



cS Brief #9



Composing Trust: An agenda with EU international cultural relations

Damien Helly

One of the key messages from the culture Solutions Composing Trust 2019/2020 report is that more research is needed to better understand and more importantly to further monitor the growing field of EU international cultural relations. That includes new challenges and priorities linked to the Covid-19 crisis.

This Brief summarises the main findings of our cS Composing Trust 2019/2020 report. It looks at the lessons learned by culture Solutions during this experience. It identifies priorities for the production of commons in the field of EU international cultural relations and how culture Solutions could contribute, in partnership with others.

Lessons learned from our pro bono research journey

We identified six main cross-cutting themes for our first 2019/2020 edition that emerged from our first literature review and they became the core of the report's thematic chapters (also available as individually downloadable Briefs) covering debates on the value of culture in societal change, digital transformations, culture and climate change, EU Delegations and EUNIC. Cross-cutting themes such as heritage development or monitoring and evaluation appear in all of them. When drafting time came, we decided to prioritise certain topics over others.

For this first edition of our report, we focus on a description of the EU international cultural relations ecosystem as such (institutions and policies, on which a lot had already been written on, but also other relevant cultural organisations). Our approach here has also been to highlight key trends, to identify instrumental forces and to raise essential questions for future research.

In academia, what used to be an anomaly (culture in EU external action) has now become a theme in masters courses and a topic of specialisation for young researchers or students writing a graduation thesis. Among practitioners, some individuals are becoming experts in the field and work as policy-officers, culture focal points, researchers, mappers, evaluators, policy analysts and advocates. EU staff are offered regular training and culture in external action is mentioned at all levels of the EU institutions' hierarchy.

It is not clear if this trend is here to stay, but given the inertia of EU institutions, what has been initiated with the adoption of the 2016 Joint Communication on EU international cultural relations will inevitably have some effect along at least the next decade.

To capture the kind of change that may happen in our field, a research horizon running down to 2030 is therefore perfectly reasonable.

10 key findings from our cS 2019/2020 report

1. Culture is now recognised officially by EU Member States and institutions as a serious item of the EU external agenda. It is an essential ingredient in all top EU priorities (climate, democracy, societal resilience, digital, security, migration, development). The European Year for Cultural Heritage led to an increase in budgets, more participatory policy-making processes and the development of an international component in cultural heritage policies.

2. An unstable and fragile coalition of Europeans (comprising governments, EU institutions, civil society organisations and individuals), is working on the implementation of an EU international cultural relations agenda and has made significant progress since 2014. The future of this coalition is uncertain and relies very much on a few key individuals and policy entrepreneurs. So far, cultural organisations from civil society and large national cultural organisations have had only limited opportunities and access to contribute to the EU international cultural relations agenda and its implementation.

3. Political Leadership will be key to keep culture high on the EU agenda and the 2020 the German Presidency of the EU is an opportunity to seize. Germany's choices on EU international cultural relations will have a lasting impact. So far the new Hight Representative for foreign policy Josep Borrell has demonstrated only limited interest for cultural matters.

4. Europeanising nation-based international cultural relations. Most of European international cultural relations are for the moment led by national or local organisations (international festivals, museums, libraries, concert halls, etc.) yet there is a strong potential for injecting a stronger European dimension in their own existing international relations. Pooling resources is often the only way to remain relevant internationally. Numerous cultural productions in Europe that have an international dimension are already jointly created, financed,

managed by or staffed by people or organisations originating from several European countries.

5. The climate crisis implies transformational cultural shifts in the ways Europeans imagine the world's future and their role and place in it. EU policies will have to reflect these transformations on an intercultural, aesthetic, artistic and creative level. To do so, culture Solutions will work on the conditions to be met for the launch of an "EU global culture and climate change initiative".

6. Digital transformations are deeply affecting cultural action, and cultural work contributes to the core of digital economy and digital media. Finding the right balance between tech and values

in an era of convergence between culture and the media will depend on EU regulatory ambitions, intercultural sensitivity and support to digital literacy.

7. Culture contributes to positive societal change because it has intrinsic value. It is an extremely powerful

tool for societal change in an era of climate uncertainty and digital transformation.

8. At the level of EU Delegations, a lot can be done to boost EU international cultural relations: systematic joint programming on culture, the secondment of more EUNIC staff in EU Delegations as cultural focal points; strengthen the role of EUDs in the design of EU regional and national cultural strategies and actions; developing a dedicated community of practice.

9. European cultural relations and diplomacy are strong when they empower; they are dangerous when they seek to dominate Europe's partners. Europeans and the EU should make the effort to apply intercultural methods to their international relations and to listen more to others.

10. In an era of media convergence, climate uncertainty and post-truth, Monitoring and Evaluation will be more and more essential in demonstrating the added value of cultural creation and cultural relations and the power of culture in societal change in the long term. (see below box on the cS M&E toolbox project).

**Our 10 findings
confirm that international
cultural action is what the EU
needs to address the global
challenges of climate and
digital change**



Priorities for future artistic, research and policy agendas in EU international cultural relations

The more we searched for new knowledge, the wider the scope of our research approach became. As fascinating as it can be, it is also becoming a methodological challenge.

Our first finding is that research on EU international cultural relations will be most fruitful if it is run through projects and methods that are:

- multi-level (EU but also global and community),
- multi-faceted (heritage, security, climate, cultural policies, development),
- multi-disciplinary (including science, the arts, and policy studies)
- multi-stakeholders (including or targeting artists, cultural professionals, policymakers, media, scientists, audiences)
- and multi-cultural and intercultural (mixing Europeans and non-Europeans and applying an intercultural approach).

Secondly, the only all-encompassing dimension of this research work on EU external cultural action, and one that we could not really develop in the current edition, is perhaps the question of perceptions of what Europeans and the EU (not to be confused) do in the world. Only by studying perceptions more systematically, more precisely and in the longer term (taking into account decades-long studies on cultural values), will we be able to assess the impact of the initia-

tives reviewed in the present report. The various chapters of the report have mentioned perceptions on different occasions and there is already a lot of (but scattered) knowledge on perceptions.

Investing more strategically in the international dimension of specific cultural sub-sectors (music, literature, gaming, architecture, etc.) as part of a comprehensive plan is one of the ways forward for EU international cultural relations. The experience of the European Year for Cultural Heritage in 2018 has demonstrated added value and its impact, at least in terms of increased budgets and participatory policy-making processes.

The educational aspect of cultural relations - see the focus in cS Brief#1 2019/2020 - and cultural diplomacy (with the project to create 20 European universities¹) will need to be better understood and connected with our knowledge of the policy field. It emerged as an obvious priority in chapters on digital transformations (the digital skills challenge), climate change (climate-awareness education) and societal change.

Connections between culture and other thematic policy fields could be explored more systematically and even develop, if our group grows strong enough, as stand-alone programmes: we have the ambition to write, research and collaborate more with partners on “culture and development”², “culture and migration”, “culture and security”, “culture and cities”.

Implications for culture Solutions work priorities

Engage and co-create with artists, curators, cultural and festival managers

With this first edition of the culture Solutions annual research report, our group has enough knowledge and ideas to seek collaborations

A research horizon down to 2030 will help us to capture new trends in EU international cultural relations

1. The European Union has set itself the objective of creating at least 20 European universities by 2024, in order to enable academic institutions to create close partnerships for student mobility and excellence in education, research and innovation. The Commission launched the first call for projects (with €60 million for 12 projects) in autumn 2018 to implement the first European universities as of the next academic year. Many French universities are taking part in the candidate projects and the Government has earmarked additional funding to amplify these projects.

2. Even though a one-off study was commissioned in January 2020 by the German Presidency on culture and the SDGs, knowledge management and research on “culture and development” will require specialised, innovative (beyond traditional ‘development think tanks’) and permanent collective organisational resources and engagement.

Examples of studies, reports and research analysing perceptions of the EU/Europe by non-Europeans

• Academic work:

- > Natalia Chaban, Martin Holland, Sonia Lucarelli³.
- > The Outside-In/decentring perspectives (Stephan Keukeleire) and mutual recognition (Kalypso Nicolaidis) approach/publications⁴
- > Foreign Policy Instrument 2015 perceptions study⁵ (to be followed up in 2020)

• Case studies:

- > Anna Lindh Foundation Mediterranean inter-cultural trends reports⁶
- > El Csid case studies on Africa, Egypt, Tunisia, Turkey, USA (focus on science diplomacy and values)⁷
- > Arab trans (FP7 Research project)⁸
- > EU's Eastern Neighbourhood perception studies⁹

and partnerships with a variety of like-minded cultural organisations. culture Solutions will design “The Engage Artists projects” aiming at enhancing artistic engagement in cS core themes and Theory of Change. This will include: identification of like-minded partners, engaging them through interaction and exchange, awareness-raising and knowledge sharing on societal change, cultural power and European affairs, co-design of joint initiatives¹⁰.

Information circulation and knowledge management

As a follow-up of our chapter (cS Brief#2 2019/2020) on policy trends and dynamics and with a view to ensuring institutional and citizens’ memory, we will consider the relevance and feasibility of a collaborative wiki-type of tool that would encompass the history of EU international cultural relations.

The knowledge produced in cS first annual report will also serve as material for future blog posts and topical and timely cS op-Eds. These could take the shape of a culture Solutions Magazine.

Research/policy analysis

Future research work could focus on interrelations between culture and other themes that were not elaborated in this first annual report. (see topics mentioned in the introduction: revisiting and refreshing the ‘culture & development’ approach, ‘culture & security’, ‘culture & migration’, “culture and cities”, etc.).

cS work will be multi-disciplinary and multi-stakeholders in nature

3. Lucarelli S., “Seen from the Outside: The State of the Art on the External Image of the EU”, Journal of European Integration, vol. 36, n° 1, 2014, pp. 1-16. Chaban N., and Holland M., eds. Communicating Europe in Times of Crisis: External Perceptions of the European Union, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

4. Nicolaidis K., Mutual Recognition: Promise and Denial, from Sapiens to Brexit, Current Legal Problems, Vol. 70, No. 1 (2017), pp. 1–40. Kalypso Nicolaidis: <http://kalypsonicolaidis.com/managed-mutual-recognition/> . Stephan Keukeleire: <https://soc.kuleuven.be/lines/staff/00016737>

5. Barcevičius E. et al., “Analysis of the Perceptions of the EU and EU's Policies Abroad”, PPMI, NRCE, NFG Research group, 2015 (Funded by the Foreign Policy Instrument FPI).

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/fpi/documents/showcases/eu_perceptions_study_final_report.pdf

6. <https://www.annalindhfoundation.org/intercultural-trends-report>

7. EL Csid – Horizon 2020 project on EU science and cultural diplomacy. <https://www.el-csid.eu/working-papers>

8. <https://www.arabtrans.eu/publications-and-reports-arabtrans-working-papers/>

9. <https://www.euneighbours.eu/en/east/stay-informed/publications/opinion-survey-2018-regional-overview>

10. This initiative could be inspired of and build on several concepts and experiences: European cultural ambassadors, We Are Europe project, Global Cultural Leadership Programme.

FOCUS

The cS Monitoring and Evaluation toolbox project

1. Where do we stand (who has been done what so far?)

Since EU international cultural relations is an emerging professional field there is no specific monitoring and evaluation framework to understand their impact. There is a recognised (including in the EUNIC network which is putting an increasing emphasis on M&E) need to adapt existing M&E methodologies to this field and to raise awareness among cultural professionals about the added value of M&E.

2. Why do we need to evaluate / Why M&E matters

M&E in EU international cultural relations matters because it is an efficient way to demonstrate the power of culture as a value in itself, and the power of collective EU external cultural action in societal change, climate awareness, digital transformation, etc.

3. What do we evaluate (various levels and M&E objectives & priorities)

The evaluation of impact and success (and failure) can be done at various levels, depending on the nature of EU international cultural relations: on the individual level, in groups or communities, in countries, professional sectors/value chains or regions/subregions, cities.

What is evaluated depends on the objective sought by EU international relations and the value given to specific cultural actions: it ranges from aesthetic emotions and encounters to economic growth, from ethical awareness-raising to technological innovations, from effectiveness to coherence and relevance.

4. How do we evaluate

M&E is run along strategies and plans, following specific methodologies, applying best practice and using

tailored indicators to measure impact and effectiveness. M&E can be done by anyone, yet it has become a specialised field and it is recommended to build mixed teams composed of M&E experts together with cultural experts. Their collaboration is usually fruitful when it comes to design M&E plans for international cultural relations.

5. Way forward: Defining specific evaluation criteria for EU international cultural relations

Various international cooperation institutions such as the EU or the OECD as well as specialised organisations and companies (in particular consultancy companies) have developed a variety of M&E frameworks and methods. UNESCO has worked on specific cultural indicators and tested pilot methodologies in limited groups of countries.

The cS Evaluation toolbox project will experiment innovative Monitoring and Evaluation conceptual approaches and methodologies tailored to EU international cultural relations.

For instance, the cS Evaluation toolbox project will identify and test innovative M&E indicators and impact criteria taken out from this first cS annual research report: interculturality, digital literacy, fair regulation, climate awareness, aesthetic encounters, etc.

The project will also test and adapt various evaluation tools that are already being used by a variety of organisations in the cultural field: Storytelling, logframes, case studies, dashboards, audiovisual evaluations, other tools.

One initiative could revolve around the interrelations between cultural action, identity building and European integration¹¹.

Research on perceptions of the EU and Europeans in the world will have to be developed in partnerships with already well-established

organisations and institutions (Eurobarometer, opinion polls professionals, Anna Lindh Foundation, etc.). Where relevant, quantitative research (for instance on budget as well as perceptions, soft power and level of trust measurements) will complement qualitative analysis.

11. This could include multidisciplinary approaches mixing legal approaches (as Olivier Roy's analyses of the European Court on Human Rights rulings in the religious field) with policy (for instance on the implications of the audiovisual directive or copyright) and intercultural analyses. Gérard Bouchard's suggestion to reinvent European myths could also be factored in and mixed with creative artistic practice.

Know-How sharing & training

cS will continue to hold internal know-how sharing webinars and will steadily engage partners and EU institutions (including DG's culture and training departments) in a conversation on dedicated training (DEVCO B4 unit with Unit 04 on knowledge sharing, EEAS Unit on career, learning and development BA.HR.4, etc.).

Lessons learned webinars could be held on specific European cultural cooperation projects in partnership with those in charge of their implementation.

The experts, networks managers, artists, scholars, academics, local government representatives and policy-makers identified in our first cS Annual Report could also be contacted for interviews and future collaborations.

culture Solutions will also explore the feasibility of setting up and coordinating, as a team of community managers, specialised communities of practice in the field of EU international cultural relations.

Dialogue, linguistic justice and diversity

It would be worthwhile exploring more in depth the linguistic dimensions of EU international cultural relations: linguistic diversity is at the core of the EU integration project, and one of its assets in international relations. The present report has its limitations in terms of the linguistic diversity of its sources. culture Solutions, if resources allow it, hopes to develop its work using linguistically more diverse references. Questions around the historical meaning of linguistic proximity (linked to colonialism) and of linguistic dominance (primacy of English language) could be captured in projects focusing on linguistic justice (a concept developed by philosopher Philippe van Parijs¹²). culture Solutions could provide exploratory thinking on the concept of a European

Cultural Translation Lab serving as a specialised platform providing linguistic and translation resources to cultural professionals cooperating in various European languages. Partnerships with the EU interpreters association (Eulita) and the international conferences interpretation association (AAIC) could be envisaged to develop some thinking on the role and the potential of language in EU international cultural relations.

Project implementation support and co-design

With the new EU Multiannual Financial Framework opening, cS is keeping an eye on the financing of EU international cultural relations at the level of EU institutions as well as in Member States' public and private sectors. cS will also research on innovative financing opportunities for European international cultural relations and will be looking for partnerships in this realm.

The concept of European spaces of culture, beyond the pilot projects implemented by EUNIC with EU funding, is worth being explored further. It could be explored and become the core of future European collaborative initiatives touching upon various¹³ spatial dimensions (spaces for cultural events, museums, outdoor spaces, physical and virtual spaces, festivals, urban and rural spaces, shopping malls and natural sites).

cS will look for partners in digital literacy, climate awareness, interculturality, research, know-how sharing & training, M&E and linguistic justice.

12. Van Parijs P., *Linguistic justice for Europe and for the world*, Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press ("Oxford Political Theory"), 2011, 299 pages.

13. Intercultural approach experiments have been tested in Brussels EU headquarters in 2016 as well as in several EU Delegations (Laos, Mauritania). See Capacity4Dev article <https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/articles/intercultural-approach-development-cooperation-and-partnership> and videos i) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dqtoZYfCAFW> ii) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7DGsOv0I2QU> iii) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=suslqy5XvkQ> iv) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RQp61ZpLxo>



culture Solutions Europe (cS) is an independent and non-for-profit social innovation group serving all those involved in EU international cultural relations.

We contribute independently to the excellence of EU international cultural relations with the opening of creative trust-building spaces, the production of commons and the brokerage of know-how.

We follow a specific **Theory of Change**.

Support us

culture Solutions Europe was created as a French association on 23 October 2018.

Bank account:

IBAN FR76 1695 8000 0103 3008 4436 926
SWIFT QNTOFRP1XXX

www.culturesolutions.eu