Culture - Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations

Culture is at the heart of EU international relations and the Joint Communication adopted on 8 June 2016 aims at encouraging cultural cooperation between the EU and its partner countries and promoting a global order based on peace, the rule of law, freedom of expression, mutual understanding and respect for fundamental values.

Culture should increasingly play an important role in the EU's foreign policy. Cultural cooperation counters stereotypes and prejudice by nurturing dialogue, open-mindedness, dignity and mutual respect. Inter-cultural dialogue can help prevent conflicts and foster reconciliation within and between countries. Culture can help respond to global challenges such as the integration of refugees, countering violent radicalisation and the protection of the world's cultural heritage. Culture can also be a tool to deliver important social and economic benefits both within and outside the EU.

Joint Communication

This Joint Communication proposes an EU Strategy for International Cultural Relations that focuses on advancing cultural cooperation with partner countries across three main strands:

1. supporting culture as an engine for sustainable social and economic development;
2. promoting culture and intercultural dialogue for peaceful inter-community relations;
3. reinforcing cooperation on cultural heritage.

In pursuing these objectives, the EU's International Cultural Relations will contribute to making the EU a stronger global actor – a major priority for this Commission as well as of the EU Global Strategy.

Implementation

The success of the new approach relies on the principle that all stakeholders join forces.

This Communication proposes a strategic framework for deeper and more effective international cultural relations as well as a new model for cooperation with Member States, national cultural institutes, private and public operators from the EU and its partner countries, increasing
opportunities, creating synergies and maximising socio-economic benefits.

For the implementation of this Strategy, the EU can count on its 139 Delegations and Offices operating around the world, which already carry out an enormous number of cultural activities in their host countries. The EU (delegations) will act as an enabler and encourage synergies and cooperation between national cultural institutes and foundations, and private and public enterprises worldwide.

An EU Cultural Diplomacy Platform was set up in February 2016 to support the implementation of the Strategy.

See also

Communication on international cultural relations
Press release on the Communication
Q&A on the Communication on international cultural relations
Speech by Federica Mogherini at the Cultural Forum
Mogherini and Commission aim to put culture at the heart of EU international relations

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