

TOWARDS A COMMON EUROPEAN CULTURAL DIPLOMACY?

A contribution to the debate by **Rod Fisher**
Director, International Intelligence on Culture

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SOME CONCERNS ABOUT EU DELEGATION'S EXTERNAL CULTURAL ACTIONS

- Ad hoc
- Lack strategic objectives
- Insufficiently rooted in local need
- Insufficient engagement with local cultural sector
- One-off projects not conducive to sustainability
- No quality assurance
- Inadequate budgets for promotion
- NCI's often reluctant to fund EU event costs
- No systematic evaluation

ADDED VALUE OF CULTURE IN EU EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Culture can:

- Contribute to EU profile & demystify its role
- Facilitate engagement with local public when not seen as politically driven
- Enhance understanding, trust, mutual respect
- Reinforce intercultural dialogue
- Build bridges when political dialogue faltering/broken
- Contribute to conflict resolution & reconciliation
- Provide opportunity for European expertise to be shared (e.g. in heritage conservation/restoration)

ADDED VALUE OF EUROPEAN DIMENSION IN EXTERNAL CULTURAL RELATIONS

- Enables Member States / NCIs to share resources by co-operating (e.g. through EUNIC)
- Can provide visibility for smaller EU states with limited budgets
- Could provide critical mass to access emerging markets
- Can help promote the diversity of Europe's culture/cultural economy
- Could extend mobility of cultural practitioners & their work
- May strengthen European cohesion by encouraging Member States to act more as European players in global arena
- Reflects reality of greater emphasis on multilateral relations

SOME GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR CULTURAL ACTION IN EU EXTERNAL RELATIONS (1)

- EU action should complement, not compete with, actions of Member States
- The EU role should be primarily as a facilitator or initiator, not an organiser of cultural action
- While presenting the unity of purpose of the EU, actions must reflect its cultural diversity
- There should be no hierarchy related to population, size, culture or language in the pursuit of EU action
- European Commission delegations need to be equipped with appropriate skills
- Need to recognise cultural relations is two way process

SOME GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR CULTURAL ACTION IN EU EXTERNAL RELATIONS (2)

- Avoid actions in individual Member States that are repackaged/rebranded with EU label
- Evaluation mechanisms should be built into EU initiatives
- A policy framework must be coherent and strategic to avoid current shortcomings with ad hoc events
- Involve Europe's cultural stakeholders in process of elaborating a strategy for EU external relations
- The policy needs to be underpinned with adequate resources

WHAT KIND OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS POLICY? SOME ELEMENTS OF AN EU ACTION AGENDA (1)

Build sustainable cultural co-operation through:

- Multi-annual programme(s) to promote mobility of cultural practitioners & exchange of people & ideas
- Support for capacity building in Member States & third countries
- Adjustment or matching funds to help balance needs of smaller Member States

Strengthen understanding & trust through intercultural dialogue with

- Dedicated support programme based on experience gained through Year of Intercultural Dialogue

SOME ELEMENTS OF AN EU ACTION AGENDA (2)

Promote Europe's creative/cultural industries

- Provide support 'upstream' on capacities & methods of production and 'downstream' on promotion & sales
- Assist creative/cultural industries of smaller Member States, e.g. through participation in trade fairs
- Showcase the artistic & creative talent of Member States
- Targeted country visits for young cultural entrepreneurs from EU States and third countries to encourage networking & collaboration

SOME ELEMENTS OF AN EU ACTION AGENDA (3)

Promote Europe's expertise in cultural heritage

- Develop / extend assistance programme(s) to provide expertise to countries having difficulties sustaining their cultural heritage
- Provide technical assistance to protect / restore cultural heritage in crisis zones & post-conflict situations

SOME ELEMENTS OF AN EU ACTION AGENDA (4)

Disseminate information about the EU, its role & values

- Engage with media
- Arrange interactive educational workshops & culturally driven partnership events
- Develop initiatives with the cultural sector that exploits the potential of social networking to engage with the public

Commission research

- Commission evidence based research into effective policy instruments and models of good practice in cultural relations

HOW TO DELIVER AN EU EXTERNAL CULTURAL RELATIONS POLICY

- Build partnerships with EUNIC, foundations (e.g. ECF), Council of Europe, UNESCO, Member States, local/regional authorities, NGOs, cultural sector etc.
- Employ digital tools and capitalise on global connectivity through social networking sites
- Utilise networking experience of European museums, theatres, dance & opera companies etc.
- Utilise EU instruments (e.g. ENPI) and seek new ones to respond to third country interest in cultural co-operation
- Ensure horizontal co-operation at European Commission level
- Avoid unnecessary bureaucracy in programmes

SOME KEY MESSAGES OF AN EU EXTERNAL RELATIONS POLICY

- EU is a unique economic & political partnership committed to democracy, peaceful co-existence, human rights, fundamental freedoms, diversity & the rule of law
- EU Europe has a rich heritage, but is also a contemporary, dynamic & culturally diverse continent

TARGET AUDIENCES:

- Not only governments, elites & traditional interlocutors, but also focus on business, NGOs, civil society and the wider public
- Young people

SOME CHALLENGES FOR EU EXTERNAL CULTURAL RELATIONS POLICY

- Whose culture is being represented?
- How to ensure EU approach involves 'listening' & not simply 'telling'?
- What role for popular culture?
- Cultural relations initiatives often require long term commitment for impact to be felt.
- How to avoid perception of EU as a 'traditional' power-based player defending its geopolitical & economic interests (cf. S. B. Rasmussen)?