



For the last 12 months, 48 cultural managers from 31 cities across Europe have been working on artistic co-productions in the framework of Tandem, a cultural managers exchange programme initiated by European Cultural Foundation and MitOst and partly funded through the European Commission's CULTURE Programme and by the Robert Bosch Stiftung.

In duo's (or tandems) the selected cultural managers from 11 EU countries, Ukraine and Moldova took part in placements in each other's organisations and enriched their cultural management skills and knowledge during workshops and study visits in Brussels, Kyiv and Chisinau. Looking back on the experience of this cultural exchange, the Tandem community developed the following statement on cultural cooperation between EU and Neighbouring countries.

Creative Europe – an opportunity to improve cultural cooperation between the EU and Neighbourhood countries

We believe in the power of culture to connect and inspire people. We also believe that culture is essential for creating **open, inclusive and democratic societies**. Support to culture is crucial for the education of all of Europe's citizens about democracy, freedom of choice and the responsibilities that come with it.

We experience daily the threat to culture and its operators in countries in Eastern Europe, where there is a substantial lack in **democratic traditions and structures**, as well as in countries in Western Europe, where the focus is too often on **the economic value of the arts**.

We consider **international cultural cooperation** as a vital opportunity to meet colleagues and peers from abroad, to learn from each other and to exchange best practices in the cultural sector.

We welcome the opening of the **Creative Europe programme** to the EU Neighbourhood countries.

We call on the **EU¹ and on the EU Neighbourhood countries (especially Ukraine and Moldova)**, to work together to remove as soon as possible all obstacles to international cultural cooperation.

More specifically, we urge the EU and the EU Neighbourhood countries to:

- conclude **the Memoranda of Understanding** in the field of cultural co-operation as soon as possible;
- address the existing needs for **structural reforms and capacity building** in both the EU and EU Neighbourhood countries. This includes support for networking, best practice exchange and peer education as well as a revision of the tax, legal framework and funding for cultural organisations;
- recognise the benefits of culture as crucial to **sustainable socio-economic development** and make sure that the different EU policies and instruments are aligned;
- establish **cultural contact points** in the EU Neighbourhood countries, to support local organisations with their application to the Programme and other relevant needs;
- lower the **minimal own contribution** of the (often small and independent) NGOs in the EU Neighbourhood countries to 20% of the project budget.

Presented in Chisinau on 25 May 2012 by the Tandem community.

More info on Tandem at www.tandemexchange.eu

¹ European Commission, European Parliament and the EU Member States