

Experts' Report
on the approved or implemented projects submitted to the 26th meeting of the Ministers
responsible for culture of the Visegrad Group Countries

in Plzeň on 10th June 2016

Honourable Ministers,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is our honour to present to you this report on the meeting of the ministerial experts, which reviewed progress in the implementation of projects and the results that have been achieved with the support of the ministries responsible for culture in the V4 countries. This report focuses on the period since the previous meeting of the V4 Ministers responsible for culture in Bratislava in June 2015.

When reviewing the projects and programmes, the experts tried to reach a common position with the aim to ensure the intensification of V4 co-operation. We will inform you about the programmes which are currently in the implementation phase and will then present them to the Ministers for their approval. The main financial instruments for the joint projects are based on the Financial Memorandum signed by the V4 countries in 2004.

Programmes in the implementation phase

1. The Colloquium of Library and Information Workers from the Visegrad Group

The first symposium, entitled “Libraries in a Knowledge Society”, took place in Banská Bystrica in 2006. In view of the success of this event and its correspondence with the EU priorities, the second colloquium on “Digitization – a means to protect and provide access to documents” took place in the Moravian Library in Brno in 2008. In 2011, the National Library in Warsaw organized the third colloquium of library and information workers in Warsaw. The workshop was an opportunity to present technical and organizational solutions, to exchange experience and to discuss relevant issues. Another expert conference “Building cultural capacity for digitization and enabling access to cultural heritage” was organized in Warsaw in February 2013 by the Polish Presidency. The next colloquium took place in Budapest in November 2013, with the title “Accessing Digital Content: Mass Digitisation, E-Legal Deposit, Copyright Matters – Experiences in National Libraries” and another one in June 2014 in Fertőd. During the Slovak Presidency the next colloquium was organized in Bratislava on 8th – 9th June 2015 with the title “Libraries in V4+ countries and perspectives of their further development towards 2020”. The last colloquium *Libraries V4 in the Decoy of Digital Age* was organized during the Czech Presidency at the Moravian Library in Brno from 31th May till 1st June 2016. The content of the symposium covered forms and possibilities of cooperation between libraries in the context of the National Libraries concepts for the period 2016-2020 and the legal aspects of digitization. The next colloquium will be organized during the Polish Presidency in 2016/2017.

Recommendations for the Ministers:

The Ministers appreciate the progress to the present day and fully support the following activities of the project.

2. The Working Group for Cultural Heritage in the V4 countries

In 2006, the V4 Ministers responsible for culture adopted a decision to appoint a working group to identify and analyse opportunities and threats for cultural heritage resulting from the social and economic changes taking place in the V4 countries and in the Central European region. The V4 Cultural Heritage Experts' Working Group is coordinated by the International Cultural Centre in Kraków. Since 2007 the group has been working, on among other things: heritage management, solutions to the problems of historic sites and locations on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The Working Group is currently dealing with the following sub-projects:

2a. V4 Heritage Academy.

The Summer Course on the Management of UNESCO World Heritage Sites in V4 countries is intended for specialists and students from the V4 and designed to discuss topics such as UNESCO legal regulations, local solutions for the management of cultural heritage and its protection in V4 countries. The International Cultural Centre has organized five courses since 2009 in co-operation with its partners from the V4 countries. Each course was organised in a different country and was designed to gather the group of 20 people, mainly heritage professionals from the V4 countries and their neighbours. The 2015 edition was organized in Poland and Slovakia and was dedicated to the city of Banská Štiavnica and the heritage of the mining industry. The 8th edition in July 2016 will be organized in Poland and Hungary and will be dedicated to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Benedictine Abbey of Pannonhalma.

2b. The Heritage Forum of Central Europe.

The objective of the Forum, which is organized every two years, is to open discussion on current trends, challenges and opportunities, to exchange ideas, experience and practices, to identify and develop sustainable strategies and to formulate recommendations for the protection and sustainable management of cultural heritage. Three editions of the Forum took place in Kraków in 2011, 2013 and 2015. The 4th Heritage Forum will take place in Kraków in June 2017. Analysing its leading theme "Heritage & Society" will bring together researchers and practitioners from various disciplines. The 4th Forum is aimed at challenging the following topics: heritage communities (perception and participation), dissonant heritage (heritage of atrocity (World War II) and heritage of communism), constructed memories, challenges of conservation (focusing on mid-late 20th century architecture). The Forums result in a peer-reviewed books with articles based on the presented papers.

Recommendations for the Ministers:

The Ministers fully support the activities of the Working Group for Cultural Heritage in the V4 countries and look forward to the next activities in the above mentioned areas.

3. Co-operation in the field of performing arts in the V4 countries

3a. East European Performing Arts Platform (EEPAP)

The East European Performing Arts Platform/EEPAP (eepap.culture.pl) works to foster the development of performing arts in Central and Eastern Europe and primarily targets independent performing artists, curators, critics, theoreticians, and persons organising theatre or dance hubs and festivals from 18 countries, including the Balkan and Eastern Partnership countries. One of the goals of EEPAP is to share the experience of the transformation period in the V4 countries with other regions of Eastern and Central Europe in the area of theatre and dance.

The aim of EEPAP is to support and facilitate international exchange between artists and activists and development of educational programs concentrating on performing arts. The project's main activities are: running a platform – website eepap.culture.pl serving as a tool for exchange of knowledge, contacts and experiences of the platform's members (workshops, seminars, labs); educational program Desant focussing on the social and political context of contemporary art in Eastern Europe; a varied offer of residency programs for theatre makers, choreographers, young managers and producers organized in partnership with major centres and festivals (the residencies took place at the Divadelná Nitra International Theatre Festival in Nitra in Slovakia, the cooperation is to be carried on in 2016); research projects in contemporary performing arts ("Platform: An East European Performing Arts Companion" , articles on performing arts organization published on EEPAP website eepap.culture.pl). EEPAP cooperates closely with the leading dance and theatre centre in Europe.

At the moment, EEPAP is working on the "Platform: An East European Performing Arts Companion" whose main aim is to establish a platform of mutual understanding by explaining the most important and widely used terms. In 2016 the collected texts will be edited and published, initially as an online version. The terms that are in focus at present include national theatres, independent theatres and archives.

3b. PACE.V4, Performing Arts Central Europe

It is a project of a continuous co-operation of Visegrad performing arts organizations belonging to the network Performing Arts Central Europe – Visegrad Countries Focus (PACE.V4) in order to develop a common presentation and research strategy with the goals to strengthen the coherence of the Visegrad group countries, to foster its visibility at the international cultural scene, to promote current performing arts sector of the Visegrad countries and the brand "Visegrad" in general and to enhance international contacts and co-operation of Visegrad artists and stakeholders on the international level. The strategy is applied both in priority international events such as the biggest world performing arts markets or important international theatre/dance/music festivals, and within the Visegrad region in the form of specialized events (conferences, meetings, workshops, presentations, networking programme).

The main project for the year 2016 is the "The traveling conference PACE.V4 / Transport and Infrastructure in the performing arts V4", which take place on 4th - 15th of June, 2016 in Budapest, Tatabánya, Topolčany, Žilina, Olomouc, Ostrava, Katowice and Kraków and

combines elements of expert meeting, showcase for international cultural community and work with diverse audience groups and institutional representatives in the Visegrad region. The event is based on theatre in its role of social and political “vehiculum” having as the main topics accessibility, mobility and infrastructure of performing arts production. The “Conference” is focused on research, interconnection and promotion of theatre infrastructure (including both the rich cultural heritage of Central European theatre architecture as one of the specific characteristics of the region and new independent cultural centres originated mainly after 1989). Further outputs of the project will be a common PACE.V4 webpage in English and presentation of the project results at European festivals and in Eastern Partnership countries.

Recommendations for the Ministers:

The Ministers appreciate the successful continuation of the EEPAP and PACE.V4 projects.

4. Seminars on the Evaluation of the Use of EU Funds in the Area of Culture and Creative Industries

The seminar on the use of the EU funds in the area of culture in V4 countries initiated and organized by the former Hungarian Ministry of Education and Culture took place in Budapest in 2009. It was a unique opportunity for participants working in this field in the V4 countries to exchange experience, analyse the results and obstacles in the use of EU funds and to share ideas related to the planning and implementation of programmes and projects. The Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic organized and hosted a meeting of experts from the V4 ministries responsible for culture in 2011 in Mikulov. The meeting offered the opportunity to exchange information on the state of preparations for the upcoming EU programming period of 2014-2020. In 2012, Slovakia held a meeting in Bratislava for the exchange of direct experience in the development of programmes and implementation of projects. The next meeting took place in Warsaw in April 2014 and was dedicated to two issues in the context of the use of European Funds: measures and statistics as well as the support for the culture and creative industries in the New Financial Perspective 2014-2020. The last meeting, which was held on 7th – 9th April 2016 in Prague, was organized by Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic in cooperation with the National Film Archive. The seminar *Audiovisual Data: From Acquisition to Metadata* was related to current issues emerging in the context of the use of European Funds: preservation of the analogue data, digitisation, register of the collections, metadata etc.

Recommendations for the Ministers:

The Ministers appreciate the success of the meetings held on this topic and look forward to the follow-up events.

5. *Visegrad Initiative for Audiovisual Co-operation*

International co-operation in the audiovisual field is a natural and integral part of culture in most European countries. The project *Visegrad Initiative for Audiovisual Co-operation* builds on previous positive experience of co-operation between V4 countries in this field and aims to create a joint co-ordination and initiative platform for further development.

Experts of the National Film Funds from the V4 countries met in March 2014 in Bratislava and discussed the opportunities for co-operation. The following meeting of the representatives of the funds of the V4 countries was held in July 2014 during the International Film Festival in Karlovy Vary. Presenting individual funds in terms of support possibilities oriented on film co-productions and the presentation of selected co-production projects from individual countries were the subjects of this meeting. The meeting and presentation were held under the sponsorship of the Czech State Cinematographic Fund and in cooperation with the Film New Europe international organization. Based on the initiative of the Hungarian party, a meeting was held in Budapest in October 2014 during Hungarian Film Week, where representatives of the Hungarian film fund, the Slovak Audiovisual Fund and Film New Europe met. Topics of discussion included the narrower definition of areas for potential cooperation between the film funds of the V4 countries, which led to a proposal to establish joint calls from the film funds of the V4 countries for the development of co-production projects.

Another working meeting of representatives of the film funds from the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia together with fund representatives from Croatia and Slovenia took place during the Visegrad Animation Forum in Třeboň in Czech Republic. The meeting was organised in May 2016 at the initiative of the Czech State Cinematography Fund. At the meeting, the participants discussed the real potential for closer cooperation between film funds in supporting the development and production of co-produced animated works. The Czech Fund is drafting the conclusions of the meeting and specific proposals will be developed by a party of experts and fund representatives during the IFF at Karlovy Vary in July 2016. The initiative is expected to lead to joint activity of the participating countries in the form of coordinated calls supporting co-production

Recommendations for the Ministers:

The Ministers support the idea of co-operation in the field of audiovisual issues within their competences.

6. *International Master Courses Project (Visegrád and the EU)/Convergence Academy.*

The main goal of the 2015 International Master Courses organized by Konvergencie (Convergence) – Society for Chamber Arts /Festival Konvergencie (Slovak Republic) was to present a series of master courses led by prominent concert artists as well as teachers working from prestigious musical institutions. Main organizer adhered to the plan of monthly master courses throughout the year (except for vacations and off-semester dates) and added a special event – special workshops and *Konvergencie* (Convergence), International Interpretation Courses at Bánovce nad Bebravou, which were held on a weekend in October 2015, as well as the master class of pianist Alexandar Serdar at the Conservatory in Košice. Participation at the master classes, which were free of charge for active and passive students, varied. Students

from surrounding countries also showed interest – from Czech Republic (Prague, Brno) in particular, but also from Hungary. Courses were attended by 15 to 50 students on average (in addition to 3 – 4 active student-participants), while occasionally attendance was as high as 80. Regarding the weekend courses in Bánovce, there were 24 active participants, predominantly from Slovakia, the Czech Republic (Brno, Ostrava), Ukraine and Hungary. Students from more remote countries (Serbia, Slovenia, Switzerland) were also interested.

The main project partners are Franz Liszt Academy of Music, Budapest, Hungary, Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts, Brno, Czech Republic and Karol Szymanowski Academy of Music in Katowice, Republic of Poland.

The implemented courses were a preparatory phase for the main *Konvergenzie* (Convergence) 2016/2017 International Interpretation Courses.

The project is primarily intended for students from the V4 countries, but it is also opened to international students.

Recommendations for the Ministers

The Ministers fully support the activities of the project and welcome its implementation.