, were translated into actions:

- ... Firstly, there was clear evidence that senior staff were aware of EUNIC. In many cases, however, this appeared to indicate that the organisation did not have any appointee with special responsibility for overseeing EUNIC work and engagement, meaning this responsibility fell to busy Heads;
- ... EUNIC activity, allocation of resource, and awareness of EUNIC was concentrated in clusters;
- ... Budget allocations to EUNIC activities were small - typically around 1% of project budgets within the EU, and between 2-5% for projects outside the EU,<sup>7</sup> and
- ... Staff in clusters were generally allowed a high level of discretion in relation to EUNIC activities, but only two responses indicated use of targets for EUNIC work or an expectation that staff delivered EUNIC activity as part of their responsibilities.

The issues of how effectively the network functions pose clear challenges. There was consensus as to the areas where EUNIC Global was already adding value, but a need to agree what its future role should be, especially in relation to helping members access funding. The challenge of developing its strategic advocacy role was closely related. There was support for more routine information sharing and communications activities but a clear sense of consensus as to priorities did not emerge.

The challenge for the network overall was seen as both strategic and tactical. Progress could be made, but the pre-conditions for that were:

- ... A shared strategic vision which included members who did not currently engage with EUNIC beyond the simple fact of membership, and
- ... Each member understanding the benefits of collaboration via EUNIC, and being willing to reflect that in their strategies, plans and activities.

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<sup>7</sup> The evidence on this was slight, only 4 members provided useable responses.

## Analysis of members' responses to individual research questions<sup>8</sup>

1. This section presents an overview and categorisation of trends among members' responses to key questions posed by the research. Due to variable response rates (see Appendix B) the analysis should be read as an evaluative commentary on responses as a basis upon which to draw bounded insights.
2. Where responses were not clear (e.g. non quantifiable responses to a quantitative question – for example on budgetary allocation), this was noted. Where members' responses to important questions were inadequate to draw research conclusions, this limitation was indicated in general terms (not highlighting particular members).
3. The presentation of analysis which follows endeavours to maintain the confidentiality of members and their views. Distinctions are occasionally drawn between varieties of EUNIC members, in terms of whether they exhibit a tendency to cohere in their views and concerns. In general, however, the research did not find significance in the type of member as a predictor of responses provided on key concerns; whether a member was 'big' or 'small,' a ministry or national institute, highly active in cultural relations or more circumscribed in terms of activities pursued internationally.

### *Preliminary observations*

4. A significant number of members' responses tended towards abstract affirmations of values, lacking detail on how these were implemented in practice. This proved extremely challenging in respect of attempts by the research team and EUNIC Global to obtain examples of good practice and challenges faced by EUNIC members in their attempts to collaborate with each other.
5. In particular, specific details on the incorporation of EUNIC membership and engagement in the practical day-to-day operations of members often proved difficult to obtain, both in writing and by interview. Consequently, it was very hard to determine whether perceived examples of successful collaboration owed anything specifically to EUNIC membership. It appeared instead that trends reflected underlying affinities between like-minded cultural organisations with common interests which may have led to collaboration regardless of EUNIC membership.

### *Members' strategies, geographical focus and priority areas*

6. As noted above, strategies did not appear to reflect the type of member and their approach to incorporation of EU and EUNIC objectives, nor their approach to collaboration with other members.
7. Consideration was given to the following potential variables as part of the research exercise:
  - a. Institutional arrangements, including degrees of autonomy from political interference;
  - b. Levels of discretion devolved to management of cluster activity (with scope to influence incorporation of EU and EUNIC objectives);
  - c. Geographic focus and strategic priorities of individual members (a potential predictor of support for cooperation).
8. **Institutional arrangements:** for all members, national priorities played some role – regardless of the member being 'at arm's length' or part of a governmental organisation.
9. **Levels of discretion:** there was a wide range of discretion to activities in clusters. This, however, told us little about the impact of such operational arrangements on incorporation of the objectives of EUNIC and the EU agenda on culture, nor whether this had any predictive relationship with regards to collaboration with other EUNIC members. To a significant degree,

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<sup>8</sup> Note: This appendix gives a full account of responses to the research questions and functions as the basis for the key findings.



operational arrangements reflected the organisational culture and national framework within which particular members worked, and were affected by specific local contexts.

10. **Geographical focus:** A guiding research question of this research was to identify the geographical focus and priorities of EUNIC members. Extensive data was collected on regions within which members engage with cluster activity. It was not possible to map the extent to which members' geographical coverage reflected a prioritisation of collaborative engagement through the framework of EUNIC. This was because necessary baseline data were not available. Moreover, mapping statements of EUNIC cluster engagement would only provide an indication of collaboration 'on paper' and not in practice, due to acknowledged variation in levels of activity among different clusters, as well as varied levels of engagement between different members within each cluster.<sup>9</sup>
11. Findings presented in the analysis which follows in this report provide a base-line which suggests that:
  - d. Some members are evidently more pro-active and better resourced than others;
  - e. This does not necessarily reflect their level of willingness to pursue European and EUNIC objectives in collaboration with other members.
12. **Understanding of culture and international cultural relations:** Significant differences were found between members' practical understandings of the nature and objectives of culture and cultural relations. A significant divide in membership existed between organisations primarily operating in terms of national projection through traditional arts, language education and exchange programmes, and other members at varying stages of developing broader programmes for long term international cultural relations.
13. Approaches to the former tended to be ad-hoc, bilateral, and focused on the culture of the member state. The latter approach was increasingly pursued by means of multilateral work with other EUNIC members, regional partners, clusters and other EU institutions and focused on a more dialogic relationship, which often incorporated efforts to develop the capacities of host cultures.
14. Classification of members according to this dichotomy was difficult and potentially error prone as:
  - a. Many EUNIC members' priorities and visions for future strategic development were moving quite rapidly towards a broader vision of culture, and
  - b. Rhetorical commitment to a broad vision of international cultural relations was quite widespread among EUNIC members. This probably reflected both the contemporary climate of debate in Europe, and also imperatives imposed by funding bodies.
15. As part of this research project, members' Heads were asked about their interpretation of what culture meant in their work, as well as how they promoted national culture. Strategy officers also discussed these topics as relating to other questions on the practical implementation of international cultural diplomacy.
16. It was possible to say that about 52% of the 23 members who responded to the research could be considered as primarily pursuing traditional national projection, whereas 48% have begun to develop a broader approach. It was also recognised that there were significant variations within this broader approach, for example, in terms of whether it pursued political and economic objectives, a value based 'soft power' approach, etc.

#### *Incorporation of the EU Strategy on Culture and EUNIC membership*

17. The research attempted to determine members' identification with the European Strategy for Culture and what working with EUNIC meant to them. A number of questions were posed which related to both strategic priorities and allocation of responsibilities in business practices.

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<sup>9</sup> For further insights on cluster activity, please refer to *Working Package 2 – EUNIC Clusters & Collaboration: EUNIC Cluster Quality Assessment*.

18. **EU Strategy on Culture:** As outlined in the European Commission's *Communication on a European Agenda for Culture in a Globalizing World* (2007)<sup>10</sup> and European Council's *Work Plan for Culture, 2015-18*,<sup>11</sup> the EU Strategy for Culture features four broad priority areas which may be summarised as diversity, dialogue, creativity and international relations. Further insight into the content of these can be derived from the aforementioned sources. International relations includes development, civil society and local partnerships as priority areas.
19. As all EUNIC members, both national institutes for culture and the ministries of Member States, were addressed by the EU Strategy on Culture it was important to determine how they related it to their strategic priorities.
20. **Culture in EU external relations and the EU Strategy on Culture:** Heads and strategists were asked to comment on their strategic priorities for EU engagement and the impact of the EU Strategy for Culture on their work, including changed priorities and potential opportunities. Strategists were also asked to indicate who read EU Strategy documents within their organisation, and to comment on engagement with the EU delegation in third countries. Regrettably, several responses to these questions were too partial or non-specific to derive detailed insights from them. However, the following general observations of trends can be made.
21. **Priorities for EU engagement (within Europe and beyond) and impact of the EU Strategy:** members' strategic priorities were consistently highly general. Broad statements related to the significance of organisational and national identity. Several members expressed reservations over any prospective future trend towards development of a single European cultural policy or EU institution responsible for its promotion. Broad rhetorical support was expressed for the EU Strategy on Culture as of abstract value, without engagement in the substance of its specific objectives. A small number of respondents confessed to lacking confidence in their understanding of its objectives.
22. On how the EU Strategy on Culture impacted on organisational strategy, projects and priorities, and whether this posed opportunities, many members did not provide a response and many provided general responses which did not constitute a meaningful answer to the question. A generous interpretation of many responses could be taken to imply broad awareness of the importance of developing a long-term approach to dialogue as part of cultural relations. However, this could not be confidently affirmed, nor was there adequate evidence in many cases to determine whether this was the case in practice.
23. Larger EUNIC members demonstrated both a clearer awareness and incorporation of the EU Strategy's priorities within their work. A number of members expressed confidence regarding convergence of the EU Strategy with their pre-existing approach to international cultural relations. This was expressed both in terms of broad socio-political values relating to e.g. governance, youth empowerment, and their deployment as part of developing a long-term dialogue with civil society partners in third countries.
24. Smaller members which did not currently have the ability to allocate significant resources to activities in third countries indicated less capacity to relate the EU Strategy and its priorities to their work.
25. **Who reads documents on the EU Strategy on culture?** Responses suggested a clear allocation of responsibility at a high level of seniority, including a variety of directorial and strategic personnel. Whether and how such attention to documents informed practice was beyond the

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<sup>10</sup> 'Resolution of the Council of 16 November 2007 on a European Agenda for Culture', Official Journal of the European Union (2007/C 287/01) [available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2007:287:0001:0004:EN:PDF>] (accessed 20/05/15)

<sup>11</sup> 'Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on a Work Plan for Culture (2015-2018)' (2014/C 463/02) [available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52014XG1223%2802%29&from=EN>] (accessed 20/05/15).

scope of this report. Even among members noted as less active in third countries, it was confirmed that relevant documents were read by high level personnel.

26. **Clusters' engagement with the European delegation in third countries:** Members appeared to grant significant discretion to their local offices to determine whether and how to engage with EU (EEAS) delegations. The approach was considered to depend upon how the delegation interpreted its priorities and role regarding culture. Members with experience of engagement, agreed that there was a consensus that effective relationship building over time was good practice for developing insights into the delegation's needs as they related to applications for project funding. Good practice was mutual representation at cluster and delegation meetings.

#### *EUNIC membership*

27. Strategists were asked about how EUNIC membership was incorporated in organisational strategy; its place within programmes, activities and projects; and what resources or other forms of support were allocated to EUNIC activity. In total, these questions garnered a significant level of meaningful responses (96% of respondents, representing 56% of all members). Additionally, 14 member Heads specified advantages they saw in EUNIC membership.
28. **Incorporation of EUNIC membership in organisational strategies:** Incorporation of membership appeared to reflect the diversity of organisational cultures rather than attitudes towards EUNIC objectives. Approaches to incorporation of EUNIC in members' strategies did not reflect the size of members or their institutional status. Many members focused on the simple fact of their membership of the network or they stated principled support for its activity in general terms (39% of responses). A small majority indicated either that membership was managed internally through informal instructions or considered to be a function of cluster or project related work (44% of responses). Few members indicated that they had directly or explicitly incorporated EUNIC membership into their strategic planning and official organisational guidelines (n=4).
29. **The role of membership in activities, programmes and allocation of resources to EUNIC:** Beyond payment of membership fees and financial support for programmes, such as *Crossroads for Culture*, most members indicated that their primary support for EUNIC activity resided at the level of clusters (50% of responses). Where members have been involved in the MENA project, this featured heavily in their articulation of how they have been involved with EUNIC.
30. Incorporation of EUNIC activity within members' strategies was often expressed as still at an 'experimental' phase. In particular, it should be noted that members did not appear to have actively developed monitoring or evaluation processes to determine the success of such activities in terms of either EUNIC or organisational priorities.
31. 58% of responses indicated that non-cluster staff were allocated responsibility for EUNIC activity. This included Heads and specified strategic staff allocated responsibility for awareness of EUNIC activities or promoting EUNIC related activity. 5 members explicitly allocated time for staff to dedicate to EUNIC work outwith clusters.
32. Both larger and smaller members often cited limited funds and staff availability as constraints on involvement in EUNIC activity: 44% of responses indicated the existence of either constraints on EUNIC activity for these reasons or a perceived inability to engage due to lack of resources.
33. Smaller members tended to focus on activities derived from membership: participation in meetings and conferences; receipt of the EUNIC yearbook; training opportunities. Although many such members were not extensively involved in cluster activities, a high level of senior level attention and interest in EUNIC work was often reported. The true extent to which staff (of all varieties of member) not actively involved in EUNIC work were dedicating time or attention to its activities was impossible to quantify or verify.
34. **Heads' views on the added value of membership:** Whilst they articulated a broad range of perceived added value, there was a clear divergence in relation to funding which may reflect differing visions of EUNIC's utility as well as aspirations for its future activities:

- a. 50% of Heads saw EUNIC as a resource for networking between members, sharing best practice, and providing training;
  - b. 43% saw EUNIC Global offering potential value as a broker or advocate for members wishing to access funding opportunities, but 56% did not mention such a role;
  - c. 4 large members saw EUNIC as a potential repository of specific expertise which could be developed to facilitate links to the needs of the External Action Service, and
  - d. 3 Heads explicitly mentioned collaboration with other members as an opportunity of value in terms of improved feasibility of projects, their visibility, and opportunities to learn through active collaboration.
35. Heads of small members saw networking and sharing of best practice within the current format of EUNIC activities as significant to current or prospective capacity building. However, whilst most members tended to enthusiastically voice support for sharing of best practice, only one explicitly mentioned that this had informed substantive change – in this instance, to promotional strategies.
36. **EUNIC engagement in practice: its ‘translation’ into daily work:** Strategists were asked a series of questions on how EUNIC membership and engagement we implemented in the ‘daily work’ of their organisation. These questions sought to get beneath rhetorical commitment to EUNIC goals, to identify structures in place to implement EUNIC work. Questions related to whether staff in clusters were engaged with EUNIC; allocation of budgets to EUNIC activities in clusters and projects; how staff contributions to EUNIC work were appraised; who read EUNIC documents; and the perceived added value of the EUNIC brand, network and support from EUNIC Global.
37. **Awareness:** 13 members provided a meaningful response on the extent to which EUNIC was recognised among cluster staff, with several either not responding, providing unhelpful answers or indicating that the question was not applicable to their work. 50% of viable responses suggested high recognition of EUNIC among people working in clusters.
38. **Budgets:** Membership fees and project costs paid to EUNIC were the full extent of many members’ budgetary allocation to EUNIC activity. Some responses suggested that smaller members’ contributions may depend upon, or could be encouraged by, visibility of their individual involvement within cluster activity.
39. Minimal information was provided on the proportion of budgets allocated to EUNIC projects. Members’ allocation of project funds was on a case-by-case basis with specific allocations to EUNIC activity only in a few exceptional cases. 5 members had a dedicated budgetary allocation for EUNIC activity in clusters. 9 indicated a moderate to high degree of discretion was available to project staff to allocate resources (potentially to EUNIC activity). In addition to observing that very few members allocated dedicated resources to EUNIC work, and that those who did so allocated ‘minimal’ amounts: typically around 1% within the EU, ranging up to an exceptional 6%; and between 2-5% for projects outside the EU.
40. **Appraisal:** it was not possible to draw meaningful conclusions from the data provided.
41. **Who reads EUNIC documents:** Of 19 responses, 53% indicated this took place at the highest level; 21% of members allocated this responsibility to mid-level staff in their hierarchy; and 26% indicated that there was either minimal interest or only low level staff were tasked with reviewing such documents. Care should be taken when assessing the potential significance of the seemingly high proportion of members with high level engagement. This may indicate that the organisation did not have any appointee with special responsibility for overseeing EUNIC work and engagement, meaning this responsibility fell to busy Heads.
42. **Value of the EUNIC brand:** The EUNIC brand was seen as offering potential for added value in the practice of cultural relations outside the EU, with all but one respondent explicitly indicating that multilateral partnerships were a means to enhance their prospects in ‘challenging’ countries; namely, China and India, but also regions in which a particular member had a poor past track record – where the EUNIC brand was potentially more appealing than their own!

43. **EUNIC Global:** The majority of members (61% of responses) perceived value in EUNIC Global's provision of news, information and calls for applications, in facilitating their engagement with the EUNIC network. A third of responses focused directly on support received with funding. Only 11% of responses identified support with gaining access to collaboration as a positive contribution from EUNIC Global. A further 11% indicated their view that support was underdeveloped or minimal.
44. Many members emphasised that they felt well supported through staff capacity building and training provided by EUNIC Global. Opportunities for connecting members, sharing information and discussion were appreciated. Similarly, advocacy on behalf of EUNIC members was recognised. EUNIC Academy, handbook, updates and staff mobility schemes were highlighted as positive.
45. A number of individual comments were made as to the current or prospective added value of EUNIC Global. Specific suggestions were:
  - a. Induction: actively approach newly appointed staff in key positions in member organisations to inform them about the role of EUNIC and what support it can offer;
  - b. Provide support for promotion of media coverage of projects in the local area and internationally;
  - c. Support use of the EUNIC brand for leveraging members' private donors and sponsors;
  - d. Maintain a shared database of expertise for members planning collaboration across the network, eg on digital media, youth or regional expertise;
  - e. Send members a quarterly status report on ongoing or future projects implemented by EUNIC Clusters, best practices and cluster returns on experience, in addition to the existing Newsletter;
  - f. Develop strategies for how members' problem areas could be shared with other EUNIC members to develop best practice, and
  - g. At the level of EU institutions, promote visibility of best practice examples of projects implemented by clusters and EUNIC members;
46. There was consensus that a priority for EUNIC Global should be the development of a coherent framework for monitoring and evaluation of EUNIC projects so that all clusters and their members could be evaluated on the same basis;
47. Other suggestions were that EUNIC Global should:
  - a. Identify, assess and disseminate EU funding opportunities;
  - b. Enable members to gain expertise in project design;
  - c. Support development of funding applications, project logistics and inclusion of smaller EUNIC members, and
  - d. Advise members on the application process for EU cultural programmes, e.g. Creative Europe.

#### *EUNIC's relationship with other European institutions*

48. Neither a definitive trend nor clear divisions between members with regards to enhanced engagement with EU institutions could be identified from analysis of research responses. Division may exist between members in favour of EUNIC Global acting primarily to promote the visibility of its members and *their* projects among EU institutions, and others advocating for active brokerage and oversight of members' attempts to access work with EU-level cultural operators. It should be noted that EUNIC's most active members were among respondents indicating the need for discussion and debate on a range of sometimes contradictory questions:
  - a. How members' knowledge of cultural exchange and education could best be mobilised in accessing and influencing the debates and activities of EU institutions. EUNIC Global may have an active role in recording and promoting good practice in collaborating among members to enhance its visibility;

- b. Strengthening EUNIC's influence and presence in Brussels networks and EU processes; whether EUNIC should act as an advisory body or actually deliver projects; whether this role should be advising the EAS on engaging EUNIC member expertise, or advising members and clusters on engagement with the EAS and other EU institutions (or both).
- c. Whether EUNIC members and EUNIC Global should advise the External Action Service at all (giving particular consideration to associated implications for remaining at 'arm's length' from EU institutions);
- d. How EUNIC Global and its members could best devise and secure opportunities for EU funding for ambitious collaborative projects which included as many members as possible;
- e. Whether EUNIC Global should be the one to apply for grants, or should this be done by coalitions of members in the name of EUNIC? The added value of the EUNIC brand for such applications must be clear.

### *Enhancing cooperation*

49. A primary objective of the research was to observe and identify how, when, and in which priority areas EUNIC members could enhance their cooperation and combine their efforts. Given the objectives of EUNIC, cooperation between members is integral to its function and future growth. As such, a series of questions were posed to members about the extent and drivers of current cooperation with other members, as well as areas where they may be interested in working together more in future.
50. **Current experience and attitudes towards cooperation:** Half of member Heads who responded said that they were involved in joint planning with other EUNIC members in third countries. If cluster work was included, this was a strikingly low proportion, and it was unclear whether members took into consideration collaboration within clusters, or more likely interpreted this question more narrowly in terms of top-level inter-organisational strategic planning. All those indicating such collaboration were large and medium size members.
51. Of the 15 Heads responding to the research, a third declined to specify which factors led them to support collaboration. The respondents identified:
- a. Opportunities to learn through collaboration;
  - b. Scope to increase the impact of projects, and
  - c. Opportunities for cost saving or staff efficiencies.
52. The importance of common organisational priorities of local relevance to areas of activity was affirmed and could be taken as a prerequisite for effective cooperation. Nevertheless, small and mid-sized members were more likely to prioritise participation (at least in principle) in multi-lateral projects in order to gain expertise and experience. It should, however, be noted that the exact nature of how each member envisaged their ideal form and objective of such collaboration when answering this question was not clear from responses. A significant difference in scale and scope of activities across the EUNIC network must be noted in this regard. There is a significant difference between obtaining preferential access to another member's facilities as a venue for short term promotional activities in a country and long-term collaboration on co-delivery of larger scale cluster activities and projects.
53. Strategists' views on how collaboration with other EUNIC members could best be enhanced were varied and diverse, but the following common views were expressed:
- a. Cluster leadership must be clear and effective;
  - b. There must be clear local demand for EUNIC involvement, including opportunity to promote EU values or to work with the EU Delegation, and
  - c. Smaller members voiced need for greater support with developing contacts, organisation and capacity to identify local partners and sources of funding.
54. Some further emphasis was placed on willingness to consider collaboration where this may provide cost-savings. However, over half of strategists, responding on behalf of a variety of

- members, did not specify a vision for how collaboration with other members might be enhanced.
55. 53% of Heads expressed support, at least in principle, for working with other EUNIC members as part of a European platform for culture. However, it should be noted questioning provided no detail as to what form this may take. Two Heads emphasised the importance of further discussion in this regard. A third of Heads who responded declined to comment.
  56. Both Heads and strategists were asked whether there were geographic areas in which members would like to share premises and work together *in future*. Of 15 members responding, 27% expressed no interest in further collaboration, or emphasised a need to focus on existing cluster activity. Those who did express a view identified:
    - a. Brussels, including interest in piloting a European House of Culture;
    - b. MENA;
    - c. China;
    - d. Countries where not currently represented (3 members);
    - e. India.
  57. Only four members indicated plans to increase such cooperation in future. The extent to which such plans are long term aspirations or actually under preparation was not made clear.
  58. **General insights on effective cooperation:** Beyond the importance of identifying and communicating common geographical and strategic priorities, it was apparent that many smaller members wanted experience in multi-lateral work, but needed support with planning and logistics. It should be noted that some members did not express a desire for increased collaboration with other EUNIC members. There are also some indications that members felt priority should be given to learning lessons and making improvements in regard to existing collaboration in clusters.
  59. It was not possible to determine whether increased collaboration through EUNIC was regarded as a plausible solution for dealing with perceived constraints on collaboration. It was not possible to determine whether desires for collaboration *necessarily* led to ministries and national institutes doing so through the EUNIC framework, nor what specific added value was achieved by doing so. Nevertheless, it was plausible that continued or enhanced support by EUNIC Global and other EUNIC members could encourage smaller members to engage more actively in multi-lateral projects.
  60. **Recommendations for engagement with EU institutions:** Member Heads were asked to comment on how EUNIC Global could best work with the EEAS and Commission towards the development of recommendations for culture in external relations. Both Heads and Strategists were asked whether they supported EUNIC Global working with EU delegations in future, as well as for their general reflections on how EUNIC Global should best support the network and its members in future.
  61. The range of responses to these questions was very broad. Neither a definitive trend nor clear divisions between members with regards to enhanced engagement with EU institutions could be identified from analysis of research responses. However, it was possible to draw out the responses below, which came from EUNIC's most active members. The responses applied mostly to EUNIC Global:
    - a. Ensure that members' knowledge of cultural exchange and education contributed to the debates and activities of EU institutions;
    - b. Record and promote good practice in collaborating among members to enhance visibility;
    - c. Strengthening EUNIC's influence and presence in Brussels networks and EU processes as:
    - d. An advisory body;
    - e. Project delivery vehicle;
    - f. Source of advice to the EAS on engaging EUNIC member expertise and to members and clusters on engagement with the EAS and other EU institutions.
  62. Members also suggested that EUNIC should:

- a. Consider how to remain at 'arm's length' from EU institutions;
- b. Devise and secure opportunities for EU funding of ambitious collaborative projects which include as many members as possible, and
- c. Consider acting as an applicant for grants, or support coalitions of members.
- d. The diversity of opinions expressed, the lack of specificity and degree of tentative speculation involved in members' responses to questions in this area meant it was hard to draw any clear conclusions. The contrast in responses in relation to the role of EUNIC Global acting for the network in relation to funding was notable. There was a clear division of views here, which would benefit from further discussion.



## A. Methodology

### *Data collection*

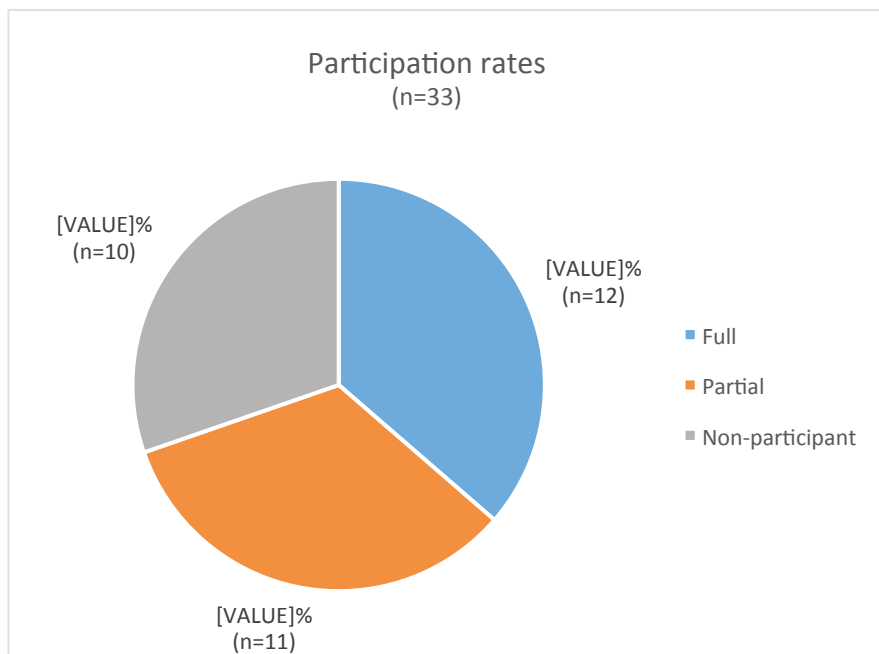
1. The research was conducted by a combination of desk-based research, questionnaires and 'semi-structured' qualitative interviews with the Heads of EUNIC members.
2. Data collection sought to identify the substantive practices through which members incorporated engagement with EUNIC and the European Agenda for Culture into the practical delivery of their strategies and vision for cultural relations. The research targeted all 33 EUNIC member organisations.
3. The questions sought to go beyond identification of rhetorical support for EUNIC membership and the European Agenda. The 2 questionnaires – the first for Heads and the second for Strategists, are reproduced below. Where dictated by a member's organisational structure, a composite list of questions was provided to a single point of contact.
4. Member Heads were provided with the list of intended questions for consideration prior to interview. Where scheduling or availability issues precluded a telephone interview, a written response to the questions was invited from Heads.
5. The agenda of interview questions reflected the indicative areas of interest which were provided to CCR by EUNIC Global.
6. The questions posed to EUNIC members aimed to go beyond statements of vision, mission, goals and business plans, in order to understand how these were executed in practice. The research therefore adopted a 'three-pronged' methodological approach:
  - a. Members' strategy officers (or cognates) were requested to complete questionnaires on how EUNIC membership and engagement were translated into the 'day to day' execution of cultural relations policies;
  - b. Access was requested to members' internal documents which evidence the incorporation (or absence) of EUNIC membership and EU Agenda into their vision, strategies and mandates; and
  - c. Following receipt and analysis of the above, Heads were approached for interview or a written response to the planned interview questions in order to:
    - i. Validate research insights derived from documents and questionnaires;
    - ii. Obtain insights into the role of EUNIC membership in the organisational vision for the future – including recommendations for engagement with EUNIC Global and in clusters.
7. This approach sought to not only derive substantive research insights, but also to draw attention to the role of EUNIC among members' Heads by directly engaging them in the research.
8. Data collection for the research was conducted in two phases:
9. **Scoping study:** Between 18/02/15 and 20/02/15, EUNIC Global contacted seven members to invite their participation in an initial scoping study to be conducted prior to extending the research to all EUNIC members. The preliminary 'scoping' exercise was intended to gain insight into these members' cultural relations strategies and experiences and to 'pilot' the methodological approach of the research. A disappointingly low initial response rate led to the development of the methodology described above, in consultation with the EUNIC strategy board. This shifted emphasis from solely pursuing responses from member Heads, to also include strategy officers, in order to gain insight into practicalities relating to delivery of cultural relations strategies.
10. **Main data collection:** Following agreement upon the research methodology in consultation with the EUNIC strategy board in March, Strategists and Heads of all 33 EUNIC members were contacted by the research team. Contact was made by email on 01/04/15 and 02/04/15. Members who delayed their response received follow up reminders from the research team,

with non-respondents receiving encouragement by telephone from EUNIC Global throughout mid to late April.

*Response rates*

*Summary of Members' Participation in the Research*

	Number	% Members
Total Number of EUNIC Members contacted	33	100%
Responses to Questions from 'Heads'	15	45%
Responses to Questions from 'Strategists'	20	61%
<b>Full Participation by Members</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>36%</b>
<b>Partial Participation by Members</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>Non-participation by Members</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>30%</b>



11. **Commentary on the Extent of Members' Participation:** The research team received full or partial responses from 23 out of 33 members (69%). However, there were significant limitations to the robustness of these responses which limited the scope for analysis.
12. **Partial responses:** Only 12 members (36%) provided a response to both the questions for Heads and Strategists. As different research questions were posed to members' Heads and strategists,<sup>12</sup> in most instances, only a partial response to the research agenda was received. In addition, some responses were incomplete or difficult to interpret, in others the question was misunderstood, not answered at all, or problematic (e.g. non-quantifiable responses to quantitative questions).
13. **Non-participation:** There was a relatively high degree of non-participation (30% of members).<sup>13</sup> Members who did not respond included 6 national ministries and 4 national institutes, from a

<sup>12</sup> Except where a member organisation was deemed not to have a strategic 'focal point' to contact. In such cases, Heads kindly completed extra questions relating to organisational strategy and its implementation.

<sup>13</sup> Bulgarian Ministry of Culture, Cypriot Ministry of Education and Culture, Estonian Institute, Finnish Cultural and Academic Institutes, Hellenic Foundation for Culture, Hellenic Republic Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

broad range of Member States. Despite the lack of an obvious trend in non-participation, it can arguably be considered a research finding. The level of non-participation suggests need for great care in future endeavours which seek to encourage broad engagement in EUNIC processes and activities. Extremely low initial participation in the research was significantly improved by extensive efforts by EUNIC Global to encourage members to respond.

14. **Inadequate access to organisational documents:** In order to better understand members' priorities, all were requested to provide electronic copies of their most recent business plans, strategy documents and where applicable, individual plans for particular regions, countries or sectors.
15. Only 8 members provided access to organisational documents. Of these, 4 provided documents in English.<sup>14</sup> Due to limited access to organisational documents, it was not possible to comment on the substantive priorities of members in detail (beyond the extent and manner articulated by respondents in interviews and questionnaires).
16. In addition:
  - a. Members were generally not willing to facilitate EUNIC Global's desire for access to potentially classified data on certain business practices; for example, budgetary data, individuals' professional responsibilities, structures in place for reporting on activities, etc. None provided this data in such a way that the prioritisation of EUNIC could be quantified;
  - b. This indicated a degree of reluctance among members to share business relevant data across the EUNIC network, and
  - c. It could also indicate that EUNIC Global was seen as the provider of information, rather than its recipient or a facilitator of data exchange between members.

## **B. Questions for Heads of EUNIC Members**

### *Culture in EU external relations and the EU Strategy on Culture:*

1. What do you take culture to mean (in your work)?
2. (How) do you promote your own national culture?
3. What drives your strategy (economic, cultural, political concerns)?
4. What are your strategic priorities for EU engagement through culture and external relations (within Europe and beyond)?
5. What impact does the EU Strategy on Culture have on your work (strategy, projects)?
  - a. What strategic priorities have changed?
  - b. What opportunities are there in this for you?

### *Operational arrangements*

6. What degree of operational independence do you have from direct government control, *in practice*?
7. What level of independence do you give your individual country offices?
8. What mechanisms are in place for reporting to your government?
9. Is the government represented on your board?
10. What, if anything may trigger an intervention from your government?
  - a. How might this impact your operational independence – either as an institution, or for your delegations?

### *Your geographic focus and priorities:*

11. How do you identify geographical priorities?
12. How could EUNIC help you engage in these areas?

### *How your cultural relations strategy and activities relate to EUNIC membership:*

13. What advantages do you see from EUNIC membership?

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Luxemburg Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dutch Culture, Slovakian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Slovenian Ministry of Culture.

<sup>14</sup> Austrian Federal Ministry, British Council, Croatian Ministry, Finnish Cultural and Academic Institute.

14. The preparatory action report recommended that EUNIC worked with the EAS, the Commission and those responsible for culture on the evaluation of pilot projects to inform a second set of recommendations for culture in external relations. How can EUNIC best contribute to this process?

*Cooperation with other EUNIC members:*

15. Are you involved in joint planning with other EUNIC members in third countries?
16. What factors lead you to support collaboration (please rank the in order of priority)?
17. Would you be interested in working with other EUNIC members as part of a European platform for culture?
18. Are there any particular countries/geographic areas where you would like to share premises and work together in the future?

*Your recommendations for engagement with EUNIC Global and in clusters:*

19. How could EUNIC help you access strategic areas through mutually beneficial partnerships with other members?
20. Are you supportive of EUNIC Global working with EU delegations in future?
21. Is there anything else you would like to add about what EUNIC Global could do for you?

### **C. Questionnaire for Strategy Officers**

*Culture in EU external relations and the EU Strategy on Culture:*

1. What are your strategic priorities for culture in external relations (in the EU and beyond)?
2. What impact does the EU Strategy on Culture have on your work (strategy, projects)?
  - a. What strategic priorities have changed?
  - b. What opportunities are there in this for you?
3. Who reads and acts upon documents relating to the EU Strategy on Culture within your organisation? At what level in your organisational structure are they?
4. When working in EUNIC clusters in third countries, how do you engage with the European delegation? What benefits are there in doing so?

*How your cultural relations strategy and activities relate to EUNIC membership:*

5. How do you include EUNIC in your strategies?
6. What place does EUNIC have in your programmes, activities and projects?
7. What staff, resources, acknowledgement or other forms of support do you allocate to EUNIC?

*How do you 'translate' EUNIC membership and engagement into your organisation's daily work?*

8. Is EUNIC recognised by people working in clusters?
9. Is a dedicated budget allocated to EUNIC activities in clusters? If not, do you have plans to do so?
10. What proportion of your budget is allocated to EUNIC projects?
  - a. Within Europe.
  - b. Beyond Europe.
11. Have these resources been activated / put into action?
12. How much operational freedom do you have to allocate funds to EUNIC projects?
13. What personal contribution are staff in clusters expected to make to EUNIC (eg roles, responsibilities, personal targets, job descriptions...) and what accountability do they have for performance?
14. Who reads EUNIC documents within your organisation? At what level in your organisational structure are they?

*EUNIC clusters and EUNIC Global:*

15. How do you inform and instruct your colleagues working in clusters?
16. What assistance do you give them?
17. What level of operational independence do your clusters have in practice?

18. What are the current barriers to engaging with EUNIC clusters? Do you have a strategy to overcome them?
19. What monitoring and evaluation arrangements do you have for your work with EUNIC clusters?
20. What would a successful EUNIC cluster project look like?
21. How does EUNIC Global help you engage with EUNIC?

*Your geographic focus and priorities:*

22. How do you identify geographical priorities?
23. Do these relate to countries/clusters? Do you also prioritise regional projects involving collaboration between clusters?
24. Where would the EUNIC brand/network be helpful for you and what value would it add there?
25. Please describe three of your success stories in carrying out EUNIC projects with key local players.
26. Where an activity or project has worked less well than hoped, what insights / lessons could you pass on to help avoid similar mistakes?

*Your recommendations for engagement with EUNIC clusters:*

27. How can collaboration with other EUNIC members in third countries work best for you?
28. Would there be benefit in sharing facilities (buildings, logistics, cultural centres...) with other EUNIC members?
  - a. If yes, could you give more details as to the amount of facilities shared, their location and purpose?
  - b. Do you have plans to increase this kind of cooperation in future (in what ways, where and why)?

*Your recommendations for engagement with EUNIC Global:*

29. How can EUNIC Global best add value to your activities?
30. Should EUNIC Global work more closely with EU delegations in future?
31. Is there anything else you would like to add about what EUNIC Global could do for you?

### Case studies

1. All EUNIC members were requested to provide details on three success stories in carrying out EUNIC projects with key local players, as well as to reflect on lessons learned where an activity or project worked less well than hoped. Views were also sought on what an ideal, successful EUNIC project would look like.
2. Regrettably, where members engaged with these requests, very little detail was provided, tending simply to list successful projects. No members provided examples of insights derived from challenging projects that had not gone to plan. In particular, responses indicated that members did not have a framework which could be used to evaluate or describe success, particularly in terms of value added by the EUNIC framework.
3. In light of this, the following section can only provide brief snapshots of some EUNIC members' success stories. It should be noted that significant support was voiced across EUNIC members for sharing of best practice and for EUNIC Global collecting and promoting EUNIC success stories.

#### Latvian Institute (LI)

4. Although a small organisation, with a three person team and “no budget”, the Latvian Institute has succeeded in developing a highly effective digital communication strategy.
5. In general, LI does not have specified priority areas for development of ‘communication products.’ According to the institute, its website [www.latvia.eu](http://www.latvia.eu) is visited by approximately 230 000 customers annually. However, its Facebook page (“If you like Latvia, Latvia likes you”)<sup>15</sup> received more than 10 million visitors in 2014. It has 79,000 direct followers, responsible for an estimated 500,000 shares.
6. LI have the competence and skills to develop communication products in Russian for the Eastern partnership countries. However, due to a lack of financial support, LI has not been able to pursue this line of activity.

#### Danish Cultural Institute (DCI)

7. Engaged in 18 EUNIC clusters as a full member,<sup>16</sup> the Danish Cultural Institute could be said to be a middle-sized EUNIC member. The DCI provides an interesting example of a national institute for culture which has recently begun to develop a broad approach to international cultural relations which goes beyond traditional national projection, embracing a multilateral approach under the EUNIC brand. A mixture of strategic prioritisation and permitting high level strategic personnel to allocate significant time to EUNIC activities has allowed DCI to work in collaboration with larger EUNIC members on high profile projects; for example, taking a leading role in the *European-Chinese Cultural Dialogue* in collaboration with the Goethe Institute.<sup>17</sup> The leader of the DCI in China was formerly the president of EUNIC in China. DCI is currently one of only a handful of EUNIC members with an advocacy role in Brussels.

#### Instituto Cervantes (IC)

8. As one of a number of EUNIC members involved in the MENA Pilot 1, Instituto Cervantes tentatively cites its activities in Casablanca as a possible success story. As President of the Casablanca cluster, IC recently hosted a meeting of cultural management staff from across the Arab world. In doing so, IC saw its role as promoting Spanish, Latin American and EU culture.

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/IfYouLikeLatviaLatviaLikesYou> (accessed 21/05/15).

<sup>16</sup> According to recent fact-finding exercise by EUNIC Global. Seven of these eighteen clusters are outside the EU.

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.dankultur.dk/EUNIC-1.aspx> (accessed 20/05/15).

9. Particular attention should be given to IC's example in its conscious engagement with the need for substantive evaluation of activities in order to determine whether they constitute success or not. Although IC has a standard procedure to evaluate its other activities, such a procedure has not yet been developed for evaluation of EUNIC projects:

*“A successful project should use the EUNIC international network (involve not only most members of the cluster but also other clusters in the region or beyond), get return on investments, have a measurable impact on the society of partner countries, strengthen existing partnerships and reach significant media coverage (at local and European level).”*

*(Eduardo Sanchez Moreno, IC)*