

CONCEPT NOTE for the EUNIC MENA long-term Project to support the creative sector in the MENA region

This concept note is based on the issues raised at the Euromed Forum on Creative Industries & Society, held from the 13th to the 15th May 2012 at the Dead Sea in Jordan. It suggests priority areas to be addressed but no specific activities. The concept note will be shared with the EUNIC Clusters in the MENA region and the EUNIC secretariat in Brussels. Between July and September 2012, a detailed project strategy including methodology will be worked out so that the EUNIC MENA long-term Project can be launched in November 2012.

GOVERNANCE – REGIONAL / NATIONAL PROJECTS:

The management of the EUNIC MENA long-term Project(s) will be carried out on 2 levels:

MENA regional project(s): Managed by EUNIC (Project Manager), supported by the European Commission in Brussels (different DGs) and EUNIC Members

E.g. Improve exchange and networking; develop regional online platforms etc.

MENA national projects: Managed by the respective EUNIC Cluster (most probably, a project manager per country will be needed), supported by the EU Delegations and the EUNIC Clusters

E.g. Advocate national cultural policy; develop and sustain new cultural venues etc.

OBJECTIVES:

- To put culture and civil society at the forefront of the democratic transformation and set the foundations of a national and Euro-Mediterranean sustainable cultural policy;
- To foster cultural exchange on all levels (cultural players, institutions, intellectuals, artists) between the EUNIC member states and the Euro Mediterranean region;
- To strengthen the competitiveness (capacity building) and to demonstrate the potential of the creative sector;
- To enhance collaboration between the EUNIC Clusters in the MENA region;
- Therefore: to outline a set of cultural priorities responding to the region's common patterns and to be implemented in accordance with the ongoing democratic process and each country's specificities.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES / PROJECT AREAS:

160 participants from 7 Arab (Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia) and 6 European countries (Belgium, France, Luxembourg, Romania, Spain and the UK) attended the Forum. The whole creative sector was represented: European Cultural Institutes, Government administrations, EU Institutions, journalists, artists, cultural operators, architects, consultants, academics, bloggers, etc. The themes discussed covered a variety of subjects, see also the list attached. As priority, the following issues were identified:

1. To develop new approaches in cultural policy that reflect a new reality in the region and that are responsive to civil society movements

1.1. To advocate new funding models for the creative sector, addressing the following issues:

- National & private funding
- Taxes
- Legal framework - employment, social security, freelance work, volunteers, status of artists
- Financial system (banks, transfers)
- Internet (speed), software
- Copyright issues
- Mobility, visa issues

1.2. To promote creativity in the formal education system, starting with elementary schools:

- Schools: improve the work conditions of teachers; provide training of teachers; organize out-school activities (theatre ...); provide modern technology; work with artists as trainers etc.
- Arts schools/ universities: strengthen entrepreneurship, collaboration with international students

- 1.3. To strengthen Culture & Tourism
 - Point out the importance of culture & arts for tourism (economic benefits)
- 1.4. To enhance visibility and development of artistic activities:
 - Create new and/ or maintain existing venues for dance, theatre, music etc.
 - Provide the necessary technical equipment incl. training for technicians.
- 2. To encourage dialogue, networking and exchange**
 - 2.1. To encourage local/ national/ regional networks (more powerful together than alone):
 - To lobby, advocate the important role of the arts; to show opportunities for city development
 - Include decision makers, media
 - Network meetings (personal contact!)
 - 2.2. To support online platforms (national and regional) as a way of enhancing connectivity:
 - Networking (personal & business), sharing
 - International promotion
 - Database of the Creative Industries, incl. products (music clips, video etc.)
 - Service (info about incubators, EU programmes, donors, sponsors, networks, training etc.)
 - Video games
 - Books, magazines – online distribution
 - Content: Pan-Arab think tank
 - 2.3. To enhance collaboration:
 - Shared office spaces, showrooms
 - Collaborative events; touring
- 3. To support capacity building and professionalizing the creative sector**
 - 3.1. To support training in order to professionalize the creative sector/ to create new jobs:
 - Cultural management, fundraising, marketing, communication, application writing
 - Internet presence/ promotion; e-learning
 - Journalism, critics, media work
 - Software, copyright issues,
 - Technical skills, craftsmanship
 - 3.2. To support training to people working at municipalities:
 - In grant making, events organization, networking, international collaboration etc.
 - 3.3. To raise awareness and promote creativity at schools:
 - Training of teachers
 - Activities for parents & children
 - 3.4. To strengthen intercultural competences and the professionalism of creative entrepreneurs:
 - Exchange between universities (Europe/ MENA)
 - Exchange of Trainees between different organizations (everybody to learn something from the other), national / international
- 4. To support projects in the following priority areas:**
 - From the idea to the implementation, incl. training, coaching, financial support (running costs)
 - 4.1. Design - technical/ ornamental; create patents, not only production
 - 4.2. Digital Media
 - 4.3. Memory/ tradition/ heritage & contemporary (conservation/ innovation)
 - 4.4. Books, publishing houses, distribution
 - 4.5. Translation, subtitling
 - 4.6. Archives/ archiving (public/ private)
 - 4.7. Street Art; community art
 - 4.8. Mobility; touring

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS:

➔ Mapping (incl. practices, statistics, funds, studies)

- Of the Creative Industries: Who is doing what? What is there, what is missing?
 - > Data to lobby
- Of the Cultural Policies: What public funding/ budget is available? How is it spent? Private sponsoring – who is interested? What are the incentives? Archives?
 - > Action Plan

➔ Administration:

There is a need in changing the usual project administration as follows:

- Flexible; less bureaucratic
- Collaboration instead of “donor” (monitoring, up-dating, possibility to change during the process);
- Regular consultations + update (bottom-up);
- Focus on sustainability, not only project support;
- Priorities for project support: gender equality, creation of sexual awareness, training/ learning.

➔ EUNIC:

The Forum participants expressed the wish to use the “EUNIC Network” in the region.

EUNIC Cluster Jordan, June 2012