

CHAPTER SEVEN

A Network Perspective on Public Diplomacy in Europe: EUNIC

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Introduction

Public diplomacy (PD) is at its core about influencing the actions and behavior of other people, whether that is in the short, medium, or long term. The study of PD is the study of relationships and communication between groups of people, whether communication is verbal or nonverbal and whether the actors are conceived as communities, networks, or populations.

As Manuel Castells has argued “power relationships are the foundation of society.”¹

With this in mind the focus on the communication, interaction, or engagement *between* groups makes the connection—the relationship—a key, if often overlooked, unit of analysis for PD research and strategy. The different actors, whether organizations or individuals, and the different types of relationships, which comprise this network create the multiple dimensions through which European PD is conducted.

Inputs into this multidimensional network come from the range of bodies which organize cultural activities including EUNIC, the EU External Action Service, and the Council of Europe. Activities are frequently facilitated by the collaborative clusters that have evolved between supranational institutions, national governments, cultural institutes, subnational groups, and private organizations, which take part in the delivery of PD in specific cities. As a result, the interconnected nature of European governance structures and cultural organisations at supranational, national and local levels create a multidimensional network with the potential to either help or hinder the various levels of European PD.

Cooperation and Competition in Cultural Relations

The network of European Union National Institutes of Culture (EUNIC) is one of the leading organizations wrestling with the way aspirations of creating networks based on cooperation and collaboration can be put into practice in the context of PD.

EUNIC describes itself as an “active network; encouraging members to implement shared projects” and a “partnering network; working with partners including the European Commission, European Parliament, the Council of Europe and partners around the world at many levels and to promote European Experience.”²

How Would You Describe EUNIC?

- An active network: encouraging members to implement shared projects at many levels and to promote European Experience;
- A learning network: sharing ideas and practices between members;
- A partnering network: working with partners including the European Commission, European Parliament, the Council of Europe and partners around the world;
- An advocacy network; raising the awareness and effectiveness of building cultural relationships between people worldwide and advocating for perception of culture not as a tool but as a goal in itself.

Guidance notes on forming and running a cluster, EUNIC, November 2012

To build collaboration European cultural institutes form local ‘clusters’ to coordinate activities in a specific city. These EUNIC clusters “seek to improve and promote cultural diversity and understanding between European societies and to strengthen international dialogue and cultural cooperation with countries outside Europe.”³ This creates two dimensions to EUNIC activity, one dimension takes place within the EU and the other takes place outside the EU. Activities conducted by EUNIC clusters to achieve this objective range from, the European Day of Languages, and European Literature Nights, to a “Studio” focusing on Architecture and Town Planning, or using cultural activities to promote a more ecological use of resources.⁴

Language learning is a central part of many EUNIC members’ activities. For example, the 2010 European Day of Languages (EDL) in Warsaw, one of the biggest in Europe, took place over eight days. During which

time 22 partners collaborated delivering 67 lessons and workshops for 1,500 students in 19 languages, showed 19 films in 12 languages, and held a conference for 360 participants.⁵ The emphasis on language also runs through the European Literature Nights, which focus on contemporary literature and translation. In 2011, 20 different EUNIC clusters, including Hanoi, London, and New York ran events, in collaboration with respective local partners, to expand the market for translated literature.

In addition to the focus on language, other initiatives focus on environmental issues. In South Africa this took the form of a “studio” attended by architecture students who were mentored by architects from France, Italy, Poland, Spain, and the UK, to look at strategies to improve and renovate an inner city building in Johannesburg. The results from this “studio” were subsequently presented to the public. Other environmental projects have included “Culture|Futures,” the initiative lead by the Danish Cultural Institute, to attract attention to a new ecological use of resources.⁶ Other EUNIC events have focused on themes such as multilingualism, migration, and mutual understanding.⁷

These activities rely on collaboration between national cultural institutes. European collaboration has occurred on a case-by-case basis with increasing frequency since the 1990s, and increased with the creation in 1997 of the Consortium of the National Cultural Institutes of the European Countries in Belgium (CICEB) and took its current form with the creation of EUNIC in 2006.⁸

While collaborations between cultural institutes have increased in frequency, many of the institutes, including the British Council, have their roots in competitive cultural promotion between European countries and in many cases this competitive stance has, to varying degrees, continued.⁹ In 2008, Jozef Batora and Monika Mokre argued in the background papers for a EUNIC sponsored conference: “A competition driven logic has been increasingly taking root in the work of national cultural institutes as most of them strive to outperform their peers in a respective foreign capital in attracting the local cultural audience.”¹⁰

The coexistence of cooperation and competition between members of EUNIC creates a multidimensional network of influence. The multiple dimensions of the network are the different types of organizations, from embassies and government ministries to arms length cultural organizations, and the different relationships they develop. These relationships, for example, can be with full or associate EUNIC members, or with local organizations in the country a EUNIC cluster operates. The increasingly complex dimensions of the network stem from the same organizations being responsible for the “Cultural Relations in and of the European Union,” to use Jozef Batora and Monika Mokre’s phrase.¹¹ This means at times collaborating with EUNIC members to influence the population represented by another EUNIC member, or creating collaborative relationships with some EUNIC members, while competing against other EUNIC members.

To demonstrate the multiple dimensions of this relationship, partners in the European Day of Languages held in Warsaw included the British Council and Goethe-Institut collaborating to achieve influence in Poland. Both organizations were also partners in the Language Rich Europe project. Along with organizations from Poland and EUNIC Brussels, this networking brings together 1200 policymakers and practitioners from 24 countries and regions in Europe to discuss and develop better policies and practices for multilingualism. One element promoted through this project, was the Visitors Handbook for the London Olympics, providing useful phrases translated from English into many languages. The multidimensional element of these relationships is that the handbook was also part of the “Britain is GREAT” campaign that included promoting the UK as a destination of study. This means collaborating with partners around discussions of multilingualism, while also competing to be a destination for international students. This competition has high stakes; a report published by the UK Department for Business Innovation and Skills estimated the value of UK education exports as “£14.1 billion in 2008/09.”¹² As a result, the multidimensional nature of European PD produces an inherent tension that places collaborative relationships that revolve around European identity and languages alongside direct competition based on national interest.

This chapter will focus on EUNIC to analyze characteristics of the multidimensional web of influence that the contemporary activity of the network has created. To draw out these characteristics, the chapter analyzes two different levels of activity, the project level and the organizational structures that underpin EUNIC. The analysis will identify some of the contemporary characteristics and tensions within European collaborative PD.

Multidimensional Networks

PD, particularly in its collaborative form, draws on the exchange of information and the interaction between individuals—which results ultimately in the creation of an effective network capable of delivering results.¹³ Elsewhere I have identified a range of factors that can influence individuals and communities.¹⁴ These include the macrobehaviors and network architecture of a community. With the understanding of the network architecture public diplomats can be empowered as “bridges” between communities, by identifying and supporting structures and practices that facilitate the flow of information between those that have it and those that can use it.¹⁵

Faced with complex problems, limited resources, and an increasingly “small world” many private and PD organizations are seeking to increase their reach through partnerships or unlock their innovative potential through collaboration.¹⁶ EUNIC is an example of an organizational

structure developed to facilitate collaborative cultural and PD initiatives. It is also where the concept of network multidimensionality is particularly relevant. The increasingly dynamic work on relational and multilateral approaches to diplomacy or PD¹⁷ intersects with the most recent work on “network multidimensionality” in the study of communication.¹⁸ Castells et al. emphasized the need to explore multidimensionality as “unidimensional networks often fail to capture the richness of the full set of relations.”¹⁹ The concept of network multidimensionality, in contrast, considers networks that have multiple types of connections between multiple types of entities. This multidimensional perspective is particularly relevant for analyzing European PD broadly and EUNIC specifically, given the number of different types of organizations involved and the range of relationships that they have created.

In practical terms, research applied to international communication has shown the structure and dynamics of global multimedia networks.²⁰ Yet, despite the importance placed on relationships and networks, very few PD projects described as building networks, relationships, or exchanges publish documentation that includes network based measures of impact, at either the planning or evaluation stages. Equally, few academic studies that emphasize networks in PD draw on relational data or network analysis. In addition, while the “last-three-feet” and analysis of the individuals engaged is important, the complex structures and macrobehaviors that result from the combined effect of the individual interactions are an equally relevant and important aspect of understanding emergent behavior and evaluating PD.

Understanding the form and cohesion of the network are important as this provides insight into the types of connections individuals and organizations develop.²¹ As Krebs and Holley put it, “Communities are built on connections. Better connections usually provide better opportunities.”²² The connections provide the bridges for this innovation diffusion to occur but the position of the individual within the network will also influence the speed at which diffusion happens.²³ For an organization to be dynamic, it needs to be able to integrate a core of strong links with a large heterogeneous periphery of weaker ties.²⁴ This network architecture allows the organization to draw on the strengths of both core and periphery to drive innovation. For EUNIC this means drawing on the resources and experience of its core membership while partnering with local organizations with specific knowledge and skills and able to reach specific communities. For example, the EDL event in Warsaw was developed in collaboration with a local partner, the Foundation for Development of Education Systems. In addition, the Culture|Futures event in South Africa was produced in partnership with the municipality of Durban.²⁵

EUNIC as a multidimensional network has within it a range of different types of organization and has to develop different types of relationships with these organizations. As Horia-Roman Patapievic, president of Romanian Cultural Institute, reflected in 2011 during his final speech as

president of EUNIC, the membership issue had been a source of long-running debate. The locus of the issue was the relationship between the cultural institutes and embassies within EUNIC clusters and the “the arm’s length” principle that existed as part of the eligibility criteria for EUNIC membership. As Horia-Roman Patapievicci noted, it was a stipulation of the constitution that “EUNIC’s members are organizations who operate at arm’s length from their governments.”²⁶ However, while the length of that arm inevitably varied from case to case, “depending on the institutional architecture of the country in question,” embassies obviously do not operate at arms length. A “flexible solution,” as Horia-Roman Patapievicci described it, was found by introducing criteria that preserved the autonomy of members in relation to governments. However, independence from government does not act as an exclusion clause. As the following case studies will show, this type of flexibility allows EUNIC to develop collaborations of varying lengths and with different types of organizations. However, concomitant with this flexibility is the level of influence that governments have even in ostensibly “arms length” cultural relations.

In addition to the range of organizations that participate in EUNIC projects, the connections that make up the network are equally important. A conference on European external cultural relations in 2012, highlighted the hierarchical, projection orientated, nature of the communication between EUNIC members and local partners to deliver projects. Natalia Chaban speaking at the conference emphasised “the importance for Europe of speaking with and not at the other side, as well as listening intently to the other side.”²⁷

The Challenge of Collaboration for EUNIC

European cultural institutes have to revisit the fact that when they approach a local partner, they have often already decided what to do, and have brought their own agenda, without taking the prospective partner’s thoughts and expectations into consideration. This rethinking can be accomplished if the European cultural institutes put the showcasing of national ideas, or what Europe is about, into second place, and focus instead on actually working together in cultural fields in a sustainable way.

Katharina von Ruckteschell-Katte, president of EUNIC sub-Saharan Africa

For Isabelle Schwarz, cocreation and cocuration were the key ideas. Speaking at the same conference she stressed that “new forms of engagement require of the partner organisations sensitivities and insights very

different from those of the past.”²⁸ Hanna Schühle, noting conclusions from the conference, wrote;

instead of taking the role of a teacher, EUNIC needs to continue to focus on dialogue, so that it is not seen as arrogant or paternalistic. In politically problematic countries, EUNIC needs to learn from institutions that are already engaged in successful projects.²⁹

The findings of this conference, and the following case studies, highlight the challenges of developing the range of relationships required to support effective collaboration within a network that is made up of multiple types of organizations connected by multiple types of relationships.

Project Collaboration: “The Network Effect”

Collaboration at the project level focuses on working with other actors, whether Governments and PD organizations, or NGO and think-tanks to deliver a specific project or achieve impact on a specific issue. The project level collaborations adopted by EUNIC provide a practical demonstration of Brian Hocking’s argument that the “traditional arrangements of bilateral and multilateral diplomatic activity are becoming supplemented by polylateral, multistakeholder diplomacy.”³⁰ As a result, conceptualization of the multidimensional space in which PD occurs has extended well beyond the “two worlds of public diplomacy that intersect, overlap, collide and cooperate in a variety of contexts” of just a few years ago.³¹

Europeans are not alone in facing these challenges, US President Barack Obama highlighted the need to be “clear-eyed about the challenge of mobilizing collective action” as US National Security Strategy has moved to emphasize the need for smarter networks.³² The focus on collaborative networks also appears in the US National Security Strategy, which emphasizes “diplomats are the first line of engagement, listening to our partners, learning from them, building respect.”³³ The same could be said of European public diplomats, for example the chair of the British Council emphasizes the importance of “multilateral, multilevel partnerships to tackle big issues” in his introduction to the 2010 annual report. A key aspect of both empowering diplomats and analyzing European PD is finding ways to identify the complex multidimensional networks in which they work. This means shifting the focus from measuring only how many people a message was delivered to recognizing the complex multidimensional networks of relationships within which PD operates.

This case study seeks to locate some of the dimensions of European PD through the perspective of one PD project; a British Council initiated project known as The Network Effect (TNE), the latter stages of which were delivered during 2008 in collaboration with EUNIC clusters in Sweden and Russia.³⁴ TNE was created to “nurture networks between the next

generation of leaders.” TNE used “a variety of methods, learning-by-doing, challenging content, teamwork, and online networking... to sustain a network of future European leaders committed to making a difference.”³⁵ To achieve this objective, TNE events combined conference sessions with visits to organizations linked to the theme of the conference. For example, the conference in Russia was titled “the identity of cities.” The speakers at the conference included Guerrilla Gardener Richard Reynolds and members of the Office of Subversive Architecture, as well as urban planners, journalists, and representatives discussing the particular case of Northern Ireland.³⁶ In keeping with the theme of the conference, participants visited the offices of Russian art and ecology organizations to understand how they were facing the challenges presented by the modern city.³⁷ As each event had a different theme and events were held in a range of European cities, different organizations collaborated with the British Council in delivering the events.

TNE Events, Location and Partner Organizations

Title and Location	Year	Partners
Media and Legitimacy in European democracy Sweden	2005	DEMOS SNS—Swedish Centre of Business & Policy Studies The British embassy in Sweden
Social diversity and cities Netherlands	2006	DEMOS KL- Kennisl and I Knowle dgel and
Good Europe? Power, participation, and the remaking of civil society Slovakia	2006	DEMOS IVO/Institute for Public Affairs—www.ivo.sk
Business and social development: how the two connect Turkey	2007	Sabancı University, and its Graduate School of Management Corporate Governance Forum of Turkey
Social innovation: key to social challenges of the: Estonia	2007	PRAXIS Center for Policy Studies
Fewer, older, more diverse? Europe’s future society Germany	2007	cafebabel. com (Café Babel European Internet magazine) DEMOS

Exclusive culture, identity, and prejudice Hungary	2008	No partners found
European culture——Just do it Sweden EUNIC	2008	EUNIC (Goethe-Institut, Instituto Cervantes) Kronika Gallery Poland Dutch Embassy ECF Amsterdam Intercult
Identity of cities Russia	2008	EUNIC The Government of Moscow the International Academy of PD (with Russian minister of Foreign Affairs in Presidium)

As the box above shows, some organizations only collaborated in one event, for example, the European Culture Foundation (ECF) Amsterdam and the International Academy of Public Diplomacy (Moscow), while others were involved in a number of the events, including the UK-based think-tank DEMOS was a partner organization in four events. In this case the British Council, as primary initiator of the project, had to be flexible in the delivery of TNE, working with partners willing to collaborate over different time periods.

This emphasizes the multidimensional nature of the relations and actors in the network. It also demonstrates the emerging methodology and activity of EUNIC clusters a year after the public launch of the network. This flexibility is a key element of the collaborative approach behind TNE specifically and also reflects one of the key aspects of the EUNIC network. As EUNIC President Horia-Roman Patapieviçi put it,

As with all networks, members get out of it what they put in. The heads of EUNIC member institutes may all have their own reasons for joining the network, but all share the same desire to work together.³⁸

EUNIC members worked together on two TNE events, each joining the initiative for their own reasons. As each organization had different reasons for involvement, following Horia-Roman Patapieviçi's logic, they were willing to contribute to the project for different lengths of time and seek to benefit in different ways from that involvement. This represents the range of connections in a multidimensional network.

Equally important was the range of organizations involved as a TNE partner. The role of think-tanks, including DEMOS, IVO, and PRAXIS highlight complex and multidimensional nature of European PD. These groups would fall outside many definitions of PD, yet they were involved in the delivery of TNE. In fact, the TNE events that involved EUNIC clusters also involved the Dutch Embassy and Government of Moscow. This highlights that the pragmatic flexibility around the “arms length” concept in EUNIC membership also extends to the organizations with which network members would collaborate. This is not unusual in contemporary PD, as collaboration and partnership often blur the boundaries between inclusion/exclusion criteria for PD echoing the argument articulated by Karine Nahone.³⁹

The collaborative approach that EUNIC takes to activities within Europe creates the flexibility or fuzziness of inclusion/exclusion criteria that challenges traditional concepts of “target audience.” For example, EUNIC members that collaborated in TNE came from the same countries where TNE was being delivered, and may have been conceived as the target audience in more traditional PD. However, in a collaborative approach to a multidimensional network the concept of audience is more complex and at times reversed. This is because TNE events were held in countries from which EUNIC members subsequently collaborated on TNE. For example, one of the 2007 events was held in Germany. The following year the Goethe Institute collaborated in the delivery of another TNE event as part of the EUNIC cluster in Sweden. Similarly, the Dutch Embassy and ECF Amsterdam collaborated in an event during 2008, while two years earlier TNE had been held in the Netherlands. As a result, members of the “target audience” in more traditional conceptions of PD are transformed from passive recipients of PD into active collaborators in the delivery of the project.

This section has highlighted the challenge of balancing input from various organizations in a collaborative initiative and it has shown that it demands alternative approaches to PD from those which focus on what R. S Zaharna has referred to as “assertive” methods.⁴⁰ The interconnection between government and nongovernment in a multidimensional network leads to fluidity between “audience,” “collaborator,” and “participant.” As the organizational structure of TNE demonstrates, collaborative initiatives within a multidimensional network demand greater flexibility, pragmatism, and a “connective mindshift” akin to the R. S. Zaharna’s “associative” or Arsenault and Cowen’s cooperative approaches.⁴¹ These factors behind the European collaborative approach to PD at the project level, also underpin the multidimensional network of relationships that facilitate collaborative action at the organizational level in Europe.

Organizational Structures Underpinning EUNIC

The multidimensional nature of European PD is highlighted by the emergence of the collaborative global network developed by EUNIC. As noted

earlier, EUNIC was founded in 2006. The original idea of creating an association of national cultural institutes in Europe was mooted in 2004 and 2005 by some of the heads of national cultural institutes and a few important cultural activists, as Horia-Roman Patapievicci recalled.⁴² The creation of EUNIC and EUNIC Brussels built on the work of an earlier organization the Consortium of the National Cultural Institutes of the European Countries in Belgium (CICEB).⁴³ When EUNIC Brussels was created it was composed of the current CICEB members and was open to new members such as EU cultural institutes that did not have a representative office in Brussels.⁴⁴

Creation of EUNIC

The ambitious idea of EUNIC is to prove that culture matters for European integration. We need to communicate to citizens in all EU-member countries how valuable and fascinating our cultural diversity is and why we benefit from supporting a common cultural space. EUNIC will facilitate cultural exchange by making use of the potential of national cultural institutes as assets and not as barriers for European integration...By acting together EUNIC will also create better chances for artists and creative people in EU-candidate countries and for partners' worldwide.

Emil Brix the Director General for Foreign Cultural Policies in the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Speaking at the official presentation of EUNIC in Brussels, 2006

The founding meeting of heads of EUNIC took place in Prague on May 18 and 19, 2006.⁴⁵ Since the creation of EUNIC with seven members in 2006, the network has grown to 30 members from 25 countries.⁴⁶ EUNIC is built around a series of clusters that focus around important geographic locations. Collectively EUNIC's member organizations have over 2,000 branches and employ over 25,000 staff working in over 150 countries. In each location, member organizations come together in "clusters" to develop local activities. A EUNIC cluster can be established when in a city at least three institutes of EUNIC-member institutions decide to do so.⁴⁷ The membership of each cluster varies depending on the geographic location as a result of the different level of resources and focus of EUNIC-member organizations (Figure 7.1).

There are over 80 clusters around the world in locations ranging from Afghanistan to Venezuela, Vietnam, and Zimbabwe. Each cluster has a combination of members based on the priorities of the member organizations. For example, the Afghan cluster has three members, British Council Afghanistan, Centre Cultural Français de Kaboul, and Goethe-Institut

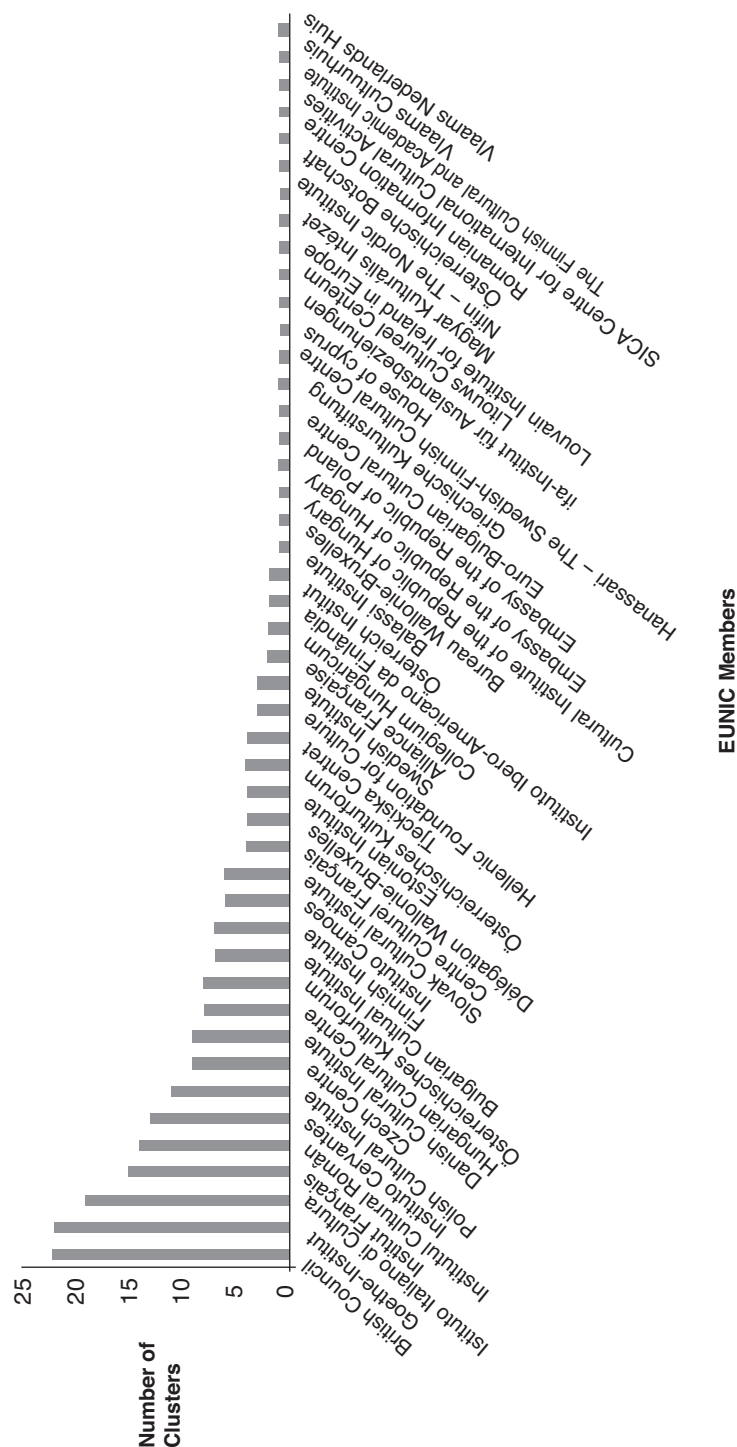


Figure 7.1 Membership of UNIC clusters.

Kabul, and supports activities such as the Afghan National Theatre festival.⁴⁸ In contrast, the cluster in Venezuela has four full members Alliance Française du Vénézuéla, British Council, Goethe-Institut Venezuela, and Istituto Italiano di Cultura along with six associated members. The activities run by the cluster include a virtual library, and events such as DJs from France, Germany, and Norway playing in Caracas, and pedagogical departments meeting to discuss the most effective use of interactive whiteboards in language teaching.⁴⁹

As EUNIC President Delphine Borione put it at the 2012 EUNIC General Assembly, “It’s from our presence in the world, on every continent, that we draw our strength.”⁵⁰ However, the many advantages of a dispersed global network of clusters comes with the challenge of providing centralized support. As current EUNIC president argued at the 2012 EUNIC General Assembly there is a need for the network to “consolidate the link between EUNIC Global and the clusters . . . We must increase our ability to lead and support our network of clusters, provide them with more ongoing assistance.”⁵¹ According to figures produced by EUNIC 2 million people learn European languages through member organizations. With a combined turnover over €2.5 billionn EUNIC members seek to;

facilitate cultural co-operation; to create lasting partnerships between professionals, to encourage greater understanding and awareness of the diverse European cultures and to encourage greater language learning.⁵²

The collaborative, multihub, multidimensional nature of EUNIC is emphasized by the organizational structure. This structure is explicitly network based, and the intention that the organization is an active network, learning network, partnering network and an advocacy network.

To function at the organizational level EUNIC adopts the flexibility previously identified at the project level. Remaining flexible, rather than insisting all members are represented in all clusters, recognizes that some organizations will have greater resources and others will have a specific regional focus. This gives the organization great flexibility and means some organizations, such as the British Council, Goethe Institut, and Istituto Italiano di Cultura, have representation in many more clusters than the House of Cyprus or Nifin—the Nordic Institute.

Challenges to the “arms-length” Principle

While the flexibility around membership of specific clusters has advantages, as noted previously, it also creates challenges. Specifically how to maintain a concept of operating at “arms length” from government while a number of government ministries from countries including Slovakia,

Slovenia, Bulgaria, Cyprus are EUNIC members. The EUNIC Guidance notes on forming and running a cluster indicate that;

if there is no institute in a country for a member then the Head may nominate a representative. In many cases this may be the Embassy/cultural attaché.⁵³

In addition the creation of “associate” membership provides an alternative channel through which governments can become direction involved in EUNIC. The guidelines for EUNIC clusters states:

Clusters can grant associate membership to representatives of the countries not represented in EUNIC at heads level. The institutes and embassies eligible for associate membership at cluster level are those from EU, EFTA (Iceland, Lichtenstein, Norway and Switzerland) and the official EU candidate countries (Iceland, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey).⁵⁴

EUNIC guidelines further suggest that as some cultural attaches/embassies have an active cultural, educational or society program these activities can bring a benefit to clusters. The guidelines go on to state “it can be a benefit to have embassy cultural attaches in the associate category.”⁵⁵ This recognizes that cultural and PD activity is not conducted in a uniform manner across EU countries but seriously undermines the claims of operating at “arms length.”

The challenge to the “arms length” principle is demonstrated by the EUNIC cluster in New York. In New York, cultural institutes, consulates general, embassies, and missions to the UN all work together as part of a single cluster. To demonstrate the complexity, associated members include embassies of France, Portugal and consulates general of Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey. The UK is represented twice, by the British Council as a full member and the UK Mission to the UN as an associate member. The Polish Cultural Institute and Polish Consulate General also have a similar relationship with EUNIC New York. France is represented by Alliance Francaise and the French Embassy, while Latvia is represented by both their consulate general and permanent mission to the UN, each having associate member status. The final dimension is the Delegation of the European Union to the UN, which is also an associated member of EUNIC New York.

As a result of the membership structure, in cities such as New York, EU supranational governmental representation, such as the Delegation of the EU to the UN, collaborates with both governmental and “arms length” forms of national representation to produce events including “Disappearing Act V,” a European film festival featuring 24 contemporary films from

24 European countries, and the annual New Literature from Europe festival.⁵⁶ As the EUNIC New York example shows, there are multiple levels of networks involved in European PD creating a multidimensional endeavor that challenges the stated division between government and “arms length” cultural institutions. The decisions made by practitioners challenge scholars to conceptualize the multidimensional network which EUNIC activity creates.

This challenge of conceptualizing PD activity is not only created by EUNIC. Even organizations considered to operate at “arms length” can have close ties to government departments. For example, at the end of 2010, some British Council country directors also had a dual role as cultural counsellor at the UK Embassy—for example in France and United States with a number of operations run from high commissions or embassies.⁵⁷ This adds a governmental dimension to the activity of cultural institutes. It also means cultural institutes operating independently from their own government can be collaborating with government representatives or ministries from other EU member states. This creates a theoretical challenge to definitions of PD that exclude nongovernmental groups as EUNIC has both government ministries and “arms length” cultural organizations, which in turn are working with local partners to deliver projects.

The multidimensional nature of PD at the organizational level, similar to that at the project level, is also shown by the choice of locations where EUNIC has clusters and runs projects. For example, there are large EUNIC clusters in Germany (16 member organizations), France (15) and Belgium (Brussels) (13), with another slightly smaller cluster in the UK (11). Yet member organizations focusing on the UK or Germany are likely to also be collaborating with the British Council or Goethe Institut in other EUNIC clusters. As noted at the project level, EUNIC activity challenges the concept of a target audience, as what might be termed an “audience” in one location can be a collaborator or participant in another location.

At the organizational level collaboration and the resultant flow of influence within European PD create complexity, which outstrips one-way or two-way theoretical conceptualizations. Instead, the collaborative approach embraced by EUNIC emphasizes the importance of a multidimensional interpretation that recognizes the multiple types of actors—government and nongovernmental—and the different forms of relationships they create, including those that are at “arms length” and those that appear significantly closer.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown, through an analysis of EUNIC, some of the challenges that European PD faces in a multidimensional environment. They relate to the degree to which EUNIC can be considered to operate independently and the types of relationships EUNIC members develop.

Key Contribution of EUNIC

“EUNIC has a special responsibility to ensure that European countries promote and celebrate the diversity that makes each of us unique. But we will also work towards promoting those cultural values that we share in common with each other and other countries around the world. Maintaining cultural dialogue and understanding at a time of both international and intercommunity tension is a real challenge for Europe... EUNIC has a key contribution to make here.”

David Green, president of EUNIC 2007

EUNIC has grown from seven members in 2006 to 19 members in 2007 and 29 members from 24 countries in 2013.⁵⁸ It has continued to develop clusters, growing from 75 in 2011 to 80 clusters around the world in 2013. EUNIC has a presence on every continent and pursues the objectives within and outside the EU.

To maintain a dispersed network of clusters across every continent, EUNIC has developed a “flexible solution” as one EUNIC president called it, to handle the multiple types of organizations seeking EUNIC membership. Through this solution EUNIC maintains the apparently contradictory position that it operates at “arms length” from government while also actively advocating the benefits of including embassies in EUNIC clusters and projects.

If EU cultural institutes only operated outside the EU and only worked with other analogous cultural institutes it would be possible to maintain a traditional unidimensional view of their cultural activities conceptualized within ideas of a one way or two way street. However, as this chapter has shown, European PD as practiced by EUNIC members is a multidimensional endeavor. In other words, as Karine Nahon has shown concepts of inclusion/exclusion in networks are “more complex than a static, binary dichotomy” or single dyadic relationship.⁵⁹

As the study of communication moves to consider multidimensionality, so the study of European PD can embrace the multidimensional nature of EUNIC’s activity and the environment in which EUNIC members operate. The relationships and interactions that underpin EUNIC activity, at the project and operational level, do not happen in isolation, but in a complex, multidimensional ecosystem of influence. In this multidimensional environment, interactions are not a series of separate, static, dyadic interactions, but a complex networked system that is constantly evolving.

Moving towards a multidimensional perspective allows the study of PD to embrace a community level analysis of the complex interactions that take place between EUNIC between full members, associated members, local partners, participants and other organizations seeking to influence

project participants. This additional level of analysis is important because we live in a networked world where the information seeking, decision making and resultant behavior of individuals takes place within a series of overlapping, dynamic networks, in which influence flows in multiple directions through multiple hubs.

Analyzing the nature of the different relationships that are developed during EUNIC activities is becoming an increasingly important part of PD scholarship. This includes understanding both the relationships between governmental ministries and cultural institutes operating at “arms length” and equally the relationships between EUNIC members and local partners. This latter form of relationship attracted increasing attention as a recent EUNIC conference. At the conclusion of that conference recommendations included that instead of “taking the role of a teacher, EUNIC needs to continue to focus on dialogue, so that it is not seen as arrogant or paternalistic.” Indeed at the same conference, other speakers argued EUNIC should be “listening intently to the other side” and ensure calls for partnership were based on equality. The conference heard many examples that depicted European cultural institutes presenting a project to a potential partner “without listening to or taking in the ideas, concerns and expectations of the other side.”⁶⁰ Brian Hocking has previously identified this as a traditional hierarchical approach and contrasted with the network model, which provides a “fundamentally different picture of how diplomacy works in the twenty-first century.”⁶¹

This chapter has shown that European PD is multidimensional at both the project and organizational levels, as it contains numerous forms of relationships and actors. Through EUNIC organizations with different priorities, remits, and legal status collaborate on PD initiatives. EUNIC will continue to evolve as the organization approaches the tenth anniversary of its creation. In that time, further evidence will emerge of the way European organizations choose to collaborate, the structures they create to do so, and the way communities choose to respond to EUNIC projects. As these projects continue, the inherent tension between the European and national interests will also continue. Equally, the continued open cross-border movement of individuals within Europe will ensure that the future conduct of European PD will involve attempts to engage and collaborate with transnational communities with priorities of their own and the agency through which to pursue those them.

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