



# General Assembly Report

Copenhagen, 8-9 June 2016



This is a report of the EUNIC General Assembly which took place in Copenhagen on 8-9 June 2016. The key events were:

- The positive welcome made by the General Assembly to the offer of a strategic partnership presented by Walter Zampieri from the European Commission;
- The granting of a mandate to the Board of Directors to engage with the European Commission and the European External Action Service to discuss the terms of engagement for a formal partnership between the EU and EUNIC in the fields of cultural diplomacy and cultural relations.
- The amendment of the EUNIC statutes to allow for the expansion of the Board of Directors from three to six members and the election of Johannes Ebert, Anne Grillo, Teresa Indjein and Zdeněk Lyčka.

To read all the conclusions of this meeting, see the annex on page 6.



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## Welcome from Michael Metz and Presidential Report from Rafael R. Ponga and handover of Presidency

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*'We have made significant progress over the last twelve months. We have now, within our grasp, a unique opportunity to fulfill our ambitious aspirations, to justify why our organisations joined in this partnership ten years ago'*

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Rafael R. Ponga  
EUNIC President  
2015-2016

The meeting opened with a welcome from Michael Metz to Copenhagen highlighting the importance of the meeting now that the Joint Communication Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations had been published only hours earlier. Before beginning his report on the year, Rafael R. Ponga explained that Vice-President Koen Verlaeckaert could not attend the meeting because his father had passed away a few days before and expressed his condolences. He then proceeded with his report and emphasized the efforts made by the network towards making their clusters' work more strategic and thus becoming potentially indispensable partners for the delivery of the new strategy.

## The EU Strategy for International Cultural Relations: presentation by EC representative Walter Zampieri

Walter Zampieri opened his presentation by saying that the process of defining a strategy was, like EUNIC, ten years old and had been facilitated by the ever closer relationship between Member States, their cultural institutes and the European Institutions. He went on to explain the principles and values which underpin the new strategy and outlined the three work streams:

- Supporting culture as an engine for sustainable social and economic development;

- Promoting culture and intercultural dialogue for peaceful inter-community relations;
- Reinforcing cooperation on cultural heritage.

The strategy will be implemented via partnerships and he stated that the most important partnership would be the partnership with EUNIC:

**“following consultation with relevant stakeholders, the Commission will propose later this year a new type of partnership between the EEAS, Commission services, national cultural institutes and their umbrella organisation (where mandates allow), setting out the principles of pan-European cooperation and the values that underpin it” (JOIN(2016) 29 final)**

In the Q&A session which followed, there was a general and enthusiastic welcome for this offer of partnership. Walter was asked what contribution EUNIC was expected to make to building the strategy and how the partnership would be formalised. He explained that EUNIC could best contribute by sharing experience, best practice and content, and clarified that the plan was to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with EUNIC.

## **Response to the Joint Communication: the Copenhagen Criteria**

The General Assembly then split into four groups to give Heads the opportunity to share their organisations’ position on the terms of engagement that would be given to the Board of Directors in negotiating such an MoU.

### **I. Principles and Values**

There was general agreement that the principles and values outlined in the Joint Communication were consistent with those of EUNIC and its member organisations. Mutuality and reciprocity were highlighted as the values that should underpin the partnership.

### **II. Themes and geography**

While the thematic and geographical priorities indicated in the Joint Communication were in general aligned with the organisational priorities of EUNIC members, it was emphasised that the principle of variable geometry would need to be applied. Given that the document focuses on the EU’s external relations, cultural relations within the EU itself should not be neglected.

### **III. Partnership arrangements**

Heads suggested that the most efficient way of negotiating and concluding an MoU would be to do it at the highest level between the Board of Directors and senior officials in the EU Institutions in Brussels, not by EUNIC’s member organisations themselves. However, the process should be a consultative one so that Heads are kept informed and approve collectively the document to be signed by the Board of Directors.

### **IV. Programmes and projects**



There should be a pilot approach to projects and programmes in strategic countries agreed by EUNIC and the EU institutions. The principle of variable geometry should be applied in this case as well, together with a flexible approach that would make projects and programmes adaptable, take different forms and propose different solutions on a case-by-case basis.

## **Governance reform: amendments to EUNIC Statutes**

Beginning a process of governance reform so that the EUNIC network can adapt to the new opportunities and challenges posed by the offer of partnership, the General Assembly agreed to the amendments to the Statutes proposed by the Board of Directors. The major change was to expand the Board of Directors from 3 to 6 members and moving to one Vice-President instead of two. Furthermore the changes included delegating some authorities from the Board of Directors to the EUNIC Global office and other administrative changes to make the day to day operations of the office more efficient. The elections followed the amended Statutes, which called for four new candidates for a two-year period. There were seven committed candidates and, after a round of voting, the following were elected:

- Johannes Ebert – Goethe-Institut
- Anne Grillo – French Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Teresa Indjein – Austrian Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs
- Zdeněk Lyčka – Czech Centres

## **EUNIC Global Progress Report**

Andrew Murray, Director of the EUNIC Global office, presented the main events and achievements over the last six months. The Crossroads for Culture project has been aligned to the new Strategic Framework and is now fully integrated into the activities of the office. Of particular note is the work done with clusters by means of a new cluster classification mirroring the EU's approach to work with countries (EEAS, DG DEVCO, DG NEAR and DG EAC), the three-year cluster strategies in process, and the regional approaches to cluster development which this year is focusing on the EU and its Neighbourhood using the support of the Crossroads of Culture project.

EUNIC Global also organised three knowledge-sharing events with members on tax and status in London, hosted by the British Council; operating models in Munich, hosted by Goethe-Institut; and teachers' accreditation in Alcalá de Henares, hosted by Instituto Cervantes. Similar events are being planned for the next 6-9 months.

The Action Plan for members agreed in Brussels at the last General Assembly in December 2015 is being implemented by most members and the response to the request for progress report was very positive. Most members were able to identify their priority clusters and were reviewing the role of their focal point; however more work needs to be done on identifying the bilateral funding currently being provided to clusters.

The EUNIC Academy events have been transformed into strategic meetings for focal points prior to General Assemblies. The benefits of these meetings are being observed in the more focused and productive proceedings of the General Assemblies.

EUNIC Communications are being reviewed and the EUNIC Global office has refocused its target audiences to mainly address the needs of members and clusters.

In the absence of Koen Verlaeckt, EUNIC Treasurer, Andrew Murray delivered the financial report which included a positive audit report for 2015. Given the scale of the operations being undertaken by EUNIC, the General Assembly agreed to move to a double accounting and approve a new auditor for both Crossroads for Culture and EUNIC Global accounts. The General Assembly also agreed on the submission of another application by EUNIC to the European Commission to continue receiving funding under the Creative Europe Programme for the period 2017-2020.

Finally, five new clusters were presented by Michael Metz to the General Assembly for approval: Skopje, Salvador de Bahia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Qatar, and Bolivia. Although the General Assembly approved some of these, the Board of Directors and the EUNIC Global office, on reflection, have adapted this decision to provisionally authorise the operations of all five, pending the outcomes of the cluster governance review which will result the signature of a new cluster charter for all the network.

## **Cluster Fund Evaluation and Recommendations**

Elisa Grafulla, Cluster Development Director, presented the results of the Cluster Fund evaluation. The main conclusion is that clusters have difficulties in designing and delivering projects with ambitions which go beyond collective showcasing. The evaluation showed a lack of strategic thinking behind cluster projects as well as little or no preparatory research and impact assessment. The recommendations for the next Cluster Fund editions are therefore to use it to deliver the EUNIC Strategic Framework and cluster strategies with a view to improving the quality of project design and delivery.

The General Assembly pointed out the importance of the sustainability of the Cluster Fund and asked the Board of Directors to prepare a plan for the next three years. It also encouraged a move towards a more proactive approach in allocating funding, this would mean identifying priority projects and the identification of the most appropriate clusters to deliver them. There was a general agreement that access to the Cluster Fund should be more flexible, with at least two calls for proposals per year matched by a request to members to replenish funding accordingly.

## **Report by the University of Siena on Cultural Diplomacy Training**

Professor Pierangelo Isernia from the University of Siena presented a draft report on Cultural Diplomacy Training commissioned by EUNIC Global. In an entertaining presentation, Pierangelo provided data on courses, content and countries in this field. The EU and the US are the main regions providing this training, although there are two different approaches: the US focuses on public diplomacy while the EU focuses on cultural diplomacy



and cultural relations. The research identified a lack of agreement as to what constituted the skills and competencies required for cultural diplomacy and highlighted the existing gap between academics and practitioners. Pierangelo proposed a joint working group of academics and practitioners to set training standards as well as practical proposals for summer schools. The General Assembly asked then the Board of Directors to continue working with the University of Siena and other academic partners to design a training and development framework for EUNIC members and the EU Institutions.



## Conclusions of the Copenhagen General Assembly (8-9 June 2016)

- The General Assembly thanks Rafael R. Ponga, Secretary General of Instituto Cervantes, for his commitment and service as EUNIC President between June 2015 and June 2016 and, before that, as member of the Board of Directors for two years.
- The General Assembly welcomes Michael Metz Mørch, Secretary General of Danish Cultural Institute, as new President of EUNIC, and Koen Verlaeckt, Secretary General of Flanders Department of Foreign Affairs, as new Vice-President for the period June 2016 to June 2017.
- The General Assembly welcomes the Joint Communication “Towards an EU Strategy for international cultural relations” of the European External Action Service and the European Commission and thanks Walter Zampieri from the European Commission for his presentation and contribution.
- The General Assembly mandates the Board of Directors to engage with the European Commission and the European External Action Service to discuss the terms of engagement for a formal partnership between the EU and EUNIC in the field of cultural diplomacy and cultural relations. The mandate is:
  - I. to begin working on the general part of an MoU based on the steer given by the General Assembly (the “Copenhagen Criteria”) and to present a draft at the next General Assembly in December 2016 in Brussels;
  - II. in parallel, to begin working with the EU Institutions on the content and practical arrangements which will form the annexes to the MoU and to provide a progress report at the next General Assembly meeting.
- The General Assembly approves the amendments to EUNIC’s Statutes as proposed in the document “Proposed Revised Statutes 30.05.16”. The General Assembly invites the Board of Directors to report at the next General Assembly meeting on the practical implementation of the new Statutes.
- Having been presented with the results of the voting procedure, the General Assembly welcomes four new ordinary members to the Board of Directors, Johannes Ebert, Anne Grillo, Teresa Indjein, and Zdeněk Lyčka, for the period June 2016 to June 2018. The General Assembly thanks all candidates for their interest and commitment.
- The General Assembly takes note of the wish of the the Board of Directors, in accordance with Article 10.5 of the Statutes, to delegate some of its statutory responsibilities to the Director of EUNIC Global Office, and requests the Board of Directors to inform the General Assembly of December 2016 on the list of delegated responsibilities.
- The General Assembly acknowledges the progress made in the implementation of the Action Plan for members, and commits to further advance its implementation by the next General Assembly meeting in December 2016.
- The General Assembly agrees on the submission of another application by EUNIC to the European Commission to continue receiving funding under Creative Europe (Culture Sub-programme - Support to European Networks) for the period 2017-2020.
- The General Assembly approves the recommendations for the operation of the Cluster Fund, as mentioned in the document “Cluster Fund Evaluation – Conclusions and Recommendations 30.05.2016” and takes note of the suggestions received. EUNIC Global will prepare the next call



and submit it to the Board of Directors for approval before it is launched, in September. The General Assembly invites members to contribute to the Cluster Fund if they have not yet done so.

- The General Assembly mandates the Board of Directors to prepare recommendations for the reform of cluster governance and to present them at the next General Assembly meeting, to be held in December 2016. The General Assembly acknowledges the applications submitted by the EUNIC clusters in Skopje, Salvador de Bahia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Qatar, and Bolivia, and postpones the decision on their final approval pending the results of the governance reform.
- The General Assembly mandates the Board of Directors to develop a training and development framework for EUNIC members and the EU Institutions; the first stage will be to do a training needs analysis and to present a progress report at the General Assembly in December 2016.
- The General Assembly appoints VRC Registered Auditor as the new auditor of the Association. The General Assembly acknowledges the positive audit report for 2015 and approves the balance sheet and the report for the financial year 2015
- The General Assembly expresses its gratitude to the Danish Cultural Institute for the great hospitality extended to its members and to the staff of the EUNIC Global Office.





# Participants

|  | Country         | Organisation  | Last Name        | First Name      |
|--|-----------------|---|------------------|-----------------|
|  | Austria         | Austrian Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs | Indjein          | Teresa          |
|  | Belgium         | WBI   | Stephane         | Cools           |
|  | Belgium         | Flanders Department of Foreign affairs                        | Hatse            | Bert            |
|  | Cyprus          | Embassy of Cyprus in Denmark                                  | Douglas Rayner   | Martin          |
|  | Czech Republic  | Czech Centres   | Zdeněk           | Lyčka           |
|  | Czech Republic  | Czech Centres   | Pavelka          | Kamil           |
|  | Denmark         | Danish Cultural institute                                     | K.Holm           | Malene          |
|  | Denmark         | Danish Cultural Institute                                     | Agger            | Merete          |
|  | Denmark         | Danish Cultural Institute                                     | Lindstrøm        | Ann Marie       |
|  | Denmark         | Danish Cultural Institute                                     | Kollerup Madsen  | Kirstine        |
|  | Denmark         | Danish Cultural Institute                                     | Kjeldsholm Linke | Katrine         |
|  | Denmark         | Danish Cultural Institute                                     | Metz Morch       | Michael         |
|  | Denmark         | Danish Cultural Institute                                     | Gerlach-Hansen   | Olaf            |
|  | Estonia         | Estonian Insitute   | Funk             | Karlo           |
|  | Finland         | Finnish Cultural Institute                                    | Ekman            | Tove            |
|  | France          | French MFA  | Borel            | Carine          |
|  | France          | Alliance Francaise  | Crespy           | Jean-Claude     |
|  | France          | French MFA  | Grillo           | Anne            |
|  | France          | Institut français Paris                                       | Mouroux          | Valérie         |
|  | France          | Institut Français   | Fontanel         | Anais           |
|  | Germany         | Goethe-Institut   | Höhn             | Susanne         |
|  | Germany         | Goethe-Institut   | Ebert            | Johannes        |
|  | Germany         | Ifa   | Grätz            | Ronald          |
|  | Greece          | Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Greece                           | Katramadou       | Kouzinia        |
|  | Hungary         | Balassi Institute   | Zslot            | Szonja          |
|  | Ireland         | Culture Ireland   | O'Connor         | Therese         |
|  | Italy           | Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs                           | Pilonca          | Giovanni        |
|  | Italy           | Società Dante Alighieri                                       | Vincenzoni       | Andrea          |
|  | Italy           | Società Dante Alighieri                                       | Menzinger        | Costanza        |
|  | Latvia          | Latvian Institute   | Rozenberga       | Aiva            |
|  | Lithuania       | Lithuanian Culture Institute                                  | Žilinskienė      | Aušrinė         |
|  | Luxemburg       | Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs Luxembourg           | Kreiger          | Carlo           |
|  | Malta           | Arts Council Malta  | Attard           | Toni            |
|  | Poland          | Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland                         | Kropiwnicki      | Aleksander      |
|  | Portugal        | Camoës Insitute   | Caetano          | Cristina        |
|  | Romania         | Romanian Cultural Insitute                                    | Marin            | Claudiu         |
|  | Romania         | Romanian Cultural Insitute                                    | Jicman           | Liviu Sebastian |
|  | Spain           | AECID Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation     | Joaquín          | Durán           |
|  | Spain           | AECID Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation     | Taboada          | Itziar          |
|  | Spain           | AECID Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation     | Pico de Coana    | Leticia         |
|  | Spain           | Instituto Cervantes   | Montesinos       | Philippe        |
|  | Spain           | Instituto Cervantes   | Rodríguez-Ponga  | Rafael          |
|  | Spain           | Instituto Cervantes   | Sánchez Moreno   | Eduardo         |
|  | Slovenia        | Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, Slovenia            | Raisp            | Natalia         |
|  | Slovenia        | Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, Slovenia            | Lampeij          | Tina            |
|  | Slovakia        | Embassy of the Slovak Republik in Copenhagen                  | Lipovsky         | Stanislav       |
|  | Sweden          | Swedish Institute   | Rembe            | Annika          |
|  | Sweden          | Swedish Institute   | Kron             | Maria           |
|  | The Netherlands | Dutch Culture   | Kieft            | Robert          |
|  | UK              | British Council   | Lynes            | Robert          |
|  | Belgium         | EUNIC Global  | Murray           | Andrew          |
|  | Belgium         | EUNIC Global  | Grafulla         | Elisa           |
|  | Belgium         | EUNIC Global  | Poulton          | Stefanie        |
|  | Belgium         | EUNIC Global  | Gawronska        | Kamila          |
|  | Belgium         | EUNIC Global - C4C  | Kirjazovaite     | Lina            |
|  | Belgium         | EUNIC Global  | Spentzos         | Efthymios       |
|  | Belgium         | EUNIC Global  | Rasmussen        | Tanja           |
|  | Belgium         | DG EAC  | Zampieri         | Walter          |
|  | Italy           | University of Sienna  | Isernia          | Pierangelo      |
|  | Denmark         | Minister for Culture Denmark                                  | Haarder          | Bertel          |