



Working paper: “European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008“

The NATIONAL STRATEGY AND PRIORITIES HUNGARY and the contribution of TICKLE

1. **National context: challenges to be met**
2. **Consultation of civil society and stakeholders**
3. **National priorities of the year and actions to be taken to meet priorities**
4. **Education**
5. **Best practices**
6. **Communication strategy**
7. **Sustainability**
8. **Monitoring and reporting**

Introduction

In Hungary, the Year of Intercultural Dialogue will indeed serve as an effective instrument by fulfilling existing needs in the fields of minority culture, cultural cooperation and dialogue, education on tolerance, civic engagement and active citizenship. It is essential that priorities are highlighted for the sake of a specific, targeted campaign.

As for the implementation of the programme in the national context, our Cultural Contact Point will be the National Coordination Body. Moreover, one expert, Ms Andrea Gáncs will be in charge of preparing the concept of the implementation at national level. She will be a member of the Consultative Committee as well. Two additional bodies will contribute to the implementation: on the one hand, there will be a „creative consultation team“ consisting of journalists, communication experts, sociologists, researchers, representatives of civic organisations etc, on the other, a consultative body has been established, bringing expertise from various fields, here the experts shall be delegated from the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour. Thus, the following fields will be covered: bilateral affairs, arts, non-formal education, higher education and public education, the civil area, social affairs and youth. These appointments and the final structure of the actors involved will be acknowledged in February at ministerial level in the Ministry of Education and Culture. It must also be added that Hungary intends to organise further events at national level in line with the priorities and aims of the European Year of 2008, depending on the budget available – this will be also be decided by the ministerial meeting, as well as the concept and volume of the implementation.

1. National context: challenges to be met

This section complies with existing national strategies: the new cultural strategy of Hungary proposed by Minister Dr. István Hiller in 2006 (“The directions of cultural modernization“). It also builds on the National Strategy for the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All in 2007, complies with the “New Hungary Development Plan“ and the National Strategic Reference Framework aiming at the implementation of programmes and the experience of civic actors in this field.

1.1 *Modernization of the image of our country*

Hungary has two faces: one of a closed and semi-modernized, and the other of an open, modern, “innovative“ society. Cultural modernization should be a bridge between different social groups and help modernise our society and the image we want to project of ourselves. Culture itself needs to be better valued as a very important player in dialogue amongst social groups and communities.

The relevant strategic aims of cultural modernisation should be:

- widening participation in culture
- creating opportunities for better access to culture
- representing Hungarian values in a modern, creative way in the world
- integrating minority cultures (especially Roma) and trans-border Hungarian culture in the Hungarian and the European culture
- acquire knowledge of universal cultural values in Hungary

Hungary needs to redefine its image of itself: we need to find new notions and define a coherent, modern image for our country that gives pride to Hungary's people and helps us interact with our neighbours and integrate into the bloodstream of international actions. We especially need to redefine and foster our relations with our new EU neighbours.

This process should be aided by workshops, consultations and conferences on cultural issues launched by the Ministry of Education and Culture. People from different walks of life should participate in these actions and discussions. The network of the Hungarian Institutes abroad should play a leading role in projecting Hungary as a creative and innovative country, help encourage international cooperation, open up possibilities for Hungarian cultural, educational and civic organisations to join European projects. These efforts should be harmonised, therefore a central institute – called Bálint Balassi Hungarian Cultural Centre – is being established currently to coordinate the activities of the Hungarian Cultural Institutes.

1.2 Participation in international i.e. EU programmes and projects

After joining the European Union, the cultural sector has had great hopes for funding various cultural activities. However, there has been little knowledge of how these funds have to be acquired and administered. Organisations such as "KultúrPont Iroda" – the National Cultural Contact Point – are making efforts to educate cultural organisations to be able to participate in international projects.

Based on bilateral agreements at the beginning, Hungary has been participating in the European cultural framework programmes Culture 2000 and Culture (2007-2013) since 2001. There were about 200-220 projects supported annually (all fields counted) in Culture 2000, with Hungarian participation in roughly 12% of them. In this respect the most successful years were 2002 and 2004, when there was Hungarian participation in 32 projects (both years).

Participation and the level of competencies still need to be strengthened by training programmes for a wide range of cultural operators, especially outside Budapest.

Higher educational institutes have international contacts, within the scope of which there are various exchanges for students and lecturers as well. There is a growing tendency to prepare them for their stay abroad through pointing at in advance possible difficulties arising from intercultural dialogue or environment. The Tempus Public Foundation and the Hungarian Scholarship Board play an active role in this. Finally, there are various scholarships in Hungary and abroad as well e.g. the Hungarian Eötvös State Scholarship or the DAAD scholarships, just to mention a few.

The key players in this process are the National Agencies such as the Cultural Contact Point or the Tempus Public Foundation. The National Cultural Fund plays a very positive role by supporting self-finance to help participation of EC projects. Semi-private and non-governmental cultural organisations are rather active and knowledgeable in the field of intercultural dialogue. Organisations led by young people – artists, students etc – are especially important (see Sziget Festival, Trafó Centre for Contemporary Arts, A38 Ship etc.)

1.3 Mobility and languages – intercultural competencies

Hungarian participation in trans-national cultural networks is rather low. This may be due to the low level of language skills amongst operators, lack of intercultural competencies and lack of mobility funds in the sector. These have to be challenged by putting a greater emphasis on modern cultural management training (including intercultural competencies), improving language skills and introducing and widening mobility schemes (e.g. the Klebelsberg Kunó Scholarship for cultural operators).

The National Core Curriculum of Hungary (NCC) has significant aspects closely linked to European awareness. In public education NCC is determined by Hungary's Constitution, the Public Education

Law and the existing international and national regulations concerning human rights. The expressed values are centered around democracy, humanism, respect for and development of the individual, promoting the co-operation of core communities (i.e. family, home country, Europe, the world), gender equality, solidarity and tolerance.

In a broader sense, through the cross-curricular theme “European awareness – global culture” pupils should learn about the history, development, constitution and institutional set-up of the European Union, as well as they should learn openness and understanding for differences, including different customs, lifestyles, cultures and religious beliefs. They should be informed of the global problems shared by the whole of mankind, as well as the emerging international co-operation to tackle and foster them. They should develop an increased sensitivity for the roots of problems, and learn how to explore possible solutions.

In higher education, it is possible to study subjects on intercultural dialogue in various faculties. Among the professional skill to be acquired, there is the intercultural aspect, e.g. students learn how to communicate or work in an international environment.

Various cultural and educational funds, municipal and state funding bodies, corporate schemes, youth organisations can play substantial role in promoting the importance of these competencies.

The promotion of Roma languages’ admission (romani, beás) can contribute to better knowledge of the Roma culture. Towards this goal the scope of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages should be also extended to Roma languages.

1.4 Cultural change – European citizenship

Among other themes, the New Hungary Development Plan (2007-2013) emphasizes the importance of cultural change and supports different developments in the field of culture. This cultural change should strengthen citizenship and civic responsibility. By this cultural change, individual initiatives should be respected more, social solidarity and cooperation strengthened, the necessity of equal and returning opportunities appreciated, compliance with the law should become standard, and the autonomy of the individual and communities strengthened.

Active citizenship is rather weak in Hungary for many reasons: due to the lack of critical attitude, the lack of self-reliance, or trust. Therefore, active citizenship should be encouraged by educational and cultural means and people’s awareness should be raised in this field.

The media, cultural, educational and civic organisations can play a substantial role in implementing this change (such as programmes like Ostrich (Strucc)¹ on one of the commercial television channels TV2). Corporate bodies can draw public attention by awarding outstanding people active in civil society (such as the Pannon Model Award (Pannon Példkép) by Pannon mobile communication company).

1.5 Decentralized cultural development

One of the main issues of cultural modernisation is the development of cultural access outside Budapest. The programme should reduce inequality of opportunities, should include culture as a main player of local and regional development. It aims at modernising the cultural infrastructure (cultural centres, libraries etc) and build multifunctional community centres in the frame of the programme called AGORA. This modernised infrastructure and its activity must be integrated in the European programme and must be active in intercultural dialogue. Hungary has to pay special attention to help the efforts of trans-border Hungarians and to pay attention to their cultural values.

Pécs, a city in the South – West of Hungary, will be one of the European Capitals of Culture in 2010 alongside Essen and Istanbul. The preparation phase should be a good opportunity to devise programmes for the Year of Intercultural Dialogue.

¹ Strucc is a TV programme designed to promote equal opportunities

The Pécs-based (South-West Hungary) Közelítés Művészeti Egyesület (Approaching Art Association) led a project on new tendencies in visual arts, with a strong emphasis on intercultural links and multiculturalism. The project hosted a digital and video art festival, a network on the links between art and gastronomy, and a creative arts' camp on the topic of center and periphery. Professional organisations of cultural operators, librarians, local municipalities, regional development agencies, organisations of transborder Hungarians should participate in the work related to these areas.

1.6 *Minority cultures*

Unfortunately, Hungary's attitude towards minorities is ambiguous. The legal frame secures equality but there are measures to be taken since the general attitude towards minorities is manifold. There are a lot of institutions and non-governmental organisations working to fight against segregation, discrimination and insufficient access to education and culture. It is favorable that minority cultures – such as Roma culture – are appreciated outside Hungary as well. Luckily, great national promotional events such as Magyar Magic in the UK, have integrated minority cultures in their programmes in a major way.

Intolerance towards minorities like the Roma can be perceived more tangibly towards immigrants and refugees. Several steps have been taken against xenophobia and negative discrimination and help social inclusion both at governmental level and in the civil area. Reinforcing these efforts and further programmes in the fields of education and cultural programmes would be necessary by disseminating the ideas of equal opportunities in education, intercultural educational methods, or tolerance, as well as through programmes on getting to know other cultures.

The familiarization of Roma cultural values as well as the creation of necessary conditions for it should be an important task. Besides debates and professional workshops concerning the establishment of Roma cultural institutions should be initiated.

Institutes such as the Hungarian Helsinki Committee or the "Menedék" Hungarian Association for Migrants² could be involved. The significant organizations and institutions which present Roma culture have to be involved in the events of the European Year.

A lot of civic actions are initiated to draw attentions to those who are different (people living with disabilities etc.). Tolerance towards and curiosity in the otherness is an area that should be given a lot of attention to in order to make change in the wider society. The Hungarian programme of the European Year of Equal Opportunity for All in 2007 will focus on these issues and efforts should be continued in 2008 to keep these issues on the agenda.

Activities related to this topic should be carried out in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, the Roma Integration Secretariats, civic organisations and various educational organisations.

2. Consultation of civil society and stakeholders

In order to formulate a strong National Strategy and carry out an effective programme, the Ministry of Education and Culture will act as a catalyst to invite a wide spectrum of cultural, educational and minority non-governmental organisations to participate. Non-governmental and professional advocacy organisations should be the main multipliers of the efforts of the National Coordination Body. The National Coordination Body will also invite the media and private organisations (such as potential funders, cultural entrepreneurs, communication companies etc.) to actively help formulate ideas and carry out the programme. Discussions for cultural actors or project weeks could also be launched in schools.

2.1 *Key cultural organisations:* Hungarian Institute for Culture , Hungarian Heritage House

2.2 *Key educational and youth organisations:*

Higher education: Key consultative bodies and social partners in the field of NGOs e.g. the Hungarian Accreditation Committee of Higher Education, Higher Education and Research Council, the Hungarian Scholarship Board - Campus Hungary Information Office³.

² The Association's mission is the social representation of people in international migration (applicants, refugees, foreign employees and immigrants) as well as promoting their legal, social and cultural integration.

Public education: Local Governments, Educational Offices of Local Governments, Educational Institutes

2.3 Key minority and other civic organisations relevant:

- National minority governments throughout the country.
- Hungarian Helsinki Committee⁴
- Menedék” Hungarian Association for Migrants⁵
- National Roma Minority Self-government as well as significant organizations and institutions which present Roma culture

2.4 Key media

see point 6.

3. National priorities for the Year

The main purpose of The Year of Intercultural Dialogue in Hungary should be to create awareness – especially amongst young people – of the importance of intercultural dialogue in a modern society in Europe. This year should raise issues; formulate proposals for further, sustainable actions on a national, regional and local level. Therefore, we see this as a starting point rather than a limited frame of a subject.

3.1. The overall objectives stated in the Decision No 1983/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council (intercultural dialogue (ICD) as a tool to deal with a more complex cultural environment, ICD as an opportunity to contribute to a diverse and dynamic society, the importance of developing an active European citizenship, the contribution of different culture to the was of life of the Member states) and the specific objectives should be considered in all the activities

Discussions about the meaning and importance of intercultural dialogue was launched amongst governmental, municipal and civic organisations from the first half of 2007. The focus was the importance and relevance of the issue for the younger generations and for the modernisation of the image of Hungary. The Ministry of Education and Culture and key civic organisations were encouraged to involve the subjects in their conferences, professional meetings, newsletters and publications as soon as possible. To maximize impact, the two Hungarian TICKLE partners, the University of West Hungary Apáczai Csere János Faculty and the Eszterházy Károly College Eger, have built on existing programmes and funds and encouraged teacher trainers, teacher trainees and teachers in local schools to include intercultural dialogue in their priorities.

- Funding bodies – national, regional, local, non-governmental and private – were asked to include programmes and projects related to the importance of intercultural dialogue as a priority in their calls for proposals.
- Organisers of local and regional cultural events in Győr and Eger were encouraged to include events relevant to the topic in their programme in 2008. Special attention was paid on existing events related to the topic (local Eger Festivals).
- Local and regional organisations participated in the programme, but the money, mainly build on existing funds, limited the efforts.
- Two conferences – one in Eger from September 18th – September 21st and in Győr from December 11th – December 14th building on international expertise and involving cross generation and cross-sectorial participants - about intercultural dialogue was organised at the end of 2008. These conferences included cross-national workshops with local teacher trainers, teacher students and staff of both universities.

³ Campus Hungary is an organisation made up of various Hungarian higher education actors, with a role to promote Hungarian higher education abroad

⁴ The Hungarian Helsinki Committee's mission includes protecting the rights of asylum seekers and foreigners in need of international protection, as well as monitoring the human rights performance of law enforcement agencies and the judicial system.

⁵ The Association's mission is the social representation of people in international migration (applicants, refugees, foreign employees and immigrants) as well as promoting their legal, social and cultural integration.

3.2 The celebration of cultural diversity in the European Union with a strong emphasis on the cultures of our new EU (and non-EU) neighbours and on minority cultures

By presenting several projects and project initiatives we took the emphasis on the question of cultural minorities, with main focus on roma communities. The values of this culture and also that of 12 other officially recognized ethnic and cultural minorities in Hungary can contribute to the European Union and also the values our belonging to this great community can contribute to our heritage. The conferences paid attention to minority cultures and their contribution to the overall objectives. It was emphasized in the workshops the necessity to contribute to the visualisation of a realistic Roma picture as well as not to convey and/or enhance the stereotypes of Roma. For this reason it was also included to visit roma settlements in the surroundings of Eger and Győr.

3.3 Encourage participation of cultural operators, young people and educational organisations in European programmes, networks and actions and to develop intercultural competencies

A national communication campaign was launched – especially targeted to young people and people outside Budapest – to raise awareness of the necessity of intercultural cooperation and dialogue in our daily lives and modern reality. The national campaign built on the overall messages of the campaign of the Community. It also emphasized the responsibility of each one of us to be active European citizens and increase our intercultural competencies. A wide spectrum of the media was involved in the campaign so the message reached the widest possible population. Next steps to be taken:

- Publicising existing national and international mobility schemes as widely as possible and negotiating with various potential funders to establish new schemes. The Cultural Contact Point could play a major role in this process.
- Targeted training programmes and educational content should be recommended in order to increase intercultural competencies. We need to create a scheme to encourage cultural and educational organisations to train people for various intercultural competencies. This was also one of the purposes of the conferences held in Győr and Eger during the year (see 3.1)
- A mobility scheme for cultural operators and educators should be introduced in order to encourage people to study good practice in intercultural dialogue

4. Education

It is within the framework of EDC – Education for Democratic Citizenship (or for Active Citizenship) that the Hungarian educational professionals' endeavors are strongly linked to the Year of Intercultural Dialogue. There is a wish to elaborate a national strategy on EDC-Active Citizenship. During the process of elaboration, aspects of intercultural dialogue have been taken in consideration and strong cooperation is desired between professionals and players from both fields. In the course of curriculum's creation the familiarization of Roma culture should be considered.

The existing programme of the Ministry of Education and Culture called Világ – Nyelv (World – Language) also was given special attention to the importance of intercultural dialogue in 2008.

5. Best practice

Especially in the area of music, Hungary has a history of establishing intercultural dialogue. Several projects related to minority cultures (i.e. roma and Jewish) and regional heritage are known even amongst a wider public. These music projects – related to migration issues, cross-border collaboration etc. - serve as good examples of best practice. (A38 Ship is a pioneering organisation in creating such projects).

Trafo House of Contemporary Arts has been coorganising several coproductions and has taken part in cooperations of performing arts companies. The Merlin Theatre organised a four-month event in 2003 to celebrate the cultures of the new member states. The festival included discussions about the future of the European Union as well as artistic programmes of contemporary culture. The Mediawave Festival in Győr can be considered as one of the best examples to be followed, it involved among others film programmes, cultural and artistic events, which all contribute to that intercultural dialogue can gain ground.

6. Sustainability

The European Year of Intercultural Dialogue concentrated its effort to raise awareness for the importance of intercultural dialogue in strengthening European identity, fostering an active European citizenship and improving a better living together. It is an efficient instrument for creating synergies between different areas and players and it involves a wide range of stakeholders. The Year played the role of a catalyst for further actions.

Possible sustainable elements remaining after The Year are:

- schemes and actions proposed by the discussions and conferences, will be implemented after 2008
- educational actions and materials to be used beyond the year
- new, cross – sectorial and cross-border partnerships will continue
- cultural and educational organisations will be more equipped to participate in EC actions and programmes and European networks
- spin-off cultural events from the large-scale national action
- the internet portal lives beyond The Year and serves as the main information point on the subject.