Final External Evaluation of the Culture 2000 programme (2000-2006) - Framework Contract on Evaluation, Impact Assessment and Related Services

A Final Report for the Directorate General Education & Culture of the European Commission

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Executive Summary

Context and Scope

This report presents the findings from the Final External Evaluation of the Culture 2000 programme undertaken by ECOTEC Research & Consulting Ltd.

This final evaluation follows on from the First and Second External Interim Evaluations.[1] It covers all actions funded during the period 2000-2006. The analysis of the Education Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EAC EA) was limited to its role in the management and implementation of the Culture 2000 programme from the date of its establishment in January 2006.

Culture 2000

The Culture 2000 Programme was the main financing and programming instrument for the EU's activities in the field of cultural co-operation between 2000 and 2006. It was formally established by a Decision of the European Parliament and the Council in February 2000,[2] following on from three previous sector-based framework programmes.[3] Originally established to run until the end of December 2004, the duration of the Programme was subsequently extended to the end of 2006.[4] It had a budget of €236.5 millions.

Culture 2000 Objectives

The overall aim of the Programme was to "contribute to the promotion of a cultural area common to the European peoples" by supporting co-operation among creative artists, cultural operators, private and public promoters, the activities of cultural networks and other partners as well as the cultural institutions of the Member States and of the other participant states.

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[1] The evaluations are available online at: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/evalreports/index_en.htm (link correct at 09/01/08)

[2] Official Journal of the European Union, *DECISION No. 508/2000/EC OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 14 February 2000 establishing the Culture 2000 Programme*, Brussels, 12/02/2000.

[3] *Kaléidoscope*, which focused on artistic and cultural initiatives with a European dimension (1996-1999), *Raphaël* in the field of cultural heritage (1997-1999), and *Ariane* in the fields of translation, books and reading (1997-1999).

[4] Official Journal of the European Union, *DECISION No. 626/2004/EC OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 31 March 2004 amending Decision No. 508/2000/EC establishing the Culture 2000 Programme*, Brussels, 03/04/2004.

The eight explicit objectives set for the Programme were to:

- promote cultural dialogue and mutual knowledge of the culture and history of the European peoples;
- promote creativity and the transnational dissemination of culture and the movement of artists, creators and other cultural operators and professionals and their works, with a strong emphasis on young and socially disadvantaged people and on cultural diversity;
- highlight cultural diversity and the development of new forms of cultural expression;
- share and highlight, at a European level, the common cultural heritage of European significance, disseminating know-how and promoting good practices concerning its conservation and safeguarding;
- take into account the role of culture in socio-economic development;
- foster intercultural dialogue and mutual exchange between European and non-European cultures;
- explicitly recognise culture as an economic factor and as a factor in social integration and citizenship; and
- improve access to and participation in culture in the European Union for as many citizens as possible.

Implementation of Culture 2000

Culture 2000 was implemented by means of three types of Action:

- Action 1 – specific innovative and/or experimental actions, involving at least three co-organisers from at least three participating countries (except for translation grants), usually lasting for up to one year and with a grant of between €50,000 and €150,000.
- Action 2 –multi-annual, transnational cultural co-operation projects involving at least five co-organisers from five participating countries, lasting from two to three years and with a grant of up to €300,000 a year.
- Action 3 – Special cultural events with a European or international dimension, including activities within the context of the European Capitals of Culture initiative. This strand also included European Prizes in the fields of Architecture and Heritage, the European Heritage Days and the European Cultural Months.

Number of Projects Supported

A total of 1,509 projects received grants under the different Actions of Culture 2000 – 1,309 in Action 1, 151 in Action 2 and 67 in Action 3.

Evaluation Methodology

The key elements of the methodology were designed to take into account all the different Actions and projects supported under the programme. Six main quantitative and qualitative data collection tools were used:

- documentary review of documents from project files;
- group and individual interviews for European Commission and EACEA staff;
- structured surveys
    - ► by email of members of the Programme Management Committee, Cultural Contact Points, experts involved in selection and "other" cultural experts; and
    - ► by web-survey of cultural operators involved in the programme as project leaders or coorganisers;
- country and project case studies;
- evaluation seminar; and
- e-consultation.

Conclusions

External Coherence

The concept of external coherence refers to how Culture 2000 sits in the broader context of cultural policy and programmes.

Aa large proportion of EU programmes such as the structural funds, Media and Active Citizenship, do have cultural elements to them and that similarities do exist between their objectives, target groups, outputs, results and impacts and those of Culture 2000.

Similarly, a number of regional intercultural cooperation initiatives and bilateral initiatives also exist. In the case of the regional initiatives (e.g. the Central European Initiative, the Visegrad Fund and Nordic Cooperation) there are clear similarities with Culture 2000.

However, evidence from the review of EU programmes and the email surveys of stakeholders clearly indicates that Culture 2000 occupies a unique position. There are no other European Union-wide programmes aimed at supporting and fostering European cultural co-operation and when the distinct focus and intended outcomes of each EU and regional programme is taken into account it is clear that any apparent duplication between programmes is superficial.

The conclusions of the evaluators are that:

- **Culture 2000 is complementary to other EU programmes;**
- **Culture 2000 is complementary to other regional and national intercultural cooperation programmes**
- **Culture 2000 does not duplicate activities undertaken elsewhere through other EU programmes or through regional and national programmes**

The evaluation has found little evidence that Culture 2000 has inspired the introduction of similar programmes and actions by national or regional authorities in participating countries. Evidence from the Czech Republic and Sweden indicates that both the Visegrad Fund and Nordic Cooperation frameworks have been amended to take Culture 2000 and its successor, Culture 2007, into account. A number of participating countries did establish co-financing funds to support the participation of their cultural operators in the programme.

The conclusions of the evaluators are that:

- **Culture 2000 has not inspired the introduction of similar programmes or actions by participating countries, but it has inspired the amendment of some existing cooperation structures and resulting in the establishment of co-financing arrangements in many countries.**

There is some indication that intercultural cooperation is of growing importance among participating countries but the evaluation found no evidence that Culture 2000 increased the exchange of information and best practice among participating countries. It seems that there is no mechanism for identifying and disseminating good practice from Culture 2000 to cultural policy-makers and practitioners in the Member States.

The conclusions of the evaluators are that:

- **Culture 2000 has not increased the exchange of information or good practice among participating countries.**
- **Culture 2000s role as a source of information and best practice examples for intercultural policy has been limited.**
- **Culture 2000 has raised the importance and awareness of intercultural dialogue among participating countries.**

The reconstruction of the intervention logic indicated that concrete programme results and impacts had not been documented at the outset of the programme. The results and outputs discussed in this report were derived from an analysis of what the programme could reasonably be expected to achieve given the objectives and resources available.

The consensus among Commission and EACEA staff interviewees and from the email survey of stakeholders was that the programmes objectives were relevant and that the activities supported were appropriate to their achievement. Some stakeholders questioned the programmes ability to achieve the objectives given its relatively small financial resources. However, Culture 2000 was not intended to achieve impact through sheer scale of activity but rather through the implementation of highly effective dissemination mechanisms and in this context the programme budget is appropriate.

Effectiveness

Evidence from the project document review and the web-survey of projects indicates that the programme has been successful in achieving its objectives, results and impacts to at least some extent. However, as programme monitoring did not actively collect and synthesise data on project and programme outputs, results and impacts or contribution to objectives it has not been possible to determine the exact extent of achievement.

The evaluation found that only a minority of participants felt that there were barriers to participation in the programme (17% of the web-survey respondents). In addition, majorities of web-survey respondents felt that the selection process was transparent (53%) and that the assessment criteria were clear (68%).

The conclusions of the evaluators are that:

- **Culture 2000 has achieved all its objectives to some extent,**
- **Culture 2000 has not increased the exchange of information or good practice among participating countries.**
- **Culture 2000s role as a source of information and best practice examples for intercultural policy has been limited.**
- **Culture 2000 has raised the importance and awareness of intercultural dialogue among participating countries.**
- **Culture 2000 has produced a wide range of impacts on people, cultural practice and cultural policy**
- **Culture 2000 has changed the mindset of many cultural operators to make them more focused on intercultural cooperation activities and in doing so, has contributed to the development of a single European cultural sphere.**

- **Some barriers do exist that prevent the participation of cultural actors in Culture 2000, specifically in terms of organisational experience and financial resources. However, given the limited budget of the Culture 2000 programme it is difficult to see how these could be overcome within the programme.**

Overall visibility of the programme among cultural operators was felt to be good. Majorities of email survey and web-survey respondents indicated that the programme was well known by cultural operators in their countries. However, survey respondents expressed doubt over the depth of understanding of the programme among cultural operators.

Awareness of the programme by the general public is difficult to assess – publicity requirements did not require the use of the Culture 2000 logo and evidence from another study has indicated widespread ignorance of the specific details of EU activity in the field of culture among the general public.[5]

Efficiency

The programme intended to achieve impact through highly visible innovative and experimental activities, not through sheer volume of activity. In this context the programme budget was appropriate for achieving the aims and objectives of the programme.

The conclusions of the evaluators are that:

- **The overall programme budget for Culture 2000 was appropriate for achieving its aims and objectives.**

The management arrangements for Culture 2000 have undergone major change over the programming period and the key change has been the establishment of the EACEA in 2006 which aimed to improve the overall management of the programme.

Commission and EACEA staff indicated that their workload was persistently heavy with extensive administrative duties that restricted their ability to provide support to projects. Assuming the inherent validity of evidence from DG EAC and EACEA staff it is possible to conclude that there was a possible mismatch between the deployment of staff resources and the volume of work during the life of the programme, particularly at peak times.

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[5] OPTEM S. A. R. L., *The Europeans, Culture and Cultural Values - Qualitative study in 27 European countries*, summary report, Brussels: DG Education and Culture, 2006, p64.

However it is less clear whether this represents an overall insufficiency in staff numbers or whether the existing pattern of work organisation led to suboptimal efficiency.

It should be noticed that some of the financial resources allocated for programme management and administration were not spent and these might have helped alleviate reported difficulties with human resources. Nevertheless, it is not clear whether these additional resources would have *solved* the reported difficulties or if these difficulties are related to an inefficient use of the available human resources.

The conclusions of the evaluators are that:

- **There was a mismatch between the deployment of staff resources and the volume of work during the life of the programme, particularly at peak times. However it is less clear whether this represents an overall insufficiency in staff numbers or whether the existing pattern of work organisation led to suboptimal efficiency.**

Programme IT System

The evaluation found that programme managers were not supported by an appropriate IT infrastructure. There were no programme-wide project database that enabled the Managing Authorities to monitor administrative milestones of each project or to produce summary reports of progress on contracting, payments and project reporting. The SYMMETRY management system, due for launch in 2004, has not been implemented, although the responsibility for this lies outside the control of the Commissions Culture Unit or the EACEA.

The conclusions of the evaluators are that:

- **The IT systems in place were not sufficient to allow the efficient and effective management of the Culture 2000 programme.**

According to the web-survey respondents the services offered by the Cultural Contact Points (CCPs) were of high quality.   Overall, respondents were satisfied with the service provided by their CCP.

The conclusions of the evaluators are that:

- **The Cultural Contact Points have used their grants to provide an effective and efficient service to cultural operators in their countries.**

Programme Management

Participants were satisfied with the application process for the programme – the majority of web-survey respondents felt that the process was clear and that the frequency of calls was about right. They were also positive about the information provided about the programme. Sources of criticism were the timing of the call for applications and the length of the process. However, other factors such as the Management Committee procedure and the European Parliament Right of Scrutiny also affect the length of the process.

A large minority of email survey respondents criticised the selection process although this was not reflected to the same extent in the web-survey of cultural operators where the majority felt that it was both clear and transparent.

Both email and web-survey respondents felt that the feedback provided to applicants could be improved and this was reinforced in the evaluation seminar – it should include a detailed breakdown of assessment scores under each criteria *and* a statement of the strengths and weaknesses of the application justifying the scores awarded. This would improve the quality of future applications.

The conclusions of the evaluators are that:

- **The frequency of the call for Culture 2000 applications was appropriate but that the timing was inappropriate.**
- **The Culture 2000 selection procedure could have been shortened by using additional human resources to speed up the application processing and assessment process.**

Programme dissemination

The Commissions dissemination activities could have been improved – 40% of web-survey respondents considered them to be poor. An examination of the Commissions two main dissemination tools – the programme newsletter and the website – confirmed this view.

The newsletter suffered from poor layout, editing and design. Content often reproduced information available elsewhere and focused too much on events that had already occurred rather than those that were upcoming. The advertised publication schedule was not adhered to and the newsletter was ultimately abolished due to time pressures.

The evaluation team undertook a technical appraisal of the DG EAC Culture webpages with a view to identifying problems and highlighting areas for improvement. The technical appraisal found that the webpages to not confirm to the Commission's own Information

Providers Guide which provides compulsory rules for the editing, technical and graphical aspects of *Europa* webpages. In addition design choices impede the usability of the webpages and they failed basic accessibility requirements on multiple counts.

The conclusions of the evaluators are that:

- **Culture 2000 dissemination activities by the Managing Authorities have not been of the consistently high standard required to successfully promote the programme and its achievements.**

Project monitoring and reporting

The project document review found that in the final project reports information on outputs, results and impacts were not systematically collected an analysed in relation to the programmes objectives. Almost all web-survey respondents felt that the monitoring and reporting forms were easy to use and the guidance on completing them provided was of acceptable quality but some areas for improvement were identified.

Evaluation seminar participants emphasised the perception that the financial element of the final report was the most important to the Commission and argued for greater importance to be placed on the qualitative section of the report. The Commission and EACEA assessments of the final reports did involve substantial financial checks to identify and remove ineligible expenditure. In this respect, the monitoring process was effective at identifying and removing such expenditure from the final payments to projects.

The conclusions of the evaluators are that:

- **Culture 2000 financial monitoring of projects is effective at identifying and removing ineligible items of expenditure from final payments.**
- **Culture 2000 monitoring of outcomes, results and impacts at project level is ineffective as although a large amount of data is collected there is little consideration of how it can be used to identify outstanding achievements and promote the programme.**

Utility

Overall, the Culture 2000 programme has been successful in generating the intended results and impacts but less successful in capturing detailed information and evidence regarding the extent of achievement.

In terms of the changes that the programme has produced on cultural operators in Europe, there are clearly demonstrable impacts. The establishment of Culture 2000 gave cultural operators in Europe the opportunity to participate in a comprehensive programme of transnational cooperation with partnerships covering over 30 countries. This opportunity was and is not provided by any other mechanism and the result of this is that cultural operators have become more outward-looking and more open to transnational intercultural cooperation.

Thousands of cultural operators have become involved in transnational cooperation through Culture 2000 and the evidence indicates that many of the networks and partnerships established through the programme are enduring and are continuing to produce cultural cooperation activities. It is this widespread engagement in cultural cooperation that is the main structural change in the community of European cultural operators.

The conclusions of the evaluators are that:

- **Culture 2000 has produced a wide range of impacts on people, cultural practice and cultural policy**
- **Culture 2000 has changed the mindset of many cultural operators to make them more focused on intercultural cooperation activities and in doing so, has contributed to the development of a single European cultural sphere.**

Sustainability

Evidence from project documents, the web-survey, case studies and the evaluation seminar demonstrates that at least part of the activities and outcomes of Culture 2000 projects continue after the funding has expired.

Cultural operators have reported that they have established, strengthened and extended transnational networks across Europe that are not only sustaining their links and activities, but generating new cooperation projects. These new cooperation projects are taking place within the context of EU culture programmes but also *independently of them*.

Although there is no evidence that Culture 2000 has led to the establishment of new regional or national intercultural cooperation initiatives the programme has had a clear impact on policies in some participating countries. A large number of countries have implemented co-financing support for Culture 2000 projects which has increased the amount of funding for intercultural dialogue. And the Nordic Cooperation framework has been revised to take into account the Culture 2000 and Culture 2007 programmes.

The conclusions of the evaluators are that:

- **Culture 2000 led to increased cross-border cultural cooperation and the creation and expansion of cross-border networks of cultural operators in Europe.**
- **Culture 2000 has increased the amount of funds dedicated to intercultural dialogue in Europe through encouraging the establishment of national co-financing arrangement.**
- **Culture 2000 has influenced the design of regional or national cultural cooperation policies.**

Recommendations

A summary of the evaluators recommendations is given below. More detailed recommendations can be found in Chapter 9 of the main evaluation report.

1   The Managing Authorities should evaluate existing ways of working against current models of good practice to investigate the mismatch between the deployment of staff resources and the volume of work during the life of the programme.

2   The Managing Authorities should schedule an annual visit programme to a proportion of projects to provide support and guidance on technical issues.

3   The Managing Authorities should provide detailed qualitative feedback to all applicants to the culture programme. This will allow applicants to determine whether to reapply with a revised project proposal and how their proposal can be improved.

4   The Commission should appoint a Publications and Communications officer. This officer should be responsible for the organisation, editorial content and quality control of the Culture webpages and all Culture Unit / Culture Programme publications such as programme thematic reports, the project compendium and the Culture Unit newsletter.

5   The Managing Authorities should reintroduce a regular Culture 2007 newsletter. It is recommended that this covers EU cultural policy rather than the Culture programme specifically in order to allow a broader range of content.

6   The DG EAC culture webpages should be redesigned and re-launched to comply with the Commission's Information Providers Guide and basic accessibility requirements.

7   The managing Authorities should explore the possibility of developing an online searchable partner-matching database to assist cultural operators to find partners and develop project concepts

8   The Managing Authorities should take over responsibility for the management and maintenance of the CUPID project database or should develop an equivalent.

9   The Managing Authorities should publish thematic reports on the programme to support dissemination of programme achievements and good practice lessons.

10   The Managing Authorities should run a programme of events (or a single event) where existing projects can showcase themselves to policy-makers, and newly selected projects can attend briefing sessions on project management for culture programme management (e.g., monitoring, evaluation, financial record keeping, etc.).

11   The European Commission should improve its collection of best practice information arising from EU culture programmes and promote policy lessons for intercultural dialogue to the culture Ministries of participating countries.

12   The Managing Authorities should publish an annual compendium of projects to be made available on the DG EAC culture webpages. The compendium should include an index and projects should be listed by cultural field and country of lead applicant.

13   The Managing Authorities should restructure the final report templates to collect detailed information on project achievements, outputs, results and impacts. This information should be used to support programme dissemination activities.

14   The Managing authorities should develop an interim programme management database to assist in monitoring applications and projects until SYMMETRY is available. This should contain basic information about each application (e.g., lead partner contact details, co-organiser contact details and outline of the budget) and record key administrative milestones (e.g., contracting, payments and reporting).

15   The Managing Authorities should continue moves to improve the guidance available to support applicants to submit an application from. This guidance should be extended to include the interim and final project reports and project management.   Quality guidance and support to applicants and project promoters will improve the quality of applications coming forward for support and will improve the quality of funded projects. The SOCRATES Guide for Applicants, June 2004 edition provides a good example.

16   The Managing Authorities should take steps to reduce the length of the application process by securing more short-term administrative resources for application processing and project contracting and additional culture experts for application assessment.

1.0   Introduction

1.1   Context and Scope

This report presents the findings from the Final External Evaluation of the Culture 2000 programme undertaken by ECOTEC Research & Consulting Ltd.

This final evaluation follows on from the First and Second External Interim Evaluations undertaken respectively by PLS Rambol Management and ECOTEC Research & Consulting Ltd. .

The evaluation covers all actions funded during the period 2000-2006.[6] The Cultural Contact Points (CCPs) are the focus of a specific evaluation and were not examined in depth in this evaluation. The analysis of the Education Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EAC EA) was limited to its role in the management and implementation of the Culture 2000 programme from the date of its establishment in January 2006.

1.2   Evaluation Objectives

The three objectives of the Final External Evaluation of the Culture 2000 Framework Programme are to:

- Provide inputs for the Commission's report to the European Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the implementation of the programme and achievement of the programme's objectives to be submitted;

- Report on the extent to which the actions adopted so far have contributed significantly to the objectives specified in the Decision and to the overall objectives of Community action in the field of culture as provided for in Article 151 of the Treaty;[7] and

- Provide lessons learned to support the implementation of any new programmes in the field of culture, in particular the new cultural programme 2007-2013. Particular importance will be placed on recommendations that will facilitate the efficient management of the actions

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[6] The evaluations are available online at: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/evalreports/index_en.htm (link correct at 09/01/08)

[7] The Treaty states that "The Community shall contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore." It also highlights specific areas where Community support can be given.

implemented and help to increase the visibility / overall impact of the programme at European level.

1.3　Description of the Culture 2000 programme

1.3.1　The legal basis for Culture 2000

The scope of the EU's activities in the field of culture is set out in Article 151 of the Treaty, introduced in Maastricht, which states that Community action should be aimed at encouraging co-operation among Member States and, if necessary, supporting and supplementing their action in the following areas:

- improvement of knowledge and dissemination of the culture and history of the European peoples;
- conservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage of European significance;
- non-commercial cultural exchanges; and
- artistic and literary creation, including in the audiovisual sector.

The Culture 2000 Programme was the main financing and programming instrument for the EU's activities in the field of cultural co-operation. The Programme was formally established by a Decision of the European Parliament and the Council in February 2000,[8] following on from three previous sector-based framework programmes.[9] Originally established to run until the end of December 2004, the duration of the Programme was subsequently extended to the end of 2006.[10]

1.3.2　The core objectives of Culture 2000

The aims and objectives of the Culture 2000 Programme are laid down in the Decision of 2000. The overall aim of the Programme is to "contribute to the promotion of a cultural area common to the European peoples" by supporting co-operation among creative artists, cultural operators, private and public promoters, the activities of cultural networks and other partners as well as the cultural institutions of the Member States and of the other participant states.

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[8] Official Journal of the European Union, *DECISION No. 508/2000/EC OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 14 February 2000 establishing the Culture 2000 Programme*, Brussels, 12/02/2000.

[9] *Kaléidoscope*, which focused on artistic and cultural initiatives with a European dimension (1996-1999), *Raphaël* in the field of cultural heritage (1997-1999), and *Ariane* in the fields of translation, books and reading (1997-1999).

[10] Official Journal of the European Union, *DECISION No. 626/2004/EC OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 31 March 2004 amending Decision No. 508/2000/EC establishing the Culture 2000 Programme*, Brussels, 03/04/2004.

The eight explicit objectives set for the Programme are to:[11]

- promote cultural dialogue and mutual knowledge of the culture and history of the European peoples;
- promote creativity and the transnational dissemination of culture and the movement of artists, creators and other cultural operators and professionals and their works, with a strong emphasis on young and socially disadvantaged people and on cultural diversity;
- highlight cultural diversity and the development of new forms of cultural expression;
- share and highlight, at a European level, the common cultural heritage of European significance, disseminating know-how and promoting good practices concerning its conservation and safeguarding;
- take into account the role of culture in socio-economic development;
- foster intercultural dialogue and mutual exchange between European and non-European cultures;
- explicitly recognise culture as an economic factor and as a factor in social integration and citizenship; and
- improve access to and participation in culture in the European Union for as many citizens as possible.

In addition to the eight overall objectives, the three operating strands of the Programme have their own specific priorities. These are detailed in section 1.3.3 below.

As the text of the original Decision has remained unchanged since 2000, these core objectives have remained the same throughout the lifetime of the Programme. The First Interim Evaluation of the Programme in 2003 argued that the objectives were too broad for a programme such as Culture 2000, particularly in light of the amount of funding available to achieve them.[12] Although the Commission broadly accepted this point in its response to the evaluation,[13] it is not possible to alter the politically agreed objectives in the legal basis during the lifetime of a Community Programme. Instead, this recommendation has been taken into account in the design of the new cultural programme for the period 2007-2013.

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[11] Official Journal of the European Union, *DECISION No. 508/2000/EC OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 14 February 2000 establishing the Culture 2000 Programme*, Brussels, 12/02/2000.

[12] PLS Ramboll Management (2003), p107.

[13] European Commission, *Report on the Implementation of the Culture 2000 Programme in the Years 2000 and 2001, Report from the Commission to the Council, The European Parliament, The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions*, COM (2003) 722 final, Brussels, 24/11/2003.

1.3.3   The implementation of Culture 2000

Types of action

The Annexes to the Decision establishing the Culture 2000 Programme specify the actions to be used to achieve the Programme's objectives and provide an indicative description of the sectoral and horizontal approaches to be implemented.

Three types of action are specified:

- Action 1 – Specific innovative and/or experimental actions, involving at least three co-organisers from at least three participating countries (except for translations where there is no co-operation dimension), in principle lasting a maximum of one year and with a grant of between €50,000 and €150,000.

- Action 2 – Integrated actions covered by structured, multi-annual, transnational cultural co-operation agreements, involving at least five co-organisers from five participating countries, lasting from two to three years and with a grant of up to €300,000 a year.

- Action 3 – Special cultural events with a European or international dimension, including activities within the context of the European Capitals of Culture initiative. This strand also includes European Prizes in the fields of Architecture and Heritage, the European Heritage Days and the European Cultural Months.

Projects funded under Actions 1 and 2 and some of the sub-Actions of Action 3 are selected on the basis of open calls for proposals. The Management Committee, consisting of representatives of national administrations, is consulted on all selections. The European Parliament also has a right of scrutiny on project selections.

In addition to these three types of action, Annex 1 of the Decision states that the Commission and Member States will, on a voluntary basis, establish Cultural Contact Points (CCPs) in each country to help to promote participation in the Programme and facilitate the exchange of information.

In January 2006, the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency was established to try and improve programme management. The Commission delegated the majority of programme administration tasks to the EACEA, retaining overall responsibility for the programme, cultural policy and the implementation of Action 3.

Decision No. 508/2000/EC establishing the Programme provides details of the priorities and types of activity to be supported under each of the Programme's three actions. These are shown in annex 10.

1.3.4   Projects Supported

Over 1,500 projects received grants under the Culture 2000 programme.

The largest proportion of grants (1,309) were awarded to annual innovative projects under Action 1. A further 151 multi-annual projects were awarded grants under Action 2 of the programme.

The remainder of the grants were awarded under Action 3 – and included a number of special events, the European Cultural Heritage Laboratories. The European heritage Days and the European Capital of Culture.

Table 1.1 Number of grants awarded in Culture 2000

Sub-Action	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Total
Action 1: specific innovative and/or experimental actions	198	158	197	178	208	190	180	**1,309**
Action 2: structured and multi-annual cooperation agreements	19	23	24	19	24	21	21	**151**
Action 3: Special Cultural Events	0	2	5	4	0	3	0	**14**
Action 3: Cultural Heritage Laboratories	2	3	3	4	1	6	0	**19**
European Prizes for Contemporary Architecture (2001, 2003, 2005) and Cultural Heritage (2002-2006)	0	1	1	2	1	2	1	**8**
European Capital of Culture	9	2	2	1	1	2	1	**18**
European Cultural Month	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	**3**
European Heritage Days	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	**7**
Total	**229**	**192**	**233**	**210**	**236**	**225**	**204**	**1,529**

Source: DG EAC website, Commission press releases IP/04/1502, IP/03/1716, IP/03/482, IP/02/1255, IP/01/1897 and IP/01/110.

[a] Not available

1.4   Current developments in EU cultural policy

There is growing awareness of the role that the EU can play in promoting cultural richness and diversity and of the roles that culture can play in meeting the EU's strategic objectives of mutual prosperity, solidarity and security.

This awareness has resulted in the Commission proposal for a *European agenda for culture in a globalising world* as set out in its 2007 Communication.[14] In this Communication, the Commission sets out its vision for an ongoing agenda for culture based on three objectives:

1   Promotion of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue

Article 151 of the Treaty emphasises that the EU shall contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States. Recognising the diversity within and between Member States is seen as a key element of this process.

The agenda sees the promotion of intercultural dialogue and mobility of artists, professionals and art itself as a means of recognising this diversity.

2   Promotion of culture as a catalyst for creativity in the framework of the Lisbon strategy for growth and jobs

Culture and the cultural industries are seen as an important source of employment and wealth for the EU – a study in 2004 estimated that over 5 million people were employed in the sector and that it contributed 2.6% of EU GDP in 2003. As a result, it's potential for contributing to the Lisbon strategy goals is significant.

The agenda sees culture as having a role in education and lifelong learning; and in developing creative sources of growth and jobs in its own right but also partnership with other sectors.

3   Promotion of culture as a vital element in the Union's international relations

The EU member States have become parties to the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and the Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. In this context the EU is keen to promote knowledge and understanding for Europe's cultures throughout the world.

[14] Commission of the European Communities, *Communication from he Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions – Communication on a European agenda for culture in a globalizing world*, COM(2007) 242 final, Brussels, 10.05.2007.

1.4.1   Delivering the agenda for culture

A solid partnership between stakeholders, consisting of four elements is envisaged for delivering the agenda. These are:

1   *Further developing dialogue with the cultural sector*

The Commission intends to pursue a structured dialogue with the sector following a framework for regular exchanges of views and best practice as well as provision for input into the policy process and evaluation.

2   *Setting up an open method of coordination (OMC)*

The agenda proposes the adoption of the OMC for a framework for cooperation between member States. This proposal would provide a non-binding, intergovernmental framework for cooperation between Member States which is in line with the Treaty's emphasis on subsidiarity.

3   *Supporting evidence-based policy-making*

The Commission intends to launch a series of studies and inter-service cooperation to support evidence-based policy-making. Additionally, EUROSTAT will coordinate the review and improvement of national statistical information to ensure better comparability of national statistics.

4   *Mainstreaming culture in all relevant policies*

The Commission aims to strengthen its internal inter-service coordination in the field of culture and has created an inter-service group for this purpose.

1.5 Second External Interim Evaluation: progress against recommendations

The Second External Evaluation[15] made a number of recommendations. The Commissions response to these recommendations was initially presented in its 2006 Report on the Evaluation[16]. An internal Action Plan was produced that set out the specific actions and responsibilities for following up the evaluation recommendations.

These two documents have been used to establish the overall response to the recommendations which are set out in annex 14 of this report. It should be noted that restrictions on the length of the 2006 report to the Parliament meant that it was not able to include all the evaluators' recommendations and the Commissions response to them, although this is not stated in the document.

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[15] Llopis-Navarro, P., McCoshan, A., Murray, S. and Roy, S., (2006), *Second External Interim Evaluation of the Culture 2000 Framework Programme*, Brussels: DG Education & Culture, 2006, Chapter 7.2

[16] Commission of the European Communities, *Report from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions – Report on the Second External Interim Evaluation of the Culture 2000 programme*, COM (2006) 666 final, Brussels, 8.11.2006.

2.0   Evaluation Framework

2.1   Evaluation Questions

Main evaluation questions were posed under five key topic areas (External Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Utility and Sustainability) and supported by supplementary questions within each topic area. The main evaluation questions and sub-questions (bulleted lists) are detailed below:

External Coherence

To what extent the does the Culture 2000 programme not contradict other interventions with similar objectives, which are either carried out at EU level or by national/regional authorities of Member States (principle of subsidiarity)?

Effectiveness

To what extent was the Culture 2000 programme successful in attaining the objectives set and achieving the intended results? In particular, but not exclusively, regarding those objectives which are also included in the new cultural programme 2007-2013

Efficiency

How economically have the various inputs of the Programme (financial and human resources) been converted into outputs (projects and complementary activities) and results?

Utility

To what extent do the results and impacts of the programme actually meet the needs and expectations of its stakeholders and intended beneficiaries?

Sustainability

To what extent could the positive changes or trends induced by the Programme be expected to last beyond the EU financing?

2.2   Evaluation Methodology

2.2.1   The key stages

The key elements of the methodology were aligned with the Tender Specification. They were:

- Inception
- Documentary review
- Production of data collection tools
- Group or individual interviews
- Structured Surveys
- Working document on data and information collection phase
- Case Studies
- Evaluation Seminar(s)
- Interim report
- Analysis
- Final reporting
- Quality assurance
- Client liaison

Six main mechanisms for quantitative and qualitative data collection were used:

- documentary review;
- group interviews;
- structured surveys;
- seminar;
- case studies; and
- consultation.

Figure 2.1 provides a summary of the methodology which is described in more detail in the remainder of this chapter and in annex 1.

Figure 2.1 Methodology
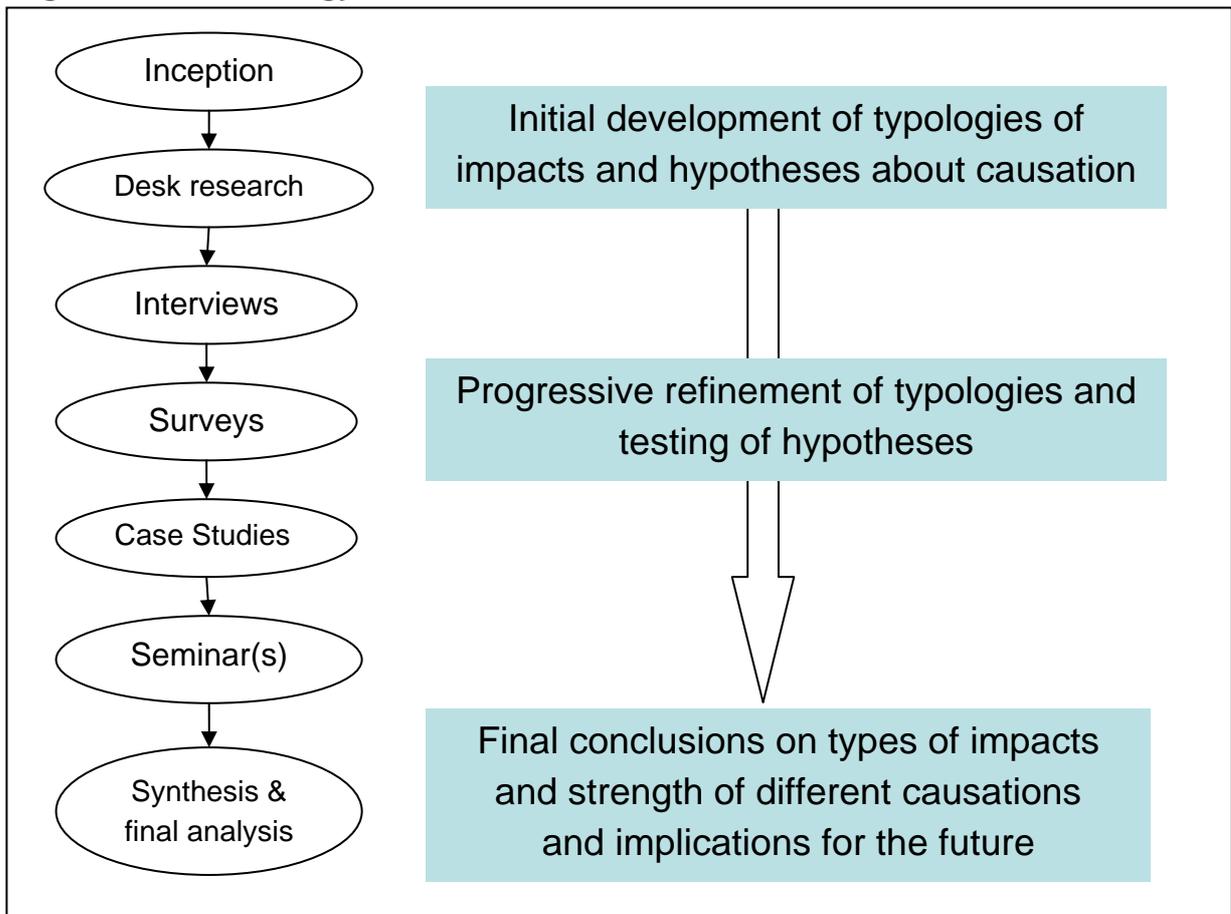
Source: ECOTEC Research & Consulting Ltd, 2007.

2.2.2   Inception

The inception phase involved two meetings between the evaluation team and the Evaluation Steering Group. The meetings discussed proposal, agreed key issues and reviewed the inception report.

During this stage individual and group interviews were held with Culture Unit staff from DG EAC and the Executive Agency to gather initial views on the reconstructed intervention logic, the progress, key achievements and any problems with the programme.

There were two key tasks for this stage:

- the reconstruction of the intervention logic for the programme.

  ► Identifying the general, specific and operational objectives of the programme.
  ► Noting the expected/desired effects (results and impacts).
  ► Systematising the outputs, effects and beneficiaries of each programme, i.e. creating typologies.
  ► Hypothesising as to the relationships between inputs, outputs/results and impacts, i.e. in order to determine causality.

- Developing an indicative programme indicator framework to set out success criteria for each of the main evaluation and sub-evaluation questions. In turn, this document supported the development of operational research questions for the evaluation. A copy of the framework is included at Annex 12.

2.2.3 Programme document review

Project Selection

Projects involved in the project document review were selected from the project lists published on the Commission website using a random quota sampling method[17]. The quota aimed to ensure a balanced selection of projects from each selection year and cultural field. In order to ensure a broad geographical selection, once a country was selected in a year / cultural field further projects from that country were excluded from selection.

A list of 172 project files representing 11% of the 1,529 grants awarded via Culture 2000. Problems with the availability of files required an additional visit to the Executive Agency to collect documents which was delayed due to the Agency's workload.

At the end of month six of the evaluation the Commission confirmed that project files from selection years 2000-2001 were held in the Commission archives and would not be made available. At the end of month eight of the evaluation, it was confirmed that all outstanding project files from 2002-2006 would not be made available. This caused a significant reduction in the number of files to be reviewed and reduced the scope of the project

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[17] See list of operators that took part as Project Leaders at:
http://ec.europa.eu/culture/eac/how_particip2007/operators/operateurs_cult_en.html (web-link checked 24/07/07)

document review to the selection years 2002-2006. As a result, only 83 of the original 172 files were available for review (48%). The major gaps in the data were:

- 2000-2001 selections (no project files were available);
- 2006 selections (only 5 project files received in total); and
- European Cultural Months (no project files received).

The aim was to collect four key documents from each project file plus additional material if available (indicated by italics). The documents, in order of importance, were:

- Contract.
- Final / Interim Report.
- Commission final Project assessments
- Assessor Scoring Sheets.
- *Report on evaluation / monitoring.*
- *Other documents, e.g., examples of project outputs or press clips.*

In practice, few files contained all the documents. In almost all cases the Commission final project assessment were missing and virtually no proposal assessor scoring sheets were available. In a small number of cases the contract or final / interim report was missing from the project file.

2.2.4   Production of data collection tools

Data collection tools were developed on an ongoing basis throughout the evaluation.

For each data tool "operational" research questions were mapped against the main and sub-evaluation questions. This process ensured that data collection remained focused on providing information to address the main evaluation questions and did not drift into tangential areas of investigation.

Figure 2.2 Operational research question mapping process
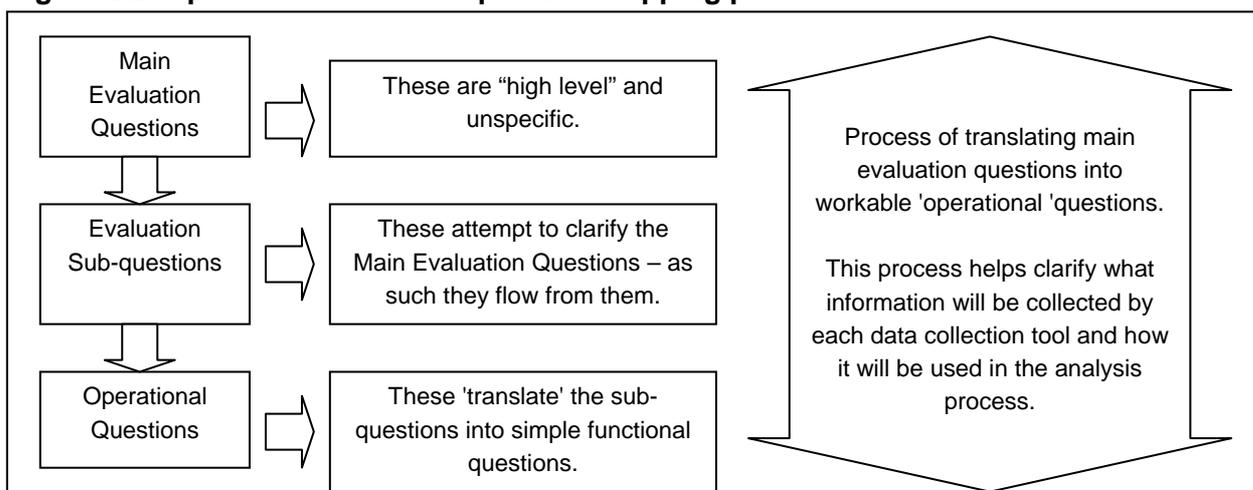
Source: ECOTEC Research & Consulting Ltd, 2007.

An example of the result of the process is shown in Table 2.1 below using operational questions from the survey of cultural experts.

Table 2.1 Example of the operational question mapping process

Main Evaluation Question	Evaluation Sub-question	Operational Question
To what extent could the positive changes or trends induced by the Programme be expected to last beyond the EU financing? **[E]**	*Has the very existence of the Programme induced some national authorities to put in place similar programmes promoting cross-border cultural cooperation or facilitating the participation of their cultural operators into projects of cultural cooperation at EU level?* **[E1]**	Has Culture 2000 had any effect on the design or development of cultural policies in your country? *If 'yes', please explain the effect and give examples. If 'no', can you explain why?* **[E1.1]**
	To what extent has the Programme led towards increased cross-border cultural cooperation and the creation and/or expansion of cross-border networks of cultural operators in Europe? **[E2]**	Has Culture 2000 had any effect on the design or development of cultural policies in your country? *If 'yes', please explain the effect and give examples. If 'no', can you explain why?* **[E2.1]**
		Has your country become more or less involved in transnational cultural cooperation activities between 2000-2006? *Has your country's involvement in the Culture 2000 programme had any effect? Please give details of changes in your country's cultural cooperation and explain the causes of any change.* **[E2.2]**

Source: ECOTEC Research & Consulting Ltd, 2007.

The main tools developed were:

- Topic guides for individual and group interviews with DG EAC Culture Unit and Executive Agency staff.
- Management Committee & Cultural Contact Point email survey questionnaire.
- Cultural Experts email survey questionnaires for (a) those involved in selection and (b) other experts.
- Beneficiary web-survey questionnaire
- Topic guides and templates for case studies.

Copies of the tools are available at annexes 2-5.

2.2.5   Group or Individual Interviews

Face-to-face individual and group interviews were undertaken with staff from the Culture Units of DG EAC and the Executive Agency. A repeat interview was held with Executive Agency staff. A repeat group interview was also proposed with DG EAC Culture Unit staff but a suitable date could not be identified.

Table 2.2 Interviews carried out with DG EAC and Executive Agency Staff

Interview Type	DG Education & Culture, Culture Unit	Executive Agency, Culture Unit
Individual	4	1
Group	1	2

Source: ECOTEC Research & Consulting Ltd, 2007.

2.2.6   Structured Surveys of Stakeholders

Five structured surveys of stakeholders were initially planned but in practice only four were actually implemented.

1   Management Committee Members

This email survey questionnaire was targeted at the national representatives of the countries participating in Culture 2000 who sit on the programme Management Committee. It consisted of a series of qualitative questions on the cultural policy, trends in cultural cooperation, management and impacts of the programme.

A large proportion of the contact details provided for this group were incorrect or out of date. Surveys were distributed and followed up by email with further telephone calls to non-respondents which identified that several contacts had either left the organisation entirely or were no longer the appropriate contact. In these cases a suitable colleague was invited to complete the survey.

In total seven (7) responses were received (a 23% response rate).

A copy of the questionnaire is available at annex 2.

2   Cultural Contact Points

This email questionnaire was targeted at the Cultural Contact Points of the countries participating in Culture 2000. It consisted of a series of qualitative questions on the cultural policy, trends in cultural cooperation, management and impacts of the programme.

Complete contact details were sourced from the DG EAC webpages[18] as directed by the client. Non-respondents were followed up by email and later by telephone.

In total 16 responses were received (a 52% response rate).

A copy of the questionnaire is available at annex 2.

3   Cultural Experts involved in project assessment and selection

This email survey was targeted at Cultural Experts involved in project selection as expert assessors of Culture 2000 applications. The survey consisted of a series of qualitative

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[18] See: http://ec.europa.eu/culture/eac/culture2007/contacts/national_pts_en.html (checked on 24/07/07).

questions on the cultural policy, trends in cultural cooperation, the assessment process, management and impacts of the programme.

This survey was not implemented as the Executive Agency's legal advisors raised a potential data protection issue at the end of month 6 as to whether it was possible to make the contact details available to the evaluators. The Executive Agency's legal advisors did not resolve their concerns or respond to the proposed alternative and at the end of month 8 the Evaluation Steering Group agreed to abandon the survey.

A copy of the unused questionnaire is available at annex 3.

4   *Other cultural experts from national or European cultural institutions and national Culture Ministries*

This email survey was targeted at Cultural Experts not involved in project selection as expert assessors of Culture 2000 applications but who had "*some knowledge of cultural cooperation in Europe gained through involvement in (1) EU cultural cooperation projects or programmes, or (2) cultural cooperation activities between their country and at least one EU Member State"* (criteria applied for nomination as an "other" expert). The survey consisted of a series of qualitative questions on the cultural policy, trends in cultural cooperation, management and impacts of the programme

Respondents to the Management Committee and CCP surveys were asked to suggest up to two experts each who were willing to be contacted – they nominated a total of 17 experts. The Commission was expected to nominate a further 30 experts but decided in month 6 not to nominate their own and instructed ECOTEC to continue only using the experts nominated by the Management Committee representatives and the CCPs. The explanation given was that this would avoid complications relating to the transparency of the selection process for experts.

Experts were sent the survey via email. Non-respondents were sent a reminder email.

In total 6 responses were received (a 35% response rate) and one expert declined to participate.

A copy of the questionnaire is available at annex 3.

5   *Beneficiary survey*

The web-survey was targeted at successful project leaders and co-organisers in Action 1 and Action 2 projects. The Commission was unable to provide complete electronic lists of

project leader and co-organiser contact details and it was necessary to use the lists of organisations involved from the DG Education and Culture webpages.

These lists did not provide complete contact details and were not guaranteed to be a complete and accurate list of all programme participants but the evaluation team was initially able to draw up contact details for 74.7% of the 1,461 Action 1 and Action 2 project leaders. The project lists available did not include contact details for co-organisers. Problems with the accuracy of the postal and email addresses for programme beneficiaries subsequently reduced this figure to approximately 58.3%.

The web-survey consisted of a series of quantitative questions with linked qualitative questions where respondents were invited to provide more detail on their responses. A copy of the survey is available in annex 5.

The web-survey was made available in English, French and German.

Project leaders were contacted by email if available or by post (if an email address was not available) and asked to participate in the survey and to invite their co-organisers to participate.   If no email or postal address were available we were unable to contact the organisation directly. The survey was sent out and publicised in the following ways:

- Invitations to participate were circulated by email to project co-ordinators with valid email addresses.
- Invitations to participate were circulated by post to project co-ordinators without valid email addresses but with valid postal addresses.
- A news item on the DG EAC Culture pages. This news item was posted online on 26-27th July.

The web-survey was closed on the 15th September 2007 in order to give project leaders and co-organisers the maximum time possible to respond.

A total of 220 responses to the web-survey were received.

It is not possible to calculate the actual total population of organisations invited to participate in the survey as project leaders were asked to invite their (former) co-organising partners to participate and the web-survey was publicised on the DG EAC culture webpages. Therefore, it is not possible to calculate an accurate percentage response rate to the web-survey.

However, the total response rate for project leader organisations can be estimated. In total 1,014[19] project leader organisations were contacted by post or email resulting in 168 responses from this group – a response rate of 16.6%.

2.2.7   Case Studies

The case studies were intended to highlight learning from the current programme.   It was originally proposed to undertake six case studies in total, sub-divided into three areas:

- EU Policy Case Study (desk based x 1).
- National Policy Case Studies (desk based x 2).
- Project Case Studies (face-to-face x 3).

Following discussions with the Evaluation Steering Group, it was agreed that the EU policy case study would not take place and that resources from this task and elsewhere would be reallocated to enable the national policy case studies to take place face-to-face. It was subsequently decided to link the national policy and project case studies together under a country 'umbrella' in order for the two types of case study to complement each other. At this point additional resources were allocated to allow a fourth project case study.

National Policy Case Studies

The focus of the national policy case studies was on examining the Programme's impacts upon national cultural policies and/or national administrations and how Culture 2000 is integrated into national cultural policy frameworks.

Project Case Studies

The evaluation team identified successful projects from information provided by stakeholders and focussed on these on the hypothesis that they were more likely to provide a better basis for assessing outcomes, visibility and their realised results and impacts.

The project case studies explored the good experiences and problems encountered to see how project partners had overcome difficulties to ensure the success of their activities. Information about less successful experiences or elements that had not worked out well also provided valuable insights.

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[19] This figure does not exclude those organisations whose email address was invalid.

2.2.8   Evaluation Seminar(s)

The evaluation seminars were originally due to take place in month 7 (July 2007) but due to delays in launching the surveys the Evaluation Steering Committee agreed to reschedule them until more emerging findings were available. Furthermore, due to concerns over securing attendance numbers the Evaluation Steering Committee decided to reduce the number of seminars from two to one.

Representatives of CCPs, the programme Management Committee, cultural operators and cultural experts were invited to participate in the seminar with a set number of places reserved for each group to ensure a mix of participants. No CCPs or Management Committee Members were able to attend and their places were reallocated. A total of 10 individual experts or project promoters participated accompanied with two members of the evaluation team.

A briefing note containing issues for discussion was circulated to all participants before the seminar. The note aimed to stimulate debate on some of the key issues arising from the evaluation, to test conclusions and formulate recommendations. A copy of the briefing note is included at annex 7.

2.2.9   Consultation

With the agreement of the Evaluation Steering Group, the second seminar was replaced by an online consultation of stakeholders who had expressed an interest in participating in the seminar but who did not attend. These stakeholders received the same briefing note and were invited to submit a written response.

Non-respondents were followed up after a week. Two responses were received from the 73 individuals invited to respond (a response rate of 3%).

2.2.10   Final analysis, reporting & presentation of findings

The detailed presentation of evaluation findings was based on the evidence collected through all stages of the research.

Quantitative data submitted through the web-survey of beneficiaries was analysed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Scientists).

Qualitative data was analysed using a template approach – key codes were initially determined from the evaluation sub-questions and were supplemented or refined based on themes emerging from the data. The evaluation sub-questions were used as the basis of

the analysis template framework which ensured that the analysis remained focused on meeting the evaluation's objectives.

2.3 Strengths and Weaknesses of the Methodology

The main strength of the evaluation framework is that it was based on a combination of techniques that were intended to complement each other to obtain comprehensive, reliable and valid data. Each of the methods selected for the evaluation had particular strengths and weaknesses which are detailed below

Desk based research

Desk-based research has the advantage of being a relatively unobtrusive method, through which a large amount of information can be obtained. However, the documents analysed in the evaluation were intended for other purposes and were not expected to provide all the information needed for the evaluation.

The major problem encountered in this element of the evaluation was the large-scale unavailability of project documents. The review of project documents was intended to supplement the project web-survey to provide data from early selection years (where participation in the web-survey was anticipated to be lower) and to provide examples of impacts from completed multi-annual Action 2 projects.

Due to the unavailability of documents this method was unable to:

- Provide a complete overview of programme activities over the entire programme period as no files were available for selection years 2000-2001 and limited files were available for 2006.
- Provide a complete overview of all programme actions as limited files were available for much of Action 3.
- Explore the quality and consistency of the expert assessments of the initial project application and compare to the achievements of the project as reported in the final report.

Structured surveys

Surveys are a cost-effective tool to collect standardised and comparable information for a relatively large number of people / projects, which is targeted to the aims of the research. They also enable inter-group comparisons, for instance by type of respondent, indicating trends that can later on feed into policy-making decisions.

A key strength of these surveys is that findings from the sample of responses obtained, if the survey framework is complete and there are no selection biases, can be applied to the wider target group or the population as a whole. Quantitative estimates can be made for the size and distribution of results. Electronic surveys can introduce a bias in the profile of respondents as only those with access to the internet are able to participate and this group may have on occasions different characteristics to the population of interest. However, we do not expect biases introduced in the context of this project where it can be assumed that a very large majority of individuals and organisations have access to email, the internet and a word processor.

The main weakness of this element of the evaluation was that of incomplete or inaccurate contact details.

- The survey of Cultural Experts involved in the selection process was abandoned as the Executive Agency legal advisors did not authorise the release of the experts' contact details. This survey was intended to gather a large amount of data on the project selection process that could not be collected elsewhere.

- The survey of other Cultural Experts was reduced in scope from the original target of 85 experts contacted for two reasons. Firstly, participating countries nominated 17 experts instead of the possible 60. Secondly, the Commission decided that they were unable to nominate their own group of up to 25 experts in order to avoid complications relating to the transparency of the selection process for experts. As a result the number of experts surveyed was much lower than anticipated.

- For the project web-survey, contact details for only 74.7% of project leaders were obtained and none were obtained for project co-organisers. As a result, it is likely that a large proportion of the target survey population was unaware of the survey and was unable to participate.

The response rates to the CCP and Management Committee email surveys were lower than anticipated. This has resulted in incomplete country coverage of these surveys.

Due to these difficulties the four qualitative email surveys generated 31 responses instead of the anticipated figure of 100+. The number of responses to each survey meant that during analysis it was not possible to disaggregate the responses by respondent group as the numbers involved would have rendered that level of analysis meaningless. Therefore, the responses to these surveys were analysed as a single group and where clear distinctions between the responses of each stakeholder group were apparent, this was noted in the analysis.

It should be noted that although the volume of responses received was lower than expected the views of the CCPs, Management Committee and Cultural Expert were credited with greater weight due to their "expert" status within the programme.

Case Studies

Case study visits allow the opportunity to observe or explore funded activities onsite, and gather detailed information through face-to-face interviews (see advantages and disadvantages of in-depth interviews below) as well as by acquiring documents and other data.

Potentially, case study visits offer rich qualitative data but they are resource intensive relative to the volume of data collected.

Evaluation Seminar

The evaluation seminar provided a useful way of obtaining different perspectives about key issues emerging from the evaluation allowing discourse and debate upon differing viewpoints.

However, as with case studies they are resource intensive relative to the volume of data collected.

In depth interviews

The in-depth group or individual interviews collected complex qualitative information that could be explored in details with the interviewees.   The interviewer was also available to assist the interviewee regarding the understanding of questions.

2.4   Reconstruction of the Intervention Logic

In order to build the overall evaluation framework it was necessary to reconstruct the intervention logic for the programme. This process involved:

- Identifying the general, specific and operational objectives of the programme;
- Noting the expected / desired effects (results and impacts);
- Systematising the outputs, effects and beneficiaries of each programme, i.e. creating typologies;
- Hypothesising as to the relationships between inputs, outputs/results and impacts, i.e. in order to determine causality.

The generic intervention logic model is presented below with descriptions of the content of each box. The following diagram populates these boxes for the Culture 2000 Programme.

Figure 2.3 Intervention logic model (generic)
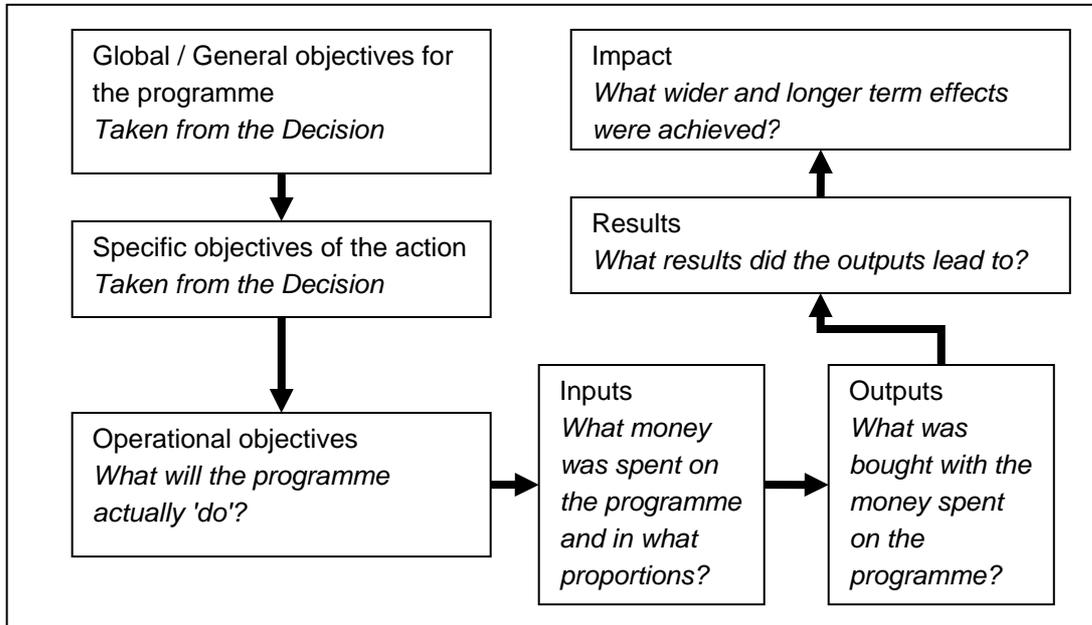
Source: ECOTEC Research & Consulting Ltd, 2007.

Information concerning the objectives and inputs of the programme was drawn from the Decisions establishing and amending the Culture 2000 programme. Information on outputs was drawn from this final evaluation and the two previous interim evaluations.

Figure 2.4 Intervention logic of the Culture 2000 programme (2000-6)

GLOBAL OBJECTIVES (DECISION No. 508/2000/EC, Article 1)

To contribute to the promotion of a cultural area common to the European peoples. In this context, it shall support cooperation between creative artists, cultural operators, private and public promoters, the activities of the cultural networks, and other partners as well as the cultural institutions of the Member States and of the other participant States.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES (DECISION No. 508/2000/EC, Article 1)

a) promotion of cultural dialogue and of mutual knowledge of the culture and history of the European peoples;

b) promotion of creativity and the transnational dissemination of culture and the movement of artists, creators and other cultural operators and professionals and their works, with a strong emphasis on young and socially disadvantaged people and on cultural diversity;

c) the highlighting of cultural diversity and the development of new forms of cultural expression;

d) sharing and highlighting, at the European level, the common cultural heritage of European significance; disseminating know-how and promoting good practices concerning its conservation and safeguarding;

e) taking into account the role of culture in socioeconomic development;

f) the fostering of intercultural dialogue and mutual exchange between European and non-European cultures;

g) explicit recognition of culture as an economic factor and as a factor in social integration and citizenship;

h) improved access to and participation in culture in the European Union for as many citizens as possible.

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES

a) Action 1: Specific innovative and/or experimental actions, involving at least three coorganisers from at least three participating countries (except for translations where there is no co-operation dimension), in principle lasting a maximum of one year and with a grant of between €50,000 and €150, 000.

b) Action 2: Integrated actions covered by structured, multi-annual, transnational cultural co-operation agreements, involving at least five co-organisers from five participating countries, lasting from two to three years and with a grant of up to €300,000 a year.

c) Action 3: Special cultural events with a European or international dimension, including activities within the context of the European Capitals of Culture initiative.

Source: ECOTEC, on the basis of Decision No 2318/2003/EC

IMPACTS

People
- Attracting greater numbers of people to participate in cultural events / activities.
- Improved knowledge of EU citizens / cultural actors of European culture and history.
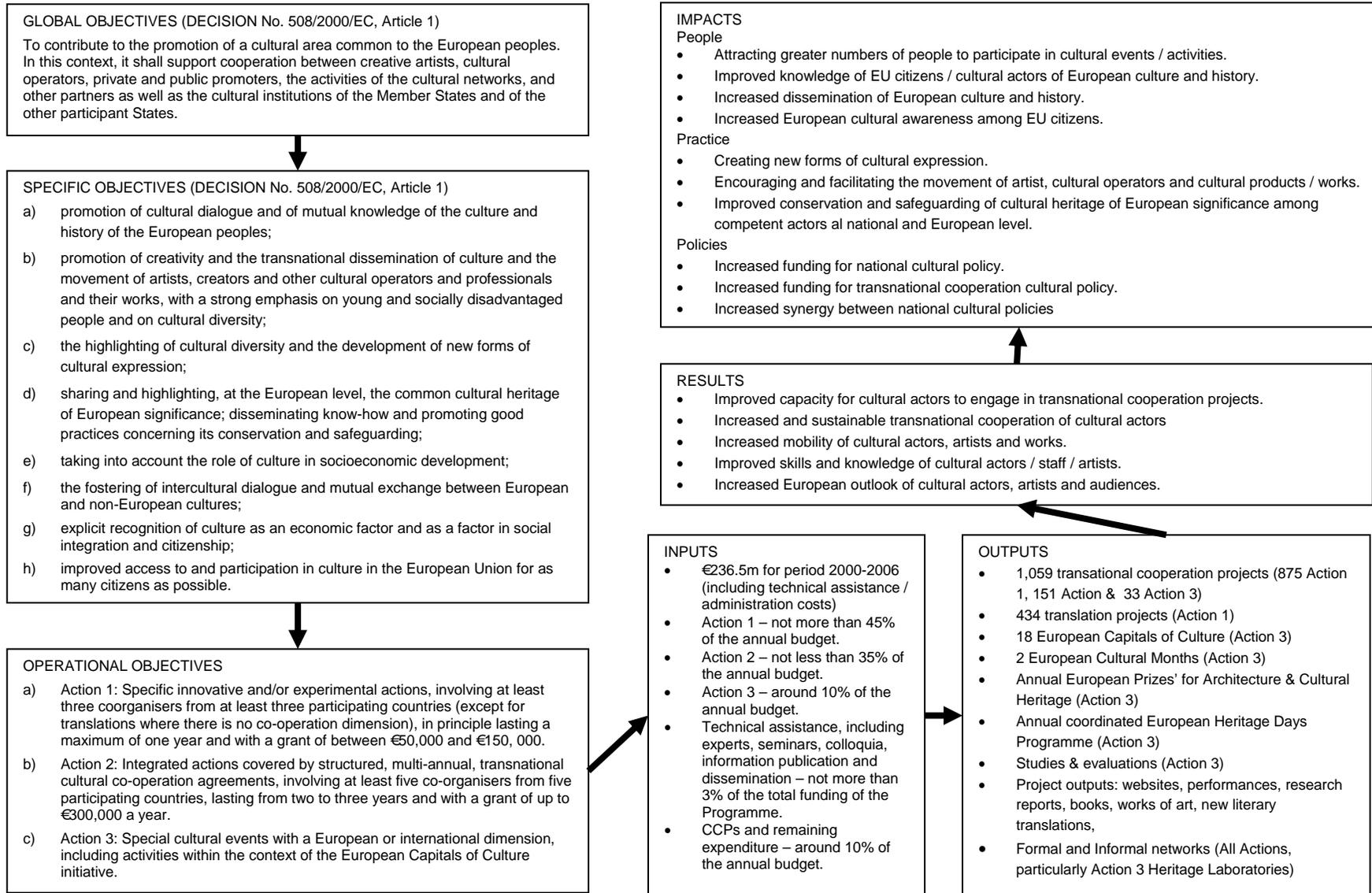- Increased dissemination of European culture and history.
- Increased European cultural awareness among EU citizens.

Practice
- Creating new forms of cultural expression.
- Encouraging and facilitating the movement of artist, cultural operators and cultural products / works.
- Improved conservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage of European significance among competent actors al national and European level.

Policies
- Increased funding for national cultural policy.
- Increased funding for transnational cooperation cultural policy.
- Increased synergy between national cultural policies

RESULTS
- Improved capacity for cultural actors to engage in transnational cooperation projects.
- Increased and sustainable transnational cooperation of cultural actors
- Increased mobility of cultural actors, artists and works.
- Improved skills and knowledge of cultural actors / staff / artists.
- Increased European outlook of cultural actors, artists and audiences.

INPUTS
- €236.5m for period 2000-2006 (including technical assistance / administration costs)
- Action 1 – not more than 45% of the annual budget.
- Action 2 – not less than 35% of the annual budget.
- Action 3 – around 10% of the annual budget.
- Technical assistance, including experts, seminars, colloquia, information publication and dissemination – not more than 3% of the total funding of the Programme.
- CCPs and remaining expenditure – around 10% of the annual budget.

OUTPUTS
- 1,059 transational cooperation projects (875 Action 1, 151 Action & 33 Action 3)
- 434 translation projects (Action 1)
- 18 European Capitals of Culture (Action 3)
- 2 European Cultural Months (Action 3)
- Annual European Prizes' for Architecture & Cultural Heritage (Action 3)
- Annual coordinated European Heritage Days Programme (Action 3)
- Studies & evaluations (Action 3)
- Project outputs: websites, performances, research reports, books, works of art, new literary translations,
- Formal and Informal networks (All Actions, particularly Action 3 Heritage Laboratories)

ECOTEC
Final External Evaluation of Culture 2000

2.4.1   Outcome of the reconstruction of the intervention logic process
Initial discussions with the Evaluation Steering Committee indicated that no Impact Assessment or Needs Analysis had been undertaken to inform the design of the Culture 2000 programme (this was reported to be the case with the majority of DG EAC programmes from 2000-2006). Therefore, the evaluation team proposed intended results and impacts of the programme based on an interpretation of programme objectives. These were discussed with DG EAC Culture Unit staff and Executive Agency staff during face-to-face interviews and refined following their comments.

The interviews indicated that no intended results or impacts were specifically identified at the outset of the programme but that, given the programme's objectives, those proposed by the evaluation team were appropriate.

Commission and EACEA interviewees were asked how the various Actions and activities supported by the programme were reflected in the specific objectives in the establishing Decision. They agreed that Action 1, Action 2, Action 3 (Heritage Laboratories) and Action 3 (Special Cultural Event) project activities contributed to all of them. However, it was noted that the contribution of each individual project to the objectives was difficult to quantify due to a lack of specific data – the relevance of projects and their contribution could only be inferred. Respondents found it more difficult to establish the logical fit of the remaining Action 3 activities with the programme's specific objectives. Specifically:

- European Heritage days are implemented independently in each Member State. The doors of monuments and sites often closed to the public are opened for visitors. A Commission interviewee noted that there is no cooperation between cultural operators and little evidence of promoting a shared or common European heritage.

- The link between the European Prizes and the specific objectives was not clear.

The European Capitals of Culture and the European Cultural Months are also both supported via the Culture 2000 programme although both pre-date the programme. Despite this, a clear argument could be made to demonstrate the link to the Culture 2000 specific objectives. In particular (emphasis in italics):

(a)   promotion of cultural dialogue and of mutual knowledge of the *culture and history of the European peoples*;

(c)   the *highlighting of cultural diversity and the development of new forms of cultural expression*;

(d)   sharing and highlighting, at the European level, *the common cultural heritage of European significance*; disseminating know-how and promoting good practices concerning its conservation and safeguarding;

(f)   the *fostering of intercultural dialogue and mutual exchange between European and non-European cultures*;

(h)   *improved access to and participation in culture in the European Union for as many citizens as possible.*

3.0   External Coherence

Main Evaluation Question: to what extent the does Culture 2000 programme not contradict other interventions with similar objectives, which are either carried out at EU level or by national/regional authorities of Member States (principle of subsidiarity)?

Evaluation Sub-Questions:

- The degree of complementarity developed in relation to other relevant EU programmes
- The extent to which the programme has remained complementary to similar national programmes and Actions and did not substitute them.
- The extent to which the programme has inspired the introduction of similar programmes and Actions by national or regional authorities of the countries participating in the programme.
- The extent to which the programme has increased readiness of national authorities of the countries participating in the programme to exchange information and best practice and to cooperate in the area in question.

3.1   Complementarity with other EU Programmes

3.1.1   Comparison of Culture 2000 with selected EU programmes incorporating culture

Complementarity of a programme with other actions is understood as a state in which the programme *supports other programmes activities and objectives and fills possible gaps between the various initiatives.* The analysis of complementarity between Culture 2000 and other Community programmes has focused on the comparison of:

- target groups;
- global and specific objectives (intended aims);
- operational objectives (types of intervention);
- inputs (size, type and duration of funding);
- the programmes' intended outputs; and
- the immediate and long-term effects of these activities (results and impacts).

The complementarity of Culture 2000 will be determined by the extent to which the programme objectives, structure, type of funding, target groups or activities of Culture 2000 do not overlap with or duplicate those of other programmes.

The programmes compared in this review are:

- Culture 2000;
- Media Plus;
- Media Training;
- European Cultural Bodies;
- MEDA II
- *e*Content;
- *e*Content*plus;* and
- Active Citizenship.

Culture is a horizontal theme in these and many other Community interventions, including the Youth programme and the Structural Funds. Indeed, in some of these initiatives it was prioritised during some calls for proposals.[20] However, each programme does take a slightly different view of culture, for example, some focus on the business or creative industries sector and others on ICT applications and culture.

Target groups

Our analysis indicated that the target groups of each initiative do vary and this can be attributed to the strong sectoral or geographical focus. For example, the Media and *e*Content programmes have a strong sectoral focus while the MEDA II programme has a strong geographical focus. The table below summarises the target groups of all the programmes compared.

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[20] For example, Youth programme call for applications 2005. See: SEC(2007)570, *Inventory of Community actions in the field of culture, Accompanying document to the Communication […] on a European agenda for culture in a globalising world*, Commission Staff Working Document, p26.

Table 3.1 Target groups

Programme	Target groups	Country Coverage
Culture 2000	• cultural operators • creative artists • private and public promoters • cultural networks • cultural institutions	Member States + EFTA (Iceland and Norway) + EU candidate countries (Turkey, from 2006)
Media Plus	cultural operators in the cinematographic and audiovisual sector	Member States + associated countries of Central and Eastern Europe + Cyprus, Malta, Turkey and those EFTA countries which are members of the EEA Agreement + countries which are parties to the Council of Europe Convention on Transfrontier Television
Media Training	professionals from the audiovisual industry	
European Cultural Bodies	• European-level representative and umbrella organisations of the cultural sector, such as organisations acting as cultural 'ambassadors' (Orchestras, Choirs and others performing artists companies) • organisations working towards an aim of general European interest in the field of culture, such as the European Bureau for Lesser-Used Languages and the centres of the Mercator network	International organisations at European level
MEDA II (Euromed Heritage and Media)	• heritage organisations Euromed Heritage: • NGOs, universities/research institutes, associations, local authorities, museums, government agencies and private companies (maritime, music, food and craft sectors)	Member States + Non-Member States bordering the Mediterranean including but not limited to Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Tunisia and Turkey.

Programme	Target groups	Country Coverage
	Euromed Media • audiovisual professionals, film makers, independent film companies, film archives, distributors, and broadcast executives.	
eContent	• content creators in private and public sectors • packagers and designers • language and customisation players • publishers and distributors • net services companies • rights trading actors • capital market players • experts and market enablers	Member States + European Economic Area countries + EU Candidate countries
*e*Content*plus*	• legal entities established in the EU Member States	Member States + EFTA States (Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein) + EU Candidate countries (Croatia, Turkey and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)
Active Citizenship	• bodies pursuing aim of general European interest • NGOs, associations, federations • municipalities, local and regional authorities (town twinning)	Member States + EFTA (Iceland and Norway) + candidate countries (Turkey, from 2006)

Source: ECOTEC Research & Consulting Ltd, 2007, on the basis of decisions establishing each programme

There is some common ground in the target groups of Culture 2000 and the other initiatives under investigation.   The beneficiaries of Media Plus, Media Training, European Cultural Bodies, MEDA II (Euromed Heritage and Media) and Media Plus could all conceivably apply for and receive Culture 2000 grants.

Global Objectives

The overall global objectives of Culture 2000 also appear to have some overlap with those of other programmes. Many of the programmes share similar global objectives regarding the dialogue between cultures and awareness of cultural backgrounds, heritage and diversity.

For example, in the Active Citizenship town twinning Action, projects are expected to raise awareness of the common elements of European culture and history; the Euromed Heritage programme also seeks to promote knowledge of cultural heritage; and the European Cultural Bodies programme seeks to strengthen Community action in culture and increase its effectiveness through supporting European level cultural bodies. Culture 2000, European Cultural Bodies, Media, and MEDA II all promote the movement of cultural professionals and European works inside and outside the Community.

However global objectives reflect overall European Commission priorities and objectives, and it is expected that they should be similar across programmes – this indicates a degree of co-ordination in the design of initiatives.

Specific objectives

It is in the examination of the specific objectives of the programmes under review that differences become more clearly identifiable at this stage it becomes clearer what each programme is seeking to achieve.

Many of the programmes under investigation have entirely different specific objectives. Some similarities *do* exist, for example, both Culture 2000 and *e*Content have an objective of improving access to culture (Culture 2000) and to [cultural] information (*e*Content) but even here there are differences. The notion of culture is broader than that of information and information is not limited to cultural information.

Operational objectives (areas of intervention)

At the level of operational objectives the differences between the programmes blur as the *means* of intervention tend to be similar.

Generally, interventions take the form of shared-costs projects, usually based on partnerships with an indicative minimum number of partners necessary to be awarded a grant. They are either annual or multi-annual and sometimes take the form of experimental actions or pilot projects. However, these delivery mechanisms are similar across many EU and indeed national interventions and are simply a means to achieve various objectives across the programmes.

Inputs

Inputs across the programmes reviewed vary considerably. The combined Media Plus and Media Training programmes are the largest with over €0.5bn allocated. In terms of budget size they are followed by Culture 2000 and *eContentplus* (see Table 3.2 below).

Table 3.2 Duration, budget and budgets' breakdown

Programme	Duration	Budget (€)	Budget breakdown
Culture 2000	2000-2006	236.5m	• Action 1 – 45% • Action 2 – 35% (at least) • Action 3 – 10%
Media Plus	2001-2006	453.6m	• Development: at least 20% • Distribution: at least 57.5% • Promotion: approximately 8.5% • Pilot projects: approximately 5% • Horizontal costs: at least 9%
*e*Content	2000-2004	100m	• Improving access to and expanding use of public sector information 40-45% • Enhancing content production in a multilingual and multicultural environment 40-45% • Increasing the dynamism of the digital content market 10-15%
*e*Content*plus*	2005-2008	149m	• Facilitating at Community level access to digital content, its use and exploitation 40-50% • Facilitating improvement of quality and enhancing best practice related to digital content between content providers and users, and across sectors 45-55% • Reinforcing cooperation between digital content stakeholders and awareness 8-12%
Euromed Heritage	2001-2007	30m	Not applicable.

Programme	Duration	Budget (€)	Budget breakdown
European Cultural Bodies	2004-2006	19m	Not applicable.
Media Training	2001-2005	59.4m	Not applicable.
Active Citizenship	2004-2006	80m	• Operating grants – 40% • Grants – 20% • Town twinning – at least 40%

Source: ECOTEC Research & Consulting Ltd, 2007, on the basis of decisions establishing each programme

In most of the programmes, including Culture 2000, the Community intervention rate does not exceed 60% (in very specific cases) and generally amounts to no more than 50% of the eligible expenditure. The exceptions to this are operating grants which can amount to up to 80% of the running costs of an organisation, and are awarded on condition that at least 20% of an organisation's costs are co-financed from non-Community sources. It is also among the organisations receiving operating grants where the difference in inputs they receive for their activities is very large as compared with Culture 2000. Operating grants cover only administrative costs, overheads and staff costs for the organisations core activities and do not cover additional non-core projects which are financed under different programmes, be they Community or non-Community ones.

Outputs

There are some similarities in Culture 2000 outputs and the project outputs from most of the other programmes: all produce reports, websites, networks and events. However, the differences in the focus of each of the programmes mean that the *content* of these outputs is at least subtly different or entirely unique.

For example, the outputs for the eContent programme include new digital products or services which are commercially viable, best practice models, methodologies and tools for dissemination of results as well as fostering new partnerships.[21] Culture 2000 may produce these types of outputs but the focus of the programme is on fostering cultural cooperation, not commercial product development.

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[21] Technopolis Ltd. (UK), IDATE (France) and PRISMA (Greece), *Mid-term Evaluation of the eContent programme*, Final Report, Brussels: DG Information Society & Media, 2003, pp72-80.

Results

The ECOTEC report on dissemination and exploitation[22] identified five types of results emerging from DG EAC programmes and initiatives. Although not all of the programmes considered in the review were managed by DG EAC, it will be useful to categorise the results according to the typology used.

The results can be broadly categorised as:

- Products which are tangible and durable outputs such as new learning products, new curricula, audiovisual materials, projects and reports, publications, but also new skills.
- Methods which are less tangible and include cooperation processes and methodologies, managerial lessons and know-how.
- Experiences which are intangible and likely to be less durable than products and methods.
- Policy lessons emerging from the overall experience in the project within the programme or initiative, which are later applied by 'multiplier' agents.
- European cooperation which includes partnerships, networks, dialogue and cooperation.

The distribution of types of results of the programmes under review is likely to be different, with some types common to all programmes and some more prevalent in certain programmes.

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[22] ECOTEC Research & Consulting Ltd, *Evaluation of mechanisms for the dissemination and exploitation of the results arising from programmes and initiatives managed by the DG for Education and Culture*, final report, Brussels: DG Education and Culture, 2006, pp19-20.

Table 3.3 Intended results of the programmes

Programme	Intended Results
Culture 2000	• improved capacity for cultural actors to engage in transnational cooperation projects • increased and sustainable transnational cooperation of cultural actors • increased mobility of cultural actors, artists and works • improved skills and knowledge of cultural actors / staff / artists • increased European outlook of cultural actors, artists and audiences
Active Citizenship	• strengthened civil society organisations at EU and national level • EU citizens better informed about the activities of the EU • increased use of inputs from civil society organisations in EU policy-making • increased interaction and stronger international networks between twinned towns and villages
Media Plus	• increased awareness of professionals as to the importance of the development phase • production projects • increased mobility of European cinematographic works and audiovisual programmes inside and outside the community • increased 'profile' of the European audiovisual sector
Media Training	• increased skills and technical know-how of professionals in the audiovisual industry, especially in new technologies (with a European dimensions)
*e*Content	• concrete project outputs such as demonstrators for new digital products/services which are commercially viable • development of best practice models and methodologies • dissemination of results • fostering new partnerships[23]
*e*Content*plus*	• better conditions for accessing, using, reusing and exploiting digital material, based on which added-value products and services can be built across Europe • increased use and re-use of digital material by content providers and users • easily accessible digital content, irrespective of location or language • greater efficiency and effectiveness in the creation, use and distribution of digital content • digital content activities in Europe fully integrate multicultural and multilingual aspects
European Cultural Bodies	• improved capacity of European cultural actors to engage their statutory activities and effective operation of these bodies • increased awareness of historic events • stakeholders represented at community level, increased networking of bodies active in the cultural field • better representation and informing of the regional and minority language communities of the European Union • information on legislation, education and media fields translated into lesser used languages and disseminated

Source: ECOTEC Research & Consulting Ltd, 2007

[23] Mid term evaluation of eContent

Culture 2000 focuses largely on cultural co-operation and while new products are an important and welcome result, they are not the singular aim of the programme. Media Plus, *e*Content and *e*Content*plus* focus on methods and products but also have a share of their budgets dedicated to cooperation. European Cultural Bodies and Active Citizenship have both an important part of their results ultimately focused on policy lessons developed as a result of their support for organisations active in this area. MEDA II is focused on cooperation and policy lessons but also on developing new methods and products. A large number of projects also have a component concerning mobility and skills.

Impacts

In the reconstruction of the intervention logic, impacts were divided into three groups: namely impacts on people, practice and policies. These correspond roughly to the results outlined above, whereby the policy lessons exert influence on policy practice, new forms of cooperation and mobility stem from new partnerships and networks, etc.

In analysing both the results and impacts of the programmes due attention has to be paid to the inputs allocated to each particular programmes - inputs into each programme vary in size and so their potential impact also varies. However, it should be noted that there is not necessarily a positive correlation between the size of a programme and its impact, i.e., larger programmes do not necessarily have a greater impact than smaller programmes. The type of activity funded is important as are the attempts to make use of the programme's outputs and results. For example, the European Cultural Bodies programme distributes operating grants targeted at representative bodies in the cultural sector. These grants are intended to be 'strategic' and to facilitate the building of a long-term relationship between the grant maker and grant recipient.[24] These grants are explicitly expected and intended to produce policy and practice impacts and in this respect these programmes may rival or eclipse the impact of the larger Culture 2000.

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[24] This is also the case in the Active Citizenship programme.

Table 3.4 Intended impacts of the programmes under review

Programme	Intended impacts
Culture 2000	**People** • Attracting greater numbers of people to participate in cultural events/activities • Improved knowledge of the culture and dissemination of European culture and history • Increased European cultural awareness among EU citizens **Practice** • Creating new forms of cultural expression • Encouraging and facilitating the movement of artist, cultural operators and cultural products / works • Improved conservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage of European significance **Policies** • Increased funding for national cultural policy • Increased funding for transnational cooperation cultural policy • Increased synergy between national cultural policies
Active Citizenship	• Policy/legislative change • Follow-on/new activities • Consolidation/expansion/creation of networks • Improved access/communication with institutions and better dialogue with civil society • Continuity of activities • Greater visibility of an event/organisation • Empowerment[25]
Media Plus	• increased competitiveness of the European audiovisual sector • increased circulation of the European audiovisual works inside and outside Europe • increased presence and preservation of the linguistic and cultural diversity • improved production in regions with low production capacity
Media Training	• increased competitiveness of the European audiovisual sector • increased knowledge and skills of the audiovisual sector professionals
eContent	• more accessible, usable and exploitable making digital content in Europe
eContentplus	• more accessible, usable and exploitable European digital content in the field of public sector information, spatial data and educational, cultural and scientific content • improved creation and diffusion of information, in areas of public interest, at Community level

[25] ECOTEC (2006). Ex-post evaluation of the Community Action programme to promote active European citizenship (civic participation), p.47-48

Programme	Intended impacts
	• better environment for investment and innovation
European Cultural Bodies	• increased networking between the cultural bodies • better policy representation • increased awareness of the common cultural heritage
MEDA II	• improved mutual understanding between European and Mediterranean countries through programmes in media, youth, information technology, and heritage • improved networking of universities and researchers, local communities, associations, political science foundations, trade unions and non-governmental organisations, the media, private business and cultural institutions in the widest sense, as well as the other bodies listed in point

Source: ECOTEC Research & Consulting Ltd, 2007

3.1.2   Cultural cooperation activities in other EU programmes

Evidence from other sources supports the finding that culture is a common thread in other EU-level programmes. Respondents to the three email surveys[26] and interviewees from the DG EAC Culture Unit all cited examples such as, Media, eContent*plus*, Youth, 7 FP, Lifelong Learning Programme and the Structural Funds as programmes that have or had an element of culture in them. However, all parties emphasised the belief that Culture 2000 is the only Europe-wide programme with a specific focus on encouraging international cultural cooperation. In all other programmes, culture was viewed as subject to the main objectives of those programmes.

Email survey respondents also highlighted differences in the administrative and financial rules of EU programmes.

- *Application and selection* – The application and selection rules are different across the countries in case of Structural Funds and any other programmes that involve a 'national' focus (Community Initiatives such as Interreg III).
- *Partnership arrangements* – unlike Culture 2000 some programmes provide support for preparatory visits and the composition of and requirements for partnership differ across the programmes.
- *Programme Budget allocations* – respondents noted that these differ widely and that Culture 2000 had one of the lowest levels of financial resources.
- *Financial rules* – There are differences between the programmes (and Actions within programmes) in terms of eligibility of costs and co-financing (both intervention rate and the match funding rules).

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[26] i.e., of the Cultural Contact Points, Programme Management Committee and cultural experts.

The target groups of many programmes were viewed as similar, although in some programmes where they were more clearly specified it was possible to make a clearer distinction (e.g., Youth targets young people and Media targets film and audiovisual producers). It was noted that some programmes do not have the same country coverage and some non-EU countries do not fully participate in all EU programmes (e.g. Iceland).

The overall opinion of email survey respondents was that Culture 2000 complemented other EU programmes rather than duplicated them. Commission staff partly attributed this to the inter-service consultation whereby different branches of the Commission communicate to ensure that there is no duplication in activities. For example, DG Research always consults DG EAC on cultural elements of their calls for proposals.

3.2   Complementarity with National and Multi-National Programmes

Three multi-national European transnational cooperation programmes were noted by survey respondents: the Visegrad Group, the Central European Initiative and the Nordic Council. All three of these groupings of countries have elements of transnational cultural cooperation as part of their wider cooperation activities. All three support cooperation projects similar to those supported through Culture 2000 and the Nordic Council also supports the mobility of artists and awards prizes in film, music, literature and nature and environment.

Further information on these groupings is given below in figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1 Multi-national Cooperation in Europe

Visegrad Group: Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia

The Visegrad Group (also 'V4') of countries aim to work together in a number of fields of common interest. The four member countries share cultural and intellectual values and common roots in diverse religious traditions, which they wish to preserve and further strengthen.

The Group aims at encouraging optimum cooperation with all countries, in particular its neighbours, its ultimate interest being the democratic development in all parts of Europe. The V4 wishes to contribute towards building the European security architecture based on effective, functionally complementary and mutually reinforcing cooperation and coordination within existing European and transatlantic institutions. In order to preserve and promote cultural cohesion, cooperation within the V4 Group will enhance the imparting of values in the field of culture, education, science and exchange of information. Projects supported from the 2005 selections include:

- International Film Festival "Central and Eastern European Cinema" 36th Lubuskie Lato Filmowe - Łagów 2006

- 8th. Meeting of European Theatres and Culture

- Visegrad Arts Lab

The V4 supports the Visegrad Fund which was established in June 2000.   The fund promotes regional cooperation among the Visegrad countries through the support of common cultural, scientific research and educational projects, exchanges between young people, promotion of tourism and cross-border cooperation. The budget of the Fund comprises equal annual contributions of all member states. Since 2007, the member states agreed to contribute EUR 1,250,000 each, providing a total annual budget of EUR 5,000,000.

Between 2000-2006 the Fund had awarded 1,377 small and standard grants for cooperation activities, of which, 687 were in the field of culture.

Central European Initiative

The Central European Initiative (CEI) is composed of 18 Member States half of whom are EU Member Countries: Albania, Austria, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine.

The CEI was established in 1989 as an intergovernmental forum for political, economic and cultural co-operation among its Member States. Initially its main aim was to help transition countries in Central Europe come closer to the EU but in the late 1990's, the extension of its membership to South-eastern and Eastern Europe refocused its priorities on countries in special need.

Cooperation between Member States takes place in the four main fields of economic development, human development, institutional development and horizontal issues. Cultural cooperation occurs as a sub-field of the human development field and during 2004-6 concentrated on the conservation of tangible and intangible cultural heritage and know-how transfer in the field of cultural management. Projects supported from the 2005 selections include:

- Conservation of ceramics as part of the intangible cultural heritage in Mediterranean and South East European countries

- Praesens: Central European Contemporary Art Review

- 2nd CEI International Spring Festival 2005/ EUROPAfest

- Cultural Heritage Interactive (Chi:KHo)

During the period 2002-4 the CEI supported 351 cooperation projects, of which 77 (22%) were in the field of culture.

The Nordic Council

Official Nordic co-operation is channelled through two organisations: the Nordic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers. There are five participating countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden and three Autonomous Regions (the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Åland).

The Nordic Council was formed in 1952 and is the forum for Nordic parliamentary co-operation. The Council has 87 elected members, representing the five countries and three autonomous territories. Members are draw from the national parliaments and nominated by their respective political party. The Council distributes grants annually for projects, finance research scholarships and organise exchange progammes to stimulate and increase Nordic co-operation.

The Nordic Council of Ministers, formed in 1971, is the forum for Nordic governmental co-operation. Overall responsibility for the Nordic Council of Ministers lies with the respective Prime Ministers. In 2006 the Concil of Ministers budget for culture was DKK 155,328 millions.

Cultural cooperation supports the following institutions: the Nordic Cultural Fund, the Nordic Film and TV Fund, the Nordic Information Centre for Media and Communication Research, and the Nordic Houses and Institutes in Iceland, Greenland, the Faroe Islands, Åland and Helsinki. The Council also operates two progames: a mobility and residence programme for artists and performers of all types and a programme for co-operation on computer games for children and young people.

In addition, prizes are awarded for film, literature, music and nature & environment.

Source: www.visegradgroup.eu, www.ceinet.org, www.norden.org

Individual cultural institutions, such as the Goethe Institute (Germany), the Instituto Cervantes (Spain) and British Council, also operate international programmes but these focus on the promotion of national culture abroad rather than fostering international cooperation of cultural operators. Other national initiatives were mentioned, some of which were also focused on promoting a country's culture abroad, but often were aimed at supporting national culture and cultural heritage.

Respondents noted several key differences between these multi-national and national initiatives and Culture 2000. In all cases, participation in the programmes is much more limited – national programmes and initiatives are often bilateral rather than multilateral and the three multi-national programmes involve 4-18 countries rather than the 31 in Culture 2000 (although the CEI does involve several countries that do not participate in Culture

2000). It was noted that these initiatives tended to engage with established public sector cultural operators and be less open to the private sector than Culture 2000.

There are also administrative and structural differences. Respondents indicated that cooperation agreements were different to the extensive partnership approach promoted by Culture 2000. In some cases it was felt that national initiatives had simpler application, selection and financing rules than EU programmes, especially with regard to co-financing and intervention rates.

Evidence from the review of project documents on the complementarity of Culture 2000 with other initiatives is limited – projects were not specifically required to provide details of match funding sources or to comment on possible alternative sources of funding. In several cases projects reviewed had previously received support for their activities from previous EU programmes (e.g., Raphael and Culture 2000) or from national sources and had accessed Culture 2000 funds to continue or develop them. It may be the case that these projects have substituted Culture 2000 funding to enable them to continue, but it is also possible that their initial activities were developed to such an extent that they constituted something substantially new and could only be funded by Culture 2000.

3.2.1 National priorities for transnational cultural cooperation

All countries represented in the response to the email surveys did have a cultural policy of some sort, several respondents did state that there were no specific priorities regarding transnational cultural cooperation.

Respondents noted that where priorities existed they were largely determined by each country's particular context, for example, their historical experiences, location and size. In smaller countries, such as Iceland or Cyprus, there was interest in fostering mobility of cultural operators and professionals and transnational cooperation. The Nordic countries have a long established cultural cooperation programme and are already involved in numerous cross-border activities. Among new members of the EU, there was often a feeling that European cultural cooperation was a relatively new field and that priorities were still developing.

The transnational cultural policy priorities provided by email survey respondents can be categorised into two groups: cooperation priorities requiring engagement with counterparts in other countries for joint working and non-cooperation activities where transnational partnerships are not required. These are summarised in table 3.5 below.

Table 3.5 Transnational Cultural Policy Priorities

Cooperation priorities	Non-cooperation priorities
▪ Commitment to cooperate within regional programmes, e.g. Nordic Council, Visegrad Group & CEI. ▪ Preservation of regional cultural heritage, for example in Central and Southern Europe (Romania, Hungary and Czech Republic). ▪ Support for domestic cultural operators and artists to engage in international cooperation (Norway). ▪ Facilitating international cooperation and mobility of people and works of art (Estonia and Cyprus).	▪ Promotion of national culture, language and heritage abroad (Italy). ▪ Promotion of positive image of country abroad (Hungary).

Source: Surveys of CCPs, Management Committee and Cultural Experts.

Some email survey respondents reported that Culture 2000 had been beneficial in terms of helping foster and enhance cultural cooperation between countries where national priorities already included a commitment to transnational cooperation. Alternatively, several respondents underlined the relatively small size of Culture 2000 and questioned its ability to contribute significantly to national cultural priorities.

Overall, there was no consensus among email survey respondents as to whether Culture 2000 helped individual counties to address their own transnational cultural cooperation priorities. Where countries are already involved with long-standing cooperation programmes there was felt to be little scope for Culture 2000 to determine priorities. Indeed, two respondents specifically criticised the lack of clear links between EU and national cultural cooperation policies.

3.2.2   Culture 2000's impact on national cultural policies

Email Survey respondents were generally unable to highlight any clear impact on the design and development of national cultural cooperation policy priorities as a result of Culture 2000.

However, a major impact which was noted by some email survey respondents was the establishment of co-funding programmes for Culture 2000. In some cases such support would be automatic upon approval from the Commission but in others there is another application procedure to obtain national co-financing from various national financing schemes that are not necessarily targeted at supporting Culture 2000 (Norway, Austria,

Iceland and Estonia). In the case of Norway, cultural operators could also obtain a small grant to prepare Culture 2000 projects.[27] The existence of many of these co-financing arrangements was reported in the Second External Evaluation of the programme which found that 11 countries had some sort of co-financing fund.[28]

> *Case Study Example:*
>
> *The Czech Ministry of Culture has supported participation in the Programme by creating a small fund for matching funds for culture 2000 projects. This fund finances up to 50% of the budget that the Czech organisation involved in the Culture 2000 project (as leader or as co-organiser) must co-finance.*

Evidence of this support from the project documents is partial as information on the sources of co-financing was not collected. However, it is clear that a large proportion of projects did receive financial contributions from national sources and others received contributions from local or regional government sources.

In the case of Romania, the main impact on national policy making was the establishment of national financial mechanisms for the promotion of culture with strong emphasis on the European dimension.

Email survey respondents from Hungary and Sweden reported "soft" outcomes: raising awareness of intercultural dialogue and cooperation and changing of attitudes among cultural operators to become more open to international cooperation. Respondents from smaller countries, such as Iceland or Cyprus, felt that the impact of the programme had been proportionally greater because of their size than in larger countries and an international dimension to cultural activities had become more integrated among cultural professionals.

Notwithstanding the establishment of several national co-financing funds, overall it was generally felt by email survey respondents that Culture 2000 has not had a significant impact on the development or design of national cultural policies. In Sweden it was noted that cultural policy had been stable for more than three decades and that Culture 2000 was too marginal a programme to have had an impact. By contrast, in Hungary it was felt that the lack of a specific cultural strategy meant that it was difficult to impact on policy. And in Slovenia, despite the country being relatively small, the perceived lack of impact was attributed to the small number of projects involving Slovenian operators.

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[27] These grants would be available to libraries, museums and archives.

[28] Llopis-Navarro, P., McCoshan, A., Murray, S. and Roy, S., *Second External Interim Evaluation of the Culture 2000 Framework Programme*, Brussels: DG Education & Culture, 2006, pp88-89.

3.3 Summary

Despite some similarities between the objectives, target groups, activities, inputs and impacts of Culture 2000 and those of other EU programmes, the desk review of programmes has made it clear that important distinctions can be made between the programmes. Our analysis has shown that while culture is often present in many programmes in some form it is never the main focus of activities. Where culture does feature in a programme the overall emphasis is different to the co-operation aspect of Culture 2000. Essentially, Culture 2000 was the only EU-wide programme that exclusively supported transnational intercultural co-operation projects and the creation and / or exchange of new cultural products, performances and experiences.

This analysis is supported by the responses to Management Committee, Cultural Contact Point and Cultural Expert email surveys. While many respondents to the surveys noted the presence of "culture" in other programmes, virtually all emphasised that Culture 2000 was the only programme with an exclusive focus on culture and intercultural co-operation – in all other cases it is simply one aspect of a broader programme.

Information on similar national or multi-national programmes is less extensive. Multi-national cooperation programmes between several countries do exist. A variety of bilateral cultural initiatives such as Nordic Cooperation the Central European Initiative and the Visegrad Fund all undertake similar activities but Culture 2000's range of participating countries, the amount of funding available and the focus on partnerships combine to make it unique.

The review of project documents has indicated that a large proportion of projects have received co-financing from public sources at national, regional or local level, in some cases from more than one source. The exact sources are not always clear, but it is likely that several projects were able to access the dedicated national co-financing funds for Culture 2000 that existed or other national funds that were available for transnational cooperation purposes. In any case, it is apparent that Culture 2000 participants have been successful in leveraging in co-financing for transnational cultural co-operation that may not have occurred without Culture 2000. However, it is not possible to quantify the level of co-financing leveraged by the programme.

As not all participating countries responded to the stakeholder surveys, data concerning the impact of Culture 2000 on national cultural policy design and priorities is incomplete. From the data available there is some evidence of Culture 2000 impacting upon national policy development – notably in the establishment of co-financing funds and the restructuring of the Nordic Cooperation framework.

However, there is little evidence of efforts to actively learn national policy lessons for intercultural cooperation from Culture 2000 projects - there was no adequate mechanism for identifying and disseminating good practice emerging from Culture 2000 to cultural policy-makers and practitioners.

4.0   Effectiveness

Main Evaluation Question: To what extent was the Culture 2000 programme successful in attaining the objectives set and achieving the intended results? In particular, but not exclusively, regarding those objectives which are also included in the new cultural programme 2007-2013.

Evaluation Sub-Questions:
- With regard to the specific objectives of the programme to what extent have the actions of the programme generated the expected results?
- To what extent has the programme generated unintended results (positive or negative)?
- Looking at the implementation of the programme, what have been the major constraints on the provision of financial support to the programme actions? i.e. what has prevented or delayed the distribution of grants to beneficiaries?
- To which extent has the programme been accessible and non-discriminatory?
- To what extent has the Programme produced visible results/impacts?
- What is the fame and the image of the Programme within the cultural sector?
- To what extent does the compartmentalisation in cultural fields (cultural heritage, visual arts, performing arts, and books and reading, including literary translation) corresponds to the reality of cultural cooperation in Europe and takes into account the emergence of new trends towards multidisciplinary activity?

4.1   Attainment of Programme Objectives

It has already been established in previous evaluations that the lack of indicators for Culture 2000 means that measuring the extent to which programme activities have contributed to the achievement of programme objectives is extremely difficult.   The intended and actual contribution of projects to programme objectives, results and impacts is not assessed or reported at the application stage, interim reporting or final reporting stage.

It should be noted that this problem is not exclusive to the Culture 2000 programme but is common across much of the DG EAC programmes for the period 2000-2006.

However, the Second External Interim Evaluation of the Culture 2000 found that overall, the activities supported by the programme had contributed to achieving all the programme

objectives in some way, and concluded that the programme was broadly achieving its objectives. It noted that greater progress appeared to have been made against some objectives (e.g., improving knowledge of European cultures and heritage, improving understanding of cultural diversity) than against others (e.g., stronger links with cultural operators in non-European countries, taking the role of culture into account in socio-economic development).[29]

The final evaluation has found no evidence contrary to this conclusion.

4.1.1 Appropriateness of Objectives

The email surveys explored whether the objectives of Culture 2000 were appropriate to the needs of the programme's stakeholders (e.g., cultural operators, European Commission and national governments). The majority of email survey respondents stated that the activities do support the objectives well, in particular concerning the development of cultural cooperation and fostering cooperation between cultural operators. They also noted the programme was fairly flexible as to the range of activities that could be carried out.

Email survey respondents were less positive when commenting upon the size of the programme which was felt to be small scale in terms of overall funding levels and the amount of activity. In particular respondents questioned the ability of the programme to achieve significant impact with the resources available and as a result of its low level of visibility and problems faced by small operators in accessing funds to participate. Some respondents, thinking perhaps about the level of programme funding, queried whether the programme was capable of achieving its objectives alone. Instead, it was suggested that due to its small size, Culture 2000 could only be reasonably expected to contribute towards their achievement.

When thinking about the future, respondents noted that between 2000 and 2006, there were major changes to the context the programme was operating in and that these and future changes must be considered in the design of new programmes. The enlargement of the EU to include 27 Member States and the participation of new countries in EU cultural programmes such as Turkey and Croatia may present new issues and priorities for cultural cooperation or require measures to support the participation of cultural operators (e.g., by supporting a project inception and preparation phase).

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[29] Llopis-Navarro, P., McCoshan, A., Murray, S. and Roy, S., (2006), *Second External Interim Evaluation of the Culture 2000 Framework Programme*, Brussels: DG Education & Culture, 2006, pp105-106.

4.1.2 Achievement of Objectives

The email survey of respondents' opinions on the extent to which the programme's activities met the global objectives were mixed. The majority felt that the size and scale of the programme meant that it was difficult to achieve the objectives in absolute terms. However, if the size and scope of Culture 2000 is taken into account, then in relative terms some felt that an analysis of individual projects would show that the programme demonstrated significant success towards achieving the objectives. One even suggested that the large number of unsuccessful applications showed that with more funding, further successes could be achieved.

4.1.3 Impact of the Programme

The main impact mentioned by the vast majority of email survey respondents was internationalisation in the cultural sector. This manifested itself in a number of ways:

- The programme helped to forge real partnerships and foster cultural cooperation and international exposure of cultural activities.
- Participation in the programme resulted in a wider and more European outlook among cultural professionals and policy makers, and improved the international cooperation and management skills of those involved in international projects.
- In some countries, participation in Culture 2000 helped raise the domestic profile of other European cultures and European culture as a whole.

The second main impact mentioned by email survey respondents was the provision of funding for cultural activities and support for the cultural sector. Many countries, especially the new Member States, introduced specific funding mechanisms to support Culture 2000 projects or opened existing funding sources to them. In some cases, such as Romania, these new funds involved a requirement for a European dimension.

Again though, a recurring feeling was doubt over the potential for individual projects to have a significant impact. The low visibility and small scale of the programme compared to overall national cultural activities were felt to marginalise the programme. One respondent noted that there were no studies looking into the impact of the programme and individual projects so it was impossible to say for sure what the impacts, if any, were.

4.1.4   Impacts achieved

Email survey respondents were unable to ascribe any major impact on national policy to the actions of an individual project. However, that is not to say that they felt that Culture 2000 projects had no impact, rather that the level of impact was limited. Both they and respondents to the project web-survey reported a wide range of impacts on people, cultural practice and, to a lesser extent national cultural policy, which was partially supported by evidence from the review of project documents.

Policy Impacts

A significant proportion of project web-survey respondents felt that their projects had improved the synergy and therefore quality of national cultural policies – 42% felt they had done so to a great or moderate extent (see figure 4.1) – and this was further reinforced by impacts reported in the project final reports examined in the document review. Specific examples cited by email survey respondents included the raised profile of specific cultural fields such as improved access to cultural heritage (Norway), contemporary dance and architecture (Austria) and improved visibility and focus of the dance sector (Hungary, Iceland). In Finland, Culture 2000 projects were reported to have influenced the way art and design were taught. In several countries respondents noted an increased focus on international cultural cooperation.

A minority of email survey respondents reported that Culture 2000 projects had led to increased funding on general cultural activities and cultural cooperation activities. In Iceland, the Reykjavik Arts Festival was given funding to operate on an annual basis and a Cultural Capital Fund was established where cultural operators could apply for funding. In Greece and Cyprus, the State provided match funding for Culture 2000 projects. Findings from the project web-survey supported this perception:

- 39% of respondents felt that their projects had contributed to increased funding for national cultural policy to a great or moderate extent; and
- 47% felt that their projects had contributed to increasing funding for transnational cultural cooperation policy to a great or moderate extent (see figure 4.1).

**Figure 4.1 Impact of project activities on cultural policy**
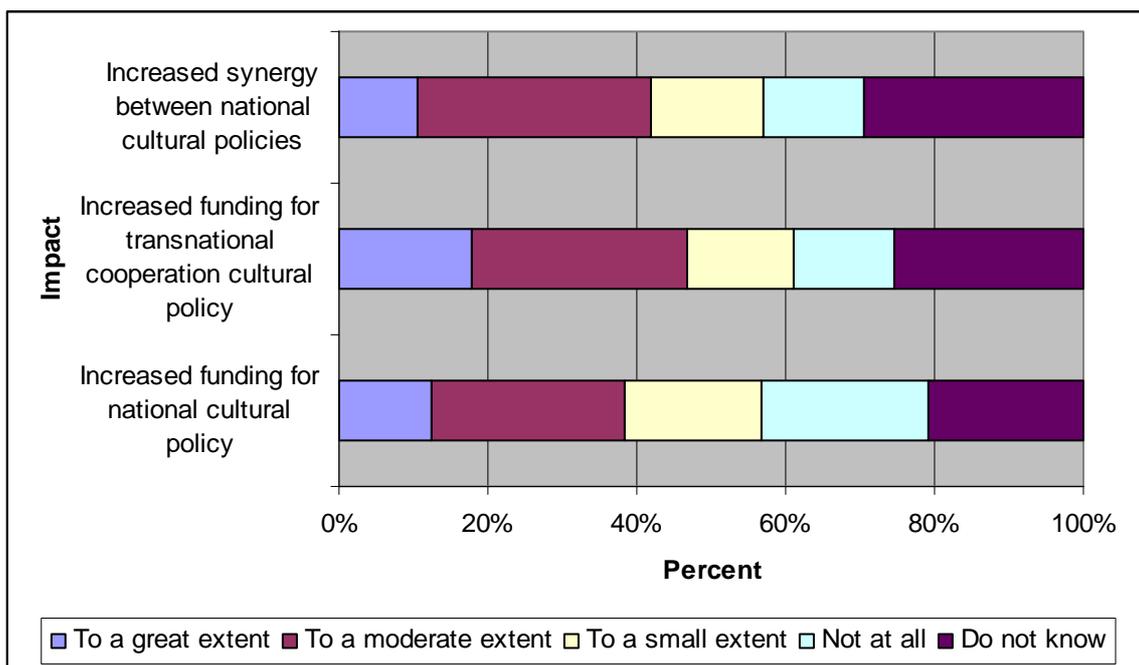
Source: ECOTEC web survey of project leaders and co-organisers, 2007.

Cultural Practice Impacts

Web-survey respondents were overwhelmingly positive when reporting the contribution of their projects to improved cultural practice in Europe and in their countries.

- 68% felt that their project had contributed to creating new forms of cultural expression to a great or moderate extent.
- Over three quarters of respondents (78%) felt that their project had encouraged or facilitated the movement of artists, cultural operators and cultural products / works.
- 67% of respondents felt that their project had contributed to improving conservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage of European significant to a great or moderate extent (see figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2 Impact of project activities on cultural practice
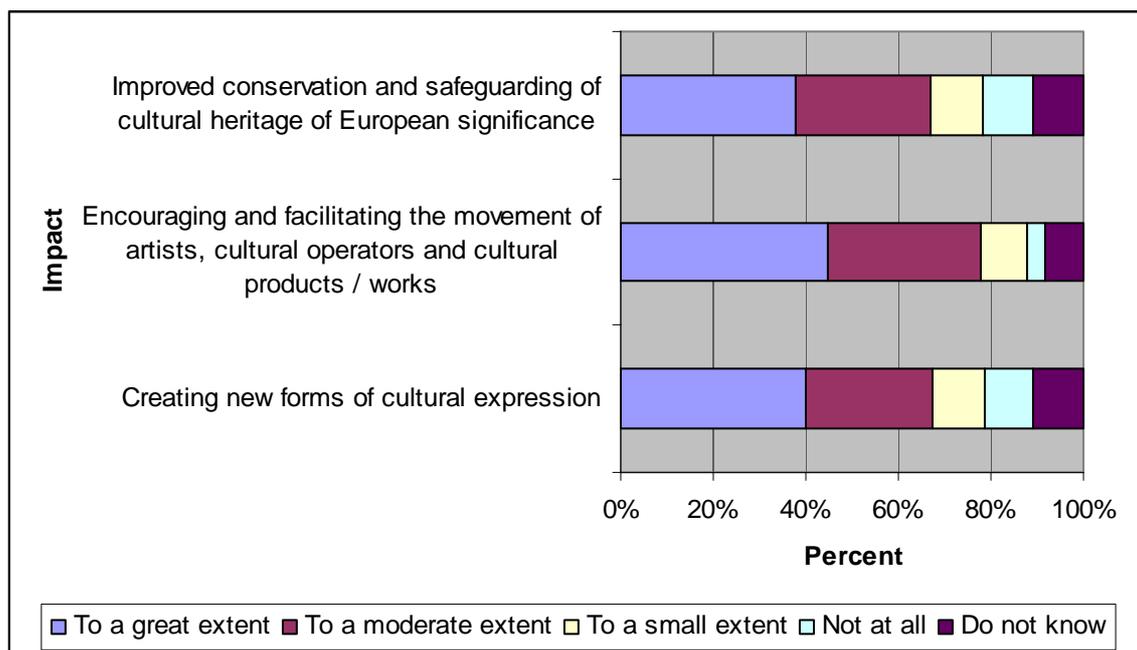
Source: ECOTEC web survey of project leaders and co-organisers, 2007.

A major impact of Culture 2000 reported by survey respondents was the creation of, and support for, transnational networks of cultural operators which introduced alternative forms of working and thinking throughout the networks. This was also referred to in many of the final project reports examined in the document review. Here, projects reported new ways of working through interdisciplinary, multicultural cross-border mobility. Cooperation and networking had significantly contributed to the development of new forms of artistic expression (events, methods, media used, etc.) and the sharing and exchange of good practice. At organisational level, many projects reported that partners had improved their skills and systems and now possessed greater capacity to initiate and participate in transnational cooperation projects.

Examples of impacts on cultural practice reported by projects in their final reports include:

- Improved skills of project participants (in some very specific domains, such as restoration of buildings or traditional cuisine).
- Increased transnational cooperation between the cultural operators, increased networking and expanding of contacts, as well as contribution to the sustainability of such networks.
- Increased European awareness and outlook of cultural operators and artists.
- Facilitation of the mobility of artists and artistic works.
- Improvement and protection of the national cultural heritage.
- Improved capacity of cultural operators of engaging in international activities.

People Impacts

Projects were overwhelmingly positive about the impact of their activities on the public in the web-survey:

- 78% of respondents felt their project had contributed to attracting greater numbers of people to participate in cultural events / activities to a great or moderate extent.
- 85% of respondents felt their project had contributed to improved knowledge and dissemination of European culture and history to a great or moderate extent.
- 75% of respondents felt their project had contributed to increased European cultural awareness among EU citizens to a great or moderate extent (see figure 4.3).

This was supported by evidence from the project document review. Projects referred to the organisation of large public events that attracted wide audiences, increased dissemination and information provision about culture on websites and through other media and the many publications (in addition to books translated under Action 1) generated.

> **Case Study Example:**
>
> **The World Roma Festival KHAMORO 2004 attracted some 5,000 - 8,000 participants including visitors, Roma artists and experts that performed at the festival, governmental and non-governmental organisations and institutions and culture institutions. It has contributed to increasing interest in Roma culture and its interpretation in the Czech Republic and in Europe.**

A number of projects had increased the participation of local communities in cultural activities and had felt that this had developed a sense of ownership of culture among local people, as well as attracting more people to engage in culture.

> **Case Study Example:**
>
> **The EMILE project (Leaving Europe for America - early EMIgrants Letter stories) implemented a sub-project called "Young Emile" through which school history classes sought to involve young students in the project and make them learn about the migration past of their countries.**

Figure 4.3 Impact of project activities on people
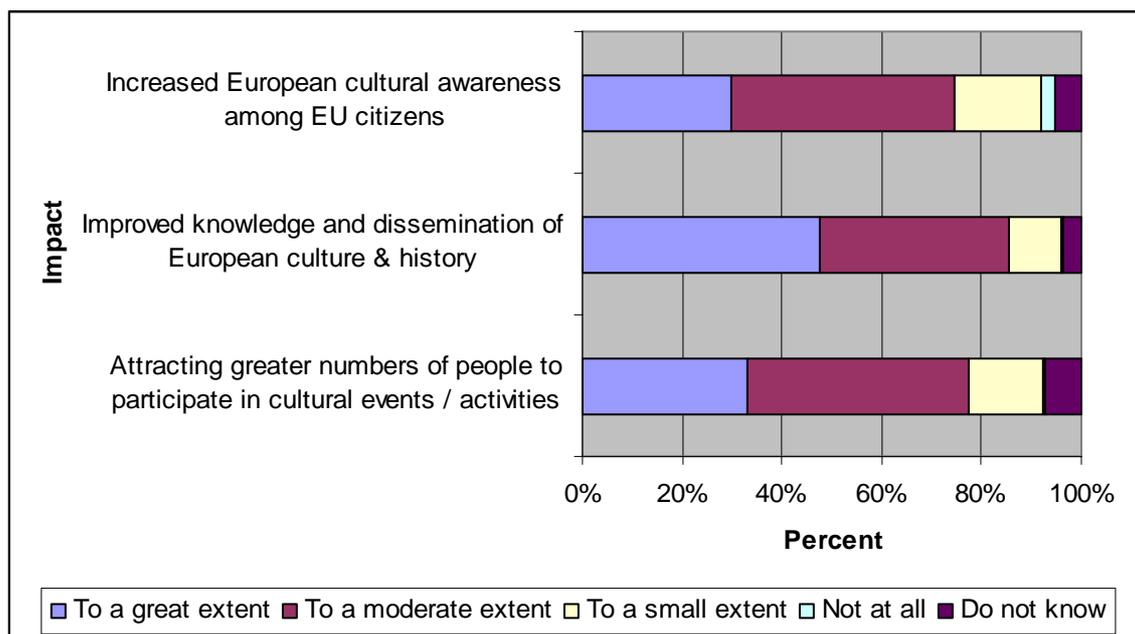
Source: ECOTEC web survey of project leaders and co-organisers, 2007.

Examples of impacts on people reported by projects in their final reports include:

- Improved knowledge of European culture and history
- Increased European awareness of the audience (citizens)
- Involvement of local communities
- Attraction of greater and more diverse audiences to arts

4.1.5   Barriers to participation

Only a minority (17%) of respondents to the web-survey felt that there were issues preventing cultural operators joining Culture 2000 project partnerships. That said, a number of perceived barriers to participation in the programme were cited by email and web-survey respondents that merit further consideration. These fall into three categories:

Organisational capacity issues

In some organisations their small size and resulting lack of human and financial resources to invest in planning and managing a project application were barriers. Even if a successful application was submitted the high associated costs of partnership

management and the resources required to administer the Culture 2000 grant were also seen as prohibitive. As one web-survey respondent said "EU money never comes cheap".

Another key issue was the availability of staff with the skills and expertise to effectively manage transnational cooperation projects. Email survey respondents felt that smaller cultural operators were less likely to possess these skills. In comparison, it was felt that larger cultural operators such as museums and universities would often have specific staff with the role of facilitating international cooperation. It was suggested by one email survey respondent that training sessions on practical project implementation could be operated by the CCPs for project promoters to help build organisational skills and management capacity.

Programme management issues

Some email and web-survey respondents cited the perceived "bureaucracy" of the programme as a barrier to participation. Additionally, delays in the circulation of the calls for applications and the lengthy period between application submission and the announcement of the results made time planning difficult for cultural operators.

Case Study Example:

IDENTITY / INTEGRITY Brno, Capital of Visual Communication in 2002 project encountered delays in receiving their grant. Inexperience in administering EU grants was a contributing factor but the partnership struggled to receive answers and guidance to their queries on programme financial requirements from their European Commission programme manager and the project start was unavoidably delayed for several weeks.

Financial requirements and conditions

A number of email survey respondents from Sweden, Denmark, Slovakia, Slovenia, Lithuania and Austria noted the problems of finding co-financing. It was felt that this was a comparatively bigger problem for smaller operators and for those from less wealthy Member States. One respondent from Estonia mentioned that as domestic cultural sector salaries were much lower than in other wealthier Member States it was more difficult to cover the co-financing or self-financing requirement of the programme.

The "5% rule" where all co-organisers were each required to contribute 5% of the total project costs was specifically highlighted as a potential problem – it did not take into account the financial turnover of the co-organiser or the relative cost of living in each country. The "5% rule" was mentioned as a barrier to participation by around 10% of respondents to the web-survey and was criticised during the evaluation seminar. At the seminar it was noted that a similar requirement had been introduced for the Culture 2007 programme and seminar participants expressed the opinion that it should be removed.

Taken together there was a feeling that Culture 2000 inadvertently favoured the participation of larger organisations that were more easily able to provide internal financial and human resources for the projects and who already had specialised staff experienced in transnational cultural cooperation.

Finally, some web-survey respondents mentioned problems with obtaining bank guarantees.

Inadequate time for project preparation

A large proportion of email survey respondents felt that this was a barrier. Several felt that it was difficult to find project partners and although only 10% of respondents to the project web-survey agreed, it is important to consider this in more detail. Participants in the evaluation seminar noted that it is true that finding partners is not necessarily difficult – a quick email search can be fruitful in this respect – the problem is more in finding "good" partners with complementary interests, suitable skills and sufficient resources that you are able to develop strong and lasting working relations with. The online partner search database operated by the Spanish CCP was held up as a good source for cultural operators but it was also suggested that it should be centrally managed (by the Commission or the Executive Agency) to ensure completeness.

Web-survey respondents were also critical of the timescale and timing of the call for applications – the timing of the calls over the summer holidays and before the busy

autumn period for exhibitions was cited as a reason for the difficulty in developing projects and securing partners.

One of the email survey respondents suggested the creation of a small mobility fund to enable cultural operators to travel and explore potential partnerships which was felt to be particularly important for small operators with limited budgets or those from more remote regions where travel is time consuming and comparatively expensive. Participants in the evaluation workshop agreed that this would assist cultural operators in locating the "right" type of partner and potentially improve the overall quality of applications, but it was recognised that making funds available for this may reduce overall funding for projects.

4.1.6   Visibility, Awareness and Opinion of Culture 2000

Awareness among cultural operators

The vast majority of email survey respondents felt that the programme was well known amongst cultural operators in their country. This view was based on a variety of indicators:

- website hits and website registration in CCPs (Denmark, Czech Republic);
- high turnout at information meetings (Sweden);
- the volume of applications submitted per call for applications (Slovakia); and
- newsletter distribution lists (Czech Republic, Hungary).

The project web-survey also indicated that the project was fairly well known among cultural operators:

- 58% of web-survey respondents felt that some or most cultural operators in their country knew of Culture 2000.

This view was not shared by all email survey respondents. One felt that perhaps only 20% of cultural operators in their country knew about the programme with one suggesting that Culture 2000 was known only to small networks of cultural operators and not generally. Another respondent felt that operators in their country did not regularly surf the internet (and specifically the webpages where they would find information on the programme) and additionally faced language barriers in accessing information – the DG Education and Culture webpages on culture are only available in English, French and in some cases German. Another respondent felt that there was insufficient availability of information and not enough programme promotion.

It was noted by one email survey respondent that knowledge of the existence of the programme would not necessarily translate into an accurate understanding of its objectives and structure. This was reflected in the project survey where only 11% of respondents reported that cultural operators that *were aware of the programme* had a good understanding of the programme and 38% felt they had an adequate understanding. Some 36% felt that the overall level of understanding of cultural operators that *were aware of the programme* was poor.

Awareness among the public

The level of awareness and understanding of Culture 2000 among the general public is difficult to assess. In terms of publicity, the European Commission only requires the use of the EU flag and DG Education and Culture logos on materials (books, websites, posters, etc) but no mention of Culture 2000 specifically. Therefore, while the public may be generally aware that the EU had supported a project activity they would be unlikely to know that it was via Culture 2000 specifically and even less likely to possess a detailed understanding of the Culture 2000 programme.

This hypothesis is supported by the findings of a major qualitative survey of Europeans and culture which found that across Europe while there was an assumption that the EU was involved in cultural policy there was widespread ignorance or at best only a vague understanding of specific EU cultural initiatives.[30]

However, it is perhaps not important that EU citizens are not aware of Culture 2000 specifically. As far as EU citizens are concerned it is more important that the programme promotes the involvement of the EU rather than the programme specifically.

Fame and Image of the programme

There was a mix of views concerning the fame and image of the programme amongst email and web-survey respondents.

On the positive side, email survey respondents were supportive of the programme's support for international cultural cooperation and the fostering of networks, partnerships and mobility of cultural actors and artists.

However, it was also commonly expressed that the programme was seen to be too bureaucratic, too complicated to apply to and too difficult for smaller operators to access.

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[30] OPTEM S. A. R. L., *The Europeans, Culture and Cultural Values - Qualitative study in 27 European countries*, summary report, Brussels: DG Education and Culture, 2006, p64.

There was also criticism of the slowness of the payment process and the lack of, or slowness of, communication from the Commission.

This mix of views were also evident in the response to the web-survey where respondents were asked what the overall opinion of Culture 2000 was held by cultural operators in their country. Over a third of respondents were unable to answer the question. Of those that did express a view, 45% said it was positive, 32% neutral and 23% thought it was negative.

Some of the reasons given for the positive perception of the programme included:

- Culture 2000 encourages innovative and experimental activities;
- some New member States viewed the programme as a way of "being part of the EU";
- the international cooperation element; and
- it empowers cultural operators participating in the projects.

Some of the reasons given for the negative perception of the programme included:

- Not all organisation had the financial capacity to participate in the programme;
- the outcomes from Culture 2000 and previous programmes are not disseminated which creates the impression that the Commission is not interested in the outcomes;
- The application process is complicated and time consuming compared to the grant available;
- Grant administration and reporting requirements are viewed as heavy.

4.2   Summary

The lack of pre-set programme indicators makes it difficult to assess the extent to which the programme has met its objectives. It should be noted that this is not a problem confined to Culture 2000, but one which effected many DG EAC programmes over the period 2000-2006. In addition, this issue has been addressed for the Culture 2007-13 programme. However, evidence from previous evaluations indicates that the programme has met all its objectives to some extent, although it appears to have made more progress against some objectives than others.

Although a large amount of monitoring data has been collected, it does not systematically relate to the results, impacts or contribution to programme objectives. Nevertheless, Commission and EACEA interviewees, email survey respondents and web-survey respondents did feel that programme activities did support the objectives well, particularly

in the development of cultural cooperation and fostering cooperation between cultural operators.

Concerns over the extent of the programme's contribution to objectives centred on the scale of activities and budget of the programme, which was perceived by some evaluation participants to be too low to have an impact. Within the budget constraints it was felt that the programme could still demonstrate a significant contribution towards achieving the objectives.

Email and web-survey respondents reported a wide range of impacts on cultural policy, cultural practice and people. The most prominent example of policy impact included the establishment of co-financing funds for Culture 2000 projects in several participating countries and the restructuring of the Nordic cooperation framework to take Culture 2000 and Culture 2007 into account. At the level of cultural practice there was increased levels of co-operation activity between cultural operators that continued after and independently of Culture 2000 and activities supported by the programme had attracted greater and more diverse audiences.

Barriers to participation in the programme were perceived to exist. These often concerned the management and financial capability of cultural operators, particularly small organisations and those from less wealthy participating states, who struggled to allocate the resources necessary to develop an application and run a project. The other main barrier concerned programme management and administration; specifically, the con-financing "5% rule" and the perceived volume of bureaucracy and length of time taken to assess applications, complete contracting and issue payments.

It seems that the programme was fairly well known among cultural operators, largely as a result of the publicity activities of the CCPs. In comparison it was felt that the publicity and dissemination activities of the Commission could be significantly improved. Despite broad awareness of the programme web-survey respondents did suggest that in many cases the objectives and structure of Culture 2000 was poorly understood by cultural operators.

It is likely that Culture 2000 is less well known among members of the public, possibly as a result of the contractual publicity requirements imposed on grant recipients which do not require the use of the Culture 2000 logo.

Overall opinion on the programme was mixed. On the positive side, there was support for the aims and objectives of the programme - increased transnational intercultural cooperation, the creation of networks of cultural operators and the mobility of culture professionals and works. Conversely, the perceived bureaucracy and difficulties faced by some operators in participating certainly fostered some negative feeling.

5.0   Efficiency

Main Evaluation Question: How economically have the various inputs of the Programme (financial and human resources) been converted into outputs (projects and complementary activities) and results?

Evaluation Sub-Questions:
- The extent to which the budget of the Programme and the human resources deployed for its implementation (both in the Commission and the Executive agency) are commensurate with its intended outputs and results?
- The extent to which the Community operating grant to the cultural points has been efficiently used to cover the tasks ascribed to them?
- The extent to which criteria and funding rules within each action are appropriate to meet the objectives and priorities of each action?
- How appropriate has the frequency and timing of calls for proposals been?
- How efficient has the selection process in the various components of the programme been?
- How appropriate has the duration of application and payment procedures been?
- How efficiently have projects been monitored and evaluated by the implementing bodies?
- To what extent the IT system is appropriate to manage the programme?
- How satisfactory have been the regular contacts of the beneficiaries with the project managers of the Commission?

5.1   Management of the programme

5.1.1   Management structure

From 2000-2005 the Culture Unit of DG Education & Culture was responsible for all aspects of the management and implementation of the Culture 2000 programme. In 2006, when the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) was established, the bulk of day-to-day implementation responsibility passed to the EACEA while responsibility for cultural policy development was retained by the Commission. Figure 5.1 below summarises the changed responsibilities.

Overall responsibility for Culture 2000 rested with the Culture Unit throughout the period, as did day-to-day implementation of Action 3 which included special cultural events, European Cultural Heritage Laboratories, European prizes, inter-institutional cooperation (e.g., the European Heritage Days), European Capitals of Culture and European Cultural Months. In 2006, responsibility for implementing Actions 1 and 2 passed to the EACEA along with responsibility for administering the calls for applications and the assessment process. Throughout the period CCPs were responsible for publicising the programme in their countries and providing information, advice and guidance to cultural operators seeking to submit an application.

Figure 5.1 Management structure of Culture 2000

2000-2005	2006
DG Education & Culture: Culture Unit • Responsible for all actions of the Culture 2000 programme.	**DG Education & Culture: Culture Unit** • Responsible for Capitals of Culture, Cultural months, European prizes, Action 3, inter-institutional cooperation.
↓	↓
	Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency • Responsible for Actions 1 and 2
	↓
Cultural Contact Points • Responsible for promoting the programme at national level; providing advice & guidance to applicants.	**Cultural Contact Points** • Responsible for promoting the programme at national level; providing advice & guidance to applicants.

Source: ECOTEC Research & Consulting Ltd, 2007.

5.1.2   Human & Financial Resources

Data for the number and type of staff involved in programme management and implementation is only available for selection years 2002-2006.

This data shows that the number of staff in the DG EAC Culture Unit had increased from a low of 32 in 2002 to 37 in 2005 before reducing again to 35 in 2006. Overall, the trend was for staff levels to increase slightly year on year (see table 5.1).

The largest single group of staff were the programme managers / agents who were responsible for day to day management and support for projects. Their responsibilities involve contracting their caseload of projects (approximately 15 new projects per year), responding to queries from their existing projects and project closure (checking financial and narrative reports).[31] Programme managers / agents were supported by financial officers, administrative staff and technical staff.

Discussions with Commission and EACEA staff indicated that staff felt they had a heavy administrative workload that focused on financial and contractual administration of projects. It was felt that work priorities and the available budget did not allow a more proactive approach to project support and monitoring, specifically through a programme of project visits.

The main issue for consideration was whether increases in the workloads of staff over time were the cause of this reported strain on resources, whether there is simply insufficient human resources allocated to the programme's management and implementation or whether working practices lead to optimal efficiency.

We have already seen that there was a general upwards trend in the number of staff involved in programme management and implementation. Table 5.2 below shows two measures of the volume of work: (1) the volume of applications and (2) the volume of projects supported.

The volume of applications received for Culture 2000 support has varied substantially. In 2000, with the launch of the new programme 1,024 applications were received for Action 1 and 2 combined. This volume was exceptional and the volume of applications subsequently fell to 540 in 2001 and 432 in 2002 before steadily increasing to between 661 and 699 over the period 2003-2006.

The role of the managing authorities in the administration of the application process remained constant over the period – issuing the call for applications, initial processing of applications, organisation of the expert involved in selection, drawing up lists of projects proposed for selection for the review of the relevant bodies, etc. The majority of these tasks are of a relatively fixed nature – drafting a list of projects proposed for selection does not take exceptionally longer for a list of 700 projects as it does for 500 in the context of all the available resources. However, a significant increase in the volume of applications would require significantly more short term resources, or would require more time to undertake the initial processing of applications.

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[31] Source: group interview with EACEA staff.

As shown in table 5.2, the volume of applications has increased year on year since 2002 and according to interviews with DG EAC staff and the Second Interim Evaluation additional resources were not available to deal with this peak in the workload. In 2006 the Executive Agency was able to secure temporary staff resources to assist with this and other peak workload periods which should have resulted in an easing of the problem.

The number of Action 1 and 2 projects supported annually has also varied from a high of 235 in 2004 to a low of 182 in 2001. In total 1,460 projects were supported – an average of 208-209 projects per year. Table 5.3 calculates the approximate number of projects in each programme manager / agent's caseload to provide an estimate of their day-to-day workload. This analysis indicates that each programme manager / agent had approximately 20-23 projects in their caseload between 2002 and 2004. The average number of projects fell to 16-18 in 2005 and increased again in 2006 to 18-20 projects each.

This analysis is only approximate and does not take into account Action 3 project caseloads for example, but it does indicate that the day to day project caseload did not vary substantially between 2002 and 2006. Indeed, it indicates that the average project caseload decreased towards the end of the programme.

Given that reports from DG EAC and EACEA staff of a heavy workload are persistent, our conclusion is that the overall staff resources are insufficient and are exacerbated by peaks in the workload, e.g., at application submission deadlines. However, in 2006 the EACEA has been able to tackle the problem of peaks in workload by the recruitment of temporary support staff.

Assuming the inherent validity of evidence from DG EAC and EACEA staff it is possible to conclude that there was a mismatch between the deployment of staff resources and the volume of work during the life of the programme, particularly at peak times. However it is less clear whether this represents an overall insufficiency in staff numbers or whether the existing pattern of work organisation led to suboptimal efficiency. Existing ways of working should therefore be evaluated by the Commission against current models of good practice.

The Culture Unit's budget and financial commitment for the period 2000-2006 is shown in Annex 8. It shows that during the period 2000 - November 2005[32] the total administrative budget made available to the DG EAC Culture Unit was € 7.202 millions. If this was all spent, it would have exceeded the maximum amount of funds available for technical assistance as laid out in the Decision establishing the programme – this sets an upper limit of 3% of the programme budget for technical assistance (up to € 7.095 millions).

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[32] Full 2005 and 2006 data was not available.

The actual amount of the administrative budget spent was considerably lower than the budget provided for - only € 4.852 millions from 2000 - November 2005. Assuming that no exceptional items of expenditure occurred, an approximate estimate for the remaining 13 months of the programme provides an indicative figure for total administrative spend of € 5.8 millions. This figure is significantly below the budget allocated.

Our conclusion from this analysis is that the unspent portion of the programme administrative budget might have been able to alleviate the reported difficulties with human resources. However, it is not possible to say whether this would have _solved_ all the reported difficulties and as a result it is not possible to conclusively say that the financial resources allocated for programme management and implementation were sufficient. It should be noted that Commission recruitment rules are strict and limit the scope to appoint additional permanent staff. However, it was possible to appoint some temporary staff.

Table 5.1 Culture 2000 programme staff levels 2000-2006

Type of staff	Year							Responsibilities regarding the Culture 2000 programme
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006[33]	
Management	---	---	1	1	1	2	5 (2+3)	Head of Units; Programme management (ie.calls for proposals, communication on the programme, Operational Initiation & Verification tasks for specific projects) and team management (EACEA)
Programme Managers / Agents	---	---	12	12	13	15	13 (5+8)	Project management, e.g., operational and financial initiation, day to day management of the project from contracting to final payment (EACEA)
Finance officers	---	---	6	6	6	7	8 (3+5)	IF & VF tasks, financial planning/reporting (EACEA)
Administrative staff	---	---	8	9	9	9	9 (7+2)	Secretarial duties, e.g., document management, archives (EACEA)
Technical assistants	---	---	5	5	5	4	0	
Total	---	---	32	33	34	37	35	

Source: DG EAC Human Resources Unit via DG EAC Culture Unit and EACEA.

Notes: 2000-2001 data not available; 2005 & 2006 figures do not include staff seconded from the EACEA from the Commission Culture Unit; EACEA administrative staff were supported by 10 interim staff members who reinforced operations during 2006, e.g., reception/encoding of submitted proposals, secretarial support.

[33] 2006 figures in brackets are for DG EAC Culture Unit and the Executive Agency respectively.

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Table 5.2 Volume of applications received and projects supported for Action 1 and Action 2 of the Culture 2000 programme (2000-2006)

Action		2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Total
Applications	Action 1	915	410	349	517	524	532	567	3,814
	Action 2	109	130	83	144	157	152	132	907
	Total	1,024	540	432	661	681	684	699	4721
Projects	Action 1	198	154	200	180	211	190	180	1,309
	Action 2	19	28	24	19	24	21	21	151
	Total	217	182	224	199	235	211	201	1,460

Source: data for 2000-2004 sourced from the Second External Evaluation of Culture 2000 report; 2005-6 European Commission.

Table 5.3 Estimated caseload of projects per programme manager / agent

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
No. of new projects per programme manager / agent	---	---	18-19	16-17	18-19	14-15	15-16
No. of existing projects per programme manager / agent[34]	---	---	3-4	4-5	3-4	2-3	3-4
Total no. of projects per programme manager / agent	---	---	21-23	20-22	21-23	16-18	18-20

Source: ECOTEC estimates based on data provided by the European Commission and EACEA.

Notes: the estimates are based on the total number of Action 1 and 2 projects selected in each selection year divided by the number of programme managers / agents in each year. Action 3 projects are not included in the calculations.

[34] This figure is based on the assumption that all Action 2 projects would last three years. For example, 2000 selections would still be on a project manager / agents caseload until three years later – in 2002 selection year.

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IT systems

Problems with programme management information systems were highlighted in both the first and second external interim evaluations.   In the Commission's report responding to the former it was stated that "the Commission will launch in 2004 the new SYMMETRY management system, which will address this and other problems".[1]

Discussions with the Culture Unit indicated that the SYMMETRY system had not been implemented and that no programme-wide project database existed that enabled the Managing Authorities to monitor the various administrative milestones of each project (e.g., contracting, payments, reporting deadlines) or to easily produce accurate lists of participants and their contact details.

5.1.3   Appropriateness of the overall budget relative to programme aims and objectives

The Second External Interim Evaluation concluded that the overall budget of Culture 2000, while small compared to some Community programmes, was appropriate relative to the programme aims and objectives.

This conclusion was based on the view that the programme was not designed to be a programme with a high volume of activity, but intended to use its limited resources to support innovative and / or experimental activities to achieve high impact and visibility.   In this context, the evaluation report noted that highly effective dissemination mechanisms were required to share the benefits of the programme and to ensure a high level of impact.[2]

The final evaluation has found no evidence contrary to this conclusion.

5.1.4   The Cultural Contact Points (CCPs)

Web-survey participants were asked a number of questions about their national CCP covering the service they received and the services they used. Overall, satisfaction with the quality of information, advice and guidance provided by the CCPs was high among respondents:

- 67% rated their national Cultural Contact Points activities in publicising the Culture 2000 programme as acceptable or good.

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[1] Commission of the European Communities, R*eport from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic And Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Report on the implementation of the «Culture 2000» Programme in the years 2000 and 2001*, COM(2003) 722 final, Brussels, 24.11.2003, p5.
[2] Llopis-Navarro, P., McCoshan, A., Murray, S. and Roy, S., (2006), *Second External Interim Evaluation of the Culture 2000 Framework Programme*, Brussels: DG Education & Culture, 2006, pp112-113.

- 70% rated the quality of information about Culture 2000 provided on their Cultural Contact Points' Culture 2000 website as acceptable or good.
- 67% sought advice or guidance from their Cultural Contact Point while completing their application and of these, 91% rated it as acceptable or good.

When prompted for further comments about the quality of service provided by the CCPs, the majority of web-survey respondents were positive. CCP staff were generally felt to be "dedicated", "knowledgeable", "hardworking" and "willing to help". The information on their internet sites was also felt to be up to date and where they were unable to answer queries immediately, they did respond back with answers at a later date. However, there were some instances where the quality of service or website content was criticised.

Only 7% of respondents used a CCP database of cultural operators to identify partners for their project. When asked why they didn't use a database comments focused around three main points:

- There was no need as partners had been identified from established networks or other means;
- A desire to know and trust partners through previous cooperation or contacts with a potential partner; and
- Concern over the quality and quantity of potential partners on the database.

Another factor may have been the visibility of partner matching databases – they re not referred to or linked from the Commission or EACEA webpages and several participants in the evaluation seminar were unaware that they existed.

5.1.5   Programme management and implementation issues

Programme management and administration

Email survey respondents were particularly critical of programme management. Many CCPs underlined the delays in receiving basic information, such as the results of the call for applications.

Several respondents criticised the Commission / Agency for being slow in processing applications, payments and contracting remarking that deadlines were often missed and this was compared unfavourably with the rigid obligation to meet all deadlines imposed on projects. The review of project documents illustrated some frustration with this from applicants. Several projects mentioned the length of drawn-out application process as a problem although the lengthy process was clearly stated in later calls for applications. A

number of projects mentioned delays in contracting and a smaller number also mentioned delays in receiving the last payment.

> *Case Study Example:*
>
> *The Meeting place – North European visual arts project encountered a delay in the receipt of the initial project grant from the European Commission, which entailed a significant risk for the maintenance of the partnership. However, partners acknowledged the problem and stayed dedicated to the project - this was potentially a serious issue as the smaller private partners in particular could not afford to incur costs in advance of receipt of the grant.*

Application process

It seems that cultural operators were satisfied with the clarity of the application process and the frequency of calls for applications:

- 86% of respondents to the project web-survey felt that the process was clear; and
- 77% felt that the frequency of annual calls was about right.

Views on the information provided about the programme were similarly positive – around 70% of web-survey respondents felt that the information sources were "good" or "adequate" (see figure 5.2).

Two thirds of web-survey respondents (67%) had sought advice from their CCP before submitting their application and of those almost all felt that it was good (69%) or acceptable (22%).

Figure 5.2 Project web-survey views on the quality of information provided by the programme managing and implementation authorities
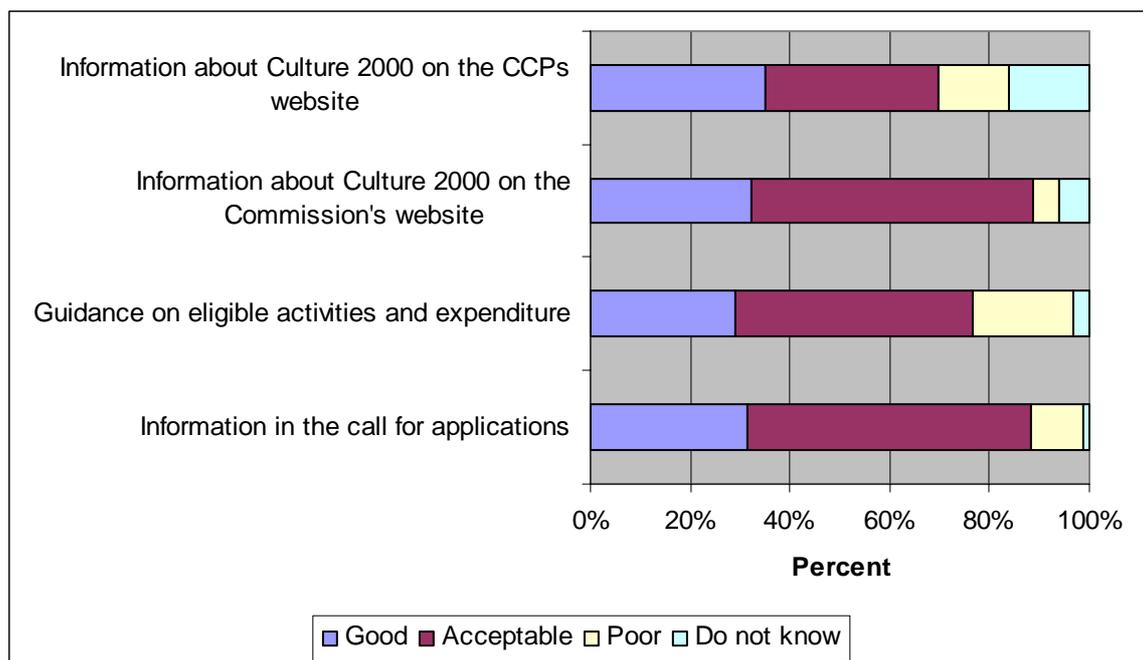
Source: ECOTEC web-survey of project leaders and co-organisers, 2007.

Very few respondents to the web-survey used a database of cultural operators to find partners (7%). As indicated previously, some evaluation seminar participants were unaware of the existence of a partner-matching database but overall opinion at the seminar was that such as service would be useful providing it was well maintained and the information was of good quality. It was felt that any such service would be best if coordinated centrally by the Commission or EACEA in conjunction with the CCPs.

Selection process

Email survey respondents criticised the transparency of the selection process and CCPs responding to the email survey felt excluded from the process and wanted better access to programme and proposal evaluation information. A minority of web-survey respondents also voiced concerns on the selection process - a substantial minority felt that it was "not transparent" (27%). Some specific concerns included:

- No explanation of why an application was or was not successful in the feedback provided;
- No information about how the selection procedure operated or of the selection committee;
- No guidance on when a final decision should be expected; and
- The selection procedure took too long.

However, a majority of web-survey respondents felt that the selection process was "very transparent" or "transparent".

Table 5.4 Transparency of the selection process

	No. of respondents	% of respondents
Very transparent	15	8
Transparent	83	45
Not transparent	50	27
Do not know	38	20
Total	186	100

Source: ECOTEC web-survey of project leaders and co-organisers, 2007.

Web-survey respondent views on the clarity of the selection process were similar. Overall, although a majority of project web-survey respondents felt that the assessment criteria and process was "very clear" or quite clear" a substantial minority disagreed. Around a quarter of respondents felt that assessment criteria and process was "not clear" (24%).

Table 5.5 Clarity of the assessment criteria and process

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Very clear	36	20
Quite clear	87	48
Not clear	44	24
Do not know	16	9
Total	183	100

Source: ECOTEC web-survey of project leaders and co-organisers, 2007.

Feedback to applicants

Feedback to applicants was also a source of criticism. Although the majority (67%) of respondents to the project web-survey felt that feedback on their application was "good" or "acceptable", criticism was often directed towards feedback to unsuccessful applicants (see table 5.3). Cultural operators specifically wished to know *why* they had been successful or unsuccessful and requested an explanation of their assessment scores.

This was also raised as an issue at the evaluation seminar – although recent feedback on unsuccessful applications lists scores by section there is no further explanation as to why the application performed badly. As one web-survey respondent noted, "it's a waste of money to invest time in another application if you don't know why the previous one failed".

Table 5.6 Quality of the Commission's feedback on project applications

	No. of respondents	% of respondents
Good	56	30
Acceptable	68	37
Poor	31	17
Not provided	19	10
Do not know	10	5
Total	184	100

Source: ECOTEC web-survey of project leaders and co-organisers, 2007.

Communication with projects

Email survey respondents often criticised the quality and frequency of contact between the Commission / Executive Agency and the project promoters. Based on their own experiences and feedback from cultural operators it appeared there was a lack of personalised contact and slow replies to queries. Respondents did not distinguish between the Commission and the Executive Agency.

Over a fifth of web-survey respondents said that they didn't have a contact person that they could seek support, advice and guidance from; when in practice all projects were allocated a programme manager for this purpose. Of those who were aware of their

allocated programme manager, the majority felt that they were easy to contact (57%) although a significant minority (13%) felt the opposite - that they were difficult to contact.

Some comments and suggestions from web-survey respondents included:

- It would be useful to meet with the Commission / EACEA programme manager face-to-face at the start of the project.
- The Commission / EACEA programme managers should be more readily available by telephone.
- Projects should be informed about log periods of absence of their allocated Commission / EACEA programme manager and alternative arrangements should be in place to offer support.

Participants in the evaluation seminar agreed that the quality of communication with and information from their Commission / Executive Agency programme manager could be improved, for example, by more practical information on project management and by project visits. The review of project documents illustrated that information and support was generally of a technical and procedural nature.

Overall though, it seems that the majority of web-survey respondents were content with the support, advice and guidance received from their Commission / EACEA programme manager:

- 61% of respondents to the web-survey rated the quality of the advice as "good"; and
- 9% rated the quality of the advice as "poor".

Dissemination of programme achievements

Dissemination of the programme's achievements was considered to be poor by web-survey respondents and evaluation seminar participants.

Of the web-survey respondents who rated the Commission's dissemination activities only 13% rated them as "good" while 40% rated them as "poor".   A large minority of respondents indicated that they hadn't seen any dissemination activities by the Commission. Some specifically stated that the content of the EC website should be improved particularly to include information on previous projects.

Dissemination was also criticised in the evaluation seminar – participants felt that the Commission did not actively search for good examples of quality projects and promote their achievements and other good practice to cultural operators and policy makers (at European and national level).

The second external interim evaluation of the programme highlighted programme dissemination as an area for improvement. A new section "Projects in Images" was created on the Commission webpage to showcase projects but consisted of short summaries of 15 Action 1 projects and three Action 2 projects from selection years 2003 and 2004. Seminar participants criticised the content of the Commission website, noting that the content was uninspiring and did not make use of interactive features to present the achievements of projects and the programme.

The programme newsletter

The monthly[1] programme newsletter "Culture 2000" ran for 36 issues from May 2002 - April / May 2006 when it was discontinued due to workload pressures. The content included:

- Events news: mostly at programme level (European Heritage Days, European Prizes) but occasionally of specific projects.
- Funded Projects: summaries of projects funded under Culture 2000 and the Active Bodies at European Level programme.
- Latest News: on subjects such as the Capitals of Culture, culture unit tenders, calls for applications, cultural seminars organised by the Danish Presidency).

The structure of the newsletter into regular categories (events, funded projects, latest news) was gave a consistent overall structure to the publication and it was clear what information would be included in each category. The newsletter was also published in three Community languages. Indeed, in a previous evaluation, 75% of programme participants responding to a survey thought that the newsletter was useful or very useful.[2]

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[1] Although the newsletter was intended to be monthly only 36 issues were produced over a 49 month period, or approximately nine issues a year.

[2] Llopis-Navarro, P., McCoshan, A., Murray, S. and Roy, S., Second External Interim Evaluation of the Culture 2000 Framework Programme, Brussels: DG Education & Culture, 2006, pp 64-65.

However, in the opinion of the evaluation team, the content, design and overall quality of the newsletter could have been improved significantly. This opinion is based on the following:

- Variable publication format: the newsletter was initially published in PDF format only (issues 1-3), then html only (issues 4-33) and finally in html and PDF format (issues 34-36). No reason was given in the newsletter for the changes in format.

- Formatting and structure of the html and PDF versions: there are often no spaces between paragraphs and bullet points in the newsletters. To the reader the newsletter appears "cluttered".

- The title: it is not clear why the newsletter was branded as "Cultur@ 2000" instead of "Culture 2000" and this title is used inconsistently throughout its publication and across language editions. For example, in the December 2005 issue "Cultur@ 2000" is used across the English, German and French editions. In the April / May 2006 issue "Cultur@ 2000" is used in the English and French editions while "Kultur 2000" is used in the German edition.   In January 2006 the German html edition uses "Kultur 2000" while the German PDF version uses "Cultur@ 2000".

- The proof-reading and editing of newsletter content: for example, the January 2006 English issue includes an opening paragraph in French and does not include the issue number or date.

- Project summaries were descriptive and did not add significantly to the information already available in the project summaries on the website.

- The majority of events and news items had already happened. As a result the newsletter was too backward looking rather than forward facing.

- The PDF versions of the newsletter only contain text and have none of the "design" features evident in the html versions.   They do not include the Commission blue flag logo, the DG EAC logo or the Culture 2000 logo.

- The newsletters were intended to be issued monthly and the Commission webpages state that it is the programme's "monthly newsletter".[1] Issues were regularly missed with no explanation in the preceding or subsequent edition. The newsletter moved to a bi-monthly publication in 2006 but no indication or explanation of this move this was given and it was

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[1] http://ec.europa.eu/culture/eac/sources_info/newsletters/newsletter_en.html (checked 06/11/07)

still branded as a "monthly newsletter". The actual publication schedule is shown below in table 5.7.

Table 5.7 Publication Schedule of the "Cultur@ 2000" newsletter

Month	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
January	n.a.	✓	**See Dec 03**	✓	✓
February	n.a.	✓	✓	✓	✓
March	n.a.	✓	✓	✓	**Joint Issue**
April	n.a.	✓	✓	**Joint Issue**	✓
May	✓	✓	✓	✓	**Joint Issue**
June	✓	✓	✓	✓	n.a.
July	✓	✓	**Joint Issue**	✓	n.a.
August	Missing	Missing	✓	**Joint Issue**	n.a.
September	✓	✓	✓	✓	n.a.
October	✓	✓	✓	Missing	n.a.
November	✓	**Joint Issue**	✓	Missing	n.a.
December	Missing	✓ [1]	**Joint Issue**	✓	n.a.
Special Issue	✓ **October (books & reading)**	✓ **March (enlargement)**	✓ **January (music)**	n.a.[2]	n.a.[3]

[1] Joint issue with January 2004.

[2] In January 2005 a link to a news release on the European Borders Breakers music awards was included but this was not a newsletter.

[3] A link to a leaflet on the 3rd European Borders Breakers music awards was included but this was not a newsletter.

The evaluation team undertook a technical appraisal of the European Commission's culture web-pages with a view to identifying problems and highlighting areas for improvement. Full details of the technical appraisal can be found at Annex 11. In summary:

- The Culture webpages do not conform to the Commission's own Information Providers Guide (IPG) which provides compulsory rules for the editing, technical and graphical aspects of EUROPA web pages.[1]
- The webpages fail basic accessibility requirements on multiple counts and design choices impede the usability of the webpages.

In summary there is a large quantity of outdated, historical, and now inactive material on the site that it is almost impossible for a reader to see clearly what is new, what they can now apply for, and what is archive material. The impression given is that there is no consistent content management being undertaken and that content is not being maintained. As a result many visitors will not be encouraged to return to the site.

Specific examples of the problems are shown below:

Example 1:

The Culture homepage included a "News This Month" feature. In figure 5.3, taken on 21/11/07, five news features are highlighted as "new". The most recent of these was added on 14/11/07 and all the calls for applications indicated as "new" have closed at least six weeks previously.

The circled box headed "The 2007 Communication on culture" contains three hyperlinks to three entirely separate news items. By enclosing all three in a single box with no reference to the issue date of each, the viewer is given the perception that they are a single news item.

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[1] http://ec.europa.eu/ipg/index_en.htm

Figure 5.3 DG EAC Culture webpages: site homepage

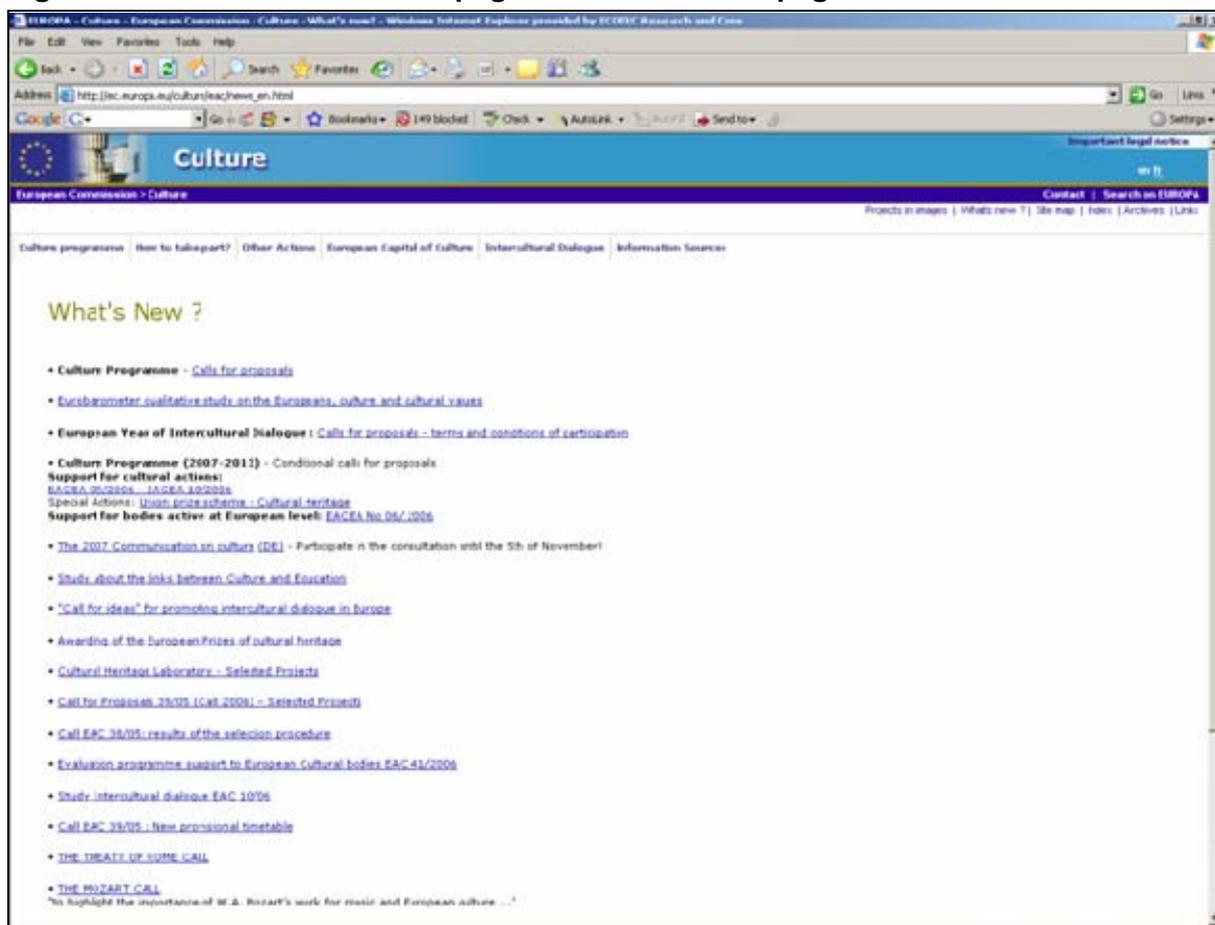*Source: http://ec.europa.eu/culture/eac/index_en.html (checked 21/11/07)*

Example 2:

When the "What's new?" link on the home page is followed visitors are directed to the page shown in figure 5.4. There is no indication of when each item was added and many of the items are out of date.

As examples, the link "CALL FOR PROPOSALS — DG EAC No 11/06, Actions to preserve and commemorate the main sites and archives associated with the deportations" takes you to material about a call for proposals in 2006 with a closing date of 21/04/06.

Even older is the European Union Prize for contemporary architecture link at which only provides information on the bi-annual prize up to 2005 despite the fact that the 2007 prize was awarded in April 2007.[1]

Figure 5.4 DG EAC Culture webpages: "What's New?" page

http://ec.europa.eu/culture/eac/news_en.html (checked 21/11/07)

[1] http://www.miesbcn.com/en/press.html (checked 06/12/07)

Example 3:

When the "Projects in images" link on the home page is followed visitors are directed to the page shown in figure 5.5.

The links to projects website often do not work (Action 1 "Nemorek" and "The Stockholm International Poetry Festival"). The links to "pluriannual" (multi-annual) and "other" projects take you to pages with project lists that do not provide any information, e.g., there is no information on the two of the five Action 2 projects listed.

There is also no link to the Action 3 European Prizes projects from the main "Projects in images" page and no information on the projects provided when the page is located.[1]

From the main page there is text and a link "If you want information about how to take part in the Culture 2000 programme, please go to the relevant section of this site". When this is followed the material tells you about calls for applications that are now closed, but still describes them as being active/current.

Figure 5.5 DG EAC Culture webpages: "Projects in images" page
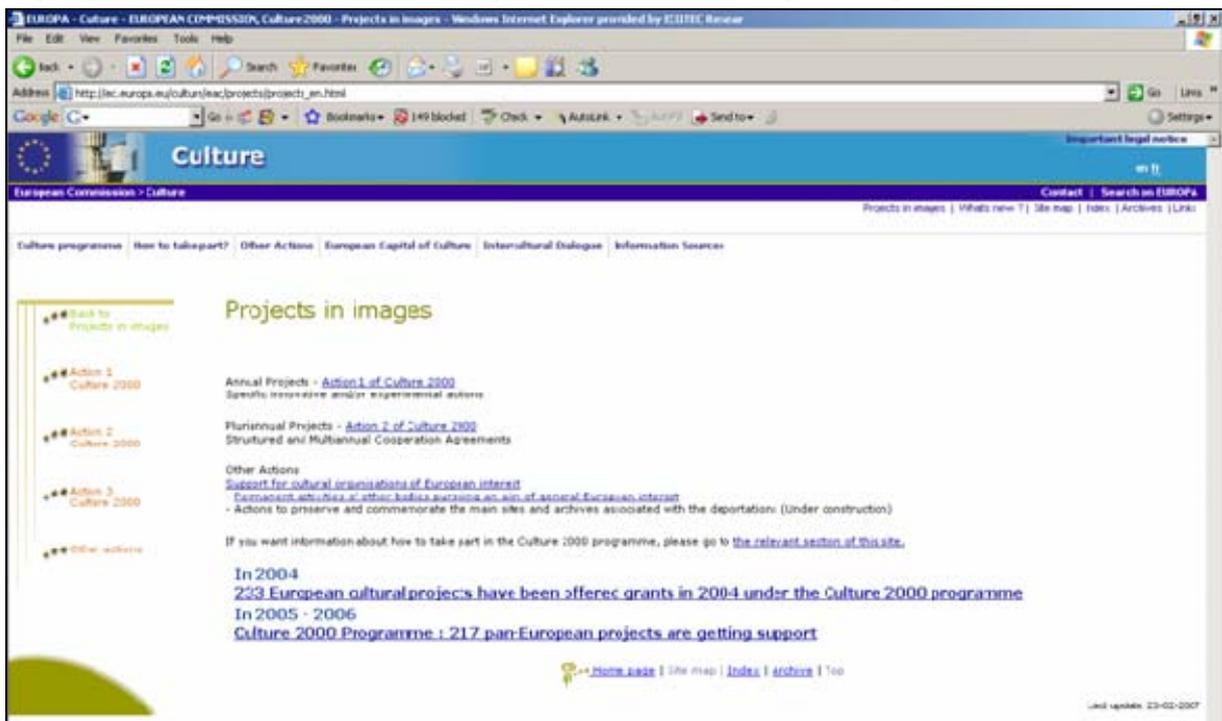
Source: http://ec.europa.eu/culture/eac/projects/projects_en.html (21/11/07)

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[1] See: http://ec.europa.eu/culture/eac/projects/action3_en.html (checked 21/11/07).

Project Monitoring & Reporting

Respondents to the project web-survey felt that the interim and final report template was easy to use or acceptably so (74%). Participants in the evaluation seminar generally agreed with this but did note that the financial element of the report was extensive. It is perhaps this that the 16% of web-survey respondents were thinking of when they completed the survey saying that it was not easy to use.

Table 5.8 Ease of use of interim / final report template

	No. of respondents	% of respondents
Easy	33	22
Acceptable	77	52
Not easy	24	16
Do not know	14	10
Total	148	100

Source: ECOTEC web-survey of project leaders and co-organisers, 2007.

Where web-survey respondents expressed an opinion on the quality of the guidance provided, it was overwhelmingly positive. Almost all respondents thought that the financial and narrative guidance was of "good" or "acceptable" quality (see figure 5.3).

**Figure 5.6 Quality of guidance on completing the interim / final project reports**
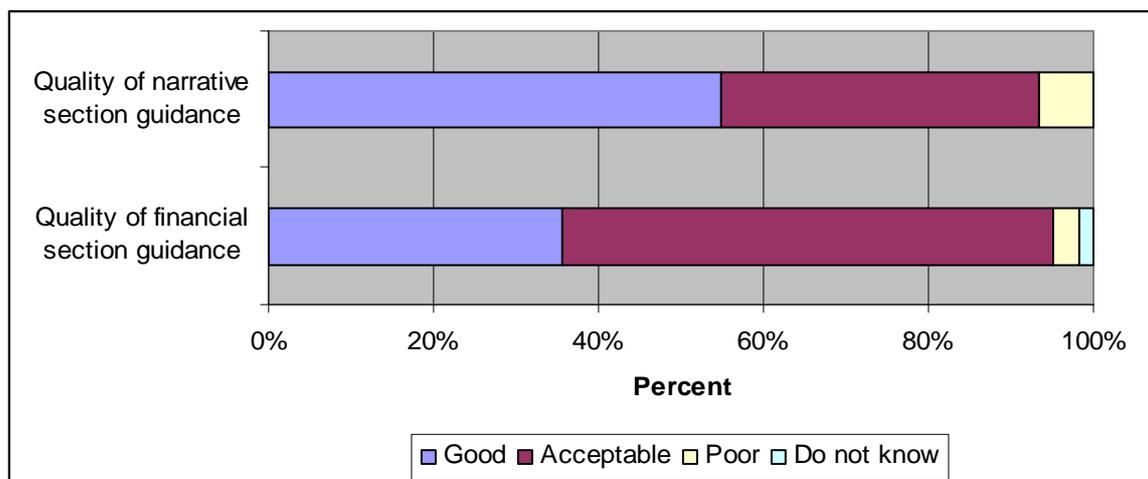
Source: ECOTEC web-survey of project leaders and co-organisers, 2007. Based on all those that received guidance.

However this finding was tempered somewhat by the proportion of web-survey respondents who reported that guidance was not provided. Almost half of web-survey respondents said that they were not provided with guidance on how to complete the financial section of the interim / final report and 60% said they had not received any guidance on completing the narrative section (see Figure 5.4).

Participants in the evaluation workshop felt that the guidance provided could be improved with a clearer statement of what information was expected in the narrative section. It was apparent from the project document review that the quality of the interim and final report narrative varied between projects. In some cases they were extremely short and gave little information other than a list of activities and outputs. Very few considered the results or impacts of their activities or reflected upon their contribution to programme objectives.

Figure 5.7 Provision of guidance on completing the interim / final project reports
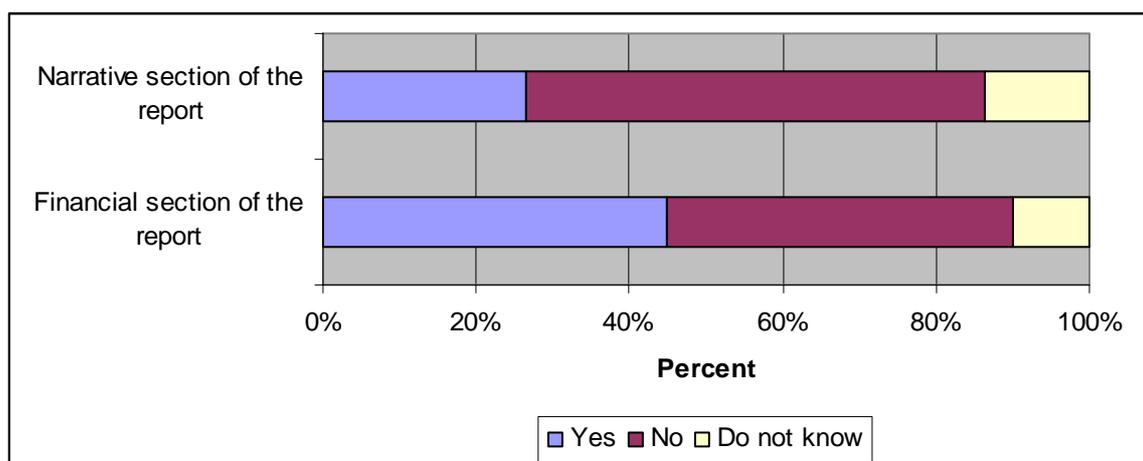
Source: ECOTEC web-survey of project leaders and co-organisers, 2007.

Commission monitoring of project activities and outputs was limited. There was no formal schedule of visits to projects to monitor activities due to time and resource pressures even though both projects and EACEA staff felt that they were beneficial.

Instead monitoring was focused at the end of projects using a standardised evaluation assessment checklist completed by Commission or EACEA staff. This process assesses the quality of project outputs and results most of which were rated as "good" or "very good". Given that the content of the report narrative sections did not contain detailed information on results and that many of the outputs were intangible it is difficult to see how either could be assessed.

As a result of the limited monitoring of project outputs, results and impacts there was limited information available for the Managing Authorities to utilise in dissemination and promotion of the programme.

A major focus of the final evaluation assessment is an examination of the financial report to identify ineligible expenditure which was generally low; in the project documents reviewed it ranged from 0.03 – 3.7% of total expenditure with the exception of one project where it was 14% due to staff changes not being previously approved by the Commission. Projects are required to submit a detailed breakdown of their expenditure with their final financial report and these are assessed in depth by the Commission / EACEA programme managers. This was identified as an area where significant changes could be made to the process. Evaluation seminar participants suggested that the financial information required should be less detailed and that the programme managers should only undertake basic numerical checks. Evidence of eligibility of expenditure could be based upon audit reports and Commission audit visits to a proportion of projects.

5.2   **Summary**

A major reorganisation of the programmes management took place in 2006 with the establishment of the Executive Agency which was intended to improve the overall management of the programme. As the Agency has been established for less than a year at the time of this evaluation it is too early to say whether it has been successful in doing so.

Commission and Executive Agency staff reported a heavy workload that was focused on financial monitoring with less emphasis on supporting projects and monitoring the impact and quality of activities. Our analysis of the human resources available to the programme indicates that the overall workload of programme managers, in terms of the volume of applications and projects, have not significantly increased. Indeed the Human Resources available to the programme in terms of numbers of permanent and temporary staff has increased over the period. . Our conclusion is that there was a mismatch between the deployment of staff resources and the volume of work during the life of the programme, particularly at peak times. However it is less clear whether this represented an overall insufficiency in staff numbers or whether the existing pattern of work organisation led to suboptimal efficiency. Existing ways of working should therefore be evaluated by the Commission against current models of good practice

When considering the financial resources available for programme administration, the data available indicates that a substantial portion of the available budget has been unspent. Had this been invested in additional human resources it might have alleviated the reported difficulties with human resources, although it is less clear whether this would have soleved them.

The Second External Interim Evaluation found that the overall programme budget was appropriate for achieving the aims and objectives of the programme and no evidence has been identified to revise this finding. The previous evaluation noted that due to the relatively small size of Culture 2000 in comparison to larger programmes it was impossible to achieve impact through the volume of activities, but that by identifying good practice and disseminating these examples to cultural policy-makers and practitioners it would be possible to achieve the programmes aims and objectives.

Respondents to the web-survey indicated a high level of satisfaction with the quality of information provided about the programme by their national CCPs and with the quality of the advice and guidance provided during the application stage.

There were several issues raised concerning programme management and implementation: the slowness of the application process and delays in payments and

contracting; lack of transparency in the selection process; poor feedback to applicants; poor communication between the implementing bodies and projects; poor dissemination of the programmes achievements; and poor monitoring of the quality of project outputs and activity.

The two main methods available to the Commission for publicising and disseminating information about the programme were the programme newsletter and the *Europa* culture webpages. A number of problems with the design, content and frequency of the programme newsletter undermined its usefulness as a publicity and dissemination tool. In addition, the *Europa* culture webpages were found to be out of date, difficult to navigate and does not comply with Commission website requirements or basic accessibility principles.

6.0   Utility

> **Main Evaluation Question:** To what extent do the results and impacts of the programme actually meet the needs and expectations of its stakeholders and intended beneficiaries?
>
> **Evaluation Sub-Questions:**
> - To what extent the programme has generated the expected impacts?
> - To what extent has the programme generated unintended impacts (positive or negative)?

6.1   Impact of the programme

Reported impacts

Respondents to the project web-survey felt that their projects had made substantial contributions to the programme's intended impacts. Figure 6.1 shows that over half of all web-survey respondents felt that their project had achieved each of the intended programme impacts to some extent (ranging from a small to a great extent).

Web-survey respondents reported their greatest extent of impact on *people* (dark green in figure 6.1). Over 90% of all web-survey respondents felt that their activities had contributed towards achieving them and these were the category of impact most commonly reported in the project documents. Projects reported that they:

- Attracted greater numbers of people to participate in cultural events / activities (92%);
- Improved knowledge and dissemination of European culture & history (96%); and
- Increased European cultural awareness among EU citizens (92%).

Web-survey respondents also reported high levels of contribution towards the achievement of *cultural practice* impacts (dark blue in figure 6.1), such as the improved movement of cultural professionals and works, new forms of expression and improved safeguarding of heritage. Projects reported that they:

- Created new forms of cultural expression (79%);
- Encouraged and facilitated the movement of artists, cultural operators and cultural products / works (88%); and

- Improved the conservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage of European significance (78%).

  Projects reported a lower contribution towards *cultural policy* impacts (light blue in figure 6.1). Projects reported that their project activities had:

- Increased funding for national cultural policy (58%);
- Increased funding for transnational cooperation cultural policy (61%); and
- Increased synergy between national cultural policies (57%).

Figure 6.1 Extent of achievement of programme impacts
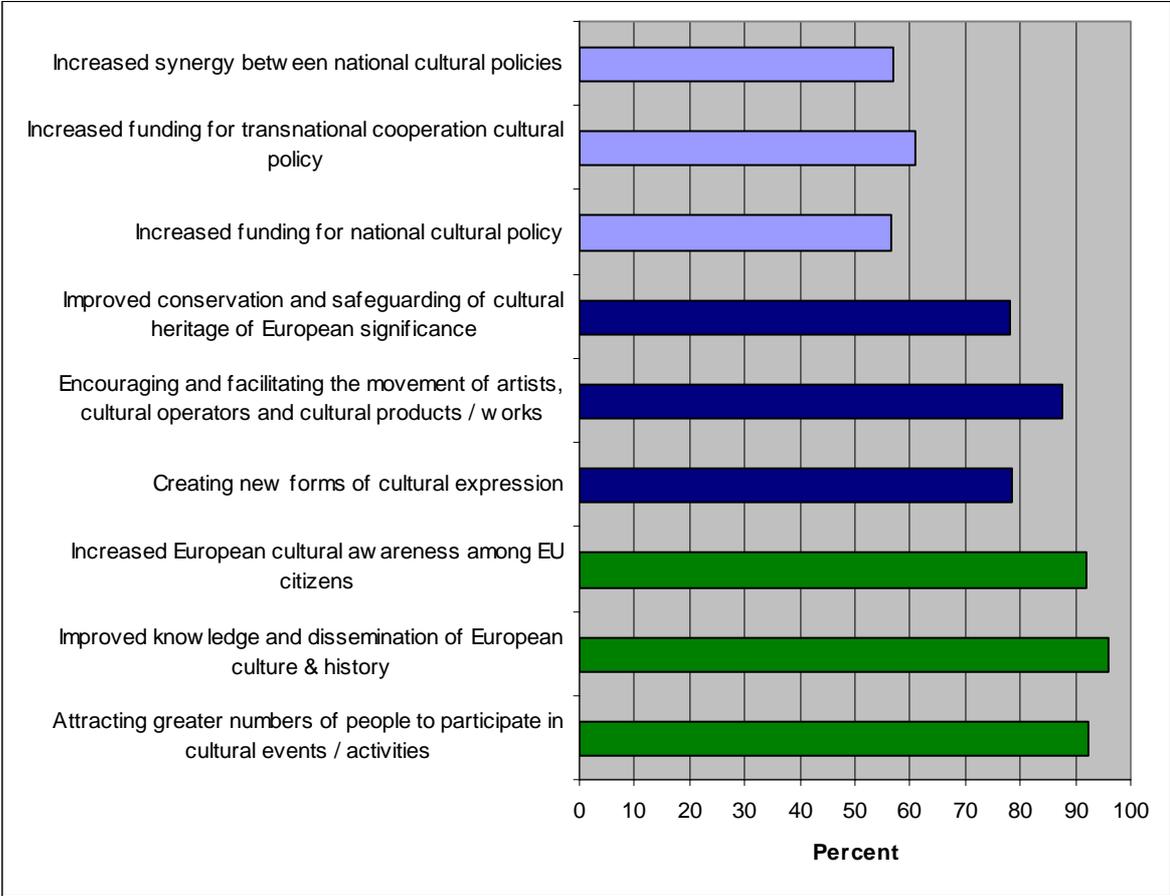
Source: ECOTEC web-survey of project leaders and co-organisers, 2007.

Respondents to the project survey did provide some examples of the kinds of impact their projects had had.

Project impacts on people

- Some projects reported social impacts including:
  - ► Contribution to an inclusive society by working with disadvantaged groups and facilitating their participation in culture and cultural activity. Projects worked with people with disabilities, young people and children, immigrants and disadvantaged communities.
  - ► Some projects contributed to the social regeneration in disadvantaged areas.

- Increasing awareness:
  - ► Project activities and events attracted large numbers of the general public.
  - ► Projects shared knowledge about life and experiences in other European countries and cultures broadening knowledge and understanding.

- Building a common European identity:
  - ► Participating in a European project gave the feeling that people and organisations were "part of Europe".
  - ► Promoting European identity by linking countries, regions and people together and demonstrating their common history, experiences and customs.

Project impacts on cultural practice

- Increasing cross-border mobility of young artists and art works

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Case Study Example:

The Meeting place – North European visual arts project supported young visual artists to exhibit their work in seven exhibitions in six participating countries.

Some of the artists participating in the project were able to exhibit other pieces of art in recognised national and regional art galleries, such as the Istaba Gallery in Latvia outside of the project as a result of their involvement. Participating artists were subsequently able to hold exhibitions in other countries including the UK and China.

- Increased European outlook among cultural operators who actively sought new opportunities to collaborate on intercultural cooperation projects.
- Cross-border exchange of local European cultures.

> **Case Study Example**
>
> **The World Roma Festival KHAMORO 2004 showcased traditional Roma music, Roma artists and provided a forum for dialogue and learning about Roma culture.**
>
> **An increasing number of Roma artists have developed projects to draw the attention of policy makers on the Roma minority. Another impact on Roma artists has been the increased mobility of cultural actors and artists - Roma artists have travelled to other countries and are participating on international festivals.**

Project impacts on policy

- Increased funding at local and regional level for cultural activities (often on an individual project basis)
- Increased interest from government at local level to engage in European intercultural dialogue

More broadly, we have seen earlier that Culture 2000 has had a discernable impact on policy in some cases. In particular the programme has led directly to the establishment of co-financing funds in several member States which have led to an increase in funding for intercultural cooperation activities.

> **Case Study Example:**
>
> **The Czech Ministry of Culture has supported participation in the Programme by creating a small fund for matching funds for culture 2000 projects. This fund finances up to 50% of the budget that the Czech organisation involved in the Culture 2000 project (as leader or as co-organiser) must co-finance.**

Culture 2000 has also had an impact upon the established Nordic cooperation programmes.

> *Case Study Example:*
>
> *Nordic cooperation structures and systems have been recently reviewed and specifically designed to be adapted to the Culture 2000 Programme and the new Culture Programme (2007-2013).*
>
> *This represents a key development in Nordic cultural cooperation. These changes were led by the need to enlarge the network and make the structures and procedures more "programme-orientated", to make it more complementary to Culture 2000 and the new Culture 2007-2013 Programme.*

6.1.1   Evidence of impact

Verifiable evidence of the impact of the programme was scarce. At programme management level, no information is gathered on project impacts and there are no studies exploring the impact of the programme. Despite the responses of respondents to the project web-survey clear evidence of impact was lacking, particularly at policy level. The project document review did not demonstrate clear examples of the impact of the programme or of individual projects.

6.2   Summary

It is clear that Culture 2000 has achieved a range of impacts on cultural policy and practice and upon the wider public. There has been increased funding for cultural activities at national and local level and cultural operators have improved their capacity and appetite for engaging in intercultural cooperation

However, it is also the case that improvements could be made in programme and project monitoring of outputs, results and impacts that would improve the reliability of the evidence base for the reported impacts.

7.0   Sustainability

Main Evaluation Question: To what extent could the positive changes or trends induced by the Programme be expected to last beyond the EU financing?

Evaluation Sub-Questions:
- What are the structural changes that have been induced by the Programme on the community of cultural operators in Europe?
- Has the very existence of the Programme induced some national authorities to put in place similar programmes promoting cross-border cultural cooperation or facilitating the participation of their cultural operators into projects of cultural cooperation at EU level?
- To what extent has the Programme led towards increased cross-border cultural cooperation and the creation and/or expansion of cross-border networks of cultural operator in Europe?

7.1   Sustained networks of cultural operators

A major measure of sustainability is the continuation of the partnerships generated through the programme. A large proportion of projects reported in their final reports that their networks had been strengthened or expanded as a result of participation in Culture 2000 and this is supported by the results of the project web-survey where 75% of respondents said that at least some of the partners continued to work together after the end of their project.

Table 7.1 Proportion of Culture 2000 project partnerships continuing after the end of the project

Proportion of partners	No. of respondents	% of respondents
All partners continued to work together	32	17
Most partners continued to work together	52	28
Some partners continued to work together	55	30
No partners continued to work together	15	8
Not applicable	27	15
Do not know	5	3
Total	186	100

Source: ECOTEC web-survey of project leaders and co-organisers, 2007.

This is confirmed by the level of continued joint project working between cultural operators. Some 75% reported that they had working in subsequent projects with at least some of their Culture 2000 project partners. In 60% of cases the majority of partners were involved in further work together.

Table 7.2 Proportion of original Culture 2000 project partners involved in subsequent projects together

Proportion of partners	No. of respondents	% of respondents
All of them	16	22
A majority of them	28	38
A minority of them	11	15
none of them	5	7
Not applicable	14	19
Total	74	100

Source: ECOTEC web-survey of project leaders and co-organisers, 2007.

It seems likely that this continued partnership working resulted in further Culture 2000 projects - some 40% of web-survey respondents reported that they had been involved in more than one Culture 2000 project.

Table 7.3 Number of Culture 2000 projects survey respondents' organisations had been involved in

Number of Projects	No. of respondents	% of respondents
0	2	1
1	108	55
2	40	21
3	20	10
More than 3	19	10
Do not know	6	3
Total	195	100

Source: ECOTEC web-survey of project leaders and co-organisers, 2007.

7.2   Sustained activities of Culture 2000 projects

It seems that cultural operators were able to continue their activities after the end of Culture 2000 funding: 84% of web-survey respondents stated that they had continued at least some of their activities.

Case Study Example:

The IDENTITY / INTEGRITY Brno, Capital of Visual Communication in 2002 was an international exhibition of grahic design.   The 2002 edition of the biennale marked a turning point, in the sense that the following events have been bigger and had a greater impact compared to pre-2002 editions.

Partners involved in the project are in permanent contact with each other and are looking for further opportunities for collaboration. Other links and networks established throughout the project are still operating - meetings for teachers from European schools have led to organised student exchanges.

Translation projects noted that their activity was inherently sustainable because once books were published and distributed they would remain in circulation.

Table 7.4 Continuation of project activities after the end of Culture 2000 funding

	No. of respondents	% of respondents
All of the activities continued	48	26
Some of the activities continued	105	57
None of the activities continued	17	10
Do not know	13	7
Total	183	100

Source: ECOTEC web-survey of project leaders and co-organisers, 2007.

7.3   Summary

Culture 2000 funding led to the creation of new transnational cooperation networks of cultural operators and the strengthening of existing transnational cooperation networks.

Evidence from the project document review, the case studies and the web-survey indicates that cultural operators indicates that both the links established and the activities are to a large extent sustainable. Cultural operators are continuing to search for ways of continuing their work, including the development of proposals for new Culture 2000 and Culture 2007 projects. Cooperation is also continuing outside the framework of EU culture programmes as cultural operators are accessing alternative sources of funding or allocating more of their existing funding to intercultural cooperation activities.

8.0   Conclusions

8.1   External Coherence

The concept of external coherence refers to how Culture 2000 sits in the broader context of cultural policy and programmes.

The evaluation has found that a large proportion of EU programmes such as the structural funds, Media and Active Citizenship, do have cultural elements to them and that similarities do exist between their objectives, target groups, outputs, results and impacts and those of Culture 2000.

Similarly, a number of regional intercultural cooperation initiatives and bilateral initiatives also exist. In the case of the regional initiatives, such as the Central European Initiative, the Visegrad Fund and Nordic Cooperation, there are also some clear similarities with Culture 2000.

However, evidence from the review of EU programmes and the email surveys of stakeholders clearly indicates that Culture 2000 occupies a unique position. There are no other European Union-wide programmes aimed at supporting and fostering European cultural co-operation and when the distinct focus and intended outcomes of each EU and regional programme is taken into account it is clear that any apparent duplication between programmes is superficial.

The conclusions of the evaluators are that:

- **Culture 2000 is complementary to other EU programmes;**
- **Culture 2000 is complementary to other regional and national intercultural cooperation programmes**
- **Culture 2000 does not duplicate activities undertaken elsewhere through other EU programmes or through regional and national programmes**

The evaluation has found little evidence that Culture 2000 has inspired the introduction of similar programmes and actions by national or regional authorities in participating countries. Indeed, any such programmes would risk unnecessary duplication of Culture 2000. However, evidence from the Czech Republic and Sweden indicates that both the Visegrad Fund and Nordic Cooperation frameworks have been amended to take Culture 2000 and its successor, Culture 2007, into account. Furthermore, a number of

participating countries have established co-financing funds to support the participation of their cultural operators in the programme.

The conclusions of the evaluators are that:

- **Culture 2000 has not inspired the introduction of similar programmes or actions by participating countries, but it has inspired the amendment of some existing cooperation structures and resulting in the establishment of co-financing arrangements in many countries.**

Although there is some indication that intercultural cooperation is of growing importance among participating countries the evaluation found no evidence that Culture 2000 has increased the exchange of information and best practice among participating countries. It seems that there is no mechanism for identifying and disseminating good practice emerging from Culture 2000 to policy-makers in the Member States.

The conclusions of the evaluators are that:

- **Culture 2000 has not increased the exchange of information or good practice among participating countries.**
- **Culture 2000s role as a source of information and best practice examples for intercultural policy has been limited.**
- **Culture 2000 has raised the importance and awareness of intercultural dialogue among participating countries.**

8.2 Effectiveness

The reconstruction of the intervention logic undertaken by the evaluators indicated that concrete programme results and impacts had not been documented at the outset of the programme. The results and outputs discussed in this report were derived from an analysis of the programme could reasonably be expected to achieve given the objectives and resources available.

The consensus among Commission and EACEA staff interviewees and from the email survey of stakeholders was that the programmes objectives were relevant and that the activities supported were appropriate to their achievement. Some stakeholders questioned the programmes ability to achieve the objectives given its relatively small financial resources. The Second Interim Evaluation that concluded that Culture 2000 could not expect to achieve impact through sheer scale of activity but that it could do so

through the implementation of highly effective dissemination mechanisms. In the evaluators view this conclusion is still valid.

Evidence from the project document review and the web-survey of projects indicates that the programme has been successful in achieving its results, impacts and objectives to at least some extent. However, as programme monitoring activity does not actively collect and synthesise information on project and programme outputs, results and impacts or contribution to programme objectives it has not been possible to determine the exact extent of achievement. However, evidence from the Second External Interim Evaluation indicated that progress against achieving programme objectives varied with greater progress being made against some objectives compared to others.

Respondents to the web-survey indicated that their projects had contributed to all the intended programme impacts to some extent. Specifically:

- 39% of respondents felt their project had contributed to increasing funding for national cultural policies.
- 42% of respondents felt their project had contributed to improving the synergy between national cultural policies.
- 47% of respondents felt their project had contributed to increasing funding for transnational cultural cooperation policies.
- 67% of respondents felt their project had contributed to creating new forms of cultural expression.
- 68% of respondents felt their project had contributed to improved conservation and safeguarding of sultural heritage of European significance
- 75% of respondents felt their project had contributed to increased cultural awareness among EU citizens.
- 78% of respondents felt their project had contributed to the movement of artists, cultural operators and cultural products / works.
- 78% of respondents felt their project had contributed to attracting greater numbers of people to participate in cultural evens / activities.
- 85% of respondents felt their project had contributed to improved knowledge & dissemination of European culture & history.

The conclusions of the evaluators are that:

- **Culture 2000 has achieved all its objectives to some extent.**
- **Culture 2000 has not increased the exchange of information or good practice among participating countries.**
- **Culture 2000s role as a source of information and best practice examples for intercultural policy has been limited.**
- **Culture 2000 has raised the importance and awareness of intercultural dialogue among participating countries.**
- **Culture 2000 has produced a wide range of impacts on people, cultural practice and cultural policy**
- **Culture 2000 has changed the mindset of many cultural operators to make them more focused on intercultural cooperation activities and in doing so, has contributed to the development of a single European cultural sphere.**

The evaluation found that only a minority of participants felt that there were barriers to participation in the programme (17% of the web-survey respondents). In addition, majorities of web-survey respondents felt that the selection process was transparent (53%) and that the assessment criteria were clear (68%).

However, several perceived barriers were stated by email survey and web-survey respondents that were also evidenced by the project document review and the case studies. These included:

- Organisational capacity issues where small organisation which lacked human and financial resources struggled to participate in partnerships
- Programme management issues, where the perceived 'bureaucracy' of the programme discouraged participation and the length of time between submission of applications and the announcement of the results disrupted organisational planning.
- Financial requirement during part of the programme period for each programme partner to provide 5% co-financing was highlighted as a problem, partly because it did not take into account the relative resources of each partner.
- Inadequate time for project preparation largely due to the calls for applications falling over the summer holiday period and immediately before the busy autumn exhibition period. It should be noted that the calls for applications took place at the same time each year and project partnerships and concepts could be developed earlier in the year.

The conclusions of the evaluators are that:

- **Some barriers do exist that prevent the participation of cultural actors in Culture 2000 , specifically in terms of organisational experience and financial resources. However, given the limited budget of the Culture 2000 programme it is difficult to see how these could be overcome within the programme.**

Overall visibility of the programme among cultural operators was felt to be good. Majorities of email survey and web-survey respondents indicated that the programme was well known by cultural operators in their countries. When considering the *understanding* of the programme, survey respondents were less clearly positive – there was a substantial element of doubt over the depth of understanding of Culture 2000 among cultural operators.

Awareness of the programme by the general public is difficult to assess – publicity requirements did not require the use of the Culture 2000 logo and evidence from other studies has indicated widespread ignorance of the specific details of EU activity in the field of culture among the general public. However, it is the evaluators' view that it is most important that the general public is generally aware of the EU's involvement in activities and that a detailed knowledge of specific programmes among the general public is not necessary.

8.3 Efficiency

The programme intended to achieve impact through highly visible innovative and experimental activities, not through sheer volume of activity. In this context the programme budget was appropriate for achieving the aims and objectives of the programme.

The conclusions of the evaluators are that:

- **The overall programme budget for Culture 2000 was appropriate for achieving its aims and objectives.**

The management arrangements for Culture 2000 have undergone major change over the programming period and the key change has been the establishment of the EACEA which aimed to improve the overall management of the programme.

Commission and EACEA staff indicated that their workload was persistently heavy with extensive administrative duties that restricted their ability to provide support to projects.

Assuming the inherent validity of evidence from DG EAC and EACEA staff it is possible to conclude that there was a possible mismatch between the deployment of staff resources and the volume of work during the life of the programme, particularly at peak times. However it is less clear whether this represents an overall insufficiency in staff numbers or whether the existing pattern of work organisation led to suboptimal efficiency.

It should be noticed that some of the financial resources allocated for programme management and administration were not spent and these might have helped alleviate reported difficulties with human resources. Nevertheless, it is not clear whether these additional resources would have *solved* the reported difficulties or if these difficulties are related to an inefficient use of the available human resources.

Data provided by the Commission and the EACEA indicates that the trend was for human resources allocated to the programme to increase year on year. An analysis of the volume of applications and the average number of projects per individual Commission or EACEA programme manager indicates that the volume of applications has not increased significantly and that the average caseload of projects has remained constant or fallen slightly. One specific problem highlighted was the increased workload at peak times such as during application processing. The EACEA addressed this issue in 2006 by recruiting temporary staff to assist at peak times but reports of a heavy workload were persistent.

The financial resources allocated to technical assistance of the programme were set at no more than 3% of the total programme budget in the founding Decision – equal to €7.095 millions. A review of the administration budget of the Culture Unit showed that the total budget allocated was consistent with this figure, but that a large proportion of the annual administration budget was often unspent at year end.

Assuming the inherent validity of evidence from DG EAC and EACEA staff it is possible to conclude that there was a mismatch between the deployment of staff resources and the volume of work during the life of the programme, particularly at peak times. However it is less clear whether this represents an overall insufficiency in staff numbers or whether the existing pattern of work organisation led to suboptimal efficiency. Existing ways of working should therefore be evaluated by the Commission against current models of good practice.

The conclusions of the evaluators are that:

- **There was a mismatch between the deployment of staff resources and the volume of work during the life of the programme, particularly at peak times. However it is less clear whether this represents an overall insufficiency in staff numbers or whether the existing pattern of work organisation led to suboptimal efficiency.**

Programme IT System

The evaluation found that programme managers were not supported by an appropriate IT infrastructure. There were no programme-wide project database that enabled the Managing Authorities to monitor administrative milestones of each project or to produce summary reports of progress on contracting, payments and project reporting. The SYMMETRY management system which was due for launch in 2004 has not been implemented, although the responsibility for this lies outside the control of the Commissions Culture Unit or the EACEA.

The conclusions of the evaluators are that:

- **The IT systems in place were not sufficient to allow the efficient and effective management of the Culture 2000 programme.**

According to the web-survey respondents the services offered by the Cultural Contact Points (CCPs) were of high quality. Although there were some cases where respondents were not satisfied with the service of their CCP, overall CCP staff were felt to be "dedicated", "knowledgeable", hardworking" and "willing to help". Specifically:

- 70% rated the quality of information about Culture 2000 provided on their Cultural Contact Points' Culture 2000 website as acceptable or good.
- 67% rated their national Cultural Contact Points activities in publicising the Culture 2000 programme as acceptable or good.
- 67% sought advice or guidance from their Cultural Contact Point while completing their application and of these, 91% rated it as acceptable or good.

The conclusions of the evaluators are that:

- **The Cultural Contact Points have used their grants to provide an effective and efficient service to cultural operators in their countries. However, it should be noted that the CCPs are the subject of a more detailed evaluation that will report separately and in more detail.**

Programme Management

Participants were satisfied with the application process for the programme – the majority of web-survey respondents felt that the process was clear and that the frequency of calls was about right. They were also equally positive about the information provided about the programme. One source of criticism was the timing of the call for applications. As mentioned earlier, the call fell over the summer holidays and prior to the autumn exhibition period. The second source of criticism was the length of the process. However, it is acknowledged by the evaluators that other factors such as the Management Committee procedure and the European Parliament Right of Regard effect the length of the process and cannot be changed.

A large minority of email survey respondents criticised the selection process although this was not reflected to the same extent in the web-survey of cultural operators where the majority felt that it was both clear and transparent.

Both email and web-survey respondents felt that the feedback provide to applicants could be improved and this was reinforced by participants in the evaluation seminar.   It was felt that applicants should receive a detailed breakdown of their scores under each assessment criteria *and* with a statement of the strengths and weaknesses of their application that justified the scores awarded. This would provide applicants with the necessary information to decide whether to prepare a new application or the programme and how to improve their application.

The conclusions of the evaluators are that:

- **The frequency of the call for Culture 2000 applications was appropriate but that the timing was inappropriate.**
- **The Culture 2000 selection procedure could have been shortened by using additional human resources to speed up the application processing and assessment process.**

Programme dissemination

The programme dissemination activities could have been substantially improved – 40% of web-survey respondents considered the dissemination activities of the Commission to be poor. An examination of the Commissions two main dissemination tools – the programme newsletter and the website – confirmed this view.

The newsletter suffered from poor layout, editing and design. Content often reproduced information available elsewhere and focused too much on events that had already occurred rather than those that were upcoming. The advertised publication schedule was not adhered to and the newsletter was ultimately abolished due to time pressures.

The evaluation team undertook a technical appraisal of the DG EAC Culture webpages with a view to identifying problems and highlighting areas for improvement. The technical appraisal found that the webpages to not confirm to the Commission's own Information Providers Guide which provides compulsory rules for the editing, technical and graphical aspects of *Europa* webpages. In addition design choices impede the usability of the webpages and they fail basic accessibility requirements on multiple counts.   Overall, the website includes a large quantity of outdated, historical and inactive material on the site and requires a complete review to bring it to a reasonable standard.

The conclusions of the evaluators are that:

- **Culture 2000 dissemination activities by the Managing Authorities have not been of the consistently high standard required to successfully promote the programme and its achievements.**

Project monitoring and reporting

The project document review found that the final project reports were of variable quality and usefulness to the evaluation as information on outputs, results and impacts were not systematically collected an analysed in relation to the programmes objectives. Almost all web-survey respondents felt that the monitoring and reporting forms were easy to use and the guidance on completing them provided was of acceptable quality but areas for improvement were identified.

Participants in the evaluation seminar emphasised the perception that the financial element of the final report was the most important to the Commission. They argued for greater importance to be placed on the qualitative section of the report with greater guidance on what information the Commission required and would find useful in this

section – they also suggested that this section of the report be restructured and split into clear sub-sections.

The Commission and EACEA assessments of the final reports did involve substantial financial checks to identify and remove ineligible expenditure. In this respect, the monitoring process was effective at identifying and removing such expenditure from the final payments to projects.

The conclusions of the evaluators are that:

- **Culture 2000 financial monitoring of projects is effective at identifying and removing ineligible items of expenditure from final payments.**
- **Culture 2000 monitoring of outcomes, results and impacts at project level is ineffective as although a large amount of data is collected there is little consideration of how it can be used to identify outstanding achievements and promote the programme.**

8.4   Utility

Overall, the Culture 2000 programme has been successful in generating the intended results and impacts although the programme has been less successful in capturing detailed information and evidence regarding the extent of achievement.   As indicated earlier, programme participants reported that their projects had contributed to a range of impacts on people, cultural practice and cultural policy.

In terms of the changes that the programme has produced on cultural operators in Europe, there are clearly demonstrable impacts. The establishment of Culture 2000 gave cultural operators in Europe the opportunity to participate in a comprehensive programme of transnational cooperation with partnerships covering over 30 countries. This opportunity was and is not provided by any other mechanism and the result of this is that cultural operators, who previously were focused on activities within their own countries, have become more outward-looking and more open to transnational intercultural cooperation.

Thousands of cultural operators have become involved in transnational cooperation through Culture 2000, many for the first time, and the evidence indicates that many of the networks and partnerships established through the programme are enduring and are continuing to produce cultural cooperation activities. It is this widespread engagement in cultural cooperation that is the main structural change in the community of European cultural operators.

The conclusions of the evaluators are that:

- **Culture 2000 has produced a wide range of impacts on people, cultural practice and cultural policy**
- **Culture 2000 has changed the mindset of many cultural operators to make them more focused on intercultural cooperation activities and in doing so, has contributed to the development of a single European cultural sphere**.

8.5   Sustainability

Evidence from project documents, the web-survey, case studies and the evaluation seminar demonstrates that at least part of the activities and outcomes of Culture 2000 projects continue after the funding has expired.

Cultural operators have reported that they have established, strengthened and extended transnational networks across Europe that are not only sustaining their links and activities, but generating new cooperation projects. These new cooperation projects are taking place within the context of EU culture programmes but also *independently of them*.

Although there is no evidence that Culture 2000 has led to the establishment of new regional or national intercultural cooperation initiatives the programme has had a clear impact on policies in some participating countries. A large number of countries have implemented co-financing support for Culture 2000 projects which has increased the amount of funding for intercultural dialogue. And the Nordic Cooperation framework has been revised to take into account the Culture 2000 and Culture 2007 programmes.

The conclusions of the evaluators are that:

- **Culture 2000 led to increased cross-border cultural cooperation and the creation and expansion of cross-border networks of cultural operators in Europe.**
- **Culture 2000 has increased the amount of funds dedicated to intercultural dialogue in Europe through encouraging the establishment of national co-financing arrangement.**
- **Culture 2000 has influenced the design of regional or national cultural cooperation policies.**

9.0   Recommendations

1   The Managing Authorities should evaluate existing ways of working against current models of good practice to investigate the mismatch between the deployment of staff resources and the volume of work during the life of the programme.

2   The Managing Authorities should schedule an annual visit programme to a proportion of projects to provide support and guidance on technical issues. It is recommended that the Executive Agency should undertake these visits but it may be appropriate for Commission staff to also attend a proportion of them. External cultural experts could also attend to advise on project activities.

3   The Managing Authorities should provide detailed qualitative feedback to all applicants to the culture programme. This will allow applicants to determine whether to reapply with a revised project proposal and how their proposal can be improved. It will result in better quality proposals being presented for selection and will improve the relationship between the Commission and cultural actors.

4   The Commission should appoint a Publications and Communications officer. This officer should be responsible for the organisation, editorial content and quality control of the Culture webpages and all Culture Unit / Culture Programme publications such as programme thematic reports, the project compendium and the Culture Unit newsletter. Depending on the quantity of publications it may be necessary for an assistant to be appointed or for the production of specific publications to be sub-contracted with the Publications and Communications officer retaining overall responsibility.

5   The Managing Authorities should reintroduce a regular Culture 2007 newsletter. It is recommended that this covers EU cultural policy rather than the Culture programme specifically in order to allow a broader range of content. The newsletter could include policy briefings and analysis, articles from cultural experts, details of calls for applications, upcoming events and project case studies. It would be a useful way of publicising the activities of the EU in the field of culture, as well as providing a dissemination tool for the Culture programme.   In order to avoid the problems encountered in Culture 2000, the newsletter should be bi-monthly or quarterly.

6   The DG EAC culture webpages should be redesigned and re-launched to comply with the Commission's Information Providers Guide and basic accessibility requirements. Further details can be found in Annex 11 of this report.

7   The managing Authorities should explore the possibility of developing an online searchable partner-matching database to assist cultural operators to find partners and develop project concepts. If implemented, the resources for this service must sufficient to ensure that it is well maintained and of good quality otherwise it will rapidly fall into disrepair. If these resources cannot be guaranteed then the service should not be provided.

8   The Managing Authorities should take over responsibility for the management and maintenance of the CUPID project database or should develop an equivalent. It is recommended that this role is awarded to the Executive Agency.

9   The Managing Authorities should publish thematic reports on the programme to support dissemination of programme achievements and good practice lessons. An example could be a report looking at "successful intercultural dialogue" or the "economic benefits of intercultural dialogue". These reports would form a valuable record of the activities and achievements of the programme in tackling specific economic and social issues. They would form an important part of the dissemination and exploitation of the programmes activities, results and impacts for cultural operators seeking inspiration for their own projects and for policy-makers at all levels searching for potential solutions to similar issues.

10 The Managing Authorities should run a programme of events (or a single event) where existing projects can showcase themselves to policy-makers, and newly selected projects can attend briefing sessions on project management for culture programme management (e.g., monitoring, evaluation, financial record keeping, etc.). It may be appropriate to combine these proposed events with the Culture programme Info Days which are targeted at potential applicants. Events would also provide an opportunity for cultural operators to build contacts for future cooperation activities. If this recommendation is taken forward, the Managing Authorities should appoint an experienced Events Organisers to organise them.

11 The European Commission should improve its collection of best practice information arising from EU culture programmes and promote policy lessons for intercultural dialogue to the culture Ministries of participating countries.

12 The Managing Authorities should publish an annual compendium of projects to be made available on the DG EAC culture webpages. The compendium should include an index and projects should be listed by cultural field and country of lead applicant. The compendium would provide a quick reference point of all projects funded annually by the

programme for potential applicants to assess the suitability of their project concept for the programme or to identify potential partners. It could also be used by policy-makers and practitioners seeking solutions for policy problems. A good example is that produce under the Grundtvig Action of Socrates during the period 2000-2006.

13 The Managing Authorities should restructure the final report templates to collect detailed information on project achievements, outputs, results and impacts. This information should be used to support programme dissemination activities

14 The Managing authorities should develop an interim programme management database to assist in monitoring applications and projects until SYMMETRY is available. This should contain basic information about each application (e.g., lead partner contact details, co-organiser contact details and outline of the budget) and record key administrative milestones (e.g., contracting, payments and reporting).

15 The Managing Authorities should continue moves to improve the guidance available to support applicants to submit an application from. This guidance should be extended to include the interim and final project reports and project management.   Quality guidance and support to applicants and project promoters will improve the quality of applications coming forward for support and will improve the quality of funded projects. The SOCRATES Guide for Applicants, June 2004 edition provides a good example.

16 The Managing Authorities should take steps to reduce the length of the application process by securing more short-term administrative resources for application processing and project contracting and additional culture experts for application assessment.