

3. Intergovernmental cultural cooperation in Europe: The context

3.1. Historical overview: Hosts and guests

European governments have become well acquainted with the uses of arts and heritage in diplomacy and trade since the inception of both forms of international relations. However, the rules of cultural diplomacy seem to bear the imprint of the role-reversal processes found in ancient rules of hospitality.

Anthropologists specialising in communication (i.e. primitive oratory analysts) have revealed that the exposure of arts treasures and heritage myths to members of other societies provides a handy idiom designed to win any kind of argument. As cultural goods and performances have a unique nature, their political consideration does not allow for dialogue or contrary discourse. They become unilateral statements which force the host audience to accept them for a fact, thus paving the way for other types of consent. Naturally, the more spectacular and lavish the exposure, the better hosts can be silenced into speechless acceptance beyond courteous admiring reactions. From Babylon to Egypt, from Greece to Rome, arts get intertwined with myth in the battles for uninterrupted discourse of precedence and power.

In this sense, cultural diplomacy is not “a gift” although its practice entails a certain degree of reciprocity through a future return of equitable value. **Cultural diplomacy corresponds rather to the “pottlatch” logic whereby the showing of one’s material or symbolic assets is destined to win the will and affection of those exposed to it.** It is a “performance-based” action where by lending the stage to the guest, the host is morally bound to appreciate the offering. A moral obligation which normally operates in the opposite direction: according to the rules of hospitality the guest should be the acquiescent party. Cultural diplomacy is a mechanism which allows for the guest to become “host” and thus to produce a reversal of roles favouring the initiative of the visiting partner.

As the essence of cultures is the symbolic play with profoundly arbitrary rules, the cultural player advancing a set of self-interpreted proposals inevitably holds the advantage. In fact, cultural relations seems to be the only area of international idiomatic practice where one can be legitimately and openly seeking psychological and dialectic advantage over the opponent.

This role of “culture” as a unilateral communication system inhibiting normal bilateral exchange might be set against the contemporary discourse on “cultural dialogue” and throw some doubts on how cultural idioms really operate in human and power relations. Conversely, the observation can elicit some concern about the “uninvited hosts” landing in our domestic environment through global media.

However, the host turned guest does get something in return - the gift of the aesthetic discovery and the pleasure of shared sensitivity. These are elements which cannot easily outweigh the political advantage acquired by the visitors,

but which pave the way for delayed reciprocity. In fact, the unilateral game played recurrently becomes in some way bilateral or even multilateral on the basis of "delayed reciprocity" and the indirect effects it produces in third parties. It is in this logic that cultural relations have become an important element in transnational interplay since the origins of diplomacy, especially in "cold war" situations where intergovernmental play is reduced to a set of symbolic gestures and mirror games.

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 at least over the last 1000 years.

Medieval diplomacy in Europe took as a model the standardising structures and proceedings of a Christian message dominated by a centralised Roman Church which tended to disregard particularistic cultural traits. In contrast, the Renaissance revolution placed the arts at the forefront of human endeavour and its diplomatic uses reached an unparalleled intensity. The artist carried with him the genius of his kingdom or republic and society could claim the social benefits of creativity whilst the patron could reap the political and trade benefits.

The Ancien Régime saw the first civil laws with special protection measures for arts and heritage. It is argued that the first "cultural" bill was approved by the Swedish Parliament in 1666 to ensure the protection of military towers with architectural value. A few decades later, access to royal art collections like the Louvre opened to the public. Such domestic importance newly attached to culture as a part of public policy translated into diplomatic relations, including the attachment of artists and writers to embassies and diplomatic missions (JJ Rousseau was appointed embassy secretary in Venice).

Structures became more complex with the Nouveau Régime; the nationalist demands of modern state-building made borders more hermetic and diplomacy more professional. The transnational presence of intellectual and artistic interests entered an institutionalisation phase through 19th Century 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. Indeed, language diplomacy is at the basis of modern cultural diplomacy as debates over its official uses in intergovernmental organisations have provoked tensions since the beginning of the 20th century. Around the same period, trade and industry found it increasingly useful to establish regular links with arts diplomacy. With the popularisation 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. In 1938 the International Institute for Intellectual Cooperation issued a statement about the nature of "intellectual agreements":

...An intellectual agreement is “a document signed by at least two states with a view to fostering intellectual relations (artistic, literary, scientific, educational) between their peoples. It can refer to one or several sectors of intellectual life excluding political, economic and social relations which are the object of separate negotiations”.¹

In 1945 the Allied Education Ministers' Conference established a Committee presided over by the Belgian Delegate J. Hoste with a mandate to elaborate a “standard cultural agreement”. The AEMC was concerned about the need to regularise cultural agreements in order to avoid propagandist-style activities and pave the way for real cooperation projects.

The Council of Europe (1949) 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. Partners to the European Cultural Convention must be parliamentary democracies, and the official signature of the document has been regarded as the waiting room for those states wishing to join the Council.

However, the Cold War did not prevent numerous cultural agreements being signed between Western European democracies and Warsaw Pact countries. This is particularly significant as the initiative very often came from the Eastern bloc seeking spaces to show to Western audiences the cultural quality of communist life. Cold War cultural diplomacy was also designed to provide occasions for favourable environments, where trade and other agreements could be reached. Despite the nightmare of artists' and intellectuals' defections, it can be said that communist cultural diplomacy reached the highest degree of sophistication and effectiveness.

Post-war dictatorships in Portugal, Greece and Spain did not resort to cultural diplomacy to influence European opinion. The advent of mass tourism to the area made it less necessary to engage in cultural communication exercises abroad. In fact it was the exiled opposition to those authoritarian governments which provided the main carrier of intensive cultural “anti-diplomacy” at the major democratic centres of power and communication.

¹ This is the definition established by the League of Nations' International Institute for Intellectual Cooperation in 1938's *Recueil des accords intellectuels*.

FIGURE 1. Number of bilateral agreements identified. Per decade, 1930s-2000s
Source: National reports (see Annex I)

Bilateral Agreements

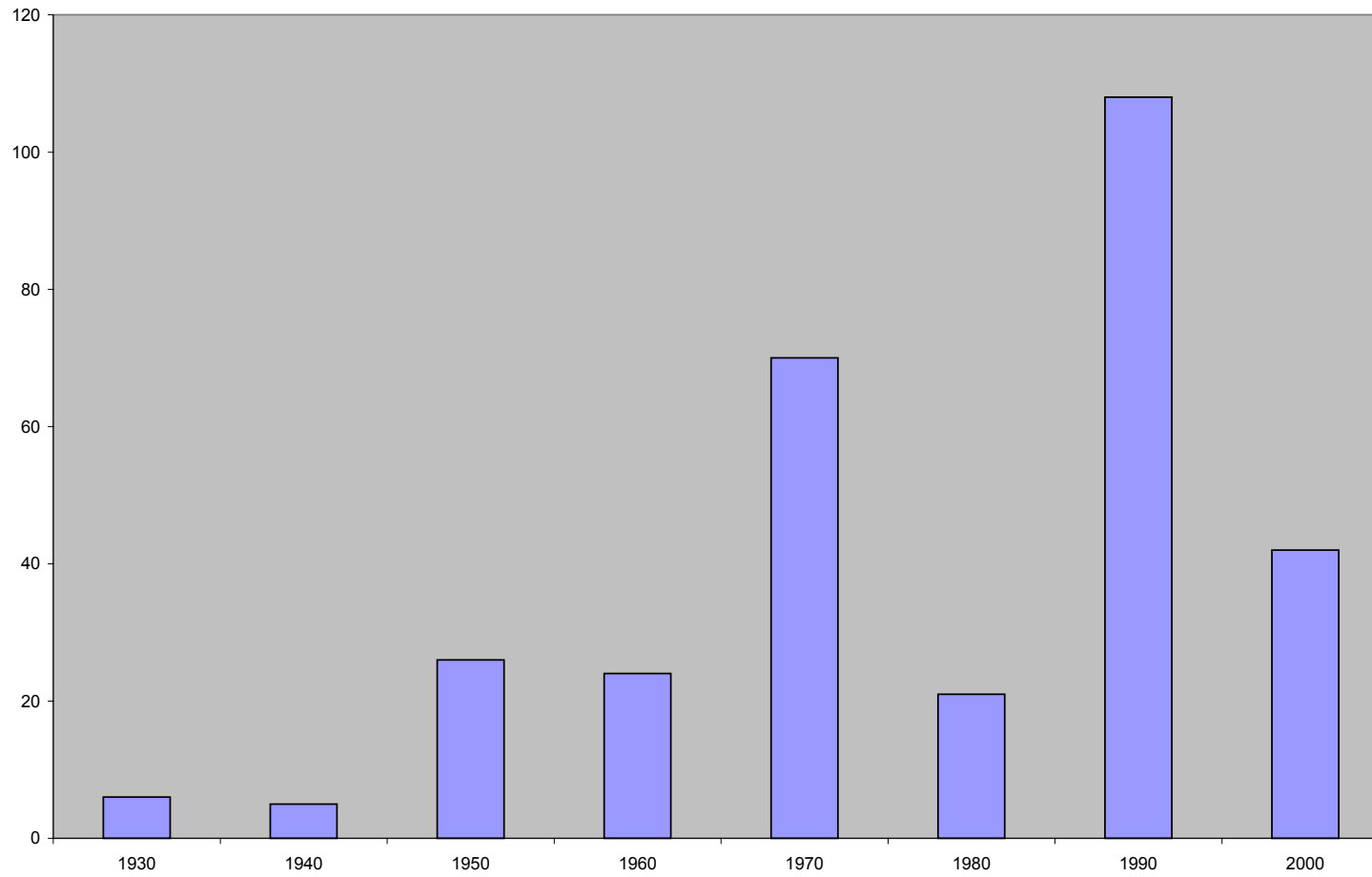


Figure 2. Identified bilateral cultural agreements in force among the 31 countries. Source: National Reports (see Annex I)

	AU	B	BG	CY	CZ	DK	EST	FIN	F	D	GR	H	IS	IRL	I	LET	FL	LIT	L	M	NL	N	PL	P	R	SK	SLO	E	S	TR	GB		
Austria		•	•		•			•	•			•			•				•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•		
Belgium	•		•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•		•	•		•		•	•	•		•	•	•		•	•	
Bulgaria	•	•		•	•			•	•	•	•	•			•			•		•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	
Cyprus			•		•				•	•	•				•	•			•	•			•				•	•					
Czech R	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•			•	
Denmark		•			•			•	•	•	•	•	•		•								•	•		•	•	•				•	
Estonia		•			•			•		•	•	•				•		•					•	•			•				•	•	
Finland	•	•	•		•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
France	•	•	•	•	•	•		•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•
Germany		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•		•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•
Greece		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•		•		•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Hungary	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•				•	•		•		•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•		•	•	
Iceland					•	•		•	•																		•						
Ireland		•						•	•	•					•			•					•		•						•		
Italy	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•		•		•		•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•
Latvia		•		•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•			•								•				•						•
Liechtenstein																																	
Lithuania		•	•				•	•	•	•	•	•			•								•		•		•	•	•	•		•	•
Luxembourg	•	•		•	•			•	•	•	•				•										•	•	•	•	•	•			•
Malta			•	•	•			•	•	•	•	•			•								•		•	•	•	•	•	•		•	
Netherlands		•		•				•	•	•	•	•			•								•	•		•	•	•	•	•		•	•
Norway	•	•	•		•			•	•	•	•				•								•	•		•	•	•	•	•		•	•
Poland	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•		•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•
Portugal	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•			•					•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•
Romania	•		•					•	•	•	•				•			•	•				•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•
Slovakia	•	•	•		•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•				•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•
Slovenia	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•
Spain	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•		•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•
Sweden											•																						
Turkey		•	•				•	•	•	•	•	•			•			•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	
United K.	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•		•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	

3.2. Aims and motivations

Governments tend to engage in international cultural cooperation with primarily political, not cultural aims. Culture is perceived first and foremost as an instrument or a channel to achieve political goals such as influence, enhancement, more visibility and an increased prestige – for one's own country, its government and its policies in another country, within its governing structures, among its public opinion leaders and among the public at large. In this sense, **international cultural cooperation could be seen as an extended form of diplomacy that is supposed to lead to actions, events and programmes of high visibility and to generate as much favourable publicity as possible.** As will be seen in this report, terms such as 'cultural diplomacy' and 'public diplomacy' often get intertwined with the notions of international cultural cooperation. The public character of cultural diplomacy stands markedly in contrast with other forms of diplomacy that traditionally invoke secrecy or, at least, discretion.

Governments' primary motivations differ from those of cultural operators in their understanding of the expected benefits from the engagement in international cultural cooperation. For the latter, the expected benefits lie primarily in the sphere of artistic and professional development. International engagement is expected to bring new creative opportunities, to provide insights into advanced and innovative cultural practices and a challenging confrontation with unknown or lesser-known peers, public and critics whose reactions cannot be taken for granted. Prestige enhancement and a perspective of economic gain, derived from the transborder market enlargement, might also be included, but only as a postponed, secondary benefit. For the governments, these cultural, artistic and professional expectations do not carry much weight and are accepted as a collateral benefit only if the primary political aims could be satisfactorily achieved.

This disparity of primary motivations and expectations creates an inevitable field of tension, which surrounds all the players involved. Governments aim to match or balance their aims of influence while accepting the cultural presence of another state on their own territory. Cultural operators seek optimal professional conditions of engagement and hope to engineer a stimulating cultural experience that will also confirm or advance their reputation. The divergent motivations and expectations create frequent misunderstandings and disappointments. In pursuing their political aims, governments seek to engage cultural operators who are usually ready to join and collaborate, but on their own terms, implicitly assuming that they can seek to satisfy their own primary motivations. In the course of the realization of international cultural cooperation programmes, these motivations and expectations get enmeshed and sometimes contradict each other. In addition, disparity of aims and expectations might occur between collaborating governments and between collaborating cultural operators whose inner agendas might not be fully synchronised.

Consequently, international cultural cooperation sometimes displays certain not very cooperative features, such as competition in influence, prestige and visibility. National and institutional interests compete and sometimes clash and, in addition, the individual personal traits of players, such as vanity, also play a role. Much of the motivation and many of the aims remain implicit, hidden behind the rhetorical curtain of good intentions, friendship, tradition and political and/or cultural proximity and affinity.

Some of what governments deem international cultural cooperation may also be understood as being a good neighbourhood policy, a carefully orchestrated effort to create a wide panoply of various relationships with the neighbouring country and to nurture a climate of security, trust, peace, and mutual benefit, to exploit the advantages of proximity. When the state has members of its own ethnic or linguistic minority across the border (as is the case of Hungarians in Romania, Swedish-speaking Finns, the German Community in Belgium etc.), this is an additional motivation for a government to engage in transborder cultural cooperation, to support the cultural life of an expression of its minority abroad and to create a positive climate of mutual understanding with a neighbouring government.

Governments draw some of their motivations to engage in international cultural cooperation from history and from historic ties and responsibilities. Former colonial powers usually strive to maintain intensive and multifaceted relations with their former colonies, including cultural ties. Much as their colonial history seems to be loaded with contentious points and episodes, it is nevertheless a shared history and has as a consequence some shared cultural heritage: architectural sites, museum collections, archives, memories, or literature whose study, conservation and dissemination often becomes the subject of intergovernmental cooperation agreements.

More recently, governments have tended to engage in international cultural cooperation for the sake of image building, to use cultural values and goods as positive and attractive attributes in their own country-wide “branding” exercise. This country marketing relies on cultural features in order to ensure a positive economic climate for foreign investments, job creation, tourist bonanzas and overall positive attitudes towards the country engaged in the exercise. Culture is what makes a country fit, hyped, appealing, “in”.

3.3. Notions of cooperation

International cultural cooperation appears in a wide range of forms and instruments, used by the parties from different countries to establish a bilateral or multilateral working relationship in order to realise a concrete programme, project or event. **Most of these undertakings are conceived and executed in a bilateral frame.** Such a relationship is easier to manage than a multilateral one, which demands considerably more time, patience and other resources to synchronise divergent aims, expectations and interests and to turn them into a web of mutual commitments.

Traditionally, the main pillars of cooperation are the **bilateral cultural agreements** between governments. These are high-level long-term instruments that are fairly uniform and general. Cultural cooperation agreements are made between governments; after joint signature they are approved by both governments and published in the gazettes. They **serve as a symbol and pledge of good-will, a diplomatic gesture, and open the way to lower-level bilateral documents of a more practical nature**. Sometimes they are combined agreements, covering educational, sports and other cooperation. This is explained by historical reasons, and although they may have technical consequences and difficulties, this has no major effect on the cultural content.

There were a few cultural agreements between the two world wars, but they really thrived in the second half of the past century. When the potential partners' number exploded in several waves – first, with the independence of the former colonies, and most recently and also most relevant to our subject, with the dissolution of several federations in the Eastern half of Europe – one might have wondered if international diplomacy was going to maintain the classical instrument of bilateral agreements as its basic constituent. Apparently the answer was yes, as old and new nations were busy multiplying the lines of the by now enormous graph of independent countries. Still, one of the purposes of this inquiry has been to investigate the future role of bilateral cultural agreements.

There are cases where the high level agreements have a more practical significance than the diplomatic framework for day-to-day affairs. The most important of these are the agreements on the establishment and status of official cultural institutions, where again attempts are typically made at complementarity. The 'classical' cultural institutions abroad have diplomatic status and are therefore in all aspects treated as such. Where this is not the case, the function of the cultural agreement is to establish benefits and indemnities which are on a par with diplomatic status. Experience shows that these efforts often fail when confronted with higher levels of interest, especially the regulations on employment, taxation and the social security of foreign citizens. Some countries are willing to circumvent their own regulations in favour of the staff or property of foreign cultural institutions on their territory, others (the majority) offer no exception, so that mutual favours are not granted for all citizens and services by the other party. Agreements on cultural institutions on one another's territories are usually made between governments; often they are only part of the general cultural agreement.

As was mentioned, the real content of the government level cultural cooperation agreements finds realisation in lower-level documents, called working programmes (exchange programmes, action plans, protocols etc.) that are usually elaborated, negotiated, approved and implemented by the culture ministries. Working programmes derive their legitimacy from the cultural agreements. The most characteristic constituents of these day-to-day (or rather year-to-year) tools of government-dependent cultural cooperation are exchange quotas. These figures express to what extent the two parties commit themselves to the reception of citizens of the other country for a determined number of days. The commitments are broken down by type: areas of culture, specific institutions or events. Typically, these numbers match.

Classes of quotas for receiving visitors are many. They range from stays of several days for artists, exhibition curators, researchers, conference delegates, individually or in groups (e.g. choruses), to residencies lasting a couple of years. The latter include study grants, an overlapping area with the bilateral educational agreements (e.g. students in artistic higher or postgraduate education).

Besides quotas, working programmes contain obligations to receive and to financially - and otherwise - contribute to ad hoc or recurrent projects. Frequently, the exact nature of these commitments is not specified, the text limiting itself to the fact of supporting or enhancing participation in, realisation of, etc, a number of listed projects.

Next to the above-listed bilateral instruments of the classical arsenal are multilateral agreements, many of which follow the same pattern. This is especially true of regional agreements, like Ars Baltica, the Visegrad Four or the Mediterranean Forum.

Ministers and ministries enter into a number of ad hoc, yet official instances of bi- and multilateral cultural cooperation. A frequent source of such activities are official visits by senior administrators, but many are instigated by diplomats and cultural institutes in the partner country. There are indications of a tendency towards an increase of such instances. In other words, **even at the bilateral level, state-dependent cooperation is governed by individual, ad hoc decisions.** Ministerial staff try to insert these into the prevailing working programmes, especially if these programmes have earmarked budgets or, more typically, quotas of exchange. It would however require a more fundamental analysis to discern whether a process of continuous regression also occurs, whereby the extra-agreement accords are subsequently integrated into established bilateral channels of cooperation.

Because of the prevalence of bilateralism, international cultural cooperation is often reduced to international cultural exchange. This in fact means that the governments or organisations from two countries exchange cultural goods or visits of cultural operators, driven by the **logic of reciprocity.** In the entire period after the Second World War, this has been the most frequent and most simple form of cultural cooperation. Yet the cooperative aspect in an exchange is rather limited: a country accepts to act as a host under the understanding that it will subsequently have an opportunity to send its representatives to another country as visitors and vice versa. An exhibit from country A goes to country B and an exhibit from the country B to the country A. Or a symphonic orchestra. Or a theatre company, a delegation of artists, cultural professionals, poets, translators, specialists in restoration, etc.

Insistence on reciprocity imposes something mechanical and detached in the cooperative relationship and reduces it to a carefully weighted symmetry of investment and effect, a precisely-measured tit for tat. This is especially so if the cooperative arrangement is initiated and executed by governments and their organs, departments or agencies. The prevailing intention then seems to be not to develop and deepen the quality of the cooperative relationship, nor to

endow it with more continuity, spontaneity and diversity, and expand it so as to encompass more participants, but rather to achieve the maximum promotional effect abroad with a single action. Since in the vision of national governments, international cultural cooperation serves a mainly political aim of increased influence in a targeted country, what many cooperative arrangements contain is in fact a licence for country A to score a promotional coup in country B in return for the same carefully measured reciprocal privilege. Governments design international cultural cooperation agreements as an exchange of prestige-exportation licenses, whereby much attention is given to the equalisation of prominence, quality, expenses incurred and effects achieved in this symmetric engagement.

Prestige, status, visibility and influence are the key concerns in the governments' engagement and investment. If and when political shifts alter the priority list of countries in which a government wants to increase its prestige and influence through various means including cultural presence, resources and efforts invested in the creation of appropriate opportunities are quickly shifted across the geographical map.

In other words, international cultural cooperation, as initiated by governments in a bilateral relationship, does not necessarily start from cultural needs, but more often than not from political interests and interests in the promotional value of the action, and thus it has little consideration for the inner quality, coherence, logic, purpose and outcome of the exchange agreed upon.

There are of course other, more complex and subtle forms of international cultural cooperation, both bilateral and multilateral, driven by cultural needs, affinities and interests rather than political interests and promotional expectations. Usually, however, they are initiated by cultural operators themselves and only eventually funded by the governments in some direct or indirect way. Bilateral cooperation programmes among European governments increasingly recognise this, by specifically committing information and financial resources towards the participation of cultural agents in events organised by non-public organisations in their respective countries.

Individual organisations or groups seek and find appropriate partners and develop with them collaborative projects that go beyond mere exchange (which from a cultural point of view has a very limited interest and value) **but imply active collaborative engagement**, sharing of risk, partaking in the process and the pooling of resources for mutual benefit. In these complex forms of cooperation, reciprocity is of minor interest. Partners understand that they have to be compatible in resources and interests in order to make their cooperative arrangements successful. It is not always necessary for the partners to be of exactly equal size and capacity, that they share risks and resources in absolute parity: if these disproportions could be negotiated in terms of common interest and affinity, if there is enough solidarity and trust, there will be hardly any risks to distort a collaborative venture into one of domination and exploitation.

In commercial transactions, the interests of the partners are pooled together and synchronised by the workings of the market. In non-commercial cultural cooperative ventures, market factors (supply and demand) are of minor

importance and the cultural values, visions, needs and interests have to find a common ground and balance. If there is a political will and interest of the respective governments to delineate this common ground and to finance a project, everything might turn out fine. But if the political interest of government A for cultural cooperation with government B has a low priority, compatibility and interests articulated by cultural operators might remain without the necessary funding. Even more absurdly, **governments A and B might have a mutual political interest to engage in bilateral cultural cooperation but the cultural operators from their respective countries remain indifferent to one another** - because of their aesthetic differences, differences in the functioning of the cultural systems, cultural differences of the operators and audiences or simple ignorance. There may not be much sense in stimulating collaboration of performing arts organisations if the structures in that sector remain at odds and feel that they have not much in common. It is difficult to oblige museums to collaborate if they feel that they are not appropriate partners for each other and cannot excite each other with their collections, conservation and presentation practices and exhibition plans.

Negative effects may also arise when government-promoted cooperation activities take place as a mere exchange not because of the real interest and affinity of the involved parties but only because the budgetary means have been made available. Short of cash and eager to please the government as their main client and subsidy provider, arts and heritage organisations may slide into opportunistic behaviour patterns. International cultural cooperation becomes under those circumstances a parody or mimicry of a cultural relationship, and hardly serves to improve a political relationship between two countries and to achieve their political aims.

3.4. Interdependence of domestic and international cultural policies and engagements

It could be assumed that domestic cultural policy and the policies related to international cultural cooperation rest on the same set of principles and are driven by the same general objectives and aims. **A government that stresses the preservation of historic heritage over contemporary artistic creation will in all probability include more heritage-related activities in the international cultural cooperation programmes which it signs.** A traditionalist bent of cultural policies at home will in all probability show in the choice of activities in the frameworks of international cultural cooperation. Governments used to dealing with the cultural infrastructure at arms' length in their domestic functioning will probably be more detached in instigating international cultural cooperation than those governments that tend to apply a more directive attitude in their domestic functioning. Constitutional arrangements and practical issues mean that Anglo-Saxon countries are less prone to signing bilateral agreements than states with stronger roots in Roman Law. Indeed, the lack of a formal bilateral agreement does not mean either that intergovernmental cultural relations shall not be conducted.²

² See Dr. Antonio Zapatero Vicente, *Derecho comunitario de la cultura y política cultural de la Comunidad Europea*, PhD thesis (Madrid: 2002, unpublished).

Whenever national cultural policy is set by the ministry of culture and international cultural cooperation entrusted to the ministry of foreign affairs, there is some risk that these two levels will be at odds with each other or at least miss coherence and synchronisation. National cultural policies are developed in accordance with some cultural objectives such as stimulation of creativity, preservation of the cultural heritage, balanced opportunities for all social groups to access the cultural infrastructure or decentralization of cultural resources. International cultural cooperation is driven by political aims such as enhancing influence in another country or region, embellishing the national image or aggrandising national prestige and all the positive results of the national cultural policies will be used in order to achieve those political aims. But even if the international cultural cooperation is shared between these two ministries, or if it belongs to the competence of the national ministry of culture or a specialised government agency, political objectives will usually prevail above the sectorial, cultural considerations. Consequently, cultural operators might find themselves confronted with contradictory signals emanating from the government. In domestic matters, they may be receiving one set of objectives and expectations that are inherent in their professional field. In international cooperation matters, those objectives could be of secondary importance, political objectives mattering most.

Disparities are visible in other aspects as well. In domestic cultural policy, for instance, a government could stimulate innovative artistic practices, yet in international cultural cooperation privilege traditional artistic forms and programmes (symphony orchestras, classical music and ballet), stress presentations of cultural heritage (historic painting) rather than present the result of its own domestic priorities.

More recently, governments are trying more directly to capitalise politically in international relations on what they have scored in domestic cultural policies. Thus, if the domestic cultural policies have led to a prominent excellence of contemporary design or of contemporary music, they will seek to promote this excellence internationally in cultural cooperation schemes and activities. A country that possesses outstanding expertise in the restoration of historic monuments or in the conservation of museum collections might also seek to plug this expertise prominently in its international cooperation agreements, expecting that professional excellence in this field will contribute to the strengthening of the country's cultural and national prestige. In some fields of cultural industry, such as design for instance, the expectation is that international political prominence might lead to additional economic benefit and strengthen the international market position of its own "creative industries".

Some carryover effect from the domain of domestic cultural policies into highlights of international cultural cooperation priorities is visible in the inclusion of some themes, aspects and not only forms, disciplines, or terrains of expertise. For quite a few years cultural organisations in the United Kingdom have been expected to develop community outreach programmes linked to their main programming activities and to supplement their subsidies with the income generated by themselves through sponsoring and other sources. In the activities of the British Council promoting contemporary culture from the UK, both of these aspects appear as topics of seminars and workshops. Dutch cultural

policy in the period 1998-2002 stressed audience participation and cultural diversity, and especially highlighted the access to culture of youngsters and the members of cultural and ethnic minorities. Consequently, government financing of international events in the country was conditioned by the same expectations, while the financing of cultural programmes taking place abroad stressed the ability of those events to attract a large audience, at the expense of small-scale activities which had until then been more generously funded, bringing primarily professionals together in an international context (conferences, workshops, seminars).

Whenever international cultural cooperation is mandated to the ministry of culture and its related agencies, there is more coherence in the style and priority-setting between the domestic and international policies, but the disparity in basic aims and objectives usually remains recognisable. Cultural benefits created by domestic cultural policies could be taken along and built to some extent into the international cultural cooperation engagement, but it is nevertheless driven by political aims and motives. In international cultural cooperation, culture follows and serves politics, and developmental concerns remain subservient to promotional, prestige-boosting priorities.