

6th ASEF Experts' Meeting and Public Forum

Creative Economy in Asia and Europe Emerging Pillar of Economic Growth and Development

4-5 December 2013
Hanoi, Viet Nam

SUMMARY REPORT

Over the past decade, the creative economy has come to be regarded as an important part of the international economic agenda. In addition to its valuable contributions to job creation, income generation, export earnings and economic development, creative and cultural industries have come to play a significant role in fostering social inclusion, cultural diversity and human progress. In this duality lies the unique characteristic of an industry that is emerging as one of the most dynamic sectors of world economy. This was the message from Viet Nam's Deputy Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism, Mr. HO Anh Tuan at the [6th ASEF Experts' Meeting and Public Forum](#) on the creative economy in Asia and Europe in Hanoi in December 2013.

The meeting brought together 30 civil experts and public officials from Asia and Europe for two days of deliberations on existing policies shaping the creative economy and their particular potential for innovatively addressing development challenges. Over 35 Vietnamese culture professionals and representatives of international cultural agencies also attended.

Creative industries were identified as an important area of mutual interest and common relevance for Asia-Europe dialogue at the [2nd ASEF Experts' Meeting on Cultural Policy](#) (7 October 2011, Melbourne, Australia) organised in the framework of the [WorldCP-International Database of Cultural Policies](#). The topic is also high on the agenda of the Ministers of Culture in Asia and Europe, who meet biennially in the framework of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). The [6th Asia-Europe Culture Ministers' Meeting](#) (19-21 October 2014, Netherlands) will specifically focus on the benefits and challenges of the creative industries. In this context, the meeting aimed to facilitate the sharing of ideas, experiences and good practices from Asia and Europe on the creative industries.



Mr. NGUYEN Van Tinh, Director General, Department of International Co-operation, Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, Viet Nam emphasises the importance of the creative economy for Viet Nam at the start of the [6th ASEF Experts' Meeting and Public Forum](#). Mr. Karsten WARNECKE, Deputy Executive Director, ASEF & Ms. Sarah GARDNER, Executive Director, IFACCA look on.

The meeting was organised in partnership with the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies (IFACCA) and the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, Viet Nam and with the support of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, The Netherlands and the British Council. It was organised as part of the [ASEF Cultural Policy Dialogue Series](#) and complemented ASEF's support to the *WorldCP-International Database of Cultural Policies*, a searchable website of country-specific profiles of arts and culture (www.worldcp.org). The Hanoi meeting marked the launches of the cultural policy profiles of India, South Korea and Viet Nam.



Experts' Meeting: Conclusions

- Despite the widespread acknowledgement of the dynamism of the sector, the precise definition (or, more importantly, understanding) of the creative industries varies across countries and regions, making policy co-ordination extremely challenging. Embedded within these views is also the notion of a 'developed/developing' country divide. In attempting to map areas of common interest for Asia and Europe in the creative industries, major debates – mostly conceptual – have emerged.

The first involves an unresolved discussion of what constitutes the 'creative', since dominant discourses that refer to the creative industries often signify dissimilar meaning and establish different boundaries for action. The second revolves around the (perceived) tension between the intrinsic (culture for culture's sake) and instrumental (culture for economic growth) values of culture, as these hold implications for the justification of State support. The third is especially provocative – namely, that the simultaneously transcendental and culturally distinct nature of trans/sub-national identities presents a distinct challenge (whether real or imagined). The above are fundamentally ontological questions that are not easily answered; any attempt to construct strategies or operationalise them therefore requires, first and foremost, a deep appreciation of the complex diversity and contextual realities of the creative economies of Asia and Europe.

- Much of the literature has placed culture and creativity against an economic backdrop, measuring its contribution in terms of the economic payoff (namely, contribution to Gross Domestic Product or GDP) derived by a predetermined category of enterprises deemed as 'creative'. Increased state support for the creative economy is also often justified on economic grounds. However, encouragingly, recent developments see the creative economy being benchmarked against non-commercial aspects of development, e.g. employment (as in the measurement methodology of the World Intellectual Property Organization/WIPO). Italy's White Paper on Creativity (2009) also promulgates a new model of 'creativity for social quality' that emphasises culture, human values, and ethics. This model looks beyond the economic angle and acknowledges the social impact of creativity – it treats creativity as a means and not an end. Creative industries are increasingly finding innovative solutions to social problems.
- The integrity of ideas is a vital component of the creative enterprise. Copyright gives creative practitioners due assurance that their work is protected, as well as support their freedom of expression. WIPO sees Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) as a catalyst for the development of the creative economy, and has, as mentioned above, even gone so far as to develop a methodology for measuring the contribution of copyright industries to GDP and employment. However, IPR can be harder to ensure when intangible heritage is involved. The 'copyrightability' of traditional arts is an unanswered question; and, often copyrighting runs counter to the logic of traditional arts, which often anonymise the creator.

Commercialisation, therefore, needs to be combined with documentation of resources and skills to ensure the building up of significant IP assets. Participation of the creators and of local communities is critical to this endeavour and market opportunities must be

facilitated only to the extent wished by the community. The issue of cultural violation for economic gain continues to be relevant.

- The creative industries appear to have stronger ambitions for internationalisation than the rest of economy. Despite the exchange-dominated globalisation narrative, a one-size-fits-all approach is a myth. Policies must ensure relevance to the specific (and hugely varied contexts) in which they operate. The lack of domestic demand can easily become a hindrance in the development of the creative industries, as is the case in the Philippines. An interesting example is that of Aarong, set up in Bangladesh in 1978 by the NGO BRAC to revive craft and interpret them for the contemporary marketplace as well as facilitate market access for rural artisans. Interestingly, this social enterprise primarily harnesses local demand and mainly serves Bangladeshi customers, with only 2% in export earnings. China, on the other hand, has seen an increase in its creative exports (although this increase may also be attributed to the overall growth of its creative economy).
- Transparent and efficient access to credit is essential for the creative industries to flourish. This industry cannot survive if only funded by the state; hence, multiple forms of support are critical. Public-private partnerships as well as microfinance for culture must be explored.
- Research & development (R&D) must be prioritised to enable long-term growth. Low priority for R&D is a severe obstacle to innovation in several countries.
- The creative economy exists on the intersections between multiple domains – arts and culture, technology, environment, education, etc. While the difficulty lies in delineating roles and responsibilities, this should not detract from the need to reduce fragmentation and make sense of the complexity that exists. More horizontal connections need to be actively built; and, cross-sectoral collaboration and transfer further reinforced.
- While much of policy is at the national level, practice is primarily in cities and communities. Therefore, it becomes important to integrate the role of arts and culture as part of long-term city planning as well as to document evidence for culture’s value to the city.
- Policy measures should reflect the new technology-enabled modes of cultural dialogue and exchange, as the production and distribution of culture, as well as the transmission of knowledge have been fundamentally transformed in recent decades. Policies must also respect the autonomy of business and civil society, while enabling them to mutually share capacities and skills. Effective inter-agency co-operation between government ministries is particularly important because the creative industries have a spillover effect in the rest of the economy. Therefore, there is also the urgent need to develop interesting strategies beyond cultural policies.
- Beyond growing the economy around cultural products and services, it is critical to nurture the broader creative ecology (covering investment, legislation, education, etc.) to ensure long-term sustainability. For creative entrepreneurship to thrive, it is important, for instance, to encourage creative ability, originality and imagination. The distinctive aspects of creative products result from passion, sympathy and the expression of the

human spirit. Developing creative talent thus becomes vital to ensure the emergence of a generation of cultural creators and entrepreneurs. The human capital agenda should connect education to entrepreneurship.

- Developing culture is not only about taskforces, capacity building and beneficiaries. It is also about alternative and independent spaces. Creativity must be placed in unusual spaces as a way of reaching out of traditional/conventional contexts, making public space more inclusive and ensuring social participation.
- The failure of the creative industries to engage with the non-commercial aspects of culture remains a key challenge. Societies must necessarily support the development of diverse artistic practices without prior knowledge of what their economic benefits will be.

Public Forum: Conclusions

The public forum focused on *Viet Nam's Creative Industries Strategy: Next Steps and Challenges* on 5 December 2014. The draft *National Strategy for the Development of Cultural Industries in Viet Nam by 2020, with a Vision to 2030* was launched and discussed at the forum.

At the heart of this strategy is the vision to make Viet Nam a “major centre and market leader in the creative industries in south-east Asia by 2020 and the world by 2030”. To this end, the strategy proposes structured support to arts and culture with specific focus on creative education and skills; government investment and regulation; audience and market development; clusters and networks; and, international positioning of Viet Nam. The strategy - prepared by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, Viet Nam with the support of UNESCO and the British Council – marks a key transition in the positioning of culture within Vietnamese society. Where it was once strictly defined as tradition, culture has now come to embrace diversity and innovation and there is more openness to exploit opportunities to monetise it.

The next steps in the translation of the vision into concrete action were discussed at the forum. To make the strategy an effective policy tool for cultural development, it was suggested, among others that implementation be planned through an arm's length organisation; more innovative funding models (such as microfinance) be explored; and, greater ownership of this vision be fostered among the arts community.

Potential Areas for Asia-Europe Collaboration

Through this meeting, we have identified some gaps as well as areas of potential collaboration in the Asia-Europe context:

- Creativity is easier to talk about than evidence. There is an urgent need to document case studies (as against existing anecdotal proof) in order to promote evidence-based discussions that highlight the causal relationships between culture, health, sustainability, quality of life, etc. Further, good practices in legislative, tax and other financial measures with positive impact on creative industries should be researched, documented and widely shared.

- Knowledge exchange between Asia and Europe needs to be further strengthened. In particular, cultural administrators and intermediaries (such as festival or music producers) in both regions can be better and more closely connected through peer-to-peer learning programmes. Forums and platforms may be created to share existing policy initiatives and practice in Asia and Europe. Existing platforms need to be documented and shared.
- Co-production and co-creation must be widely advocated and actively supported. This is premised on supply and value chains being inherently global, in addition to the mobile nature of the modern society and workforces. The mobility of cultural professionals must be strengthened and reciprocal exchange emphasised upon. Digital technologies may also be harnessed to facilitate co-creation.
- Mediating curatorial initiatives must be encouraged to support cultural products that suffer from poor accessibility to markets.
- Regular channels of dialogue and communication between the arts community and policy makers must be fostered.

Following up on these ideas, ASEF is organising/supporting the following initiatives in 2014:

To document information & good practices

- [*Enabling Crossovers: Good Practices in the Creative Industries*](#) (2014, ASEF), a compilation of 36 good practices in four areas: creative skills, creative entrepreneurs, creative cities: sustainability and creative cities: quality of life

Commissioned by ASEF in partnership with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, The Netherlands and Het Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam, this publication will serve as 'food for thought' for the upcoming *6th Asia-Europe Culture Ministers' Meeting* (19-21 October 2014, Netherlands). The publication was launched at the first Senior Officials Meeting of the *6th Asia-Europe Culture Ministers' Meeting* (20 June 2014, Rotterdam, The Netherlands). Download this publication at: <http://www.asef.org/pubs/asef-publications/3251-enabling-crossovers>

- Commissioning country-specific arts & culture profiles as part of [*WorldCP-Asia*](#), an initiative of the *WorldCP-International Database of Cultural Policies* (www.worldcp.org)

In partnership with the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies (IFACCA); Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, Mongolia; Arts Council Mongolia; Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, Republic of Korea; Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, Viet Nam; Ministry of Culture, Community & Youth, Singapore

- [Mobility Funding Guides: Funding Opportunities for International Cultural Exchange in Asia](#) (2nd edition, 2013)

In partnership with Arts Network Asia, Japan Centre-Pacific Basin Arts Communication (PARC), Korean Arts Management Service (KAMS), and the Tokyo Performing Arts Market (TPAM)

(All available for download on www.asef.org & culture360.asef.org, ASEF's arts and culture portal)

To provide knowledge exchange between cultural mediators

- [Creative Encounters: Cultural Partnerships between Asia and Europe](#) is promoted by ASEF and Arts Network Asia (with the support of Trans Europe Halles) to facilitate and support artistic collaborations between cultural professionals and arts organisations. Two initiatives supported through *Creative Encounters* particularly aim to connect creative industry professionals from Asia and Europe:

[Ties that Bind: Asia-Europe Film Producers Workshop](#)

Alongside the 16th Far East Film Festival
29 April-3 May 2014
Udine, Italy

In partnership with Busan International Film Festival (Korea), EAVE-European Audiovisual Entrepreneurs (Luxembourg), Far East Film Festival (Italy), Fondo Audiovisivo Venezia Giulia (Italy)

[EARS on Helsinki 2014](#)

Alongside the Helsinki Design Week
4-7 September 2014
Helsinki, Finland

In partnership with Europe-Asia Roundtable Series/EARS and Modern Sky Entertainment (China)

- The [ASEF Creative Networks](#) initiative is promoted by ASEF to build sustainable connections between cultural professionals in Asia and Europe. Two initiatives supported in 2014 particularly promote knowledge exchange:

Network as Learning Experience

Connecting the European Network of Cultural Administration Training Centers (ENCATC) and the Asia-Pacific Network for Education and Research (ANCER), with the support of the Hong Kong Institute of Education, China

Throughout the year with activities in Brno, Czech Republic; Brussels, Belgium; Hong Kong & Shanghai, China; London, UK; and, Singapore

Asia-Europe Network of Urban Heritage for Sustainable Creative Economies

Establishment of a new network to promote the sharing of knowledge between organisations, networks and experts in the areas of urban heritage management and economic development in Asia and Europe

[Seminar on Heritage and Sustainable Economic Development](#)

27 August 2014
New Delhi, India

Conference
25-27 October 2014
New Delhi, India

Promoted by Europa Nostra, Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage/INTACH (India), International Institute for the Inclusive Museum (Denmark), International National Trusts Organisation (UK) & Yangon Heritage Trust (Myanmar)

To promote cultural mobility & environmental sustainability

▪ ***Create your future/focus on cultural mobility in Asia & Europe***

Training and networking meetings
17-19 June 2014
Metz, France & Luxembourg City, Luxembourg

In partnership with On the Move (Belgium) and Plurio.net (Luxembourg)

▪ **[Green Art Lab Alliance \(GALA\) series](#)**

Throughout the year with activities in Amsterdam & Maastricht, Netherlands; Glasgow & Oxford, UK; Prague, Czech Republic; Ljubljana, Slovenia; Visby, Sweden

In partnership with a consortium of partners led by DutchCulture/Transartists (The Netherlands) and Julie's Bicycle (UK)

Dialogue between policy makers and arts communities

▪ **[7th ASEF Public Forum on the Creative Industries in Asia & Europe: Enabling Crossovers](#)**

18 October 2014
Amsterdam, The Netherlands

As an official side-event of the 6th Asia-Europe Culture Ministers' Meeting (19-21 October 2014, Netherlands) in ASEF's capacity as a partner of the Ministerial meeting

In partnership with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, The Netherlands, Het Nieuwe Instituut (The Netherlands) and with the support of the European Cultural Foundation (The Netherlands)

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This report is based on the presentations and discussions at the 6<sup>th</sup> ASEF Experts' Meeting and Public Forum in Hanoi, Viet Nam. Participating experts included:

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A presentation prepared by **Christiaan DE BEUKELAER**, PhD researcher and teaching assistant, Institute of Communications Studies, University of Leeds, UK was shared at the meeting.

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This report was prepared by Daniel HO Sheng and Anupama SEKHAR (at the Asia-Europe Foundation/ASEF) with the support of the meeting rapporteurs, Natasha EVES and Raghavendra TENKAYALA.

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This report can be downloaded at: <http://tinyurl.com/nfle9vp>

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This report is included as *Epilogue* in ASEF's new publication, ***Enabling Crossovers: Good Practices in the Creative Industries***, a compilation of 36 case studies from 33 countries in Asia and Europe. This mapping covers four topics being addressed at the 6th Asia-Europe Culture Ministers' Meeting of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM): creative skills, creative entrepreneurs, creative cities-sustainability and creative cities-quality of life. The publication showcases examples of policy and practice that may serve as inspiration for networking, collaboration and policymaking. Download this publication at: <http://www.asef.org/pubs/asef-publications/3251-enabling-crossovers>

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