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Master thesis:

**The state of the governmental cultural cooperation between the Western Balkans
countries**

Student:

Cveta Spasova

Mentor:

Milena Dragicevic Sheshic, PhD

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Abstract

South East Europe, and therefore the Balkans, has recently undergone many changes that have radically altered its political physiognomy. The 1990s were a turbulent decade in the Balkan region, as the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia broke-up and new countries were created. Ethnic and civil wars affected all the countries of the region, either directly or indirectly, costing them dearly. Besides the human losses and the dislocation of the ethnic groups, the countries faced a collapse of the economic system which contributed to extended poverty and high rates of unemployment that is felt even today. This disruption delayed the reform process and transition from command to market economies which other former communist states in Central and Eastern Europe underwent during that decade. The region today faces unresolved conflict issues, birth of new states, post-conflict problems such as the prevalence of organized crime, and the challenge of creating societies based on respect for human rights and the rule of law.

After the fall of Yugoslavia, the present political landscape of the Western Balkans includes six new countries. The Western Balkans is a term introduced by the European Union institutions to refer to the sub-region comprising Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, and Serbia and Montenegro. Kosovo will be exempt as it is under UNMIK administration and with unclear international status. With the exception of Albania, the countries of the Western Balkans were former constituent republics of the old Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The establishment of new frontiers has obviously upset the pre-existing patterns of political, economic, social and cultural relationships. Old, well-established connections have been severed and need to be rebuilt on a new basis.

Despite the significant number of regional initiatives and the common goal of EU membership as the main stimuli for good neighbourly conduct, the countries in the region have barely advanced their levels of cooperation and interdependence. Whether one is talking about trade, infrastructure, minorities, free movement of people or cultural exchange, as some of the key regional issues, the level of cooperation is modest at best. Nonetheless, several meetings concerning regional cooperation policies have taken place in the last three years, which provides hope that things could take a turn for the better. As a result of these inter-governmental events, some declarations and resolutions have emerged that clearly declare the willingness to establish

future successful cooperation in the region. In this respect the civil society in the region, at least in the cultural field, was the main engine for re-establishing regional cooperation. In spite of the increasing willingness between the art and cultural communities to promote a new frame of cultural cooperation, the overall cooperation in the region is based more on interpersonal networking than on governmental support. Until now regional cultural cooperation was lead mainly by the civil sector and mostly supported by Foundations or foreign cultural centres such as OSI, Pro Helvetia, French Cultural Centres, British Council, Goethe Institute, etc.

The regional cultural cooperation is proceeding in changeable political, social and financial circumstances. In these conditions, the Governments of the region have an obligation to undertake specific actions and measures through which they will contribute towards the maintenance of this important regional cultural process. In the context of this research regional cultural cooperation does not simply mean cooperation across new borders. Nor does it refer only to regional isolation from the international trends. But instead, it involves a process that will enable a flow of ideas, know how, and the overcoming of stereotypes and prejudices that are deeply affecting the regional cooperation, economic sustainability and support for the cultural sector - as well as the free movement of artists and cultural operators, the establishment of partnerships between the public-civil-private sectors, and the professionalization of the whole cultural sector.

The general hypothesis of this research is that the Governments of the Western Balkan region did not include culture in their political calculations as a perspective for fostering cooperation and reintegration of the region, but instead with their lack of strategy they are endangering the cultural cooperation in the region already established by civil society.

The objectives of the research are the following:

- To elaborate the meaning and significance of the cultural cooperation at the European level, by reviewing the role of the Council of Europe, UNESCO and EU,
- To present models of regional cultural cooperation in Europe,
- To analyse the cultural cooperation on the basis of the national cultural policies of each state in the Western Balkan region and identify best practices,

- To underline the reasons for strengthening regional cultural cooperation, including the need to develop professionalism in the field, achieve the transfer of regional know-how, and share experiences of transition of the cultural sector.
- To contribute to the development of policy strategy and policy measures at regional level,
- To identify policy alternatives and possible instruments in order to strengthen the future development of regional cultural cooperation.

The research findings confirm the general hypothesis of this paper that the level of governmental cultural cooperation in the region is still at a low level and therefore a lot of energy and effort should be devoted in order to overcome the current condition.

In this respect the Governments, which are key actors in cultural cooperation, need to develop a frame for regional cooperation. It is their obligation to promote and encourage cultural dialogue among their citizens in order to develop societies based on democracy, human respect and recognition of cultural diversity. Today the region is much more ready to consume cultural products from neighbouring countries than it was a decade ago. The basis of all future relationships should be built on the full acceptance of the diversity of this region and on the coordination of interests among different cultures, societies and countries. Consequently, it is important to support cross-border and territorial cooperation initiatives. Such a support impels national institutions to use the instrument of co-financing and paves the way for a more extensive commitment to cooperation. Far more energy should be devoted to developing and restructuring national cultural policy in the region. Currently, local governments are either non-players in or even obstacles to a dynamic cultural sector. The danger of a vacuum developing, where governments have neither the money nor capacity to support the local sector while international funding is withdrawn, is imminent.

Innovative and democratic cultural policies are needed. Assistance should be given to developing a more democratic cultural policy. Such a policy should be based on a conception of diversity as the norm and it should seek to include all, equally, in the process reconstruction. The need for regional cultural cooperation strategy is urgent. A common cultural strategy is needed, since that seems to be the most positive way to acquire a level of recognition in the European cultural space. The cultural cooperation needs to be supported and promoted because that is the only way

that the region can contribute towards creating common European cultural space. This process is expected not for the sake of integration as the ultimate goal of all the countries of the region, but for the sake of keeping the cultural values and diversity in the global world that we're living in.

On a practical level, regional cooperation requires favorable conditions and operating mechanisms. It is important, also, to raise regional awareness of the opportunities and positive impact that could be achieved by establishing regional cultural cooperation. In this context many programs for regional development follow the thesis that the region is the basis for economic and social development: it is assumed that if citizens identify themselves with a particular region, development projects have a great potential for being successful, and successful projects would in turn contribute to a close bond with the respective region. But the formation of regions is essentially a social and cultural process. Political and administrative regulations are based on that social process, while the reverse sequence is rarely successful.

The Governments of the region, through their institutions, should work on building solid partnerships among all actors involved in cultural cooperation in order to create an open platform for sharing knowledge and best practice. This partnership will ensure that local authorities, regional stakeholders, communities and cultural NGOs will all have a voice in influencing the role culture plays in the life of the region. A strong working partnership between all these actors could provide a regional strategy for cultural cooperation.

Cultural cooperation is a live process that depends on, and changes due to, many factors in society. Therefore a final note of caution: given the lack of evaluative instruments, time and manpower in research as well as of basic empirical evidence on the state of cultural cooperation in the region, this thesis needs to be part of a continuing research mosaic.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Metodlogical Introduction

Perceiving culture as one of the greatest perspectives for fostering regional cooperation in the Western Balkans, back in 2005, I started research in the field of cultural cooperation in the region. The main interest of my research was to determine the level of involvement and participation of the public cultural institutions and cultural ministries in the regional cultural cooperation, as having a mandate but also responsibility towards their cultural and art communities to continue and support the process of cultural cooperation in the region. For the purposes of getting real data about the state of the governmental cultural cooperation in the region, I identified around 70 national cultural institutions and sent them a questionnaire. After resending the questionnaire several times, I only received five incomplete responses that were simply not enough to come to any conclusion. The absence of responses could be also interpreted as lack of interest or lack of cultural cooperation between the public cultural institutions in the region. Still, I was determined to work on this subject; to continue with the research using open source information and personal networking.

The main interest of this research is to examine the current state of the governmentally based cultural cooperation of the countries of the Western Balkans. The thesis also researches models of regional cooperation like the Nordic model that was initiated by the national Governments in the specific region, which could be suitable in the context of the Western Balkans. The thesis contributes towards the creation of the regional strategy for cultural cooperation through its recommendations.

Having in mind the complexity of the Western Balkans, regional cultural cooperation has to be based on the full acceptance of diversity, reconciliation and recognition, as well as keeping the integrity of each of the countries involved. I believe that by establishing such a model of cultural cooperation, the region will gain multiple benefits. It will encourage the process of self rebranding and visibility in an international framework; it will strengthen capacities and it will contribute towards political and economical stability.

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- To underline the reasons for strengthening regional cultural cooperation, including the need to develop professionalism in the field, achieve the transfer of regional know-how, and share experiences of transition of the cultural sector.
- To contribute to the development of policy strategy and policy measures at regional level,
- To identify policy alternatives and possible instruments in order to strengthen the future development of regional cultural cooperation.

The research is based mainly on an examination of existing national information sources like web sites of cultural institutions, cultural ministers, and web portals for SEE as well as of EU, Council of Europe, and UNESCO. It also include analyze of the national cultural policies of each of the countries that are subject of interest for this research.

Among major comparative studies and information systems consulted are the following:

- The Council of Europe/ERICarts "Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe";
- The ERICarts "European Cultural Cooperation" for the G2CC web portal
- The ERICarts "National Policies Influencing Cultural Cooperation and Mobility in Europe" for the G2CC web portal
- Council of Europe "Forty Years of cultural cooperation"
- the EFAH/Interarts report on "The state of cultural cooperation in Europe";
- ECF/Ecumest "Funding opportunities for international cultural cooperation in and with SEE"

- The ECF report on the Conference “THE HEART OF THE MATTER: What Future for the Balkans in the EU? The role of arts and cultural cooperation in their European integration”
- European Policy Center “Balkan in Europe: why, when and how?”
- The latest analysis and reports of the Western Balkans integration process in EU
- The Lab for culture database www.labforculture.org;
- European Cultural Foundation data base www.eurocult.org
- Budapest Observatory <http://www.budobs.org/>
- www.balkankult.org
- www.culturelink.org
- www.policesforculture.org

and different individual studies, which will be introduced later in the text.

1.2. Historical overview of cultural cooperation

From prehistory till present time people used to exchange arts and goods as a primary tool for establishing communication and trade. Even thou the usage of the arts treasures and heritage myths were primarily to produce admiration or simply gift giving, still these models of communication between different people are considered as highly unique. If trade and exchange of cultural goods are perceived as process of cooperation, than the origins of the “cultural cooperation” between the people has a long history. Naturally, the process itself was modulated under the general political, social and cultural context that different societies and communities underwent. For sure present understanding of cultural cooperation is much more complex and differs from the primitive forms of art and goods exchange. Cultural goods and performances have a unique nature and their usage in the process of cooperation was probably the easiest way to be accepted by the “others” as a fact, thus paving the way for other types of consent. Therefore arts and culture were primarily used as tool for achieving greater objectives or simply reciprocity exchange between different communities. The position of the “culture” as a unilateral communication system inhibiting normal bilateral exchange was not changed up till modern

times. Still, it is in this logic that cultural relations have become an important element in cooperation process since the origins of diplomacy. On the basis of hospitality and the eventual gift of shared sensitivity, cultural diplomacy's long history deserves a complete essay to illustrate some of its effects and uses but this is not the subject of investigation. The importance of culture as a part of public policy translated into diplomatic relations, including the attachment of artists and writers to embassies and diplomatic missions was present on European level back in 18th century. During the 19th century in Europe begins a process of establishing formal intellectual exchanges, the establishment of arts academies abroad and the regular supply of grants, awards and scholarships to foreign artists and scientists. Language dissemination and literary translations became preferred instruments for cultural influence abroad. This process brings culture into institutional phase. On the beginning of 20th century trade and industry found it increasingly useful to establish regular links with arts diplomacy. With the popularization of international exhibitions, cultural complements to science and industry proposals became part of the regular "Expo" scene. Between the two world wars, multilateral discussions took place about the nature of intergovernmental cultural exchanges. Their aims often had to do with the safeguarding of a "bona fide" space for cultural relations and to keep them as much as possible away from economic and political interests.

After the II World War, Europe was faced with huge challenge of rebuilding the broken ties and relation between the nations based on solidarity and common respect. A new era of cultural agreements between the states begins. The Council of Europe gave multilateral legitimacy to cultural agreements, and its activities led to the drafting of the European Cultural Convention in 1954, which has served as a basic framework for intergovernmental cultural cooperation and the establishment of cultural rights standards in Europe. European Cultural Convention¹ was adopted in Paris on 19 November 1954. It has been signed by 48 countries. It is one of the key instruments through which the European states, whether members of the Council of Europe or not, expressed their earliest commitments to cultural cooperation. The Convention was also remarkable, at a time dominated by the cold war, in seeking to use cultural cooperation as a means of building bridges between the two halves of divided Europe. In fact, provision is made, on certain conditions, for non-member states to sign the text.

¹ Council of Europe, <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/EN/Treaties/Html/018.htm>

During the Cold War numerous cultural agreements being signed between Western European democracies and Warsaw Pact countries. Cold War cultural diplomacy was also designed to provide occasions for favourable environments, where trade and other agreements could be reached. Every aspect of international relations was at the service of the global cold war, the rivalry between the two dominant world systems. That meant not only strict control over all kinds of contacts and cooperation, but also clear guiding principles². Cultural cooperation served ‘higher’ objectives, the cause of world level class struggle. This also means that the key concept of the cooperation used to be control, plan, and higher political objectives.

From this viewpoint, cooperation, which had initially been considered as a technical device to be used in the pursuit of objectives, gradually came to be seen as an essential component of cultural development in line with the relatives of the European situation. An inevitable stage in a strategy seeking to break down the divisions inherited from the second world war and a vital condition for establishing dialogue between states keen to preserve their autonomy after the painful experience of hegemonic claims on each other, cooperation was gradually recognized as the very expression of a type of European cultural development, corresponding to the acceptance of the other unifying concepts such as cultural democracy or cultural identity and diversity. This is what was meant by the Heads of State and Government when they said that:

“Cultural cooperation, in which the Council of Europe is a prime instrument, (...) is essential for creating a cohesive yet diverse Europe.”³

“This statement is recognition of the fact that the cultural cooperation pursued in changing circumstances over 40 years has really found its place among the fundamental frames of reference, expressing, as both instrument and guiding principle, the values making up that common heritage on which European construction is founded”⁴.

In this respect, European cultural cooperation is the expression of a cultural project which, far from being based on relative superiority - even in adherence to democratic procedures - is rooted

² Budapest Observatory study “Transnational Cultural Cooperation in the accession countries”, <http://www.budobs.org/cultural-diplomacy/cultural-diplomacy/transnational-cultural-cooperation-in-the-accession-countries.html>

³ Final Declaration of the Summit of Heads of State and Government, Vienna, 9 October 1993.

⁴ Etienne Grosjean “Forty years of European Cultural Cooperation 1954-1994” http://www.coe.int/t/e/cultural_cooperation/commun/40cceng.asp#P1088_251715

in the positive acceptance of diversity and the belief that even the most modest contributions can, through patient striving for consensus, help to shape a common destiny. In this spirit European Cultural Cooperation was defined by the LAB as “shared communicative action across European boundaries to achieve common, similar or different ends through artistic and other cultural means”⁵.

1.3. Forms of cooperation

International cultural cooperation appears in a wide range of forms and instruments. While the European Cultural Convention is a strictly intergovernmental framework, the cultural cooperation prevail this framework and developed its own specifics and involved new actors. The Convention is from high importance since provided a framework and basis for action which has constantly expanded and developed. In the following lines the basic forms and actors involved in the process of European cultural cooperation would be presented.

1.4. Governmental cooperation

The basic instruments of the intergovernmental cultural cooperation are the bilateral treaties between states. The main pillars of cooperation are the bilateral cultural agreements between governments which are high-level long-term instruments that are fairly uniform and general. They represent a diplomatic gesture, a pledge of good will and an open path for lower-level bilateral documents of a more practical nature. In most of the cases the agreements are covering educational, sports and other cooperation. The most important are the agreements on the establishment and status of official and cultural institutions, although sometimes there are cases where the high-level agreements have a more practical significance than the diplomatic framework for day-to-day affairs. Abroad the cultural institutions have diplomatic status and when this is not the case their function is to establish benefits and indemnities which are on a par to diplomatic status. It has been shown that these efforts often fail whenever confronted with higher levels of interests such as regulations on employment, taxation and the social security of foreign citizens. Some countries are willing to avoid their own regulations, but the majority won't

⁵ Danielle Cliche, Teresa Brown, Oliver Göbel “European Cultural Cooperation in the G2CC-LAB-Environment (Portal) Definition and Elements of a Conceptual Framework”, www.labforculture.org, 2005 Amsterdam, pg.20

allow mutual favours to be granted for all citizens and services by the other party. As was mentioned the agreements are usually made between governments and often they are the only part of the general cultural agreement. The so called working programmes which are brought by the government cultural cooperation agreements are discussed and carried out by the culture ministries. The quotas of exchange are the most characteristic elements of the government-dependent cultural cooperation. The obligations are divided in groups: areas of culture, specific institutions or events. There are many classes of quotas since they range from several day stays for artists, researchers, to residences lasting for a couple of years. The latter also includes study grants which mean that there is an overlapping area with the bilateral cultural agreement. The work programmes also contain obligation to receive and financially and otherwise contribute to ad hoc or recurrent projects. The exact nature of these commitments is not specified and often depends on the realisation of the listed projects.

As well as bilateral agreements many multilateral agreements follow the same pattern. For example Ars Baltica, the Visegrad Four or the Mediterranean Forum which are regional agreements. Ministers and ministries enter into a number of ad hoc, yet official instances of bi-multilateral cultural cooperation⁶. Usually such activities are run by senior administrators but many are inspected by diplomats and cultural institutes in the partner country. There are signs of a tendency towards an increase of such instances. That means that even at the bilateral level, state-dependent cooperation is conducted by individual ad hoc decisions⁷. Basically ministerial staff tries to insert these into the work programmes because of the earmarked budgets or quotas of exchange. Even more would have to be done to see clearly whether a process of continuous regression occurs, whereas the extra-agreement succeeds in harmony the integration into established bilateral channels of cooperation.

In this context the Interarts/EFAH Study on Cultural cooperation in Europe finds out that the “Intergovernmental cultural cooperation is a concept which has not yet been developed to its full potential, having often been reduced to the signature of bilateral or multilateral agreements of a purely diplomatic nature and comparatively unspecific content. Projects involving exclusively national governments are less and less the norm. In this context, it is easy to wonder whether

⁶ Budapest Observatory study “Transnational Cultural Cooperation in the accession countries”, <http://www.budobs.org/cultural-diplomacy/cultural-diplomacy/transnational-cultural-cooperation-in-the-accession-countries.html>

⁷ ibid

governments may be able to leave logic of diplomacy, bureaucracy and promotion behind to engage in another dimension of cooperation”⁸.

1.5. Council of Europe

The Council of Europe was founded in 1949. The Council of Europe has a genuine pan-European dimension gathering 47 member countries and 1 applicant country: Belarus. Five countries have observer status: the Holy See, the United States, Canada, Japan and Mexico⁹.

The vision of establishing political, economical and cultural cooperation between European states devastated by the II World war, was determining factor in establishment of the Council of Europe, and is actually enshrined in Article 1 of the Statute as an element in achievement of the Organisation's aims:

- "a. The aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve a greater unity between its members for the purpose of safeguarding and realising the ideals and principles which are their common heritage and facilitating their economic and social progress.
- b. This aim shall be pursued through the organs of the Council by discussion of questions of common concern and by agreements and common action in economic, social, cultural, scientific, legal and administrative matters and in the maintenance and further realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms."¹⁰

The cultural cooperation remained on a very sporadic level until the European Cultural Convention was officially opened for signing on 19 December 1954. One of the few cultural policy documents of almost pan-European validity is the European Cultural Convention (1954), which describes the duties and objectives of a meaningful cultural policy. The Convention has provided a framework and basis for action which has constantly expanded and developed. The establishment of the Cultural Fund in 1958 enables Council of Europe to make a distinctive progress in the cultural cooperation field.

⁸ Interarts Foundation/European Forum for the Arts and Heritage (EFAH): *Report on the State of Cultural Cooperation in Europe*. June, 2003. <http://www.efah.org/en/resources_for_culture/policystudy/interarts.htm>

⁹ http://www.coe.int/T/e/Com/about_coe/

¹⁰ Statute of the Council of Europe, London, 5 May 1949.

The meaning of the word "cooperation" - essential in the very definition of the purpose of the European Cultural Convention and the Council for Cultural Cooperation – refers to the specific field of inter-institutional or international relations. Cooperation is a level in relations between different partners implying a convergence of activity aimed at achieving certain objectives accepted by all concerned. Beyond this general meaning, the cooperation that was developed within the framework of the European Cultural Convention was rather process of joint action between the parties involved than project aiming to achieve certain objectives. "Even that cooperation was firstly considered as a technical device to be used in the pursuit of objectives, gradually became as an essential component of cultural development on European level."¹¹This is what was meant by the Heads of State and Government when they said that: "Cultural cooperation, in which the Council of Europe is a prime instrument, (...) is essential for creating a cohesive yet diverse Europe."¹²

Even that the European Cultural Convention is strictly intergovernmental framework, the cultural cooperation developed in its context involved variety of actors in the cultural sector in order to make cooperation fully effective. This has been confirmed in practice by the systematic participation of other international organizations, local and regional authorities, civil society, networks and associations. This means that cultural cooperation at the Council of Europe is not a fixed and stable system, rigidly unaffected by the social, economic and political trends of the last fifty years. Instead, the cultural cooperation was developed in changing circumstances of the European societies. As the objectives of cultural cooperation were changeable, so the structures and working methods were up-dated and refined. The methodology developed is practically a product of cultural cooperation as practiced at the Council of Europe. Besides the wide scope of recommendations or resolution of political or legal nature produced as follow up of certain projects or initiatives, the project's methodological framework has also made it possible to expand the characteristic results of cultural cooperation. Just for illustration, one of the main goals of the Council of Europe over the past decades has been to facilitate cultural cooperation through the exchange of information and experience and the sharing of good policy practice on a wide range of issues. Some of their main activities have been the evaluation and

¹¹ Etienne Grosjean, "Forty years of European Cultural Cooperation 1954-1994"

http://www.coe.int/t/e/cultural_cooperation/commun/40cceng.asp#P1088_251715

¹² Final Declaration of the Summit of Heads of State and Government, Vienna, 9 October 1993.

analysis of national cultural policy approaches and appropriate tools for all levels of government to promote creativity, participation, diversity and cultural identity. These results reached not only the representatives of national institutions, administrators or politicians, but also cultural operators from the civil society, academics and variety of professionals engaged in the cultural field. The tremendous scope of work carried out by the Council of Europe in the cultural cooperation field, could not be only observed on texts of a directly political or legal nature, but rather on the “products” that emerged from implementing or following certain guidelines and priorities. This is what cultural co-operation at the Council of Europe has essentially been - the gradual emergence of a certain approach to cultural and educational issues, whose influence now reaches far beyond the limited sphere of intergovernmental relations.

As defined in the latest publication about the main developments, key documents and common principles resulting from 40 years of European cultural cooperation undertaken in the context of the Council of Europe the “European cultural cooperation is the expression of a cultural project which, far from being based on relative superiority - even in adherence to democratic procedures - is rooted in the positive acceptance of diversity and the belief that even the most modest contributions can, through patient striving for consensus, help to shape a common destiny”.¹³

1.6. UNESCO

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization - UNESCO was founded on 16 November 1945. UNESCO promotes international cooperation among its 192 member states and six associate members in the fields of education, science, culture and communication. UNESCO is working to create the conditions for genuine dialogue based upon respect for shared values and the dignity of each civilization and culture¹⁴. The key UNESCO legal instruments for culture are the following:

1950: Agreement on the Importation of Educational, Scientific and Cultural Materials (Florence Agreement) with its Protocol (Nairobi) to improve the circulation of knowledge.

¹³ Etienne Grosjean, "Forty years of European Cultural Cooperation 1954-1994"
http://www.coe.int/t/e/cultural_cooperation/commun/40cceng.asp#P1088_251715

¹⁴ http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=3328&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

1952: Universal Copyright Convention, revised in 1971, protects intellectual property – from scientific and literary texts to film and sculpture.

1954: Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict.

1970: Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property. This is the cornerstone of international efforts to curb the illicit art trade.

1972: Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage. This was the first convention to put forth the idea that humanity possesses a common heritage and the legal foundation for the World Heritage List.

1980: Recommendation concerning the Status of the Artist. This recognized the special labour conditions of artists and their unique role in society.

2001: Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage. This was the first convention to protect such sites as the Alexandria lighthouse in Egypt and shipwrecks over a century old.

2001: Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, recognizing it as part of the ‘common heritage of humanity’.

2003: Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

2005: Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

UNESCO member states reaffirmed their conviction that cultural diversity is one of the roots of development and dialogue. In 2005, a new step in this direction was taken with the adoption of the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions¹⁵. This Convention is especially important because seeks to strengthen the five inseparable links of the same chain: creation, production, distribution/dissemination, access and enjoyment of cultural expressions, as conveyed by cultural activities, goods and services.

In particular, the Convention aims to:

- reaffirm the sovereign right of States to draw up cultural policies

¹⁵ http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=31038&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

- recognize the specific nature of cultural goods and services as vehicles of identity, values and meaning
- strengthen international cooperation and solidarity so as to favor the cultural expressions of all countries

Along with the 1972 Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage and the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, this Convention is one of the three pillars of the preservation and promotion of creative diversity. Today, UNESCO functions as a “laboratory of ideas and a standard-setter to forge universal agreements on emerging ethical issues. The Organization also serves as a clearinghouse – for the dissemination and sharing of information and knowledge – while helping Member States to build their human and institutional capacities in diverse fields.”¹⁶ In short, UNESCO promotes international cooperation among its 193 Member States and six Associate Members in the fields of education, science, culture and communication.

1.7. European Union

The European Union acknowledges the importance of cultural cooperation, but Article 151 of the Treaty¹⁷ establishing the European Community (originally Article 128 of the Maastricht Treaty (1992)) clearly states that the role of the European Union in the field of culture is to encourage cultural cooperation between its Member States and to complement their actions, if necessary, in accordance with the principle of subsidiary. Therefore although cultural cooperation is a cornerstone of European integration, each state (and the institutions, organisations and individuals within them) acts unilaterally in this respect, with the EU giving ‘added value’ rather than providing a framework for coherent multilateral activity. This means that the EU can only become involved in cultural actions if such actions are deemed to be better engaged with at Community level rather than in the states themselves. Actions by the Community must respect national and regional diversity while bringing the common European cultural heritage to the fore.

¹⁶ http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=3328&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

¹⁷ Treaty establishing the European Community , Official Journal C 340 of 10 November 1997, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/en/treaties/index.htm#founding>

Up until the Treaty¹⁸ of Maastricht in 1992, the Community had no real power in the field of culture. However, culture was still represented in Community activities through ad hoc initiatives. In 1993, the entry into force of the Treaty of Maastricht marked the Member States' desire to "mark a new stage in the process of European integration", that of "an ever closer union between the peoples of Europe", expressed in particular via the creation of a European citizenship and by the granting of new powers to the Community, including new powers in the field of culture, with the Treaty introducing a new article devoted to it. Cultural cooperation thus became a recognised aim of Community action, with an appropriate legal basis (article 128).

This article was included in its entirety in the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997) (article 151), apart from paragraph 4 which was amended to read as follows: "the Community shall take cultural aspects into account in its actions under other provisions of this Treaty, in particular in order to respect and to promote the diversity of its cultures". This paragraph calls for culture to be taken into account and for cultural diversity to be respected in all Community policies, in compliance with Community law. This is a legal obligation, and the Community institutions must take the cultural implications of all Community policies on board.

Based on Article 151, a first generation of cultural programmes¹⁹, first of all pilot and then sector programs were put in place between 1993 and 1999. In July 1990, the Commission published the selection criteria and conditions for participation in the "Platform Europe", which became in 1991 the first Kaléidoscope programme for supporting artistic and cultural events involving at least three Member States. The programme was reorganised from 1994 in order to support cultural events more effectively, encourage artistic creation and cooperation in the form of a network, to promote better public access to European heritage and to improve artistic and cultural cooperation between professionals. Between 1990 and 1996, the Commission also launched several pilot projects in the area of translation and the promotion of books in Europe, providing support for more than 500 projects or translations.

These pilots allowed the implementation, between 1996 and 1999, of three cultural programmes:

¹⁸ Treaty establishing the European Community, Official Journal C 224 of 31 August 1992, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/en/treaties/index.htm#founding>

¹⁹ http://ec.europa.eu/culture/eac/culture2007/historique/historic_en.html

- Kaléidoscope (1996-1999), which aimed to encourage artistic and cultural creation and cooperation with a European dimension;
- Ariane (1997-1999), which supported the field of books and reading, including translation;
- Raphaël (1997-1999), the aim of which was to complement Member States' policies in the area of cultural heritage of European significance.

Finally, preparatory actions were performed in 1999 in order to manage the preparation of Culture 2000²⁰. Culture 2000 was a Community programme established for seven years (2000-2006) with a total budget of 236, 5 million euros. In contrast to the financial instruments that preceded it, Culture 2000 provides grants to cultural cooperation projects in all artistic and cultural fields (performing arts, plastic and visual arts, literature, heritage, cultural history, etc.). Culture 2000 was established by the Decision No 508/2000/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, adopted on 14 February 2000 and prolonged by Decision No 626/2004/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 March 2004. These decisions were examined in accordance with the procedure provided for in Article 151, according to which actions in the area of culture are adopted by the Parliament and the Council according to the co-decision procedure, and unanimity is required in the Council. The Committee of the Regions is also consulted.

The objective of Culture 2000 is to promote a common cultural area characterised by its cultural diversity and shared cultural heritage. It seeks to encourage cultural creation and mobility, access to culture for all, the dissemination of art and culture, intercultural dialogue and knowledge of the history of the European peoples. It also accords culture a social integration and socio-economic development role. Created to promote artistic and cultural cooperation in Europe and to move towards a common cultural area, the Culture 2000 programme supports artistic and cultural projects with a European dimension, at the level of their creation, their organisation and their implementation. Activities supported by this programme include festivals, master classes, exhibitions, new productions, tours, translations and conferences. They are intended for artists and cultural operators, as well as for a broader audience, in particular young people and those who are socially or economically disadvantaged. Most of the projects include a multimedia dimension, in particular via the creation of Internet sites and discussion forums. The European

²⁰ http://ec.europa.eu/culture/eac/culture2000/cult_2000_en.html

Commission implements the programme with the aid of a management committee. It selects projects on the basis of the opinions of a panel of independent experts.

So far, participants from 30 European countries have taken part in the Culture 2000 program: the 25 EU Member States (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Cyprus and Malta; the three countries of the European Economic Area (the EEA - Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway) and the following two candidate countries: Bulgaria and Romania. Memoranda have been signed with each of these countries.

EU programmes, especially Culture 2000, have been an important source of support for organisations that are prepared to act within an expanded European cultural space. The problems identified relate more to the sustainability of the partnerships. Another problem is a lack of genuine interest in true cooperative, or interactive, transnational challenges. Some operators are not really prepared for these challenges, such as language barriers or management capabilities. Frequently, one finds 'forced cooperation' with foreign partners, which is sought mainly for obtaining EU resources that are no longer available from public bodies at home.

The New Culture Programme²¹ is established by the Decision No1855/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, published in the Official Journal n° L 372 of 27 December 2006. The programme shall be implemented over a period starting on 1 January 2007 and ending on 31 December 2013. The general objective of the programme shall be to enhance the cultural area common to Europeans through the development of cultural cooperation between the creators, cultural players and cultural institutions of the countries taking part in the programme, with a view to encouraging the emergence of European citizenship.

The Programme shall be open to the participation of non-audiovisual cultural industries, in particular small cultural enterprises, where such industries are acting in a non-profit-making cultural capacity.

The specific objectives of the programme are:

²¹ http://ec.europa.eu/culture/eac/culture2007/launch_en.html

- to promote the transnational mobility of people working in the cultural sector;
- to encourage the transnational circulation of works and cultural and artistic products;
- to encourage intercultural dialogue.

There are three main institutions in EU that have some role in cultural matters.

1.8. The Council of the European Union

The Council of the European Union²² is the EU's main legislative and decision-making body. It represents the interests of the Member States, allowing them to define policy and discuss legislative proposals made by the European Commission. There are various Council meetings held, at least once every 6 months, in the various thematic areas that are within the aegis of the European Union. These meetings will be attended by the appropriate Minister from each Member State. Therefore, the Ministers of Culture from the Member States will meet to discuss key policy and legislative issues.

1.9. The European Parliament (EP)

The European Parliament²³ - the only democratically elected international institution - has 730 Members who exercise democratic control at European level. Parliament helps to draft, amend and adopt European laws and budget, and makes policy proposals. The Parliament has a committee, which oversees cultural issues, the Committee on Culture, Youth, Education, the Media and Sport. It should be noted that this is a policy-making committee and its main responsibilities are:

- The European Union's education policy (Article 149 of the EC Treaty)
- Youth policy: exchanges of young people, with the exception of young workers, the European voluntary service and other measures designed to involve young people in the European integration process, such as the European Youth Forum

²² <http://ue.eu.int>

²³ www.europarl.eu.int

- The cultural aspects of the European Union, and in particular improving the knowledge and dissemination of culture, the conservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage, cultural exchanges and artistic creation (Article 151 of the EC Treaty)
- The audiovisual industry and the cultural and educational aspects of the information society
- Information and media policy and informing public opinion about the activities of the EU
- The development of sports (Declaration No 29 of the Amsterdam Treaty) and leisure policy
- Cooperation in the areas of culture and education with third countries and the competent international organisations, in particular the Council of Europe
- The monitoring accompanying the implementation of current expenditure for which it has responsibility, on the basis of periodic reports provided by the Commission.

In this context it's important to mention two documents which influenced the scope of cultural cooperation pursued by the European Union. The first one "Unity of Diversities: Cultural Cooperation in the EU" or otherwise known as "Ruffolo Report"²⁴. Named after its reporter, the Ruffolo report is an own-initiative report drawn up by the European Parliament's Committee on Culture, Youth, Education, the Media and Sport. Stressing that culture is an essential component in creating an EU identity which is required to consolidate the sense of European citizenship and that it is an important contributor to economic development, the report calls on Member States and the Commission to strengthen the profile and dimension of culture in the political and economic spheres while respecting the principle of subsidiary.

The Ruffolo report,

- calls on Member States to allocate at least 1% of total public funds to stimulate artistic creation, expression and dissemination.
- asks the Commission to submit to the Council and Parliament a draft decision for the creation of a European agency which would monitor cultural cooperation, coordinate the cultural policies of Member States and the Community and identify and promote best practices for the benefit of the European cultural heritage, artistic creation and citizens' access to culture.

²⁴ Report on cultural cooperation in Europe, Committee on Culture, Youth, Education, the Media and Sport, author: Giorgio Ruffolo, 16 July 2001

- calls on Member States to grant tax benefits to patrons of the arts and asks the Commission to study the opportunities for bringing more into line Member States' tax treatment of works of art, artistic work – especially VAT – and the tax provisions for the movement of artists within the European Union.
- recommends that the European Union restate its position at the forthcoming WTO summit concerning the requirement to uphold the principle prohibiting dominant positions with regard to trading in cultural property and services.

This report provided the basis for the Resolution on Cultural Cooperation in EU (2000/2323), adopted by the European Parliament in 2000. It calls on the Commission to submit a draft decision under Article 151 of the Treaty, for setting up a European observatory to monitor cultural cooperation. During the years that followed, many ideas on how to realize such an Observatory were discussed. Feasibility studies were commissioned by the EU and other institutions, notably the ECF; their results were discussed by governments, NGO and experts. The concept gradually changed from the earlier "observatory model" into that of a more proactive and collaborative "Laboratory of European Cultural Cooperation"²⁵ (the "LAB"). LabforCulture.org is exciting new online tool aims to facilitate cultural dialogue, exchange and cooperation across physical, cultural and imaginative borders between 48 countries in the broader Europe and beyond.

1.10. The European Commission (EC)

The European Commission²⁶ consists of 20 Commissioners, is independent of national governments and acts as a “college”. The Commission makes proposals for European legislation and action, and oversees the implementation of common policies. The European Parliament must give its approval to the appointment of the Commission, and also has the power to censure it. It is therefore the executive arm of the EU and controls the implementation of the policies of the EU. The EC administers the funding programmes of the European Union, including Culture 2000.

²⁵ http://www.labforculture.org/en/about_us/background.

²⁶ <http://europa.eu.int>

The European Commission published the Communication on a European agenda for culture in a globalizing world²⁷ on 7th May 2007. Entitled Communication on a European agenda for culture in a globalizing world, it is presented by the Commission as an ambitious document, which should open the way to more and better Community and national coordinated actions at EU level in the field of culture. The recent adoption of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions was certainly one of the driving forces behind the drafting of the Communication. When implementing the Convention, the EU and its Member States, have the opportunity to take actions and develop policies, which support cultural expressions beyond their strict economic value.

The purpose of the Communication is to explore the relationship between culture and Europe in a globalizing world and proposes objectives for a new EU agenda for culture. It identifies 3 main objectives: promotion of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue; promotion of culture as a catalyst for creativity in the framework of the Lisbon Strategy for growth and jobs and promotion of culture as a vital element in the Union's international relations. Then identifies how the Commission will develop new and more pro-active cultural role for Europe in the context of Europe's international relations and to integrate the cultural dimension as a vital element in Europe's dealings with partner countries and regions.

Another important strand of the Communication is devoted to improving dialogue with European civil society. A regular and structured dialogue with civil society actors is crucial to ensure that EU policies and actions genuinely reflect the needs and practice of the cultural practitioners around Europe. The instruments to structure this dialogue as presented in the document are a good start, and the mention of the Civil Society Platform on Intercultural Dialogue, very encouraging, but further attention to some of the terms of engagement as well as a more frequent event than the 'biannual European Cultural Forum' proposed, will be needed if civil society actors are to make sure that their voice is heard and their expertise taken into account.

The main innovation of the Communication is to propose enhanced cooperation among the Member States in order to push forward a European cultural agenda, using the 'open method of

²⁷ Communication from the commission to the European parliament, the Council, the European Economic and social committee and the committee of the Regions on a European agenda for culture in a globalizing world, 7th May 2007, Brussels, http://ec.europa.eu/culture/eac/communication/comm_en.html

coordination' ('OMC'). It's non-binding, intergovernmental framework for policy exchange and concerted action suitable for a field such as this, where competence remains very much at Member State level. It consists of agreeing common objectives, regularly following up progress towards them and exchanging best practice and relevant data in order to foster mutual learning. This flexible soft law mechanism has already been used in other fields like employment, education, youth or social affairs. The method works in stages: Member States fix guidelines and common objectives that they regularly review through a common system of reporting. The main question that arises is who will determine the indicators for successful implementation of the OMC in the cultural field. The Communication does not suggest any involvement of the cultural sector in the actual setting of the indicators which will again leave a small space for real action. It only states that it will 'encourage' Member States to involve 'local and regional authorities and national cultural stakeholders' in the follow-up reporting process. The involvement at EU level will be enabled through a Cultural Forum and regular meetings between the Commission and civil society. In order to make this process effective and adequate the easy access and on time distribution of relevant information should be exceeded.

Although the OMC is seen as having many advantages, it is not without its critics.

Commentators have noted "the absence of real sanctions for poor performance, that difficult findings are sometimes buried, and that the process may lead merely to the endorsement of practices that would in any event have been undertaken". A further criticism is that national parliaments as well as the European Parliament tend to be excluded from the process. With regard to the latter concern, the Commission states in its Communication that the 'European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions should be involved in the process', though it would be helpful to have clarification as to what form it is envisaged this will take"²⁸.

Whether the Member States will take the OMC into their competence in the sensitive cultural field is open to question. Nevertheless, the OMC presents an opportunity to raise the profile of cultural

²⁸ R. Craufurd Smith "A New EU Agenda For Culture", Europa Institute, University of Edinburgh, May 2007, <http://www.efah.org>

concerns at both the European and domestic levels, and cultural organisations will clearly wish to influence the agenda at this early stage of OMC development.

The third recommendation concerns spread and collection of information on cultural polices where EU is seen as supporter or coordinator of this process. It proposes undertaking of studies in order to make effective evaluation and assessment of the cultural polices at European, national, regional or local level. The Communication suggests that national statistical information should also be improved. If really realized, these proposals could result in the development of useful resources for policy makers and those working in the cultural sector in the future.

The last recommendation refers to mainstreaming cultural in all relevant polices. In order to achieve this Commission should improve the internal communication between various services and directorates-general and states that a new inter-service group was created to this effect. Still, mainstreaming culture into other relevant polices also means identification and involvement of relevant stakeholders in the early stage of proposal's formulation, which obviously is not integrated in the commission proposal. Also the Communication doesn't explore the reasons for not involving the cultural consideration within the Community legal system. In general, the Communication is not giving specific actions how will improve cultural mainstreaming into the relevant polices, but rather focus on promoting cultural dimension in its external policies and puts forward a number of suggestions designed to improve the EU's ability to formulate effective cultural policies and integrate cultural concerns into its other policies.

"The Communication it is important not so much for putting forward specific proposals regarding future European Community action in the cultural field, though it does include a number of such proposals, but for its consideration of new processes and structures through which cultural issues can be raised and debated at the European level"²⁹.

Gaining knowledge of one another, changing established patterns, and fighting ignorance about the history and scope of cooperation, of the role of 'integration forums' like the EU and 'cooperation platforms' like UNESCO and the Council of Europe, will require concerted action by operators and policymakers at national and European level in the coming years.

²⁹ R. Craufurd Smith "A New EU Agenda For Culture", Europa Institute, University of Edinburgh, May 2007,
<http://www.efah.org>

1.11. Civil society: networking & associations

Non-governmental organisations, networks, foundations or partnerships (either between or with local and regional public bodies) play an increasingly dominant role in European cultural cooperation. These new actors are addressing or helping to overcome various challenges, including: shortage of resources; impediments to mobility; information/knowledge of opportunities; language barriers; mental barriers and stereotypes. In that context, they collect and distribute information on cultural cooperation opportunities, identify potential partners, organise training workshops, report on successful cooperation projects, identifies potential funds. Gradually, this process of ongoing contact between the people in charge of pilot projects centred on the same problem became the main characteristic of certain projects, and soon developed into a systematic element in the methodology of European cultural cooperation.

Networks play an important role in bringing together cultural actors from across the European continent and beyond - and from the same field – into pooling their knowledge, experiences and energies into the creation and management of cultural projects with a European dimension. Networks have proven to be effective at producing sustainable and value oriented processes which have led to innovative and creative results. They have shown how civil society can operate across borders and how they contribute towards the creation a European citizenship and lead to the awareness of a common European heritage. Networks can contribute to the economic dimension of culture and can serve as a catalyst for the creation of further projects and in essence play a part in providing dynamism to the European cultural economy.

The "networking" technique has many advantages. "Apart from the benefits of direct communication between cultural operators living in different cultural communities, the networks also make it possible to move beyond "international" relationships and to establish a whole network of transnational or trans regional relationships, which stay in being and keep developing when the project is completed, thus increasing its impact and the number of people aware of, and

involved in, European cooperation. Trans-national networks of individuals, institutions, cities and regions engage in more action-oriented projects to achieve their goals of cultural cooperation”³⁰.

1.12. Cultural policy and place of cultural cooperation

The framework of cultural cooperation in Europe has been deeply affected in the last few years and is currently rapidly changing owing to a wide range of factors and dynamics. A major understanding of the new frame of international cultural cooperation and of its implications in terms of policies, tools and actors as well a comprehensive evaluation of the experiences and practices developed in the past years have been identified by the main public and private policy makers as a precondition to identifying and establishing appropriate and innovative strategies, action plans and tools.

The dynamics of international cultural cooperation are undergoing fundamental change from being mainly government sponsored and controlled from above to the emergence of horizontal exchanges directly between artists, producers, arts organisations or cities. In addition, policy strategies and legislative frameworks related to international cultural cooperation are being revised and new priorities are being set which link culture to other fields such as tourism, urban regeneration or economic development.

Since 1985, under the auspices of Council of Europe the idea of systematically reviewing national cultural policies started. The extension of the work leaded to the European Declaration on Cultural Objectives, which reflects the need for a common approach to evaluation of national cultural policies, so that these can be concerted more easily later. Besides the benefits of the countries whose policies are reviewed - by giving them a range of methods they can use to assess cultural action more effectively - it also makes a practical contribution to cultural cooperation.

The updated Compendium country profiles now provide more detailed information on how national governments and other actors are addressing these issues. They report on: main structures and trends; public actors and cultural diplomacy; European / international actors and programmes; direct professional cooperation; cross-border intercultural dialogue and cooperation

³⁰ Danielle Cliche, Teresa Brown, Oliver Göbel “European Cultural Cooperation in the G2CC-LAB-Environment (Portal) Definition and Elements of a Conceptual Framework”, www.labforculture.org, 2005 Amsterdam, pg.24

and other relevant developments. All these developments put cultural cooperation among the fundamental frames of reference, expressing, as both instrument and guiding principle in the European cultural space. Still, we could not make general conclusion about the importance given to the cultural cooperation on a national level in countries of Europe, no matter being member states or not. National polices could be driving forces in cultural cooperation, but could also discourage it if doesn't imply different steps and actions or implement measures with the aim to mobilize cooperation between individuals, groups and institutions in Europe.

CHAPTER II: REGIONAL CULTURAL COOPERATION

“Our Europe remains one in which regional political structures, within and beyond the nation-state are becoming the norm”³¹

The high importance of the existing and development of the regions and therefore the need for creation of “good” policies for regional cooperation on European level are present since 1980. After the founding of the “assembly of European Regions” in the mid-eighties and intensification of EU/EC regional policies, finally in 1991 the Maastricht Treaty laid down five policy fields, where the Commission and the Council must obtain the Committee of the Regions’ opinion in the case of legislative proposals. This also includes the fields of culture and education. Until present, the discussion about the regions and respectively the regional cooperation has reached high importance and still remains present on the agenda. But why regions and why they are important? Before giving possible answers to this question, I would make overview of different definitions for region.

2.1. Definitions

Cultural region³² is a term used mainly in the study of geography. Distinct cultures often do not limit their geographic coverage inside the borders of a nation state, or to smaller subdivisions of a state. To 'map' a culture, we often have to identify an actual 'cultural region', and when we do this we find that it bears little relationship to the legal borders drawn up by custom, treaties, charters

³¹ Charlie Jeffery, Changing Europe in a changing world, Report of the Belgo-British Conference 2003

³² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_region

or wars. There are different kinds of cultural regions that can be delineated. A map of culture that maps 'religion & folklore' may have slightly different shape to one which, in the same region, maps 'dress and architecture'.

2.2. Types of Cultural Region

Formal Culture Region³³ - an area inhabited by people who have one or more cultural traits in common, such as language, religion or system of livelihood. It is an area that is relatively homogeneous with regard to one or more cultural traits. The geographer who identifies a formal culture region must locate cultural borders. Because cultures overlap and mix, such boundaries are rarely sharp, even if only a single cultural trait is mapped. For this reason, we find cultural border zones rather than lines. These zones broaden with each additional cultural trait that is considered, because no two traits have the same spatial distribution. As a result, instead of having clear borders, formal culture regions reveal a center or core where the defining traits are all present. Away from the central core, the characteristics weaken and disappear. Thus, many formal culture regions display a core-periphery pattern.

Functional Culture Regions³⁴ - the hallmark of a formal culture region is cultural homogeneity. It is abstract rather than concrete. By contrast, a functional culture region need not be culturally homogeneous; instead, it is an area that has been organized to function politically, socially, or economically as one unit: a city, an independent state, a precinct, a church diocese or parish, a trade area or a farm. Functional culture regions have nodes, or central points where the functions are coordinated and directed. Ex: city halls, national capitals, precinct voting places, parish churches, factories, and banks. In this sense, functional regions also possess a core-periphery configuration, in common with formal culture regions. Many functional regions have clearly defined borders that include all land under the jurisdiction of a particular urban government; clearly delineated on a regional map by a line distinguishing between one jurisdiction and another.

³³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_region#Types_of_Cultural_Region

³⁴ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_region#Types_of_Cultural_Region

Vernacular Culture Regions³⁵- is one that is perceived to exist by its inhabitants, as evidenced by the widespread acceptance and use of a special regional name. Some vernacular regions are based on physical environmental features; others find their basis in economic, political, or historical characteristics. Vernacular regions, like most culture regions, generally lack sharp borders, and the inhabitants of any given area may claim residence in more than one such region. It grows out of people's sense of belonging and identification with a particular region. Ex: one popular region in the US "Dixie". They often lack the organization necessary for functional regions, although they may be centered on a single urban node, and they frequently do not display the cultural homogeneity that characterizes formal regions.

Regionalism³⁶ is a term in international relations that refers to the expression of a common sense of identity and purpose combined with the creation and implementation of institutions that express a particular identity and shape collective action within a geographical region. The European Union can be classified as a result of regionalism. The idea that lies behind this increased regional identity is that as a region becomes more economically integrated, it will necessarily become politically integrated as well. The European example is especially valid in this light, as the European Union as a political body grew out of more than 40 years of economic integration within Europe. The precursor to the EU, the European Economic Community (EEC) was entirely an economic entity.

In politics, regionalism³⁷ is a political ideology that focuses on the interests of a particular region or group of regions, whether traditional or formal. Regionalism centers on increasing the region's influence and political power, either through movements for limited form of autonomy (devolution, states' rights, decentralization) or through stronger measures for a greater degree of autonomy (sovereignty, separatism, independence). Regionalists often favor loose federations or confederations over a unitary state with a strong central government. Regionalism may be contrasted with nationalism.

³⁵ ibid

³⁶ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Regionalism_%28international_relations%29

³⁷ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Regionalism_%28politics%29

This is in contrast with regionalization³⁸, which is the expression of increased commercial and human transactions in a defined geographical region. In national politics regionalism is a political notion which favours regionalisation—a process of dividing a political entity into smaller regions, and transferring power from the central government to the regions. Regionalisation is the tendency to form regions or the process of doing so.

In geography it means also the process and proper techniques of delineation of the Earth surface into regions. When used in opposition to globalization, this often means a world that is less connected, with a stronger regional focus.

In national politics regionalisation is a process of dividing a political entity — typically a country — into smaller regions and transferring power from the central government to the regions. In International Relations regionalisation (or regionalism) is actually the set of processes that lead states to work together in an international system on a regional scale.

From another perspective it can be seen as an impulse for regions to work closer together. This could overcome national boundaries and make nationally under-privileged regions capable of working with neighbouring regions (from another country), without undue central governance interference.

Behind the process of regionalisation lies the concept of regionalism. This can be seen as the normative aspects, or values, that underlay regionalisation e.g. the (contested) European identity. However, it is also a theoretical tool for analysis of international relations. For example the concept of security regime in regional security would not be possible without the analytic tool of 'regionalism'. Regionalisation and unitarisation are often confused with, respectively, decentralisation and centralisation.

Regional development³⁹ is the provision of aid and other assistance to regions which are less economically developed. Regional development may be domestic or international in nature. The implications and scope of regional development may therefore vary in accordance with the definition of a region, and how the region and its boundaries are perceived internally and externally.

³⁸ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Regionalisation>

³⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Regional_development

What's more important than having listed a variety of different definitions about region we have to keep in mind several aspects that were determined in their development - physico-territorial, politico-institutional, social, functional, linguistic, economic aspects. Therefore the multiplicity of regions that exist in Europe is not own only to one of these aspect. In these respect is very hard to define the regions. Regions could be based on a common identity, on economical base-commercial or tourist region, on administrative and institutional level, etc. In our common European history we're witness of creation and disappearance of certain regions. E.g "Central Europe" disappeared as a term with collapse of communism as it was based on a sense of cultural space. This also implies the idea of artificially created regions. E.g Before enlargement of EU the term SEE was also referring to the Balkan states. Today, we have new term like Western Balkans. This paper doesn't explore the European trend towards an artificial delineation into 'regions', but rather on positive aspects and trends that outcomes form the regional cooperation.

The questions on which I would try to give possible answers is how can regions provide a stable, open platform for cross-border cultural cooperation in the region of Western Balkans; what contribution can regional cultural policy make to cultural development and to the overall regional development.

2.3. Regional policy and culture at EU level

The latest report about EU regional policy "Growing regions, growing Europe"⁴⁰ shows that EU cohesion policy has played an important role in the convergence process. In shifting Member States' policies towards growth enhancing investments. It reduced social exclusion and poverty by providing skills for the knowledge economy and reinforcing labor market policies. It has improved administration and public governance, particularly at sub-national level and it encouraged an integrated approach to development which improves the overall impact of sector policies. And on the basis of all of these elements, it contributed to more growth and jobs in the Member States.

At national level, Greece, Spain, Ireland and Portugal - the largest beneficiaries of cohesion policy in recent years - have achieved an impressive growth performance between 1994 and

⁴⁰ "Growing regions, growing Europe" Fourth report on economic and social cohesion, Communication from the Commission, Luxemburg, 2007
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/reports/cohesion4/index_en.htm

2006. Between 1995 and 2005, Greece reduced the gap with the rest of EU-27, moving from 74% to reach 88% of the average in 2005. By the same year, Spain had moved from 91% to 102%, and Ireland reached 145% of the Union's average starting from 102%. At the same time, the lagging regions in the EU-15 showed a significant increase in GDP per head. Between 1995 and 2004, in a quarter of them the GDP per head had risen above the 75% threshold.

As different evaluations show, cohesion policy has considerably contributed to GDP growth. Between 1989 and 1999 the additional growth impact of EU funding has been at 10% in Greece and 8.5% in Portugal. Between 2000 and 2006, it has been in the order of 6% for Greece and Portugal, 4% in the East German *Länder* and 2.4% in Spain.

If we look at the 2007-2013 period, studies suggest that cohesion policy will add some 5-15% to GDP in most of the new Member States, on top of a baseline scenario without cohesion policy. For example, additional 8% of GDP growth for Lithuania, the Czech Republic and Slovakia are estimated, and 5.5 - 6% for Bulgaria, Poland and Romania, 3% for Greece and 1.5% for Spain, the German *Länder* and the Mezzogiorno.

European regional policy is designed to bring about concrete results, furthering economic and social cohesion to reduce the gap between the development levels of the various regions. From a scientific approach, regional policy brings added value to actions on the ground. The policy helps to finance concrete projects for regions, towns and their inhabitants. The idea is to create potential so that the regions can fully contribute to achieving greater growth and competitiveness and, at the same time, to exchange ideas and best practices. This is the main purpose of the new initiative Regions for economic change. The whole regional policy is in line with the priorities set by the EU for growth and jobs (The Lisbon strategy).

The rationale of EU regional policy is of macro-economic nature and based on the political agreement that the Union's internal market policies should be accompanied by fiscal policy. The objective is to exploit and equally spread the advantages of our common economic area. In this sense, cohesion policy may be understood as the "visible hand" of the EU fostering economic integration throughout its territory.

The cohesion policy could be represented as the leading edge of a system of multi-level governance in which supranational, national, regional and local governments engage in overarching networks across policies and territories. Principles such as partnership, transparency, subsidiary, local democracy and integrated approach to development make an essential asset of development policies. They empower local people and help growth strategies by targeting local resources in a more efficient and effective way. They reinforce the cooperation between public and private sector – for example under the form of public-private partnerships.

Culture has become an important issue of regional discourse since the rise of the idea of the economic impact of culture and other possible functions that could increase the prosperity and image of the regions. Even of the variety of functions that culture has and therefore contributes for the social and economical development, it's very wrong to perceive culture as any other industry. The primary cultural activities don't have commercial aspects. Artistic creativity and expressions, protection and conservation of cultural heritage are non profit activities but they create other values for the humanity which could not be express in figures. The cultural sector is facing a huge challenge: a global approach towards culture based on economic development and preservation of the primary values of culture. It would be huge challenge for all of us working in the cultural field to make the right balance among these two different concepts. In this context many programs for regional development follow the thesis that the region is the basis for economic and social development: it is assumed that if citizens identify themselves with a particular region, development projects have a great potential for being successful, and successful projects would in turn contribute to a close bond with the respective region. But the formation of regions is essentially a social and cultural process. Political and administrative regulations are based on that social process, while the reverse sequence is rarely successful.

The paper “Structural funds, enlargement and the culture sector”⁴¹ written for EFAH by Pyrrhus Mercouris states “The contribution the culture sector makes to the economic well being of the wider society is absolutely vast and yet it is seen as being of relatively little importance by the

⁴¹ Pyrrhus Mercouris, "Structural Funds, Enlargement and the Cultural Sector", Brussels 2002, http://www.efah.org/en/policy_development/structural_funds/structural.pdf

policy makers in Europe. Culture touches every aspect of our lives. Economic sectors such as TV, radio, the recording industry, multimedia, tourism, the leisure industry and entertainment industry, education - are very dependent on the culture. This obvious fact has to be repeated again and again to policy makers. For all kinds of reasons, culture is constantly treated as a function or as an aspect of another economic sector. One of these reasons is that the culture sector is stigmatized for low pay and temporary employment, meaning that not just policy makers, but economists and planners responsible for drafting and implementing development plans ignore the culture as an area worth investing in”.

The study “Economy on Culture in Europe”⁴² published by DG Education and Culture in 2006, confirms the marginalized position of the culture: “The role of the cultural and creative sector is still largely ignored. Indeed, the move to measure the socio-economic performance of the sector is a relatively recent trend. Moreover, the exercise is a contentious one. For many, the arts are a matter of enlightenment or entertainment. That leads to the perception that the arts and culture are marginal in terms of economic contribution and should therefore be confined to the realms of public intervention. This may explain to a large extent the lack of statistical tools available to measure the contribution of the cultural sector to the economy whether at national or international level, in particular compared to other industry sectors”. This study is from high importance because brings to light facts and figures about the direct and indirect socio-economic impact of the cultural sector in Europe. (In context of the Lisbon agenda, and in particular in terms of realising growth, competitiveness, more and better jobs, sustainable development, and innovation). It shows how culture drives economic and social development, as well as innovation and cohesion. In context of regions and culture, the study identify that “culture and innovation play a crucial role in helping regions attract investment, creative talents and tourism”. In this respect, culture is a main driving force for tourism, one of Europe’s most successful industries representing 5.5% of the EU GDP and where Europe holds a 55% of the global market share. Europe is the most-visited destination in the world. In 2005, the continent recorded 443.9 million international arrivals⁴³. Furthermore, culture is seen as “tool of social integration and territorial cohesion” in Europe.

⁴² “Economy on Culture in Europe” Study for European Commission (DG Education and Culture), October 2006
http://ec.europa.eu/culture/eac/sources_info/studies/economy_en.html

⁴³ <http://unwto.org/facts/eng/economy.htm>

2.4. EU structural funds and culture

The Structural Funds, instruments of regional development policy, are the most significant EU funding instrument for cultural projects in terms of the total amount of funding available. The Structural Funds are based on a complex legal framework: general regulations and fund-specific regulations at EU level plus national implementing legislation and national programming documents. With the funds being administered at regional level, there are few pan-European mechanisms for sharing experience and know-how of participation for culture in the program. Neither does the local dispensation of the funds mean that cultural operators can easily find a voice in the planning process. Cultural operators work in relative isolation attempting to translate their projects into the hard economic language around regional development, employment and social cohesion. If successful, applicants may be unaware of the impact such funding may have on their organizational capacity as they attempt to meet the rigorous evaluation required to release grant payments. Whilst there have been some exciting and creative projects that have long term impact on both the cultural infrastructure and communities, significant funds have been poured into capital projects that subsequently prove to be unsustainable in terms of revenue and other resources.

The European Commission has already acknowledged the significant contribution that the culture sector can contribute to economic and social development. The most clear of these was in 1996 when the Commission issued a Communication precisely on this issue. The Communication, entitled: "Cohesion Policy and Culture, A Contribution to Employment"⁴⁴ is a fifteen page document giving an intelligent argument why the culture sector should be supported by the Structural Funds. The document cites successful examples of Structural Funds support to the culture sector and how these specific culture-development projects generated wealth and long-term employment. It also refers to the legal obligation of Article 128. The Communication

⁴⁴ Commission of the European Communities, "Cohesion Policy and Culture," Brussels 1996, com 96 (512) http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/communic/pdf/culture/cult_en.pdf

concluded: “The increasing importance of culture for regional development has to be seen in the context of the restructuring of the economy as well as a result of changed ways of life. In this perspective, the cultural sector should be further exploited to enhance and diversify the local and regional development potential of both the least favored regions and those suffering from structural change. As culture is often treated in a manner isolated from other factors of development or image, it will be important to address culture as a more integral part of regional and local development strategies towards new employment. Moreover, to maximize innovation and employment effect, there is scope for further synergy between support to culture by the Structural Funds and other related Community programs (e.g. R&D programs such as multimedia support networks under ESPRIT, Media II, Info 2000) Assistance to culture by the Structural Funds not only enables the preservation and development of cultural assets (i.e. the cultural heritage), but also productive investment in cultural industries and products. As a rapidly expanding sector of the private economy, cultural industries and products provide for a considerable growth potential, for example in the sectors linked to media. The potential role of the Structural Funds in this context is yet not fully exploited. In view of the program approach as well as the importance of development concepts based on endogenous potential, the Member States and regions concerned play a central role in giving more effective weight to cultural action under the Structural Funds.”⁴⁵

In the light of this acknowledgement, it is ironic that culture has not become a clear and more identifiable objective within the Structural Funds. Structural Funds are far more generous and therefore possibilities are greater. However they are much more difficult to access because these Funds are not designed to support the culture sector but rather to boost the economic performance of depressed industries or under-developed regions, and this handicap remains. The legal basis to fund culture is enshrined in Article 151 of the Treaty on the European Union (Amsterdam Treaty), previously Article 128 of the Maastricht Treaty (1993) which established the European Union. From a culture sector view point, this Article ought to be interpreted by the European Commission as an obligation on it to ensure that funds are made available from funding mechanisms – which include the Structural Funds. Many of these statements and resolutions do not necessarily concerns the funding of culture through Structural Funds, they concern diverse

⁴⁵ Ibid, page 15

issues relating to European support to cultural cooperation, European involvement and support to specific areas of culture like the audio-visual sector, or to specific issues such as mobility, the resale rights of artists, intellectual; property rights, illegal auctioning of cultural objects and other interesting issues and topics.

Based on the two previous reports about the Structural Funds (1994-2000 and 2000-2006), many of the Member States with the sanction of the European Commission have allocated very large sums for the support of culture. This was done on a various ways, but mostly trough so called Operational Programs. In a great many Operational Programs, culture is a function or is viewed as an element of another more clearly definable sector. There are other areas and budget lines in which funds can be accessed:

- environmental improvement,
- tourism,
- urban renewal,
- combating unemployment,
- combating social deprivation,
- worker mobility.

The Community Programs

Opportunities for the culture sector were possible to find in the Community programs: Interreg III, Urban, Leader Plus and Equal. But, this is conditional depending on the nature of the development plans to be funded. Applications for funding to these Community Programs can only be made by local or regional authorities. It is therefore impossible for the culture sector to make an application. What is necessary is for cultural organizations to approach their local/regional authorities to insert a budget line for culture. If this is done, it can then become possible for cultural organizations to access funds from the approved development plans.

Based on these positive experiences approached from the two previous periods, the Structural Funds 2007-2013 finally recognize culture as objective.

In the period 2007-2013, cohesion policy will benefit from 35.7% of the total EU budget or 347.41 billion Euros⁴⁶. The European Fund for Regional Development (EFRD), the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Cohesion Fund contribute to three objectives: Convergence, Regional Competitiveness and Employment, and European Territorial Cooperation.

The rationale of the **Convergence objective**⁴⁷ is to promote growth-enhancing conditions and factors leading to real convergence for the least-developed Member States and regions. In EU-27, this objective concerns – within 17 Member States – 84 regions with a total population of 154 million, and per capita GDP at less than 75 % of the Community average, and – on a “phasing-out” basis – another 16 regions with a total of 16.4 million inhabitants and a GDP only slightly above the threshold, due to the statistical effect of the larger EU. The amount available under the Convergence objective is EUR 282.8 billion, representing 81.5 % of the total. It is split as follows: EUR 199.3 billion for the Convergence regions, while EUR 14 billion are reserved for the “phasing-out” regions, and EUR 69.5 billion for the Cohesion Fund, the latter applying to 15 Member States.

Outside the Convergence regions, the **Regional Competitiveness and Employment objective**⁴⁸ aims at strengthening competitiveness and attractiveness, as well as employment, through a two-fold approach. First, development programs will help regions to anticipate and promote economic change through innovation and the promotion of the knowledge society, entrepreneurship, the protection of the environment, and the improvement of their accessibility. Second, more and better jobs will be supported by adapting the workforce and by investing in human resources. In EU-27, a total of 168 regions will be eligible, representing 314 million inhabitants. Within these, 13 regions which are home to a total of 19 million inhabitants represent so-called “phasing-in” areas and are subject to special financial allocations due to their former status as “Objective 1” regions. The amount of EUR 55 billion – of which EUR 11.4 billion is for the “phasing-in” regions – represents just below 16% of the total allocation. Regions in 19 Member States are concerned with this objective. The former programs Urban II and Equal are integrated into the Convergence and Regional Competitiveness and Employment objectives.

⁴⁶ http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/policy/fonds/index_en.htm

⁴⁷ http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/policy/object/index_en.htm

⁴⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/policy/object/index_en.htm

The **European Territorial Cooperation objective**⁴⁹ will strengthen cross-border cooperation through joint local and regional initiatives, trans-national cooperation aiming at integrated territorial development, and interregional cooperation and exchange of experience. The population living in cross-border areas amounts to 181.7 million (37.5 % of the total EU population), whereas all EU regions and citizens are covered by one of the existing 13 transnational cooperation areas. EUR 8.7 billion (2.5 % of the total) available for this objective is split as follows: EUR 6.44 billion for cross-border, EUR 1.83 billion for transnational and EUR 445 million for inter-regional cooperation. This objective is based on the experience drawn from the former Community initiative – INTERREG.

The only Community financing that still benefits the entire EU territory – regardless of the economic performance of each region – is the financing allocated to European Territorial Cooperation in which culture is objective. It is thus clearly in the interest of all European regions to review their attitude towards cooperation projects and to recognize the importance of these initiatives for their own regional development. Cooperation projects are in a key position in view of the transfer of best practices, efforts to raise attractiveness and competitiveness of a region as well as in reinforcement of its innovation potential. Culture and regional identity play a crucial role in the mutual understanding and building up of sustainable cooperation activities between European regions, a fact that should be taken into consideration in order to ensure effective implementation of the European Territorial Cooperation objective.

To conclude, Western Balkan countries are still not fully eligible to approach the Structural Funds⁵⁰. This will happen sooner or later, mostly depending of the region integration in the

⁴⁹ http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/policy/object/index_en.htm

⁵⁰ From January 2007 onwards, the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) replaces a series of European Union programs and financial instruments for candidate countries or potential candidate countries, namely PHARE, PHARE CBC, ISPA, SAPARD, CARDS and the financial instrument for Turkey. The IPA is made up of five different strands: Assistance for transition and institution building; Cross-border cooperation (with EU Member States and other countries eligible for IPA); Regional development (transport, environment and economic development); Human resources (strengthening human capital and combating exclusion); Rural development. The IPA beneficiary countries are divided into two categories: EU candidate countries (Croatia, Turkey and Macedonia) are eligible for all five strands of IPA; Potential candidate countries in the Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Serbia including Kosovo) are eligible only for the first two strands. In this way, the IPA prepares candidate countries to manage European funds covering the same areas: European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), Cohesion Fund, European Social Fund (ESF), European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/funds/ipa/index_en.htm

EU. But, what's more important is to acknowledge and familiarize with the experiences from the countries like Bulgaria and Romania. These two countries used the Structural funds for culture. This is from high importance for all the countries from the region. Therefore our obligation as cultural sector is to promote the other values that culture has greatly on political level. We have to emphasize the development logic that culture incorporates. The cultural sector of the region should strongly lobby on the national levels for culture to be considered as priority and as engine for further economical, social and political development of our society. In the same time it's our obligation to focus on establishing partnerships and networking among the cultural administrators in the region, since this is the only way to approach EU funds. Likely or not the Governments of the region will have to cooperate in order to achieve quality results for the citizens.

The scientist of the region could greatly contribute for achieving better perspective for the culture, by writing further studies to explain the importance and the benefits culture brings to the economy. Such studies are necessary in justifying to the need to fund culture. Studies examining in detail the employment opportunities, the training, the infrastructural problems, funding and resources situation, mobility of artists, commercial pressures and any other economic and social aspect of importance. Such approach will make the cultural sector more visible and could greatly contribute toward recognition of the cultural sector in the region. Generally there is huge lack of such studies on regional level which enables the cultural policy makers to base their visions on real data and statistics.

CHAPTER III: NORDIC CULTURAL MODEL (Case study)

“Above all, Nordic cooperation is an informal community of decision-makers in the Nordic countries. If a Danish politician or government official does not understand a Norwegian decision he or she can bypass the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and directly call a Norwegian colleague who can explain. The same applies if a Norwegian cannot interpret the meaning of a Danish, Finnish, Swedish or Icelandic decision. The Nordic interdependence, the language similarities and the extensive acquaintances among Nordic public servants, politicians and military officers have contributed to non-bureaucratic and personal procedures. Nordic cooperation is comprised of a broad network of informal contacts which are often stronger than formal hierarchies”⁵¹ - by *Ola Tunander*

The Nordic area consists of five sovereign states—Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. Three territories within the area have self-rule: the Faeroe Islands and Greenland under Denmark and the Åland Islands under Finland. The total population of this area amounts to 25 million. The Nordic countries are closely linked by the common background of their languages and culture and their common historical roots and development.

3.1. The origin of the Nordic cooperation

Since the early period of the Kalmar Union (1397–1521) there have been close contacts between the Nordic countries in most areas of society. Nordic cooperation is firmly rooted in cultural and societal ties, shared democratic traditions, values and way of life. The decade following the Second World War brought a decisive breakthrough for the Nordic vision. Progress was made in all areas of cooperation. Since then the Nordic framework has served as an umbrella under which political opinions have been coordinated.

3.2. The core of Nordic cooperation

Parliamentary and governmental cooperation between the Nordic countries has developed step by step during this century, and especially after the Second World War. This development has been accompanied by the establishment and gradual strengthening of common institutions. The general

⁵¹ Ola Tunander, “Nordic Cooperation”1999; <http://odin.dep.no/odin/engelsk/norway/foreign/032005-990418/dok.bn.html>

objectives of Nordic cooperation are laid down in the Helsinki Treaty⁵² of 1962, with subsequent amendments, which defines the competence of the common institutions.

Official Nordic cooperation is channelled through two organisations: the Nordic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers. Both organisations are working to build relations with the EU and propose measures in relation to the EU and the Northern Dimension plan. The Nordic countries comprise of three EU countries, Denmark, Finland and Sweden and two non-EU countries, Iceland and Norway.

3.3. The Nordic Council

The Nordic Council⁵³ was founded in 1952 with the aim of promoting cooperation between the Parliaments of Denmark, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. Finland joined in 1955. Representatives to the Council from the Faroe Islands form part of the Danish delegation and Åland of the Finnish delegation. The Council consists of 87 elected members, all of whom are members of their respective national Parliaments. It implements initiatives, acts in a consultative capacity and monitors co-operative measures. The actions of the Council are carried out by its institutions: the Plenary Assembly, the Presidium and standing committees. The Council's decisions are not binding for members, but the national governments have often chosen to follow its recommendations.

3.4. The Nordic Council of Ministers

The Nordic Council of Ministers⁵⁴ was established in 1971. It submits proposals for cooperation between governments of the five Nordic countries to the Nordic Council, implements the Council's recommendations, and reports on the outcomes. The Prime Ministers of the five Nordic countries assume overall responsibility for this cooperation, which is coordinated by Ministers for Cooperation and the Nordic Cooperation Committee. Composition of the Council of Ministers varies according to the nature of the issue involved.

⁵² Helsinki Treaty, 1962; <http://www.norden.org/avtal/helsingfors/uk/3-2-2-hfors.asp?lang=6>

⁵³ http://www.norden.org/nr/uk/3-1-4-0-om_nr.asp?lang=6

⁵⁴ <http://www.norden.org/web/3-1-raad/3-1-5-nmr/uk/index.asp>

3.5. Nordic cultural cooperation

Historic bonds between the Nordic countries and peoples have fostered a sense of cultural kinship and created shared values and a similar pattern of social development. This serves as the cornerstone of Nordic cooperation. Ever since the establishment of the Nordic Council in 1952, cultural cooperation has been the core component of official Nordic cooperation. It is based on an agreement- Cultural Treaty⁵⁵ between the Nordic governments that entered into force in 1972. The goals of the agreement are the development of Nordic cultural affinity and an increase in the impact of joint measures in the field of culture. The agreement stipulates that these goals are to be reached through joint planning, co-ordination and cooperation and through an allocation of tasks.

The overall objectives of Nordic Cultural Cooperation are:

- To promote diversity of cultural expression: cultural cooperation under the auspices of the Nordic Council of Ministers must contribute to promoting and protecting the diversity of cultural expression in the Nordic countries and strengthening the Nordic Dimension in the cultural life of the countries.
- To present artists and their works: there should be a good basis for mobility of individuals, groups and products of culture.
- To strengthen the quality and competitiveness in the Nordic artistic and cultural life: Nordic cultural cooperation should strengthen and develop the cultural and artistic activities in the whole region. Nordic cultural cooperation should result in culture and art from the Nordic countries being accessible in the Nordic region and increasing the impact on audiences across the region and internationally.
- To complement the efforts made in the individual countries.
- To pay particular attention to the autonomous areas and to the special structural conditions which apply to cultural cooperation between the autonomous areas and the rest of the Nordic region.

⁵⁵ “Nordic cooperation” Swedish Institute, 1997, http://www.bolag.org/english/nordic/e-a-nordic_cooperation.htm

3.6. Organisation

The ministers of culture have general responsibility for Nordic cultural cooperation within the framework of the Nordic Council of Ministers. Measures are devised and initiated by the Committee for Nordic Cultural Cooperation composed of senior officials from the ministries of culture, the various management groups, and the arts committees and by the Council of Ministers' Secretariat. The arts committees and the management groups also fulfil an important advisory function. Cooperation in this field also includes two major funds – the Nordic Cultural Fund and the Nordic Film and Television Fund – and ten Nordic institutions, including the cultural centres in Iceland and the Faroe Islands, and the cultural institutes in Greenland and the Åland Islands.

Nordic Culture Point⁵⁶ is the new contact point for Nordic cultural cooperation. The institution has been established in 2007 at Sveaborg in Helsinki under the auspices of the Nordic Council of Ministers. Nordic Culture Point will primarily take responsibility for providing information and consultancy to professionals within the field of culture, act as a service function and serve as a secretariat for the framework programmes of the Nordic Ministries of Culture, as well as co-ordinate the activities of the Nordic cultural forums. Nordic Culture Point will also profile Nordic cultural cooperation within and outside the Nordic region.

3.7. Cornerstone in Nordic cultural cooperation

One of the main goals of Nordic culture policy is the involvement of children and young adults in cultural life. The measures designed to achieve this goal are integrated in general cooperation on culture. The Nordic Youth Cooperation Committee is responsible for the implementation of the cross-sectoral action plan The North into a New Millennium. This plan provides a general framework for child and youth policy cooperation in 2001– 2005. Cultural cooperation is given high priority in the plan. The Nordic Youth Cooperation Committee also administers the Council of Ministers' support scheme for youth cooperation and serves as an advisory body on youth policy issues. The Nordic Steering Committee for Children's and Youth Culture is an advisory body to the Council of Ministers. It has main responsibility for Nordic cooperation on children,

⁵⁶ <http://applications.kknord.org/>

young people and culture in 2002– 2006 under the title Young North –Community and Cultural Diversity.

- Nordic Cultural Centres and Institutes

The Nordic Houses in Iceland and the Faroe Islands and the Nordic Institutes in Greenland and the Åland Islands are cornerstones in the organisational structure of the culture sector and play a vital role in Nordic cooperation on culture. They serve as a vibrant two-way link, “exporting” their national cultures to other parts of the Nordic Region, and “importing” Nordic exhibitions and events to their local venues.

- Cooperation on Film and Media

The media are undergoing sweeping changes fuelled by technical development. New forms of media and distribution are emerging, requiring media policy decisions and the adoption of novel regulatory measures. The Council of Ministers has thus decided to keep abreast of these trends by co-ordinating the steps taken at national level. Important issues are the future of public service radio and TV and supporting digital contents production – possibly through a fund – the further training of film and TV professionals, film and TV activities for children and young people, and projects and activities focusing on multimedia and interactive media.

Nordic Steering Committee on Culture and Media serves as the Council of Ministers’ advisory body on issues related to culture and media policy. The KM group is commissioned to monitor developments in media, both at Nordic and international level, to promote coordination, and to increase Nordic cooperation on film and media, both within the region and in international organisations.

- Art Cooperation

The Council of Ministers’ main goal is to promote cooperation on art in the Nordic Region and to increase the availability of Nordic works of art. Steps have thus been taken to promote mobility and to develop networks linking national cultural institutions in the Nordic Region.

The Nordic Literature and Library Committee (NORDBOK) was formed to foster cooperation between public libraries in the Nordic Region and to improve the distribution of Nordic literature, both as translations and in the original Nordic language versions.

The Nordic Music Committee (NOMUS) promotes cooperation on music in the Nordic Region by awarding different types of grants. It also acts as the secretariat of the Nordic Council Music Prize. The Nordic Centre for the Performing Arts (NordScen) supports guest performances and develops cooperation on theatre, dance and musical theatre. The Nordic Institute for Contemporary Art (NIFCA) promotes Nordic cooperation on visual arts (especially contemporary art), architecture, handicrafts, industrial art, and on industrial design. NIFCA administers a guest studio programme for artists and launches and supports art and exhibition projects together with Nordic artists and institutions. It also administers the SLEIPNIR travel grants scheme for artists within all fields. The Nordic Museum Committee is a consultative organ of the Nordic Council of Ministers, which tries to achieve a higher profile for the Nordic cultural heritage. The Committee takes initiatives to develop information and to create networks between Nordic museums.

3.8. Budget

Cultural as well as other Nordic cooperation is divided into three areas: Nordic countries; adjacent areas (Baltic States, North-West Russia and the Arctic region); EU and EEA. In cultural cooperation the emphasis is on the first area: 87% of the budget is allocated to measures in the Nordic Region. Cultural cooperation accounts for some 19% of the Nordic Council of Ministers' total budget. The funds are allocated to projects, programs, general support schemes and as direct support to the Nordic cultural institutions.

Nordic Cultural Fund

The goal of the Nordic Cultural Fund⁵⁷ is to promote cooperation between the Nordic countries by providing funding for different projects. The funding is allocated through the Nordic Council of Ministers' budget. The activities range from culture in the broadest sense of the term to art, education and research. The main focus is on cooperation in the Nordic Region. Preference is given to projects that are impossible to implement nationally and that increase Nordic competence.

⁵⁷ <http://www.nordiskkulturfond.de>

Nordic Film and Television Fund⁵⁸

Established in 1990, the Fund's primary purpose is to promote film and TV productions of high quality in the five Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), by providing support for top-up financing of feature films, TV-fiction / series and creative documentaries. The Fund is based on an agreement between the Nordic film institute's, a number of Nordic TV companies and the Council of Ministers.

CHAPTER IV: Western Balkan region

The Western Balkans is a term introduced by the European Union institutions as reference for the sub-region comprising Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia, Montenegro. Kosovo will be exempt as it is under UN/EU administration and with unclear international status. With the exception of Albania, the countries of the Western Balkans were former constituent republics of the old Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The 1990s were a turbulent decade in the Western Balkans, as the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia broke-up and new countries were created. Ethnic and civil wars affected all the countries of the region, either directly or indirectly, costing them dearly. Besides the human losses and the dislocation of the ethnic groups, the countries faced a total crash of the economical system which contributed to extended poverty and high rates of unemployment that are felt even today! The disruption delayed the reform process and transition from command to market economies which other former communist states in central and eastern Europe underwent during that decade. The region today faces unresolved conflict issues, post-conflict problems such as the prevalence of organized crime, and the challenge of creating societies based on respect for human rights and the rule of law.

Despite the significant number of regional initiatives and the common goal of EU membership as the main stimuli for good neighborly conduct, the countries in the region have barely advanced their levels of cooperation and interdependence. Whether one is talking about trade, infrastructure, minorities, free movement of people or cultural exchange, as some of the key regional issues, the level of cooperation is modest at best. Nonetheless, several meetings

⁵⁸ <http://www.nordiskfilmogtvfond.com/>

concerning regional cooperation policies took place in the last three years, which provides hope that things could take a turn for the better. As a result of these inter-governmental events, few declarations and resolutions came to light thus clearly declaring the willingness for establishing future successful cooperation in the region. Still the prospect of EU membership constitutes the most powerful political asset for enhancing stability and good-neighborly relations in the Western Balkans. It has initiated and sustains reforms, and it represents a framework for conflict settlement and an effective incentive for improving regional cooperation.

4.1. Westren Balkans - EU relation 2000-2007

The Stabilization and Association Process (SAP), as the primary EU policy tool towards the Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro including Kosovo, Macedonia), was initiated in spring 1999 in an attempt to develop a global long-term approach towards the region⁵⁹. It was built on the Regional Approach to the countries of South East Europe, adopted by the EU in 1996 and 1997, which set out political and economic conditions for enhancing relations with the EU⁶⁰. Today, these countries count as ‘potential candidates’.

After the Kosovo war, the EU, through the creation of the Stability Pact for South East Europe on 10 June 1999, undertook to draw South East Europe ‘closer to the perspective of full integration ... into its structures’, including eventual full membership⁶¹. As a contribution to the Stability Pact and an interim step towards membership, the European Union set up a new generation of Stabilization and Association Agreements. In June 2000, the European Council in Feira recognized the five Western Balkan countries as potential EU members and adopted a strategy of support and EU approximation. "All the countries concerned are potential candidates for EU

⁵⁹ Communication to the Council and the European Parliament on the Stabilization and Association Process for Countries of South East Europe [COM(99)235 of 26.05.99]

⁶⁰ Council Conclusions on the Principle of Conditionality Governing the Development of the EU’s Relations with Certain Countries of South-East Europe, 29.04.1997.

⁶¹ The Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe was adopted on the EU’s initiative. In the founding document, more than 40 partner countries and organizations undertook to strengthen the countries of South East Europe ‘in their efforts to foster peace, democracy, respect for human rights and economic prosperity in order to achieve stability in the whole region’. Euro-Atlantic integration was promised to all the countries in the region. At a summit meeting in Sarajevo on 30.07.1999, the Pact was reaffirmed.

membership”⁶². For the first time the EU gave to the countries of the Western Balkans a full European perspective. It confirmed that its objective remains the fullest possible integration of the countries of the region into the political and economic mainstream of Europe through the Stabilization and Association process, political dialogue, liberalization of trade and cooperation in Justice and Home Affairs. The Union promised to support the Stabilization and Association process through technical and economic assistance.

Against this background, the Zagreb Summit of November 2000 confirmed the Stabilization and Association Process as ‘the heart of the Union’s policy towards the five countries concerned’⁶³. The SAP is aimed at assisting countries in the region ‘to move closer to the European Union’ by ‘introducing European values, principles and standards in the region’. These include democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights, protection of minorities and a market economy. The Stabilization and Association Process (SAP) comprises three main instruments: the Stabilization and Association Agreements, autonomous trade measures and substantial financial assistance. The Stabilization and Association Process is more than a bilateral process with each country. It has an important regional dimension and that dimension has two parts. One is to encourage the overall cooperation in the region, be it bilateral (solving open issues) or multilateral (participation in regional multilateral initiatives like a Stability Pact, South East European Cooperation Process, Adriatic-Ionian Initiative etc.). The other is to oblige them to create between themselves relations similar to those that exist between the EU member states. The core of the SAP is the conclusion of a Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) which commits the Western Balkan countries to a formal association with the EU over a transitional period. The SAP provides intensive technical assistance and support for improved governance, better functioning institutions, democratization, protection of human rights, refugee return, economic development and the fight against corruption and organized crime. It also underlined that each country’s progress towards European integration would continue to depend on complying with the Copenhagen criteria and the SAP conditionality.

⁶² Santa Maria de Feira European Council – 19/20 June 2000, Presidency Conclusions, Western Balkans

⁶³ Zagreb Summit, Final Declaration, 24.11.2000.

4.2. Zagreb Summit

The Zagreb Summit (24/11/2000) put the seal on the SAP, by gaining the region's agreement in a Final Declaration to a clear set of objectives and conditions. The Summit underlined the connection between the progress in the countries of the region towards democracy, rule of law, regional reconciliation and cooperation on the one hand and the prospect of possible accession to the EU on the other hand. It was underlined several times that rapprochement with the European Union will go hand in hand with process of developing regional cooperation. The European Union confirmed its wish to contribute to the consolidation of democracy and to give its resolute support to the process of reconciliation and cooperation between the SAP countries and reaffirmed the European perspective of the countries participating in the stabilization and association process and their status as potential candidates for membership in accordance with the Feira conclusions. If it was not completely clear before the Zagreb summit, the Final Declaration left no doubt that the Stabilization and Association process is at the heart of the Union's policy towards the five countries concerned and that individual approach is the fundamental principle.⁶⁴ The prospect of accession was offered on the basis of the provision of the Treaty on European Union, respect for the criteria defined at the Copenhagen European Council in June 1993 and the progress made in implementing the stabilization and association agreements, in particular on regional cooperation. In general prospect of accession for the SAP countries is not different from the prospects of accession of the ten, at that time, already negotiating countries.

4.3. Thessaloniki Summit and after

After the Zagreb Summit the rapprochement of the Balkans with the European Union went smoothly for two years. All the countries were making progress, some faster than others. Croatia has applied for the EU membership in February 2003. A general feeling emerged that more has to be done in order to give additional impetus to those countries that were lagging behind. The Greek Presidency in the first half of the 2003 was an excellent opportunity for new EU Balkan meeting – Thessaloniki Summit⁶⁵. The European Council of 20 June 2003 endorsed „The

⁶⁴ Zagreb Summit, Final Declaration, par. 4.

⁶⁵ Thessaloniki Summit, 23.06.2003

Thessaloniki agenda for the Western Balkans: Moving towards European Integration“ which represents a new important step in the privileged relationship between the EU and the Western Balkans. The EU – Western Balkans Summit Declaration of 21 June 2003 stated that its content shall be considered as the shared agenda, and that everybody is committed to its implementation. The countries of the region will focus their efforts on meeting the recommendations this agenda refers to. The EU reiterated its unequivocal support to the European perspective of the Western Balkan countries explicitly stating that the future of the Balkans is within the European Union. The ongoing enlargement and the signing of the Treaty of Athens in April 2003 should inspire and encourage the countries of the Western Balkans to follow the same successful path. Preparation for integration into European structures and ultimate membership into the European Union, through adoption of European standards, is now the big challenge ahead and the speed of movement ahead lies in the hands of the countries of the region.⁶⁶ It was acknowledged that the Stabilization and Association Process will remain the framework for the European course of the Western Balkan countries, all the way to their future accession. The process and the prospects it offers serve as the anchor for reform in the Western Balkans, in the same way the accession process has done in Central and Eastern Europe. Progress of each country towards the EU will depend on its own merits in meeting the Copenhagen criteria and the conditions set for in the SAP and confirmed in the final declaration of the November 2000 Zagreb summit. New additional instruments were introduced, of which the most far-reaching were the European Partnerships, inspired by the Accession Partnerships. The Western Balkan countries welcomed the decisions by the EU to strengthen its Stabilization and Association policy towards the region and to enrich it with elements from the experience of enlargement. They welcomed in particular the launching of the European Partnerships, as well as the decisions for enhanced cooperation in the areas of political dialogue and the Common Foreign and Security Policy, parliamentary cooperation, support for institution building, opening of Community programs⁶⁷.

It should be noted that the European prospect is grounded on strict EU conditionality. Each country is expected to progress at its own pace towards membership according to its ability to

http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/enlargement_process/acccession_process/how_does_a_country_join_the_eu/sap/thesisaloniki_agenda_en.htm

⁶⁶ Thessaloniki Declaration, par. 2

⁶⁷ Thessaloniki Declaration, par. 4

take on the obligations of closer association with the EU. The prospect of future membership of the European Union has had a profound transformative impact on the Western Balkan countries. In view of the Stabilization and Association Process, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia and Albania have undertaken considerable efforts to reform their institutions, economies and legal systems, but they have progressed at a different pace towards the goals of the EU, based on the Europe Agreements⁶⁸.

- The Commission opened negotiations on concluding a Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) with Albania in January 2003 but managed to sign in June 2006⁶⁹.
- On 18 November 2003 the Commission adopted a Feasibility Study on opening SAA negotiations with Bosnia and Herzegovina. Brussels announced that negotiations would start shortly but due to many difficulties the SAA is still not signed⁷⁰.
- Croatia, having signed an SAA on 29 October 2001, presented its application for EU membership on 20 February 2003. The Commission submitted its response on 20 April 2004, recommending that negotiations for accession should be opened. In light of Zagreb's improved cooperation with the ICTY, membership talks started in October 2005⁷¹.
- Macedonia signed an SAA on 9 April 2001, and on 22 March 2004 applied for EU membership. The Commission, on 9 November 2005, recommended granting Macedonia the status of candidate country and the opening of negotiations once 'it has reached a sufficient degree of compliance with the membership criteria'⁷².
- Serbia and Montenegro made some progress by adopting the Constitutional Charter and, in June 2003, an Internal Market and Trade Action Plan. In view of the diverging economic and political interests of the two republics, the EU suggested application of a 'twin-track' approach within the SAP. In October 2005, the European Union started association negotiations with Serbia and Montenegro. After the deceleration of independence by the Montenegrin Parliament on 03 June 2006, the Council of the EU gives the EU Commission a new mandate to

⁶⁸ On the implementation of the SAP, see the Annual Reports by the European Commission: 'The Stabilization and Association Process for South East Europe', First and Second Annual Reports, Brussels 2002 and 2003.

⁶⁹ <http://www.delalb.cec.eu.int>

⁷⁰ <http://www.delbih.cec.eu.int>

⁷¹ <http://www.delhrv.cec.eu.int>

⁷² <http://www.vlada.mk/Informacii/Dekemvri2005/i17-12-2005.htm>

commence SAA negotiations with the now independent Montenegro. In mid October 2007 Montenegro sing the SAP⁷³.

Following the dissolution of the State Union and Montenegro's declaration of independence after a referendum in May 2006, the political dialogue continued with Serbia, as a successor state of the State Union. Unfortunately, Serbia had to face consequences of its failure to comply with the only serious condition, its full cooperation with Hague Tribunal (ICTY), and the EU subsequently suspended negotiations in May 2006. After the parliamentary elections in Serbia, in February 2007 the Council welcomed the Commission's readiness to resume the SAA negotiations with a new government provided that it would show clear commitment and take concrete and effective action for full cooperation with the ICTY. As the new coalition government formed in May 2007 met these conditions, the Commission resumed the SAA negotiations with Serbia on 13 June 2007⁷⁴.

On 10 September 2007 Serbia and the European Commission concluded the negotiations for the SAA that needs now to go through the process of initialing, signature and ratification. Before the Council takes the decision to sign the SAA, the Council and the Commission will jointly review Serbia's performance in developing the necessary legislative framework and administrative capacity to implement its obligations under the SAA, and on full cooperation with ICTY.

Once in force, the SAA will establish a contractual relationship between Serbia and the EU through a comprehensive agreement between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Serbia, of the other part. Similar to the "Europe Agreements" with countries of the Central and Eastern Europe, the SAA will provide a legal framework for the relations between the EU and Serbia for the entire period prior to the possible future accession

- Kosovo, whose legal status is still unresolved, is assisted by the SAP Tracking Mechanism (STM), although formal association appears unrealistic as long as the sovereignty question remains open.

⁷³<http://www.europa.org.yu/code/navigate.php?Id=115>

⁷⁴<http://www.europa.org.yu/code/navigate.php?Id=115>

4.4. Western Balkans and EU integration process

Over past few years, the Western Balkans states were moving from stabilization to integration and from conflict management to institution building. All of the countries have had to start developing modern state institutions from scratch or from a very low base. Albania⁷⁵, previously isolated from the rest of the world, embarked on its transition from an even lower base. Some were more successful like Croatia and Macedonia and became candidate countries already. So far, their progress depended on their results in transition process; in future it will increasingly depend on the will and readiness in EU member states. In following years, advancement of Serbia, B&H, Albania and Montenegro will still depend more on their internal reforms and less on EU structures. The process of integration to EU is dynamic and unpredictable one. It remains to be seen which country will better manage its affairs and sooner integrate to the EU. Failing to meet European standards means the door will remain closed, the standards will be getting more complex and the Western Balkans will be drifting further away from the EU. There cannot be accession to the EU if the state is not stable, functional and capable of effective implementation of the European legislation. Above all, there cannot be full membership if the European Union is not ready and willing to make it happen. At least, another decade will be needed for the sixth enlargement to be completed.

In the year 2006 of all Western Balkan countries, only Albania managed to sign the SAA in June, and worries are mounting amidst difficult conditions in this country surrounding the implementation and also the ratification of this agreement. Albania has to carry many reforms necessary to guarantee proper implementation which has not been carried out due to a protracted internal power struggle between the main political parties. These relate, among other things, to the fight against organized crime and corruption, and the functioning of the judicial system. Political uncertainty and limited reform focus impede social and economic development, and corruption, organized crime, deficient law implementation and administrative inefficiency represent serious obstacles to business development. “Overall, Albania has made some progress in strengthening its government structures to address its commitments towards the EU and the

⁷⁵ Albania 2005 Progress Report, Brussels, 09.11.2005, SEC (2005) 1421, pp. 15–16.

broader development agenda. Further strengthening of capacity, coordination and strategic planning remains necessary for Albania”⁷⁶.

The region witnessed the birth of yet another country – Montenegro, which after getting Independence at the beginning of June 2006, began SAA negotiations in late September, and manages to sing the SAP in mid October 2007. According to the latest progress report⁷⁷ about Montenegro 2007, the country has to carry out many reforms in order to meet the EU criteria, but mostly to focus on reformation of the public administration, capacity and institutional building, harmonization of the judicial system, etc.

The prime challenge in B&H is constructing Bosnian’s statehood and government ownership along administrative capacity building. Bosnia and Herzegovina still suffers from a dysfunctional political system and weak institutions. Despite many encouraging signs, Bosnia and Herzegovina didn’t get over its main problem – integration of the country as the precondition for the integration into the EU. Negotiations on a Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA), which is a central element of the SAP, were officially opened in November 2005. Technical negotiations were finalized in December 2006. In May 2007, the Member States endorsed the outcome of the negotiations, but reiterated that, to conclude the SAA, Bosnia and Herzegovina will need to meet the conditions set out by the EU prior to the opening of negotiations. The SAA will be initiated as soon as Bosnia and Herzegovina has made sufficient progress in addressing these requirements, notably police reform. The signature of the SAA will require evidence that the police reform is irreversibly on track, as well as full cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). Progress in the areas of public broadcasting and public administration reform will also be required before the SAA is signed. Failure of Bosnia and Herzegovina’s political leaders to achieve the necessary reforms and to conclude the SAA would seriously undermine Bosnia and Herzegovina’s prospects of European integration⁷⁸.

Croatia and Macedonia were not only the first ones to sign SAAs in 2001, but are also candidates for EU membership. Croatia is an important step ahead, because it has already started accession negotiations, unlike Macedonia that will have to wait a lot until this decision is made.

⁷⁶ Albania 2007 Progress Report, Brussels, 6.11.2007, SEC(2007) 1429

⁷⁷ Montenegro 2007 Progress Report, Brussels, 6.11.2007, SEC(2007) 1434

⁷⁸ Bosnia and Herzegovina 2007 Progress Report, Brussels, 6.11.2007, SEC(2007) 1430

Croatia is so far the only country participating in the Stabilization and Association process that negotiates the full membership with the EU. Croatia has convincingly demonstrated how quickly and dynamically reforms can be carried out once there is a real prospect of accession. Less than ten years after this country regained full sovereignty over its entire territory, the European Commission concluded that Croatia was a functioning market economy that should be able to cope with the competitive pressure resulting from EU integration, and that it would be able to take on the obligations of membership in the medium term. In order to get to this point, to become the leader as far as European integration is concerned, Croatia had to go through all the steps designed by the EU, fulfill numerous conditions, achieve many benchmarks, prepare and implement many reforms but, at the same time, gain a lot of experience. This experience gives a good base for assessment about the future European perspectives of this part of Europe.

In Macedonia the situation has normalized – after the crisis of 2001 – on the basis of the Ohrid Framework Agreement brokered by the EU and the US. The agreement gives the EU a leading role in overseeing its implementation and thus a major responsibility for its success. Since that time, Macedonia has experienced notable progress, notably in the area of interethnic relations (use of minority languages, ethnic representation, and so on). The political situation is relatively stable, although the implementation of key parts of the Ohrid agreement have not been finalised (for instance, as regards delays with regard to decentralisation). Here, as in all other Western Balkan countries, administrative capacity and institution-building need to be further strengthened for full compliance with EU requirements. On December 17, 2005 the EU Council granted Macedonia a candidate status for EU membership. The Republic of Macedonia as a candidate country faces the need of a serious and continuous implementation of all the EU membership criteria, without any exception. In this regard, the Macedonian government should focus its efforts towards the implementation of the envisaged institutional reforms. It's expected that Macedonia will manage to get the dates for starting the negotiations for full membership in the following year.

4.5. Prospects of European Membership

On the occasion of Thessaloniki Summit in 2003, EU leaders made a firm promise that “the future of the Western Balkans is within the European Union”. The EU’s existing Member States have accepted these countries as future members because:

- The Treaty says that any European state which respects its basic principles may apply for membership
- The EU has a historical and moral obligation to help the countries of the region;
- Politically and economically, the EU has an interest in the stability and prosperity of these countries.

Even the above counted Union’s declared standing points, the EU accession will become ever more difficult since the general political, economical and social conditions in the EU are obviously changed. One of the main reasons for postponing the EU accession is for sure the negative outcome of the referenda in France and Netherlands, which mainly concerns the Turkey accession, but also influence a lot on a European future of the WB. Still, the argument for a full membership is based on the assumption that the impact of external political factors in the transition process is minimal, and that positive trends in the region will continue if the governments of the Western Balkan countries take the right decisions. Enlargement will have significant political, economic and psychological implications for the Balkans.

After the accession of Bulgaria and Romania in January 2007, the Western Balkans are now wholly surrounded by EU Member States, forming a conspicuous ‘hole’ in the EU map. In its 2005 report, *The Balkans in Europe’s Future*⁷⁹, the International Commission on the Balkans argued that the target date for accession should be set at 2014-2015 – symbolically, a century after war broke out in Sarajevo in the summer of 1914. Still the EU is reluctant to decide such dates: the European Council in December 2006 stated that “target dates for accession will not be set until negotiations are close to completion”.

⁷⁹ “The Balkans in Europe’s Future”2005, International Commission on the Balkans; <http://www.balkan-commission.org/>

But EU candidates do need to set target dates for themselves for the purposes of government planning, for setting priorities and sequencing reforms. A target date is also an important means of mobilizing the broad national effort needed and can be used to hold governments to account for progress. Croatia has declared that its target for accession is 2009. For the other Balkan countries, which have not yet opened accession negotiations, it is harder to make any predictions. The principle of ‘differentiation’ – that each country advances to membership at its own pace – must be upheld. Croatia needs to be reassured that the EU will admit it as soon as it has fully met the criteria. If Croatia is able to join in 2009 or soon after, this will show EU citizens that enlargement can work in the Western Balkans, bringing benefits all round. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia and Albania will reach European standards as regards institutions, rule of law and governance probably with the next decade.

The Western Balkan countries need the political prospect of EU accession and assistance in accomplishing the reform process, and there is little hope that a vague and remote prospect of ‘potential candidature’ would lead to significant institutional and economic improvements. Therefore, it is of paramount importance to maintain this prospect and ensure that there are no intermediate steps on the road to membership. Any other option would seriously undermine the stabilization process and instigate a vicious circle of disappointment, frustration and destruction. Giving up the project of South-Eastern enlargement would seriously endanger the stabilization process in the region. It would discourage EU-oriented transition, discredit reform-oriented elites and risk creating a Balkan ghetto on Europe’s South-Eastern periphery. It is very much in the EU’s own interest to continue and even speed up the accession process of these countries. In contrast, any form of political marginalization could inflict considerable harm on the Union (trans-border organised crime, migration flows, inter-ethnic tensions, and so on).

The challenges ahead have to be confronted by both sides. The EU and the countries of the Western Balkans need to work together better in mustering leadership and political will, strengthening mutual confidence and sustaining the momentum of enlargement. Successful EU enlargement is a joint partnership in managing the dynamic interplay of politics within and between the EU and the aspirant members. It takes both sides to make it work.

CHAPTER V: CULTURAL COOPERATION BETWEEN WESTERN BALKANS COUNTRIES

“A lot of work has to be done in order to establish cultural cooperation, which has become the main ideological urge in Europe these day”- *Balkane, my balkane Dubravka Ugrisic*

The Balkan region is known for its unique character and sense of place. A region bound by a collective identity that encompasses the past and the present. A region that is extremely complex from variety of aspects: political, historical, social...A region that is “a crossroad and a bridge at the same time”...The last decade of the 20th century has witnessed some fundamental movements in the political and ideological aspects within the region. The developments and processes of integration, in all the areas, have created new premises and possibilities for the countries of the region to establish higher level of cultural cooperation. It’s our common responsibility to overpass the stereotypes and prejudices that are deeply affecting the process of regional cultural cooperation and introduce new practices and cooperation logic.

As most important for cultural cooperation in the region is not to forget or ignore our past cultural unity. With exception of Albania, all the countries that are subject of observation used to live in one state federation. The cultural ties exist even much before forming of Yugoslavia, but 40 years of common state certainly contribute toward creation of shared cultural identity. This

means that the cultural capital still exists embodied in the knowledge of local tradition, cultural workers and institutional memory. On the other hand, the transition period opened new forms of cooperation like networking, consultancy, and transfer of knowledge. These bring us new approaches like cultural management, strategic cultural planning, capacity building and focus on organizational development. This should be the pillars of the regional cultural cooperation. Re-establishing and re-vitalizing trans-border artistic and cultural ties in the WB are not only important for the improving of cultural life or as concrete support of cultural diversity it is, as well, a precondition for reconciliation, for the return of mutual trust and for moral and economic reconstruction of the region. In this respect, the strengthening of cultural cooperation in the WB, their interconnection and connection to other Euroregions in Europe would definitely make a significant contribution to trans-border cooperation and openness of the borders. After 15 years of transition, the countries of SEE including the Western Balkans have changed radically. “All these developments have led to the need to redefine the region and regional cultural cooperation. In spite the increasing willingness between the art and cultural communities to promote new frame of cultural cooperation, the overall cooperation in the region is based rather on interpersonal networking than on governmental support “ . Until present, the regional cultural cooperation was lead mainly by the civil sector and mostly supported by Foundations or foreign cultural centres such as OSI, Pro Helvetia, French Cultural Centres, British Council, Goethe Institute, etc. All of them played a huge role in re-establishing the bridges for cultural cooperation. In spite of significant non-governmental initiatives and tremendous scope of cooperative cultural projects that were realized by the civil sector in the region, government-dependent cooperation has not reached the same level of institutionalization as in other sub-regions. The turbulent processes of transition, the political, economic and ideological processes certainly determined and limited the conditions for cultural production and cultural cooperation in the region. One of the dire consequences of the new political situation was the severance of cultural ties in a once-unified cultural area that used to exist in former Yugoslavia. The connections have so far not been restored to their former level. Naturally the cultural cooperation continued in spite of these limitations, as it is impossible to put a complete stop to it, but still it is very difficult to maintain.

It's characteristic for the whole region the nongovernmental organization played a crucial role in establishment of international and regional cultural cooperation. There are many reasons for this development. According to the analysis of case studies of East-West cultural cooperation projects, "Every Step Has An Echo"⁸⁰, "these new actors have demonstrated a fresh, flexible, multi-skilled, open and internationally oriented logic of cooperation". For many of them, working internationally represents a means of survival, given the difficulties in finding the means and the context for developing their artistic projects at national level. At the same time, public sector actors did not undergo real reform, though there were differences from country to country.

"Bosnia is a cruel example of such a policy. During the siege of Sarajevo the whole world had taken Sarajevo as a symbol, many artists and intellectuals went there to see and to be seen as giving support, and many foundations entered directly after Dayton in 1995. They invested in the development of the NGO sector - leaving the public sector to their political divisions, administrative confusion and lack of know-how. This created a very particular artificially-created situation, where a country has a highly developed civil sector, with salaries ten times greater than the public sector, encouraging the final exodus of the remaining artists and intellectuals from the public sector to NGOs, further weakening the stability and quality of work in the public sector⁸¹." In many cases this prevented the public sector from acquiring sufficient knowledge and skills to be able to work internationally and from taking advantage of all the opportunities which this new context afforded. Another important process that was going on in the last 15 years is that the Ngo sector was manly supported by the international funds that enabled them to learn and gain skills for fundraising. As the BalkanKult report into the role of foundations in the Balkans (2001) points out, "capacity development support from foreign foundations enabled the NGO sector to achieve greater competence and skills than the public sector in fundraising, project development and management, partnership development and the ability to work internationally"⁸². As the BalkanKult report also indicates, the fact that support from international and foreign funders has been directed principally at the third sector has provided an excuse for national and local

⁸⁰ Ilić, Milica & DeVlieg, Mary Ann - "Every Step Has an Echo (*Jumping to Conclusions*)" (2003)

⁸¹ Dragičević-Šešić, Milena & Šuteu, Corina "Mapping cultural cooperation in South East Europe: the internationalization of cultural policies" Written for the 'Crossing Perspectives: Cultural Cooperation with South EasternEurope' seminar organised by the European Cultural Foundation (Amsterdam, 2003)

⁸² BalkanKult - "The present and future role of foundations in cultural funding and policymaking in the Balkans" (Belgrade,2001)

authorities not to give money to the cultural sector, or at least not to the steadily developing independent sector, a practice which endangers many private initiatives of proven quality and impact. This unbalanced development represents one of the fundamental challenges which the funding programs need to address.

5.1. Political context

At a moment when the European destiny of the Western Balkans is again being heavily discussed by politicians from the region and in Brussels, as well as by the citizens, the role of the arts and culture in the integration process seems to be the last important question or on a contrary one of the most prospective mechanism for achieving the “only” common aim of the region. The Commission’s survey carried out in the region, notes “One overriding conclusion to counteract the high level of pessimism in the region, caused by the crisis of the systems in the individual states and the defensive attitude of many of its people who tend to prefer to stick to the status quo, is that the only common platform in the Western Balkans is the European Union. The EU constitutes the only ground where expectations meet and where optimism exists, not only for the individual states themselves, but also for the future of their neighbors⁸³”.

While reading the political documents concerning the regional cooperation between the Western Balkans countries as one of the main requirements for EU integration, it’s very easy to conclude that the cultural issues are either putted aside either they are totally lacking. SAP which is the crucial mechanism for the Western Balkans integration avoids cultural issues. Culture is discussed as one means of realizing the main objective— which is to bring peace, stability and prosperity to the region.

Still, at a time of “enlargement fatigue”, cultural engagement can strengthen the political dialogue, break prejudices and contribute to stability in the region. Contrary of this prevailing opinion, it’s illusion to believe that joining the EU is key solution for all problems. The task ahead is a more practical one. What are the prospects for a comprehensive EU strategy for the Balkans? How to integrate the political side with the cultural side? Where the shared

⁸³ “The Balkans in Europe’s Future”2005, International Commission on the Balkans; <http://www.balkan-commission.org/>

responsibilities and what are the practical measures need to be undertaken at various levels (local/country, regional, EU)? “Culture is a binding element here, if understood in a wider context, encompassing education, exchange of students, the restoration of heritage, lectures about political issues, exchange of artists. This will make the Balkans more visible and understandable in the EU also. Integration is not only a political issue. It can only be made understandable and can involve people, if it includes a cultural element.”⁸⁴

In a circumstance where the changes are not easily acceptable, where people are living in danger from so many radical changes, the reform processes are lasting long. Even that the Western Balkans countries, especially after the enlargement, are having huge pressure coming from EU to improve the level of regional collaboration, the process is still slow. In this context is very important to highlight that the pressure form EU is expected, but the process itself could be very long. Raymond Weber (2000), identifies five developmental phases of cultural cooperation in the post-World War II Europe: “reconciliation, reciprocal recognition, creation of a common discourse, imagining common solutions, awareness awaking of multicultural challenges”. The above quoted aims of cultural cooperation (valid for post-WorldWar II Western Europe) are still not valid today for the Balkans: “The process of reconciliation had been started from the top-down, even better to say, from outside, and has, therefore, not been achieved. Albanians from Kosovo and Serbs are supposed to get together because of international pressure more than because of grass-rooted intercultural incentive exchange. The three nations of Bosnia compromised, but that society did not find reconciliation with post-war (1993) trauma. Neither was reciprocal recognition achieved truly between Macedonians and Greeks. The “common discourse” has not been created, like in Western Europe, through partnership, debate and public dialogue. Common discourse is imposed from outside - vocabulary such as interculturalism, multicultural society, cultural diversity, truth and reconciliation, capacity building, sustainability, re-training of cultural administrators, policy issues etc. came “from the top”, from pro-European political elites, and were imposed as key words on cultural actors in the region, while no one really introduced them as values in primary education and within general public space, with adequate policy measures in all fields of social life. Those who wanted to enter “the game” had to

⁸⁴ Report of the ECF-Hivos Conference “The heart of the matter: What Future for the Balkans in the EU?” The role of arts and cultural cooperation in their European integration, 2005, pg.14, www.eurocult.org

learn and to adopt this vocabulary, without having the time to independently discover, integrate and assimilate it internally and organically.”⁸⁵ In this context, the opinion of Raymond Weber seems quite correct: “while in Western Europe these values (the above cited values) had the time to develop and install during half a century, the Western community is waiting from Central and Eastern Europe to acquire them in only some years”.

Still some recent developments in the regional cooperation where progress is made are worth mentioning. An Energy Community has been formed and a regional free trade agreement (CEFTA) was signed in December 2006, in which cultural goods are specifically mentioned. Special Coordinator Erhard Busek comment: “This is the culmination of six years work under the auspices of the Stability Pact's Trade Working Group starting with the Memorandum of Understanding in 2001, through the negotiation of 32 bilateral FTAs and now a single regional agreement. The new CEFTA is a tremendous economic and political achievement for South Eastern Europe. It demonstrates the region's capacity to work together for its own development and towards its European future”⁸⁶. The other one is that the Stability Pact for South East Europe will cease to exist at the end of 2008 and be replaced by a regional cooperation structure⁸⁷. Following extensive consultations with the region in 2005 and 2006, it was agreed that the RCC and its Secretariat should focus its activities on six areas, which the countries of the region have already identified as those where regional cooperation will be beneficial to all:

- Economic and Social Development
- Infrastructure
- Justice and Home Affairs
- Security Cooperation
- Building Human Capital

Parliamentary Cooperation will be an overarching theme that is linked with each of the above areas. The political work of the RCC in these six core areas will be supported on a technical and expert level by the network of Stability Pact's initiatives and taskforces. As part of the Stability

⁸⁵ Dragičević-Šešić, Milena & Şuteu, Corina “Mapping cultural cooperation in South East Europe: the internationalization of cultural policies” Written for the 'Crossing Perspectives: Cultural Cooperation with South Eastern Europe' seminar organised by the European Cultural Foundation (Amsterdam, 2003)

⁸⁶ Stability Pact Newsletter, Issue 26. Feb 2007, www.stabilitypact.org

⁸⁷ www.stabilitypact.org

Pact transformation strategy, all of the SP initiatives and taskforces have been reviewed to determine their relevance for the future RCC and to outline appropriate individual transition strategies. Since September 2006, considerable work has been undertaken to develop the institutional, legal and financial basis for the RCC. The establishment of RCC means that the region today is much more ready to cooperate than decade ago. The RCC means that the region has capacity and political commitment to work commonly on many aspects of further development of regional cooperation. The transformation or evolution of the Stability pact into Regional Cooperation Council is from high importance for the region because the process of regional cooperation is now quite depending from the countries involved in it. What miss on the agenda of the RCC is again culture which obviously shows the rigidness and inferior position of the cultural field in the region. Obviously there was not sufficient coordinated lobby on a regional level to pursuit the idea of making culture one of the areas important for regional cooperation in the frames of RCC.

These developments imply and foresee a closer cooperation of the countries in South East Europe with each other and individually and en bloc with the European Union. Positive developments, however, especially when they concern the regional dimension, still happen under pressure from the European Union.

5.2. Governmentally based cultural cooperation in the region

As elaborated in the previous chapter, the regional cultural cooperation in the last decade was based on two main pillars: the civil society and external pressure from the international community. The conditions for maintaining cultural cooperation in the region are obviously changed which implies the need to examine the role of the Governments in the regional cooperation and to review the cultural polices on the national level in the region. It's from high importance in the current political and social setting of the Western Balkan region to make a pressure on the Governments to overtake a greater responsibility in the process of regional cooperation.

The below listed institutions are the main that have a mandate in the field of international cultural cooperation.

Albania

- Ministry of Culture and Tourism
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs

www.mfa.gov.al/english

Bosnia and Herzegovina

The mandates for international and cultural cooperation are split between different levels, but without a clear distinction of responsibilities. Thus, foreign affairs (including cultural cooperation) are the responsibility of the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina, whereas responsibility for the support for culture (including international cultural cooperation) lies with its two entities: the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Srpska. It should also be mentioned that financial support for international exchange and cooperation projects can also be provided by the ministries of culture of the ten cantons of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina

www.mvp.gov.ba

- Ministry of Culture and Sports of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Srpska

www.vladars.net/en/min/mp.html

Croatia

- Ministry of Culture

www.min-kulture.hr

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration

www.mfa.hr

Republic of Macedonia

- Ministry of Culture

www.kultura.gov.mk

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs

www.mfa.gov.mk

Republic of Serbia

- Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Serbia

www.kultura.sr.gov.yu

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Serbia

www.mfa.gov.yu

The status of Kosovo and the replacement of the Interim UN Administration in Kosovo remain to be decided. Provisional Institutions of Self-Government in Kosovo – including a Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports – have been established, and the transfer of responsibilities from UNMIK to these Provisional Institutions has begun.

- Provisional Institutions of Self-Government in Kosovo

Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports

www.pm-ksgov.net

Montenegro

- Ministry of Culture, Sports and Media of the Republic of Montenegro

www.gom.cg.yu/eng/minkult/

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Montenegro

www.vlada.cg.yu/eng/mininos/

5.3. Cultural Policies in the Western Balkan region

In the last 10 years, all countries of the Western Balkan region have elaborated their cultural policies. With exception of Bosnia and Herzegovina all other countries submitted national reports on cultural policies. Now, evaluations, assessments and further research in cultures are ahead.

Cultural policies are of high importance for the cultural cooperation. In this context, “cultural policies could either foster or discourage the cultural cooperation from the point of view of mobility and exchange whether it be people, intangible assets, goods or services. Among the relevant instruments and measures are: social and tax regimes, foreign policy agreements, awards and scholarship regulations, labor laws and union rules, language policies, quota regulations or copyright royalty schemes. Other important factors to consider are national/regional histories, a body of intellectual knowledge and cultural/aesthetic experiences or "intangible assets" which can influence mind-sets and the openness or not of others to engage freely in trans-national

cooperation and exchange”⁸⁸. Cultural cooperation does not take place within a vacuum but rather within a broader political and historical context which is subject to, for example, different legal and regulatory frameworks. This means that there are incentives, constraints and larger obstacles which may foster or prevent cultural cooperation. Therefore, the main objectives of the further text is to analyze the current postulates in the national cultural policies of each of the country of the region in order to locate constraints and obstacle for cultural cooperation. The regional cultural cooperation will be observed as part from the international cultural cooperation.

5.4. Report on International Cultural Cooperation- Western Balkans Countries

Source: Based on country profiles in the Council of Europe/ERICarts *Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe*, 2007 edition, reports and institutional websites.

5.5. Albania

Overview of main structures and trends

The Ministry of Tourism and Culture is responsible for international cultural cooperation. Except for cultural heritage and film production, the Ministry of Tourism and Culture has no strategy on international cultural cooperation. There has been no significant change in international cultural cooperation in recent years. Unfortunately, culture itself was not a topic of the program of the previous left-wing government and is not a topic of the current right-wing government's program either. Even the "word" culture is missing in these documents. In this context, the Albanian government fails to fulfill obligations imposed by international agreements and conventions to which it adheres. Intercultural projects are proposed and funded by international or foreign agencies.

Public actors and cultural diplomacy

Since the merger of the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Culture, there has been a decrease in the government's interest (and funding) in cultural activities in general. No significant

⁸⁸ Danielle Cliche, Teresa Brown, Oliver Göbel “European Cultural Cooperation in the G2CC-LAB-Environment (Portal) Definition and Elements of a Conceptual Framework”, www.labforculture.org, 2005 Amsterdam, pg.32

efforts have been seen to establish cooperation between the Ministry of Tourism and Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The latter has announced a major plan aimed at setting up a network of "Albanian Institutions" abroad, but to date this is only, and merely, a statement. Unlike Albanian public institutions, foreign cultural agencies have been increasingly active in promoting their respective national and European cultural values in Albania. Especially, the Italian Institute and the Alliance Française have sponsored a wide range of activities, from translation and book publishing, to drama productions and live concerts. The Italian Institute is a promoter and major sponsor of "Allegretto Albania", a series of classical music concerts in major cities, while the Alliance Française organises the annual French Cultural Festival, a multi-disciplinary event. A major factor in this field remains the Swiss Cultural Council - Pro Helvetia, which also supports projects with a national or regional profile. Recently, the British Council has been expanding its services, including library and home video rentals. The major instruments used in international cultural relations are bi-lateral cooperation agreements. A good example in this matter is the 2002 agreement between Albania and Italy, which paved the way for two co-productions of feature films, the first ever with Albanian and Italian money. Another agreement, between the Albanian and Italian ministries of education, has allowed many Albanian students to study arts and culture at Italian universities. In addition, opera and classical music institutions from Italy, France, Germany and Austria, have been offering training courses and internships for Albanian singers and musicians, thus helping many of them to start an international career abroad. Due to a lack of interest in international cultural cooperation, the Albanian government provides no specific funding programs for projects of this kind. However, the Ministry of Tourism and Culture provides limited and decreasing funding, benefiting events such as international drama and film festivals or classical music summer festivals.

European / international actors and programs

Albania is a full member of the Council of Europe and UNESCO, while, as a candidate country, it has been benefiting from EU programs like Phare and CARDS. Albania is also a country member of the Francophonie Community, benefiting from direct and indirect support from the French government. The Albanian Parliament ratified the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions on 24 September 2006. The Ministry of Tourism and Culture will be in charge of monitoring the implementation of the

Convention. Few Albanian cultural and education institutions have affiliations with international, transnational or European organizations. Tirana Arts Academy is a member of ELIA, while there is a national centre of the Madrid-based Mediterranean Theatre Institute. There is no partnership between Albania and the Nordic Council or the Anna Lindh Foundation Networks.

Direct professional cooperation

Trans-border exchanges with Serbia and Montenegro have been almost non-existent, due to political obstacles between the two countries. In recent years, Albania has tried to foster these exchanges with Macedonia and Kosovo. With the latter, there has been distinguished progress, with cultural festivals, joint book fairs and exchange of concerts and drama tours. The current government has announced a plan to change an existing cultural centre into a theatre, with support from the Greek government, in the form of euro 2.5 million to finance the project.

Drama, opera and ballet have received grants from mandated agencies such as the Alliance Française, the Italian Institute of Culture, the German Embassy, and the Austrian Embassy. In the film industry, the French foundation Fond du Sud has played a key role, financing half of Albanian feature film productions. In 2005, the "Artistet Shqiptare" online database on Albania artists from all arts sectors living in Albania and abroad was launched (<http://www.artistetshqiptare.com/index.htm>). Its main objective is to provide information for Albanian arts and media managers and international artists who are interested in collaborating with colleagues from Albania. It also aims at facilitating the contact among Albanian artists in Albania and abroad. The project is supported by the Open Society Foundation (SOROS) and the European Cultural Foundation.

Cross-border intercultural dialogue and cooperation

The Albanian government has no specific programs to support cross-border intercultural dialogue and cooperation. The Ministry of Culture has signed bi-lateral agreements on cultural cooperation with its counterparts in Greece, Macedonia and Kosovo. Except for Albania-Kosovo exchanges, these agreements have had a small impact.

In the third sector, there are some good examples of trans-national intercultural dialogue. The Albanian Centre of ITM (Mediterranean Institute of Theatre) organises an annual international drama festival in Butrint. The Albanian Section of ISCM (International Society of Contemporary

Music) organizes the annual New Chamber Music Festival and has recently launched its Centre for Balkan Music Documentation, the first project of this kind in Albania.

The annual International Tirana Film Festival of short films, animations and documentary films has a special focus on films from Albanian-speaking minorities in Kosovo, Macedonia and the Diaspora. The festival takes place every year in October and is organized by the Albanian Art Institute. All films receiving an award are screened on Albanian national TV.

Butrint 2000 is an annual theatre festival that takes place on a historic site in the South-Albanian town of Butrinti, on the shore of Lake Butrint. The festival started in 2000 and has presented works by Albanian artists, as well as more than 50 companies coming from Greece, Italy, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Serbia and Montenegro, Poland, Romania, the Netherlands, UK, USA, France, Russia, Sweden etc. It is also a measure to promote cultural tourism in Albania, as Butrinti is only a short ferry ride away from the island of Corfu.

Other relevant issues

Despite the fact that Albania has a considerable Diaspora, there have been no efforts from the government to support the creation of cultural centers or other structures to support the preservation of language and cultural identity among Albanian's living abroad.

Neither the Ministry of Culture, nor the Ministry of Labour and Social Issues, have even drafted "culture in development" programs. In such cases, Albania relies on international funding. Albania is open to European and international cultural cooperation and efforts are being made to promote the most important achievements of national culture abroad. The Council of Europe has been the most important partner in international cultural collaboration during the last decade.

Some examples of international exhibitions and festivals in Albania are:

- the Onufri International Exhibition in Tirana (an annual exhibition for visual arts);
- the International Festival of Opera Singers in Tirana;
- the International Festival of Theatre in Butrinti (South of Albania);
- the International Festival of Experimental Theatre in Elbasan;
- the International Festival of Comic Theatre in Korca;
- the Art Biennale of Tirana; and
- Tirana International Film Festival etc.

The Tirana International Book Fair takes place every year in November with participants mainly from Greece, Italy, Macedonia, Montenegro, Kosovo, and France. Its main objective is to present the latest publications in Albania and translation from Albanian into other languages. The Book Fair is supported by the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports and by the Open Society Foundation for Albania - Soros. Albanian artists are now represented at international festivals abroad (e.g. Venice Biennale for visual arts, Film Festival of Venice, International Festival of Theatre in Cairo, International Festival of Poetry in Struga, Macedonia). Albanian writers have been on board the Literature Express Europe 2000, a literary train that crossed Europe in the summer of 2000.

The lack of financial means strongly hampers Albanian cultural activities abroad, so that the import of foreign culture into Albania outweighs the export of Albanian culture. Albania was involved in the Mosaic Program of the Council of Europe, which helped in the process of formulating principles for national cultural strategies. This program is also an example of regional cultural cooperation of South Eastern European countries. For the last five years, Albania has been involved in the program "European Heritage Days" organized by the Council of Europe and the European Union. The ancient city of Butrinti has been added to the UNESCO World Heritage List.

5.6. Croatia

Overview of main structures and trends

The government has listed international cultural cooperation among its priorities and established a Cultural Council for International Relations and European Integration in 2004. The aim of this Council is to better coordinate and plan international cultural cooperation activities. In addition to its consultative role in the distribution of grants, the Cultural Council for International Relations and European Integration also has the task to make proposals to improve the coordination of those involved in planning and participating in international exchanges. In May 2006, the Council produced public Guidelines for planning international cultural cooperation, which can be found at the web site of the Ministry of Culture (<http://www.min-kulture.hr>). Following the proposals made by the Cultural Council, the Ministry made some changes in the rules for

distributing grants. In 2006, the Ministry introduced another (spring) deadline for financing projects of international cultural cooperation.

The government continues with the policy of signing bilateral agreements and programs of cultural cooperation. It is important to stress that the majority of projects financially supported by the Ministry of Culture are not based on the traditional form of "government to government cooperation" but on direct contacts between artists and arts and cultural organisations.

The government has listed, as one of the priorities, strengthening cultural cooperation within the region of South Eastern Europe. The cooperation is based on existing links between artists and arts managers; bilateral and regional programs of cooperation; cooperation within the framework of international organizations such as UNESCO or the Council of Europe; cooperation within regional organizations such as the Council of Ministers of Culture of Southeast Europe, the network of ministers responsible for cultural heritage sponsored by UNESCO, the Danubian Region, the Alps Adriatic Working Community, the Central European Initiative, the Quadrilateral Initiative, etc. Special projects include post-war reconstruction, the return of stolen cultural objects, support for mobility, and cooperation in the field of policy-making, cultural itineraries etc.

Public actors and cultural diplomacy

The Ministry of Culture (on the national level) and larger cities (on the local level) are major founders of international cultural cooperation projects and initiatives. The Ministry of Culture cooperates with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its Department for International Cultural Cooperation, which is responsible for coordination of work of cultural attachés. As Croatia does not have publicly mandated cultural agencies or institutes abroad for cultural cooperation, Croatian embassies are the most important focal points for the promotion of Croatian culture abroad. The Ministry of Culture operates all major instruments used in international cultural relations including state guarantees, bilateral agreements and programs, as well as sector-specific agreements such as coproduction agreements. The Ministry of Culture allocates around 13 million HRK (app. euro 1 750 000) for international cultural cooperation, together with 25% of the Funds received by the Ministry through the Lottery Fund (the amount varies depending on the income of the State Lottery, but it amounts to about euro 200 000 for international cultural cooperation).

European / international actors and programs

Croatia is an active member of UNESCO and the Council of Europe and participates in numerous projects initiated or supported by these organizations. Croatia is in the process of negotiations for full membership of the European Union. It has ratified almost all normative instruments of both organizations that refer to culture and cultural heritage.

The UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions has been ratified by the Croatian Parliament on 12 May 2006 (Official journal reference: NN-MU 5/2006) and the instrument of ratification was submitted to UNESCO on 31 August 2006. The Ministry of Culture is responsible for implementing and monitoring of the Convention, together with the National Commission for UNESCO.

Direct professional cooperation

In the past few years, it is possible to observe a greater interest from cultural operators and artists for participation in various international networks. Several Croatian theatres are members of the European Theatre Convention and Croatian artists participate in several platforms and networks supported by the Culture 2000 program (i.e. Triathlon Network, project SEAS, Gemine Muse etc.) While it is still difficult to obtain extra-budgetary funds for cultural cooperation projects and networking in Croatia, financial support is mostly provided by the Ministry of Culture and local communities.

Cross-border intercultural dialogue and cooperation

Much effort is being invested in support for cross-border cooperation projects, both by the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education. Initiatives are usually carried out by NGOs which apply for government funding. Cooperation programs include joint education programs, cooperation in promoting common heritage, student camps etc. An important role in initiating and supporting such initiatives was played by the Stability Pact, through the "Working Table on Education and Youth".

Other relevant issues

Programs that support "culture in development" are not designed as special measures outlined and proclaimed by cultural policy and Croatia did not have a tradition of funding such projects abroad. Following the war and subsequent stabilization processes in South-East Europe, Croatia initiated symbolic support and cooperation projects (mainly focussing on transfer of knowledge and exchange of experiences) in this region. Croatia has a large Diaspora around the world from North and South America, Australia and New Zealand to Western European countries particularly Germany, Switzerland and Austria. An independent organization / institution "Croatian Heritage Association" (Matica Hrvatska) established by the government, and funded through the Ministry of Culture, supports and coordinates cultural programs for Croatians abroad. The Ministry of Culture also supports special radio programs aimed at the Croatian Diaspora, as well as satellite programs on Croatian television.

5.7. Macedonia

Overview of main structures and trends

Although the federal republics had some independence, in ex-Yugoslavia the vast majority of international cultural cooperation was realized through the Federal ministries and institutions. After gaining independence and especially after its admission to the United Nations in April 1993, the Republic of Macedonia gradually became integrated into all major international governmental and nongovernmental organizations in the field of culture, developing and realizing its own international cultural cooperation.

The Ministry of Culture is responsible for cooperation with international governmental organizations, and also for cooperation with international non-governmental organizations within the framework of the Ministry's competencies and possibilities. Unfortunately, there is no political document (or long-term / short-term strategy) in this field.

Public actors and cultural diplomacy

The Ministry of Culture (in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) in Macedonia is the main body responsible for international, bilateral and multilateral cultural cooperation, which is realized through international conventions, other international agreements, bilateral agreements

and programs for cooperation. Bilateral cultural cooperation agreements include educational and scientific programs as part of framework agreements that are signed for 1-3 years. Therefore, these agreements are the major but not the only instrument in international cooperation. Other instruments such as cooperation treaties, co-production agreements or state guarantees are also used. On the other hand, local authorities are also independent in establishing and realizing international cultural cooperation. At the same time, a significant part of international cultural cooperation is realized through direct cooperation between institutions and individuals and is frequently endorsed and financed by the Ministry of Culture.

The foreign agencies and institutes such as the British Council, the French Cultural Centre, IFA (Germany) etc., are an important link in the international cultural cooperation process. However, as these agencies have in mind their main goals this cooperation is mostly partial, one-sided.

The financial support for international cultural cooperation varies each year, depending on the annual budget of the Ministry of Culture and the programmed activities. However, the usual estimation is 2-3% of the annual budget of the Ministry for the programs and activities in the field of international cultural cooperation. The new government (September 2006) announced the idea of appointing recognized artists, writers, musicians etc., as cultural ambassadors abroad.

European / international actors and programs

After gaining independence, and especially after its admission to the United Nations in April 1993, the Republic of Macedonia gradually became integrated into all major international governmental and nongovernmental organizations acting in the field of culture, such as UNESCO, the Council of Europe etc., participating in most of the major programs of multilateral cooperation. The Republic of Macedonia is also a member of Francophonie. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for implementing and monitoring all the international (bilateral or multilateral) agreements and conventions. The Ministry of Culture is responsible for implementing and monitoring the conventions in the field of culture, such as the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. The Convention has not yet been ratified.

Direct professional cooperation

There are two very interesting examples of sector-specific trans-national cultural cooperation in dance and theatre. The first one is connected with the monumental painting (24 sq.m.) and the documentary film "Planetarium" by the internationally recognized Macedonian artist Kiro Urdin. The painting and the film "Planetarium" were an inspiration for the Canadian choreographer Debbie Wilson to produce a dance performance having the same name. The performance had two premieres, the first in Toronto (Canada) on February 5, 2003 and the second in Skopje (Macedonia) on July 7, 2003. The two premieres brought together a Macedonian artist and a Canadian choreographer, 8 dancers from OMO Dance Company (Canada) and 7 dancers from the Macedonian National Theatre etc. Planetarium began with a single idea: to combine different cultures into a stronger statement, exploring universal themes that are common to all people. The second example is the ongoing theatre project "Bones in the Stone" by the Croatian writer Slobodan Snajder, supported by EU funds. The project will combine theatres from 8 countries, including the Naroden Teatar from Bitola (Macedonia), "Kampnagel" Theatre from Hamburg (where the world premiere will take place on 6 June 2007) etc.

Cross-border intercultural dialogue and cooperation

There are no exact government programs to support trans-national intercultural dialogue, but certain programs are channeled via the Ministry of Culture or intergovernmental organizations. The Ministry of Culture supports specific trans-national activities for young people or youth groups, through funds available for travel grants, language or cross-cultural training courses. In 2005 the Ministry of Culture supported 14 projects focused on developing and understanding cultural pluralism, intercultural and interethnic dialogue etc.

Other relevant issues

One very interesting issue is the establishment of cultural links with the Diaspora. It is well known that the Macedonian Diaspora is spread all over the world, but mostly in the far distant continents such as Australia, Canada and the USA. Therefore, the activities and organizational provisions for Diaspora communities has always been a priority for the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In the summer of 2006, for example, the National Theatre from Prilep carried out a one month tour in Australia, giving performances in the cities where most of the Macedonian Diaspora lives. However, bearing in mind the distances and the costs involved

for such activities, the provisions are very limited. One other issue connected with the Macedonian Diaspora is the question of voting rights. For years there has been a constant debate in the Macedonian Parliament and in the media about the possibilities of changing the Constitution and giving the Diaspora the right to vote, which is still unresolved.

5.8. Republic of Serbia

Overview of main structures and trends

One of the most important tasks identified by the government, from 2001 - 2003, was to re-establish the broken links with all international institutions and organizations. Specific cultural priorities had not been defined, but European integration is considered as an ultimate government task. The principal document relevant for this issue is the National Strategy of the Republic of Serbia SCG's Accession. The Ministry for Culture in Serbia considers that cities and municipalities, as well as public cultural institutions, are very active internationally: working with the majority of relevant cultural institutions and individuals in formal and informal cooperation, linked with projects and initiatives of the international community from the private (NGO) and public sectors, including inter-governmental bodies such as the Council of Europe and UNESCO. However, the analysis of the scope of cooperation is not satisfactory, as it does not have a policy and priorities, and mostly is re-active to foreign demands.

The Ministry of Culture is currently working on the design of new model agreements for bilateral cultural cooperation, and a few more contracts are being prepared (Italy, Portugal, Tunisia, and Spain). From 2002 - 2005, eight bilateral cooperation agreements had been concluded (Croatia, Slovenia, United Kingdom, Turkey, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Egypt, Bulgaria and Algeria). A specific cooperation agreement has been concluded with Hungary regarding the protection of national minorities (Hungarians in Serbia, and Serbs in Hungary).

The Ministry encourages cultural institutions to enter into their own cooperation projects and engage in networking. However, there is no special mobility fund or funding available to pay network fees or to make financial contributions as partners in international projects.

One of the priorities of the Serbian Ministry of Culture is regional cooperation. It participates actively in the Council of Ministers of South East Europe, and supports the inclusion of culture in

the Central European Initiative. In this respect, the Ministry of Culture is working with other relevant ministries from the region to establish a Regional Fund for Cinematography.

Initial contact has been established with the Minister for Culture, Youth and Sports of the Temporary Institutions of the Government of Kosovo. Representatives of the two Ministries met, for the first time, in September 2005 and formed working groups in the fields of archiving, the return of documents and artefacts, archaeology excavations, mobility of artists, cultural cooperation etc. UNMIK is acknowledged as the facilitator of these contacts.

Public actors and cultural diplomacy

Cultural diplomacy is lead independently by each level of government, sporadically, without plan or general concept, mostly based on traditional established links. Even existing contracts are not seen as an obligation for strategic actions, so cultural diplomacy is mostly re-active (responding to demands from abroad). The most important actor in international cultural cooperation is the city of Belgrade, creating and financing the most important international event in Serbia for each domain of art (October Salon / Visual Arts, FEST / Film, BEMUS / Music, BITEF / Theatre, Belgrade Book Fair / Literature), as well as for different generations and types of audiences (BELEF / summer festival, The Joy of Europe / children's creativity, etc.).

The role of cultural agencies and institutes was extremely important in the first few years of re-opening Serbia to the world, bringing new types of issues within the cultural debate and helping institutional reform. However, only Pro Helvetia is now supporting local cultural activities, while all the other similar organizations develop only promotional programs relating to their own culture, or are supporting their own agendas, regardless of real community needs (e.g. British Council programs of introducing the term and support for research relevant to creative industries).

It can be said that instruments of international cultural cooperation are not developed and used within certain strategies and programs. There is no system to enable the long term commitment of public bodies, especially financial (guarantees for the programs which have to happen in future), which prevents cultural managers from organizing big international events or network meetings. Training is sporadically organized by foreign cultural centers and embassies, in the fields where those embassies decide, or according to NGO or cultural institution initiatives (no Ministry policy involved). This means that the American Embassy organizes fundraising training, while Italy is

bringing in experts for restoration and conservation, etc. The Centre for Continuous Professional Development in Art, Culture and Media is developing, according to its own wishes and capacities, a training program with international partners, together with the UNESCO Chair for Cultural Policy and Management (Interculturalism and Mediation in the Balkans), but each year has to address the Ministry and cities for support through general calls for projects (which prevents long term strategic thinking and planning). The UNESCO Chair developed a joint Masters program with two French universities (I.E.P. Grenoble and University Lyon II), involving other European partners. It is very difficult to make an assessment of trends in public financial support for international cultural cooperation, as there is no specific budget line or current statistical data, and as projects are supported through "disciplinary" categories (so, it is not certain if they had an international component and if they got public financing for this component).

European / international actors and programs

Within the European framework, the Serbian Ministry decided to participate actively in all the programs relevant to the region such as MOSAIC and the Integrated Rehabilitation Project Plan; the latter conducting a survey of the architectural heritage (2003-2006), establishing the PIL (Prioritized Intervention List) and working on a feasibility study for the creation of an Institute for Conservation and Restoration. The Ministry is also implementing projects within the framework of the CARDS program (INTERREG III). In 2006, The Ministry of Culture started to prepare project applications for funds within the framework of IPA program for the period 2007-2013. The Ministry of Culture of Serbia prepared a dossier for application for observer status in the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie; its status was accorded at the meeting of OIF in Bucharest held on 29 September 2006. In the meantime, both the University of Belgrade and the University of Arts in Belgrade became members of Agence Universitaires de la Francophonie. The Serbian cities of Belgrade and Novi Sad are active in Les Rencontres, the Association of European Cities and Regions and the first network meeting was organized in Belgrade and Novi Sad in September 2006 (on the circulation of theatre works, artists' mobility in Southeast Europe and the role of regional and local governments). The Ministry of Culture and the Office for Ethnic Minorities are responsible for monitoring the implementation of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

Direct professional cooperation

All major national institutions in Serbia have many cooperation protocols and agreements signed. The policy focus, since 2001, was on joining the European and regional professional / sectorial networks and associations, to develop international cooperation and exchange, while, at the same time, singular links are established among relevant institutions. The Ministry of Culture participates actively in the organization and coordination of European Heritage Days. Every year, it is directly involved in the organization of the central celebration on the national level and Belgrade and Serbia will be the host of the 2007 Launching Ceremony of the European Heritage Days. The National Museum in Belgrade has more than ten cooperation protocols with major European museums regarding the exchange of exhibitions and the exchange of curators. Within this scope of cooperation, several major projects have been realized, such as In touch with antics - with the Louvre (2006) or the exhibition of the European art collection of Belgrade National Museum in The Hague (2005). Also, the National Museum is active within ICOM and ICCROM, having signed a cooperation agreement with the latter. The Museum of Contemporary Arts, as one of the oldest museums of its kind in Europe, cooperates widely and extensively with similar key institutions abroad, resulting in many important exhibitions like Museum Stedelijk Amsterdam at USCE (curated by Serbian curator B. Dimitrijevic, which represents a precedent in the museum's policy). Along this line, the Museum is preparing a new exhibition of British Contemporary Arts, curated by three Serbian curators. Important links exist with MACRO, Roma, etc. Major regional and international exhibitions had been organised since 2001, such as the cross referencing project Conversations in 2001 (when curators and artists from different countries of the region created projects in dialogue with each other), or the Last East-European exhibition in 2004 linking curators and artists from the region.

In the field of theatre, Yugoslav Drama theatre has the most extensive international cooperation. It was member of the Convention Theatrale Europeene, and now is a member of Theatres de l'Union de l'Europe, and recently, NETA (New European Theatre Action), launched by 11 theatres in Balkan countries. The Serbian National Theatre in Novi Sad (a central theatre institution of the autonomous province of Vojvodina) has signed agreements on cooperation with theatres and theatre institutions in Macedonia, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Slovakia, Romania and Switzerland. This kind of cooperation includes: co-productions,

exchanges of artistic experience, know-how transfers, exchange of performances etc. Towards the end of 2006, the Serbian National Theatre in Novi Sad was working on Shakespeare's tragedy Troilus and Cressida, a co-production with The Theatre Carouge from Geneva.

The Belgrade Music Festival BEMUS has been accepted into the European Festivals Association, among 100 of the most prestigious music and theatre festivals in Europe. The Belgrade Youth Centre is active within IETM, as well as several other NGO theatres. Serbian NGOs are the most connected and active in the European and world network, such as Dah Theatre, which is a member of the Magdalena network, or Remont, which has actively participated in the creation of several Balkan networks (BAN, SEECAN, etc.) In the field of librarianship, professional cooperation has been established within IFLA and Eblida, and more than 50 bilateral agreements of cooperation have been signed between the National Library of Serbia and the most relevant European and world national libraries. The National Library is a co-founder of the TEL project (The European Library) - a Catalogue of European National Libraries and Digital Collection of European Literary Heritage (since 2005). Continuous professional development is organised through study visits and peer exchange within CALIMERA - Cultural applications: Local Institutions Mediating Electronic Resources project for a network of city libraries of Belgrade (knowledge transfer and exchange of experiences). The Calimera project is part of the IST programme of the EU Commission, including all the countries of the Western Balkans, lead by Slovenia as the coordinator. One example of a project carried out within Calimera is the Serbian Children's Digital Library, with 120 books, contributing towards the overall aim to have 10 000 books in 100 languages within a world network.

Cinematography, since 2000, has been developed relying a lot on co-productions - so that nearly half of the production has international, mostly regional co-producers. At the same time, the Film Centre of Serbia had granted subsidies for 4 co-production projects from Southeast European countries. A few film projects succeeded in obtaining EURIMAGES grants, and a few obtained funding for scenario development (from the Paul Nipkow Fund Berlin, Southeast European Fund, etc.) Among cultural institutions in different Serbian cities, museums and theatres are the most active in international cultural cooperation. One example of this cooperation is the City Museum in Sombor and their Protocol on cooperation with Bács-Kiskun Megyei Múzeumi from Kecskemet, Hungary, signed on 4 May 2005; mostly the program relates to exchange of

exhibitions - visual arts, research of trans-border archeological sites, and knowledge transfer (study visits and exchange of curators).

Cross-border intercultural dialogue and cooperation

There are no government programs to support trans-national intercultural dialogue, nor any specific government support for the trans-national activities of young people. A small number of programs promote talented young people to travel abroad, such as: travel grants for young musicians organized by the Ministry of Culture in 2006 (approx. 9 000 euros) and a similar Music Talent Fund of the City of Belgrade (40 000 euros per year), or specific Austrian Embassy mobility grants, awarded to 200 of the best students, to travel within the EU (summer 2006), but there is no policy on promoting language or cross-cultural training.

NGOs are the most active in this field, such as the European Movement and European House, students unions and associations (AEGEE, AISEC...), and activist NGOs such as Stalkers (sociology students), which organized several dialogues among Serbian and Albanian students from Kosovo. The University of Arts in Belgrade has regular summer schools and conferences, where partners from neighboring countries participate in debates and dialogues. The Centre for Cultural De-contamination has organized many open debates and major programs linked to rediscovering the truth about the latest wars, war crimes etc. Transitional Justice was one of the latest programs in this respect, involving academics and students of media and journalism from Kosovo, Macedonia, Bosnia, Croatia, and Serbia.

Other relevant issues

Key issues concerning the Serbian Diaspora communities are the responsibility of the Ministry for the Diaspora, such as customs regulations, military service, voting rights etc). The Ministry has also been organizing and supporting some programs in the field of culture for the Diaspora communities, but those programs are predominantly traditional (preserving language, traditions and religion, nurturing folk traditions, music etc.).

5.9. Montenegro

International Cooperation

After foundation of Republic Institute for International Scientific, Cultural, Educational and Technical Cooperation in 1972⁸⁹ (in that year, a network of these institutions was created in all Yugoslav republics and regions, as well as the Federal Institute in Belgrade), all forms of international cooperation were under the authority of the Institute. Until 1992, international cultural cooperation of Montenegro was developing according to signed interstate agreements from the side of ex-Yugoslavia with many countries. During the last decade, Montenegro presented itself to the world independently or within a framework of ex Yugoslavia. Since it was a period of sanctions and isolation, and Montenegrin culture lived a period of stagnation in cultural cooperation with abroad, almost all previously signed agreements were not in force, and contacts were based on personal initiatives. In the past several years, processes of improvement of international cultural cooperation have been intensified and enriched in terms of programs, although it is still not enough. Ministry of Culture of Montenegro, until recently, did not have any employee whose task would be realization and following international cultural cooperation.

In great part of considered historical period, international cultural cooperation of Montenegro was being achieved with rather unfavorable financial “conditions”. The quantity and ways of ensuring financial resources did not correspond to the real needs, and sometimes even to real capabilities of Montenegro. The problem of financing was permanently present in conceiving, programming and implementation of cultural cooperation with abroad. Funds from various sources were not even close to satisfy needs and interest of international cultural cooperation. Proposed measures for improvement of the activities are: In forthcoming period it would be necessary to create material and personnel basis for development of international cultural cooperation of Montenegro, not only within the Ministry of Culture, but also in special institutions operating in the field of protection of cultural heritage, cultural and artistic creativity and media. There should be defined priorities by countries and activities, which would correspond to real interests and abilities. Special attention should be paid to inclusion in current networks of cooperation on regional level.

⁸⁹ National report on cultural policy, CDCULT-BU(2004)7A, 6 February 2004, pg.35,
<http://www.gom.cg.yu/eng/minkult/>

5.10. Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Expert's report of the cultural polices in Bosnia and Herzegovina was made back in 2003. Even that in the first lines of this reports it's highlighted the urgent need for development of National repot for cultural policies Bosnia and Herzegovina, this is not the case up till now.

National Report⁹⁰ will provide the baseline in terms of both statistical evidence and judgment about activities from which to move forward and to engage in European level debate. This will help Bosnia Herzegovina negotiate with the key international cultural actors. The main question that arises is-who would write the report and who would they represent? The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and within that the two groups Bosnians and Croats or the Serbs from Republika Srbska? Would there be one report or two or three? Immediately the fact that BiH has three constituent people, living in two entities caused a barrier.

There is currently no written cultural policy statement of any kind, in any part of Bosnia and Herzegovina that would help the domestic or international cultural community understand what the country's cultural objectives are. The cultural system in Bosnia and Herzegovina is very complex even hardy understandable. Because of the fragmentation of the country hardly anyone knows how the system as a whole works. There many levels of governance, decision making bodies, cultural institutions whit no clear mandate and responsibilities. The most difficult is to collect and find data about the current state of culture in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Regrettably, the 1995 Dayton Peace Accord, which includes the constitutional framework for Bosnia and Herzegovina as a polity, devolves culture to the local level, as a result of which there is no state-level institution in Bosnia and Herzegovina responsible for cultural policy as a whole and for the implementation and monitoring of international norms in this field, as well as certain other related fields like the very implementation of international conventions.

There are two ministers responsible for culture in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Federation has a cultural ministry, which is combined with education and sport, but the real power lies with the 10 cantons, of which Sarajevo Canton is by far the largest. The Federation's ministry has little power and budget, even less than the cantons. Republika Srpska has a central ministry with little power for the 61 local authorities. It's little bit strange, but the Ministry of RS has 5 employees

⁹⁰ Cultural policy in Bosnia Herzegovina -- experts report: togetherness in difference -- culture at the crossroads in Bosnia Herzegovina Charles Landry, Strasbourg: Council of Europe,2002,
http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/policies/Reviews/Bosnia_EN.asp#TopOfPage

and bad economic situation and it's very hard to undertake a development approach. The eight state cultural institutions have been left with no formal founder, who means they have no status, no legal standing. After the war the different cultural groups, who define themselves as nations have all wanted their own national cultural institutions with the Croats and Serbs asserting that the existing institutions all of which are based in Sarajevo increasingly represent Bosniacs. There is, for example, a national library and theatre for RS in Banja Luka; and the Croats in Mostar are proposing a national Croatian theatre. It is for Serbs or Croats valid if they so wish to set up national institutions, but not to claim that those institutions should represent a separate state. Currently, for example, RS desire a separate seat at international bodies. This leaves the question open about what to do with the eight state institutions. To ensure their credibility as representing the whole of the state their content has to reflect the diversity of the whole of BiH, which they largely do, but would need to continue to do. Crucially also their management and employment practices would need to ensure proper representation of Serbs and Croats. In essence this means trying to de-politicize cultural appointments. Once this is achieved joint financing by all cultural groups is a valid proposition and an appropriate policy. Once this notion is accepted the core problem that Serbs and Croats have over national representation in international bodies could be solved in that they may on occasion be that state representative.

It's expected the Bosnia and Herzegovina will find strength to overpass the difficult situation that is facing with. The cultural policy could be very helpful in the process of building a society based on multiculturalism, democracy and respect for the "others". The culture could play a significant role in the Bosnian society as binding element for all the populations living on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This role of culture should be recognized and therefore used by all political structures in the process of rebuilding the post war society. The choices we therefore make about cultural policy are intensely political. Cultural policy is then the strategic assessment and implementation of cultural choices balancing often a set of difficult or at times incompatible options. The process will last long for sure.

5.11. The main actors in the international/regional cooperation on governmental level - Western Balkans

The national public institutions which have a mandate for cultural cooperation are usually the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in each country of the region. The two ministries should cooperate in the creation of a common strategy for international cultural cooperation policy. This cooperation could be achieved only if the both ministries have clearly defined responsibilities in the process of international cultural cooperation, but also common and define state policy or strategy for cultural cooperation. In Macedonia there is no political document or strategy that will define the common responsibilities of both Ministries in charge for cultural cooperation and in many cases on a practical level this means that nobody is fully responsible. This is the case with Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia and Montenegro, at least before the referenda for independence, where the relationship between the various state levels and agencies is problematic and there is a lack of shared and assumed responsibility⁹¹. Albania has the similar problem: "No significant efforts have been seen to establish cooperation between the Ministry of Tourism and Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs". The higher problem is that Albanian Ministry of Tourism and Culture has no strategy at all for international cooperation. In Serbian case "cultural diplomacy is lead independently by each level of government, sporadically, without plan or general concept, mostly based on traditional established links". Bosnia and Herzegovina is lacking general definition of cultural policy priorities so it's totally unclear who is responsible for international cooperation. In this case we could not even speak about shared or uncoordinated activities between the public actors responsible for cultural cooperation, but rather of process that hopefully will be defined in the near future. Montenegro according the Expert's report on cultural policy facing the same problem: "the share of tasks and responsibilities between the Institute for International Cultural, Educational and Technical Cooperation and the Ministry of Culture, both in charge for international cultural cooperation, needs to be revised".

⁹¹ "Funding opportunities for international cultural cooperation in/with South East Europe", 2005, ECF&ECUMEST, www.eurocult.org/uploads/docs/287.pdf

Croatia is the only that has defined actors in the cultural cooperation: “The Ministry of Culture cooperates with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its Department for International Cultural Cooperation, which is responsible for coordination of work of cultural attachés. As Croatia does not have publicly mandated cultural agencies or institutes abroad for cultural cooperation, Croatian embassies are the most important focal points for the promotion of Croatian culture abroad. The Croatian government established a Cultural Council for International Relations and European Integration in 2004. The aim of this Council is to better coordinate and plan international cultural cooperation activities. In addition to its consultative role in the distribution of grants, the Cultural Council for International Relations and European Integration also has the task to make proposals to improve the coordination of those involved in planning and participating in international exchanges.

In most of the cases, the main problem is that both Ministries usually don't have explicit budget for cultural cooperation or projects. In Macedonia for example, every time when cultural projects are in question, the embassies request budgets from the ministries of culture, not ministry of foreign affairs. The ministry of culture which holds quite low part of the national budget, very often cannot support the embassies in their attempt to realize cultural cooperation or projects. In Macedonian ministry of culture around 300 requests annually are submitted from the embassies for cultural cooperation projects. The ministry of culture barely supports 10-15 % of the requests. In practice this means that Macedonia is losing a great number of opportunities for international cultural cooperation, because of the lack of common strategy between the ministry of culture and ministry of foreign affairs, lack of cultural cooperation policy and lack of funds.

Besides the two ministries, the embassies, consulates and other missions abroad are holding important part in the international cultural cooperation. Cultural centers abroad could also have important role for cultural cooperation, but cultural centers are also very expensive to maintain which is not matching with the very low budget of the ministries of culture. The WB countries have very low number of cultural centers abroad. In the last 4 years Ministry of culture of Macedonia opened cultural centers in New York and Sofia, but the future sustainability of these centers is not guaranteed. One of the main problems of the ministries of cultures in WB is in fact lack of continuity. This is due to the fact that in the last 15 years the WB countries didn't have

stable governments. The changing of the ministers was very regular process, which negatively affected on the working process.

Also, these ministries sometimes provide support for international mobility and cooperation projects initiated by national or local cultural institutions, individuals and the NGO sector. These institutions provide very little information on their specific support for cultural cooperation and exchange activities which limit the researchers to make profound analyze.

Politically bilateral agreements regarding cultural cooperation at national level are potentially important as policy instruments, insofar as they identify priority areas and provide the means for dealing with them. The 2003 Interarts-EFAH report on cultural cooperation in Europe³⁰ observed that, even though many such political agreements exist in Europe, very few are used by cultural operators; the multitude of existing schemes do not come close to meeting the present needs. The Governments of Western Balkan countries have sign many bilateral agreements among themselves, but the problem is these agreements have pure political nature and serve as diplomatic gesture in most of the cases. These agreements are only the foundation, and just good will on which the long-term and more efficient mechanisms of regional cultural cooperation can be built. The multilateral agreements in cultural sphere do not exist in the region of Western Balkan. In fact the governmental cooperation in field of culture is mostly result from outside pressure. It never comes as result from initiative of the region. The international community and cooperation platform like Council of Europe, UNESCO, CEI were the initiators and facilitators for regional cooperation.

5.12. The cultural policy priorities in cultural cooperation- Western Balkans

The cultural policy models in the WB countries do not make special mention of support to regional cooperation. On the contrary, by implication, many solutions in these cultural models and official political decisions actually limit the cooperation. In case of Albania, the regional cooperation exists with Kosovo and Macedonia mostly because of the Albanian population who

lives in the neighboring countries. The Albanian government has no specific programs to support cross-border intercultural dialogue and cooperation. The Ministry of Culture has signed bi-lateral agreements on cultural cooperation with its counterparts in Greece, Macedonia and Kosovo. Except for Albania-Kosovo exchanges, these agreements have had a small impact. Croatian government has listed, as one of the priorities, strengthening cultural cooperation within the region of South Eastern Europe. The cooperation is based on existing links between artists and arts managers; bilateral and regional programs of cooperation; cooperation within the framework of international organizations such as UNESCO or the Council of Europe; cooperation within regional organizations such as the Council of Ministers of Culture of Southeast Europe, the network of ministers responsible for cultural heritage sponsored by UNESCO, the Danubian Region, the Alps Adriatic Working Community, the Central European Initiative, the Quadrilateral Initiative, etc.

Serbia is the only country from the region that prioritize the regional cooperation but without defined terms and funds. The regional cooperation is seen as participation in the Council of Ministers of South East Europe, and supports the inclusion of culture in the Central European Initiative. The Ministry of Culture of Serbia has stated that is working with other relevant ministries from the region to establish a Regional Fund for Cinematography. This could be perceived as a good starting point for regional cooperation and it's probably the only initiative that comes from the region. Still, there are no government programs to support trans-national intercultural dialogue, nor any specific government support for the cross border cooperation.

In Macedonia bilateral cultural cooperation agreements are still a major instrument for international cooperation. The regional cooperation is seen as taking part in the programs of Council of Europe and CEI. The right oriented government that came into power in 2006 set new priority which is cooperation with Macedonian Diaspora. Montenegro also participates in the regional program of Council of Europe and as stated in the cultural policy document – the regional cooperation is one of the priorities but there is no data that could be provided for this issue.

It's quite characteristic the each country is participating in the programs of Council of Europe, UNESCO, CEI, networks like Francphony, but there is no real political commitment towards cooperation in the region. Both Albania and Croatia even highlight the reasons for the low cooperation in the region. In Croatian case: "following the war and subsequent stabilization processes in South-East Europe, Croatia initiated symbolic support and cooperation projects (mainly focusing on transfer of knowledge and exchange of experiences) in this region". Albania also" trans-border exchanges with Serbia and Montenegro have been almost non-existent, due to political obstacles between the two countries". On another hand each country prioritizes the cultural cooperation with the Diaspora. According to my opinion this type of priority in the cultural policy deeply expresses the "national" orientation of the Governments in the region and is very regressive. It's understandable that each country should nurture the existence of the mother language, traditions and cultural values in the Diaspora, but prioritizing such policy in the international cultural cooperation clearly depicts the mode of the Governments in the region.

5.13. Public funding for cultural cooperation in the Western Balkans

With exception of Croatia, all the countries from the region didn't manage to develop financial instruments of international cultural cooperation. There is no system to enable the long term commitment of public bodies, especially financial which prevents public cultural institutions to enter in cooperative projects or network participation.

Due to a lack of interest in international cultural cooperation, the Albanian government provides no specific funding programs for projects of this kind. However, the Ministry of Tourism and Culture provides limited and decreasing funding, benefiting events such as international drama and film festivals or classical music summer festivals.

The Ministry of Culture of Croatia allocates around 13 million HRK (app. euro 1 750 000) for international cultural cooperation, together with 25% of the Funds received by the Ministry through the Lottery Fund (the amount varies depending on the income of the State Lottery, but it amounts to about euro 200 000 for international cultural cooperation). The financial support for international cultural cooperation varies each year, depending on the annual budget of the Ministry of Culture of Macedonia and the programmed activities. However, the usual estimation

is 2-3% of the annual budget of the Ministry for the programs and activities in the field of international cultural cooperation.

In Serbia it is very difficult to make an assessment of trends in public financial support for international cultural cooperation, as there is no specific budget line or current statistical data, and as projects are supported through "disciplinary" categories (so, it is not certain if they had an international component and if they got public financing for this component). The Ministry encourages cultural institutions to enter into their own cooperation projects and engage in networking. However, there is no special mobility fund or funding available to pay network fees or to make financial contributions as partners in international projects.

In Montenegro the financial and infrastructural problems in the cultural field are enormous. Within the overall state budget about 2,5% (1,54% if one excludes the Media Section) go to cultural funding, including rebuilding and modernizing the infrastructure. 92 % of this budget concern fixed expenses, leaving only 8% for project work. The Institute for International Cultural, Educational and Technical Cooperation handles a budget of almost 500.000 EURO, 300.000 EURO of which for project funding.

One of the crucial issues for cultural cooperation in the region is exactly the funding. "After a period of strong investment in the region (following the fall of communism and the wars in Yugoslavia), there has been a weakening of financial support accompanied by a failure to grasp cultural cooperation's key role in democratization, reconstruction and the understanding of European values"⁹². The past fifteen years of change in the Balkans have dramatically affected the level of support provision, not least for the cultural sector. The enthusiasm which followed the fall of the Berlin wall and the many programs of 'assistance to' or 'cooperation with' the countries of Eastern Europe lasted for about eight to ten years. From the year 2000 a general tendency towards the retreat of important funders or a reorientation of their priorities which no longer include culture, the closing of mobility funds and the reshaping of cultural cooperation support programs. In the same time there is serious lack of national and regional alternative financial instruments for support of cultural cooperation. As Lidia Varbanova, states: "to achieve

⁹² "Funding opportunities for international cultural cooperation in/with South East Europe", 2005, ECF&ECUMEST, www.eurocult.org/uploads/docs/287.pdf

cultural or any kind of cooperation you have to have resources and a well-developed framework for it”⁹³.

New models of funding should be created. Regional Foundation would probably be one of the best solutions to overpass the current gap in funding the regional projects. Again, this idea needs to be developed firstly on the national levels and purchased by the Ministries of cultures in each of the respective countries. In this respect the establishment of the Council of Ministers of Culture of South East Europe certainly represents an important step forward in coordinating efforts within the region. For the moment, this cannot be expected to lead to a significant increase in the provision of funding support for regional cooperation.

5.14. A new perspective for the regional cultural cooperation

The Council of Ministers of Culture of South East Europe

The Council of Ministers of culture of SEE was officially established in March 2005 with the aim of creating a new forum for dialogue and interaction between the Ministers of Culture and other government and nongovernmental structures. Joint cultural strategies, opportunities and projects, and the exchange of information and experience are intended to result from this. The Council foresees its involvement in a number of activities, such as: "undertaking joint cultural projects; creating joint programs to facilitate mobility for artists and cultural professionals, as well as the exchange of cultural artifacts and art works in the region; employing the potential of the existing programs of the Council of Europe, UNESCO, EU and other non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations, in order to achieve synergy between the different international initiatives to the advantage of South East Europe"⁹⁴. The Charter marking the establishment of the Council has so far been endorsed by Ministers of Culture in Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Turkey. The presidency of the Council is rotating annually between the members.

⁹³ Vrbanova, Lidija - Cultural Policies and Cultural Development in South-eastern Europe: New Realities and Challenges, Expert Meeting, Culturelink/IMO, Zagreb, Croatia, 10-11 September 2004, Final Report

⁹⁴ Charter of the Council of Ministers of Culture in SEE, 31 march 2005, Copenhagen,
http://www.norden.org/internationellt/uk/nmr_balkan.asp?&lang=&p_id=682

The second Meeting of the Ministers of Culture in South East Europe Ministers of Culture, high officials from SEE countries, from the Council of Europe and the European Commission gathered in Varna, Bulgaria, from 22 to 25 June for a new meeting of the Council of Ministers of Culture in South East Europe⁹⁵. The event reinforced the importance of effective national policies and cooperation as key foundations for further developing South East Europe as a dynamic European region. One of the main topics addressed by the forum was the regional initiative in the field of cultural heritage. Following the Declaration "Communication of Heritage"⁹⁶, adopted by the SEE Heads of the States in Opatija, Croatia, early June 2006, the participants to the meeting in Varna adopted the Strategy for identifying, preserving, sustainably using and promoting cultural corridors of SEE, and agreed upon a related action plan. The forum was organized under the Bulgarian Presidency of the Council.

VARNA Declaration

The Heads of State of the SEE countries declared that the historical links and axes of inter-cultural dialogue and exchange of ideas, beliefs, knowledge and skills, as well as cultural goods and expressions, have given rise to a unique network of cultural corridors and cultural routes in South-East Europe. In their "Varna Declaration"⁹⁷, they argue that these cultural corridors deserve to be identified, preserved, and promoted. They committed themselves to set up a Regional Network which would help develop a conceptual and operational strategy for these "cultural corridors" in cooperation with the European Institute of Cultural Routes. It recommends the development of an Action Plan aimed at the creation of integrated regional policies and actions to promote and protect cultural heritage at risk within the region.

Under the Croatian presidency of the Council of Ministers of Culture of SEE, the 3th meeting took place on 14 March 2008 in Zagreb, Croatia⁹⁸. On this occasion the Ministers of culture reaffirmed their interest and commitment to foster the regional cultural cooperation. Again as on the previous meetings, the Council concludes its work with new Declaration⁹⁹. The Declaration

⁹⁵ E-bulletin, Polices for culture, issue 22, July 2006

⁹⁶ Opatija Declaration on Communication of Heritage, 02 june 2006, Opatija,
<http://www.culturelink.org/news/members/2006/opatija-heritage-communication.pdf>

⁹⁷ Varna Declaration, 21 may 2005, <http://www.president.bg/en/news.php?id=58&st=0>

⁹⁸ <http://www.min-kultura.hr/default.aspx?id=3675#>

⁹⁹ Declaration on Cultural Co-operation of the Council of Ministers of Culture of South East Europe, 14 march 2008, Zagreb

reaffirms the “commitment to develop regional dialogue in South East Europe, intensify cultural co-operation and exchanges between artists, experts and institutions, as well as work together on cultural policies within the framework of European integration and cooperation” It also highlight the role of international organization like Council of Europe and UNESCO, as well as the interest for participation in the regional programs.

The establishment of the Council of Ministers of Culture of South East Europe certainly represents an important move for the cultural cooperation in the SEE. The creation of the Council of Ministers of Culture of South East Europe thus represents an opportunity to conceive and coordinate cultural agreements regionally and make them more effective. They should certainly be accompanied by the creation of support schemes which respond better to current needs and cultural cooperation practices. How it will function in practice and whether it will also provide funding opportunities for cultural cooperation projects remains to be seen. From its creation in 2005 till now, there is no information about the work of the Council besides the political agreements or Declarations, which enables the evaluation of the Council’s activities and work. It’s from paramount importance for the cultural sector to have accession to the Council’s activities. The impact and the scope of the Council activities could not be measured if the process itself is not transparent. The Council has to establish communication channels with the public in order their work to be recognized. For ex. The Council doesn’t have its own web site that will provide information. However, the Council could play an important political role in raising awareness of the importance of regional cultural cooperation and advocating the need for different funding bodies, including the EU, to provide more consistent support in this respect.

Ministerial Conferences

One of the main fields for governmental cultural cooperation in the region is cultural heritage. Still, the cooperation was going on as result of initiative of foreign Governments or international organizations. Nevertheless, as it’s one of the rare forms of governmental cooperation and it’s important to be mentioned.

The Government of Italy, in collaboration with UNESCO, decided to promote the organization of the first Ministerial conference on cultural heritage in SEE, which took place in Mostar, Bosnia

and Herzegovina, on 19 July 2004, with the participation of the Ministers responsible for culture of the beneficiary countries of the Stability Pact for SEE, as well as of high representatives of the Stability Pact's partner countries and organizations¹⁰⁰. The occasion for the meeting was offered by the celebrations for the opening of the Old Bridge of Mostar, destroyed during the war in 1993 by deliberate bombing and painstakingly reconstructed with international assistance. The timing, purpose, and title of the conference – “Cultural heritage: a Bridge towards a Shared Future” – was largely inspired by this highly significant event. The success of the Mostar event, combined with the support offered by UNESCO and by Italy, allowed for the continuation of the process in form of yearly ministerial conferences, to be held on a rotation basis in all the participating countries. The Second Ministerial Conference was held in Venice, Italy, on 24-26 November 2005, hosted by the Italian government, with the collaboration of UNESCO¹⁰¹. The Third Ministerial Conference recently took place in Macedonia, on 3-4 November 2006 in Ohrid¹⁰². The conference was hosted by the Macedonian government, again with the collaboration of UNESCO. On 10 September 2007 the government of Croatia, in collaboration with UNESCO, hosted the fourth edition of the annual Ministerial Conference on Cultural Heritage in South-Eastern Europe. Ministers of Culture of South-East European countries met in Zadar, Croatia, to reaffirm and reinforce regional cooperation for the enhancement of the shared cultural heritage. The activities realized within the present initiative are coordinated by UNESCO, through the Culture Section of the UNESCO Venice Office – Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe (BRESCE), with the aim of ensuring the complementarities of activities, their adherence to common objectives, and the coherence of the whole cooperation process. The main set of activities is based on the Trust Fund for Cultural Heritage in South-Eastern Europe, created at the UNESCO BRESCE as a follow-up to the first Ministerial Conference (Mostar, 2004). Italy, through the Italian Development Cooperation (Ministry of Foreign Affairs), is the main contributor to the Trust Fund. Within this framework, activities have been realized or are ongoing in the following countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Macedonia,

¹⁰⁰ http://www.see-heritage.org/ministerial_conferences.htm

¹⁰¹ http://www.see-heritage.org/ministerial_conferences.htm

¹⁰² http://www.see-heritage.org/ministerial_conferences.htm

Moldova, Montenegro and Romania. The definition of activities in Croatia and Serbia is also in progress.

In addition to the Trust Fund projects, new activities are currently being defined as follow-up to the Ohrid Ministerial Conference, with an aim at further strengthening cultural cooperation on broader, regional scale. In this regard, specific attention shall be given at enhancing public communication skills and services of institutions responsible for the management, conservation, and promotion of cultural heritage, according to the following objectives:

- to improve bi-directional information flow between relevant institutions and the public;
- to offer better information and promotion for cultural heritage and cultural events in the region;
- to increase public demand for culture and cultural heritage.

Research and studies: Cultural heritage as a tool for human, social and economic development. Aiming to integrate above-mentioned activities with the development of research for a better valorization of SEE cultural heritage, UNESCO-BRESCE is carrying out a series of studies on the role of cultural heritage in promoting a sustainable human, social and economic development. At present, three reports on cultural tourism respectively on Bulgaria, Moldova and Romania have been published. Works for the realization of the fourth report, concerning Serbia, started in October 2006.

Support to South-eastern European contemporary art

Activities in this area presently consists of two initiatives, representing a follow-up to the Venice Ministerial Conference (2005), during which the Italian Regions Tuscany, Veneto, and Umbria offered their support for enhancing the preservation and promotion of SEE contemporary art. This commitment originated the following activities, specifically directed to the museums of contemporary art of Belgrade (Serbia), Sarajevo (Bosnia–Herzegovina) and Skopje (Macedonia), and intended as a pilot project for a future, broader cooperation:

- The system of contemporary art in Tuscany and Umbria – Visit program for managers and directors of contemporary art museums of Belgrade, Sarajevo and Skopje
- FuturoContemporaneo – Seminar on conservation of contemporary art

CHAPTER VI: Conclusions

6.1. Cultural Identity

The identification of the Western Balkan region is still open and unsettled due to many dynamic social and political factors have taken place since the break up of Yugoslavia. Today the identity of the region is modeled and shaped on a different basis - external pressure by EU and local efforts to join EU. Still identity is seen as the biggest obstacle for improving the cooperation in this region. "A lot of work has to be done in order to establish cultural cooperation within Europe. The Balkan people, ex-Yugoslavs above all, have a tough job ahead of them re-thinking, re-evaluating and articulating their recent past and their involvement in recent events. In other words, the people of the Balkans have some real "soul-searching" to do. They will have to deconstruct the familiar patterns of self-stigmatization, self-pity and discrimination, or denial that "there is something wrong", as well as an arrogance that is based on the shaky foundations of national identity or the "otherness"- pride. West Europeans are expected to do the same". The Balkan nations are still in a process of redefining their identities or looking for them. This process is constantly leading us to history that is marked by too many "traumas" which obviously could not be easily forgotten or ignored. The Balkans are much more focused on differences, on inequalities, retelling and rewriting the past, observing it from the point of view of one nation or one religion, constantly exploring the dominance of one culture or language which destructively influences the integration and regional cooperative process. As Ralph Darendorf says, that while political change of post communist countries can be achieved in six months, economical change in six years, cultural change needs 60 years to be achieved. The region needs a lot of time and effort to restart cooperation using a different logic. The main aspects of this different logic should be economic development and growth, cultural cooperation, security, EU integration, infrastructure projects, political stability and stable democracies. Only if they manage to put the question of identities and history aside will it be possible to achieve progress in regional cooperation. It may seem naive to believe that such progress can be achieved, but that does not necessarily mean that the idea cannot survive and bring results.

Contrary to the prevailing opinion that identity hinders cooperation, the findings in "National Policies Influencing Cultural Cooperation and Mobility in Europe"¹⁰³ identify that the notions of a "common history" or even "identity" as a basis for regional cultural cooperation are more an exception than a rule. This means that the region should probably focus on sharing values and preserving multiple identities, rather than imposing artificial differences as unnecessary obstacles. In this context it is wrong that one language or one version of history should prevail. Rather cooperation should be established in order to implement policies that enable the people of the Western Balkans to move forward on the basis of shared and secure values. The basis of all future relations should be built on the full acceptance of the diversity of the region and through coordination of the aspirations of different cultures, societies and countries.

6.2. Economic rationale

On an individual level each of the states has a very small chance to develop the economic logic of culture. The region, however, has a huge market that could be used as an engine for social and economic development. Several regional studies throughout Europe have demonstrated that the cultural economy has a high potential for employment creation and above-average economic development. In many areas touched by economic conversion, culture already employs a growing share of the overall workforce. At present the true economic value of cultural activities is hardly ever recognised in the region. The great advantage of all successful cultural activities in the framework of regional development is that they are based on a wide participation of local actors. They are often an essential element in projects which at first sight are oriented towards economic goals only. In fact culture has the potential to upgrade the quality of these economic factors. Not only has culture a great economic potential, but its importance for the welfare and the quality of life is even more important. Its added value to the society underpins the sustainability of economic growth. "To develop an increase in cultural industries, what should be established are better links and trade of cultures in the region – we should invest more in changes

¹⁰³ Wiesand, Andreas Joh. "National Policies Influencing Cultural Cooperation and Mobility in Europe", 2007, www.labforculture.org

in communication, new technologies, and in this way put more culture products on the market".¹⁰⁴

6.3. The EU integration

"The EU constitutes the only ground where expectations meet and where optimism exists. Not only for the individual states themselves, but also for the future of their neighbours." - Balkan Report

Regional cooperation is both a prerequisite and a tool for the European integration of countries of Western Balkan. Therefore, regional cooperation should not be mistaken for a substitute for EU integration. While the foundations of the EU itself are built upon the notion of regional cooperation, it is also a condition for further integration of Western Balkan countries into the EU. Regional cooperation should thus be seen as a practicing ground for future EU membership. It is not the question of whether new enlargement will happen but rather how and when the accession of six countries from Western Balkans to the EU will finally be accomplished. Over the past few years, these states were moving from stabilization to integration and from conflict management to institution building. Some were more successful, like Croatia and Macedonia, and have become candidate countries already. However, with the failure of constitutional reform, increasing debate on future enlargements among national and European policy makers, weak political and weaker public support in member states, the final integration of B&H, Croatia, Serbia, Albania, Montenegro and Macedonia has become a more challenging and unpredictable decision.

Continuing reservations about the pace and implications of EU enlargement have made the context for Western Balkan countries unpredictable and potentially destabilizing. It seems that the two most advanced SAP countries will have to wait for this internal EU crisis to be resolved even if they fulfill all Copenhagen criteria and successfully conclude negotiations on

¹⁰⁴ Svob-Dzukic, Nada, Final Report, Cultural Policies and Cultural Development in South-eastern Europe: New Realities and Challenges, Expert Meeting, Zagreb, Culturelink/IMO, 2004

membership. If accession countries, Croatia or to some extent Macedonia, depend more on the European side at this stage, other countries that are in the association phase depend more on themselves. Since they are in the early integration phase, the EU crisis will not directly affect their progress for a moment. It is questionable if the stated perspective of the International Commission on the Balkans – membership by 2014 – is realistic. While it is reachable by Croatia and Macedonia, the financial perspective period from 2013 to 2020 is the most realistic scenario for the other four. In all cases it will be possible if stabilization phase is over soon; Kosovo settled peacefully, regional cooperation increased and institutional building completed. The European Union has to find a solution to the serious institutional crisis, overcome lack of leadership and prove its capabilities of solving different ethnic, security and political obstacles in weak and unfinished states. The prime challenge in B&H is constructing Bosnia's statehood and government ownership along with building administrative capacity. Bosnia and Herzegovina still suffers from a dysfunctional political system and weak institutions.

The process of integration into the EU is dynamic and unpredictable. It remains to be seen which country will manage its affairs better and will join the EU soonest. Failing to meet European standards means the door will remain closed, the standards will be getting more complex and the Western Balkans will be drifting further away from the EU. There cannot be accession to the EU if the state is not stable, functional and capable of effective implementation of the European legislation. Neither will the accession succeed in producing stable societies if the cultural insecurities between and within countries are not managed creatively. This requires a considerable increase in the investment in cultural activity. Above all, there cannot be full membership if the European Union is not ready and willing to make it happen. At least, another decade will be needed for the sixth enlargement to be completed.

The EU integration process brings new opportunities but also challenges for both the region and the EU. This is taking place in a context of very weak cooperation between countries in the region, with the prospect of new borders emerging as between countries which have already joined the EU, and those for which the prospect of EU integration is receding. It is also a context in which cultural cooperation policies continue to lack cohesion, with little political will to address

culture as a crucial element of social and economic development and as a key to a better understanding of European civic values.

It is precisely to these challenges that arts and culture in general and cultural cooperation projects in particular can effectively respond: in bridging gaps and facilitating communication, mutual knowledge and understanding; in developing cultural dialogue and intercultural exchange; in turning culture from a negative force of nationalistic drivers to a resource for social development; in understanding and supporting culture as an agent of change, of democratisation, which accompanies, promotes and strengthens the processes of transformation in post-communist societies through the support it lends to creativity and critical thinking. If arts and culture are acknowledged, this role and support provided, then the support must also adequately respond to the challenges addressed. If there is a need for systemic change, long-term investment is required in order for it to be effective.

This means the EU and the countries from the region have to acknowledge the role of culture and arts as crucial in the reinvigorating the EU integration process. “They are pillars of the knowledge-based, innovative, inclusive and democratic societies for which the EU strives”.¹⁰⁵

European Union support for the cultural sector

One of the most positive developments for the cultural sector from the region is that EU has finally opened its programme funds for the Western Balkan countries from January 2007. These funds are both a challenge and an opportunity for establishing more sustainable international and regional cooperation. These funds are mainly distributed for cultural cooperation; therefore the solid partnerships and relations among the cultural organisations in the regions are urgent. These funds are available also to public cultural institutions. This is an opportunity that should be used both by national and nongovernmental cultural organisations and institutions if they manage to build a partnership relationship, but also if they have the skills and knowledge for fundraising.

¹⁰⁵ Report of the ECF-Hivos Conference "The heart of the matter: What Future for the Balkans in the EU?" The role of arts and cultural cooperation in their European integration, 2005, pg.34, www.eurocult.org

6.4. What Nordic model tells us?

Since 1952 extensive co-operation has existed within the Nordic countries, and Nordic cooperation in art and culture has provided an excellent platform on which many cooperative cultural projects were realized. Initiated and based on Governmental level, the Nordic cooperation model presents huge inspiration for the author. Based on the cultural commons, language similarities and historical links the Nordic model shows how cooperation can be leading process in one region. The history of the Nordic region is also marked by wars and dominance by one nation or country over the rest. The Nordic region shows that cooperation is possible if based on common interests and strong political will and commitment.

Official Nordic cooperation is channelled through two organisations: the Nordic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers Nordic cooperation developed in a majority of policy areas: cultural, social, economic and judicial. Collaboration grew particularly strong among Nordic officials and between Nordic political parties. By this time, the Nordic Council had already created a Nordic passport union, a common labour market, and a Nordic social insurance convention covering all Nordic citizens, which later was concluded in the Helsinki agreement of 1962. These measures contributed considerably to closer ties between the Nordic countries. A harmonisation of the Nordic nations' laws was pragmatically motivated and resulted from informal contacts between decision-makers. Nordic cooperation projects were supported by the Nordic Investment Bank (NIB) and Nordic cultural activities were supported by the Nordic Culture Fund. The Nordic Council views culture as being at the core of intra-Nordic cooperation. Cultural issues are dealt with by the Intra-Nordic Committee of the Nordic Council and, as with all Nordic projects, the idea of 'Nordic Advantage' – or the added value to be gained from working together - is central to all projects undertaken by the Council.

The Nordic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers have evolved into a forum for formal and primarily informal contacts between Nordic politicians. Contacts among representatives for the Nordic sister parties (the Labour parties, Conservatives, Centre parties etc.) have often been more intimate than contacts between competing parties within the separate countries. Similar ties developed at the senior government official level. These informal contacts are the core of Nordic cooperation. No Nordic minister can make a decision which has direct consequences for any of the other countries without discussing the matter with ministers in the affected countries. Within the Nordic area, international decisions about business policies, labour market policies, and social

policies are not primarily matters to be handled by the foreign ministries, but rather by the individual countries' respective ministries that they apply to, almost as if the Nordic area were a loosely organised confederate state.

In the area of arts and culture, it is the five Nordic Ministers for Culture who assume overall responsibility for Nordic cooperation which is underpinned by two major funds (the Nordic Cultural Fund and the Nordic Film and TV Fund) and by ten Nordic institutions which include the Nordic Literature and Library Committee (NORDBOK); the Nordic Music Committee (NOMUS); the Nordic Centre for the Performing Arts (Nord-Scen); the Nordic Institute for Contemporary Art (NIFCA); and the cultural centres on Greenland and Åland¹⁰⁶. Measures are devised and initiated by the Committee for Nordic Cultural Cooperation composed of senior officials from the ministries of culture, the various management groups, and the arts committees and by the Council of Ministers' Secretariat. The arts committees and the management groups also fulfil an important advisory function. As well as intra-Nordic cooperation and cooperation with the EU, working with the Adjacent Areas forms one of the pillars of the Nordic Council of Ministers' cultural activity. A unanimous decision in the Council of Ministers is binding for the individual governments, but more importantly, it provides a channel that facilitates relations and communication between ministers.

Poruka tog teksta je da drzavna i civilna politika medjunarodne saradnje treba da budu kompatibilne a ne suprotstavljene i dijametalno razlicite sto je cesto slucaj kao i da treba da ih stvara edukovana kulturna diplomacija sto nije slucaj.

Ne znam koliko sam pomogla, mada u sustini i nemam primedbi na rad osim mozda da negde u zakljucku treba da bude istaknuto da su u domenu medjunarodne sradnje stalno figuriraju dva termina a time i dva koncepta: Zapadni Balkan i region Jugoistocne Evrope koji nisu podudarni.

Sve zajedno u korelaciji sa temom rada koja se odnosi na medjudrzavnu saradnju to znaci da nadlezna ministarstva inostranih poslova i kulture moraju da stvore mehanizme da u formulisanje svojih politika ukljuce i zainteresovane aktere iz privatnog i NVO sektora sto takodje u praksi ni iz bliza nije slucaj niti se u zakljucku rada taj novi model detaljnije razradjuje iako logicno sledi iz pouka Nordijskog modela.

I naravno, razlika izmedju preovladjujuceg drzavnog modela KP u zemljama zapadnog balkana i nordijskog paradrzavnog modela je takodje bitna a nasi zakljucci o ukljucivanju svih aktera su moguci u okviru paradrzavnog i vrlo tesko u okviru drzavnog tako da bi jedan kratak pasus u zakljucku trebalo i o tome nesto.

¹⁰⁶ "Cornerstone in Nordic cooperation" Facts on Nordic cooperation, Nordic Council of Ministers, 2007
www.norden.org

6.4. Recommendations: Possibilities for the creation of regional strategy for cultural cooperation

The research findings confirm the general hypothesis of this paper that the level of governmental cultural cooperation in the region is still at a low level and therefore a lot of energy and effort should be devoted in order to overcome the current condition.

In this respect the Governments, which are key actors in cultural cooperation, need to develop a frame for regional cooperation. It is their obligation to promote and encourage cultural dialogue among their citizens in order to develop societies based on democracy, human respect and recognition of cultural diversity. Today the region is much more ready to consume cultural products from neighbouring countries than it was a decade ago. The basis of all future relationships should be built on the full acceptance of the diversity of this region and on the coordination of interests among different cultures, societies and countries. Consequently, it is important to support cross-border and territorial cooperation initiatives. Such a support impels national institutions to use the instrument of co-financing and paves the way for a more extensive commitment to cooperation. Far more energy should be devoted to developing and restructuring national cultural policy in the region. Currently, local governments are either non-players in or even obstacles to a dynamic cultural sector. The danger of a vacuum developing, where governments have neither the money nor capacity to support the local sector while international funding is withdrawn, is imminent.

Innovative and democratic cultural policies are needed. The need for regional cultural cooperation strategy is urgent. A common cultural strategy is needed, since that seems to be the most positive way to acquire a level of recognition in the European cultural space. The cultural cooperation needs to be supported and promoted because that is the only way that the region can contribute towards creating common European cultural space. This process is expected not for the sake of integration as the ultimate goal of all the countries of the region, but for the sake of keeping the cultural values and diversity in the global world that we're living in.

The Governments of the region, through their institutions, should work on building solid partnerships among all actors involved in cultural cooperation in order to create an open platform for sharing knowledge and best practice. The national public institutions which have a mandate for cultural cooperation in the region are usually the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in each country of the region. The two ministries should cooperate in the creation of a common strategy for international cultural cooperation policy. This cooperation could be achieved only if the both ministries have clearly defined responsibilities in the process of international cultural cooperation, but also common and define state policy or strategy for cultural cooperation. Based on analyze in the previous chapter, the Croatia is the only country of the region that has progressed in this respect. In this respect defining of the common strategy for cultural cooperation between all actors responsible for international cooperation is primary goal. On the regional level the establishment of “superregional dialogue between all the cultural policy makers is great strategy for euro-integration of the Western Balkan region. The dialogue is depending from educated cultural diplomacy, strategic analyze of the current and possible forms of international cooperation, partnership between all the cooperative subjects, that would lead to institutional forms of long term superregional dialogue”¹⁰⁷.

This partnership will ensure that local authorities, regional stakeholders, communities and cultural NGOs will all have a voice in influencing the role culture plays in the life of the region. A strong working partnership between all these actors could provide a regional strategy for cultural cooperation. “Balanced approach and complementarities of interest and possibilities are guaranteeing the realistic, down-to-earth selection of priorities and instruments. Shared aims are the only aims to be achieved, and intersectorial approach is contributing toward widening of the policy perspectives and alternatives. Also, joining private and civil sectors to public sector in policy making is bringing another sort of knowledge and operational methods in public administration management, giving to policy planning more certainty in its viability and legitimacy.” Shared policy is a future of cultural development within each country, region and

¹⁰⁷ Dojcinovic, Vesna Djukic, “Četiri faktora supraregionalnog dijaloga aktera kulturnih politika balkanskih zemalja”...

city. Cultural policy has to be integral part of the public responsibility; it means responsibility of all main vectors of cultural life, done through precise procedures and in dialogue”¹⁰⁸.

Having in mind the complexity of the Western Balkans, regional cultural cooperation has to be based on the full acceptance of diversity, reconciliation and recognition, as well as keeping the integrity of each of the countries involved. Establishment of a new model of cultural cooperation will have multiple effects on the region. It will encourage the process of self rebranding and visibility in an international framework; it will strengthen capacities and it will contribute towards political and economical stability.

On a practical level, regional cooperation requires favourable conditions and operating mechanisms. It is important, also, to raise regional awareness of the opportunities and positive impact that could be achieved by establishing regional cultural cooperation. Culture has become an important issue of regional discourse since the rise of the idea of the economic impact of culture and other possible functions that could increase the prosperity and image of the regions. Given the variety of functions that culture has, and therefore contributes to the social and economic development, it is very wrong to perceive culture as being comparable to any other industry. The primary cultural activities don’t have purely commercial aspects. Artistic creativity and expressions, protection and conservation of cultural heritage are non profit activities but they create other values for humanity which cannot be expressed solely in figures. The cultural sector is facing a huge challenge: a global approach towards culture based on economic development and preservation of the primary values of culture. It is an immense task for those working in the cultural field to make the right balance among these two different concepts. In this context many programmes for regional development follow the thesis that the region is the basis for economic and social development: it is assumed that if citizens identify themselves with a particular region, development projects have a great potential for being successful, and successful projects would in turn contribute to a close bond with the respective region. But the formation of regions is essentially a social and cultural process. Political and administrative regulations are based on that social process, while the reverse sequence is rarely successful.

¹⁰⁸ Dragičević Šešić, Milena”Shared policies: future of cultural development, in: *Dynamics of communication: new ways and new actors*, edited by Biserka Cvjeticanin, Culturelink, Zagreb , 2006, pp.103 – 111

Culture is often considered to consist of built heritage and cultural institutions (theatres, museums, libraries etc); and cultural reform tends to focus on physical restoration and reconstruction. However, assistance should be given to developing a more democratic cultural policy. Such a policy should be based on a conception of diversity as the norm and it should seek to include all, equally, in the process reconstruction. Efforts should also be made to promote a vibrant and diversified cultural life. This means:-

- empowering civil society through freedom of expression and association in the cultural field;
- redefining the strategic role of cultural policy makers as gate-openers to a future based on regional (and global) diversity;
- identifying the new role of cultural institutions in a multicultural environment.

There is a need for further research in order to justify the benefits cultural development can contribute to the future prosperity and stability of the region – and to its potential contribution to Europe as a whole. Studies examining in detail the employment opportunities, the training, the infrastructural problems, funding and resources situation, mobility of artists, commercial pressures and any other economic and social aspect of importance are required. Such an approach will make the cultural sector more visible and could greatly contribute towards recognition of the cultural sector in the region. Generally there is lack of such studies on the regional level which allow cultural policy makers to base their visions on real data and statistics.

On regional level:

- To maintain a primary focus on, and develop and strengthen the capacity for strategic regional cultural planning;
- To be the primary focus for developing regional cultural data and intelligence and studies;
- To be the primary focus for the encouragement of a strategic approach to embedding culture in local authority planning;

- To be a leading advocate for the role of culture in regional economic and social regeneration, promoting the success and sustainability of initiatives to increase prosperity and quality of life;
- To promote regional distinctiveness;
- To promote the image, identity and diversity of the regions and its role in broader regional development.

On a state (in this case local) level, Ministries of Culture should:

- Develop, shape and implement policy;
- Lobby and make effective representation within governments and intergovernmental organisations;
- Build and strengthen relationships with opinion formers and decision-makers at every level;
- Develop a range of membership services which will add value;
- Make a positive and effective contribution to regional leadership and governance;
- Encourage, support, share and communicate best practice in local government;
- Develop the image, perception and reputation of local government.
- Deliver resources efficiently to the institutional and independent cultural sectors.
- Cooperate in forming regional resource structures to support cultural development across national borders.

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