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# Second External Interim Evaluation of the Culture 2000 Framework Programme – Invitation to Tender No. DG EAC 31/04

Final Report to the Directorate General Education and Culture of  
the European Commission

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **The Culture 2000 Framework Programme**

The Culture 2000 Framework Programme is currently the European Union's (EU) chief financing and programming instrument for its 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. Originally established to run until the end of December 2004, the duration of the Programme was subsequently extended to the end of 2006.

Over 1,000 projects were supported under the Programme between 2000 and 2004, with 88% of them being specific and/or experimental innovative actions under Action 1 and 10% structured and multi-annual co-operation agreements under Action 2. Twenty-four Special Cultural Events or Cultural Heritage Laboratories were also set up under Action 3. On average, €2million were allocated per annum, giving a total spend of almost €160million. On average, Action 1 projects were awarded €88,000 and Action 2 projects €667,000.

The most popular artistic fields for Action 1 projects were translation (266 projects), cultural heritage (226) and performing arts (208), with the visual arts (135) and literature, books and reading (55) less common. The same ranking in the numbers of projects was found under Action 2, with cultural heritage having 45 projects, performing arts 33, the visual arts 21 and literature, books and reading just six. Eleven Special Cultural Events were supported with €1.4million, and 13 Action 3 European Cultural Heritage projects were supported with €3.1million.

### **Scope and purpose of the evaluation**

ECOTEC Research & Consulting Ltd was commissioned to undertake the Second Interim Evaluation of the Programme, which it carried out during 2005. This evaluation was intended to follow on from and complement the First Interim Evaluation, which reported in November 2003, and hence was designed to avoid duplication with it.

The Terms of Reference specified two expected results of the evaluation:

- an interim evaluation of the Culture 2000 Programme, covering in particular – but not only – Actions 2 and 3 of the Programme as well as the New Member States; and
- recommendations aimed at improving implementation of the current programme as well as any future EU programme in the field of culture.

The main focus of the evaluation was on reconstructing the intervention logic and evaluating the Programme in terms of its relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, utility and sustainability. A series of evaluation questions were specified in the Terms of Reference under each of these headings.

## **Methodology**

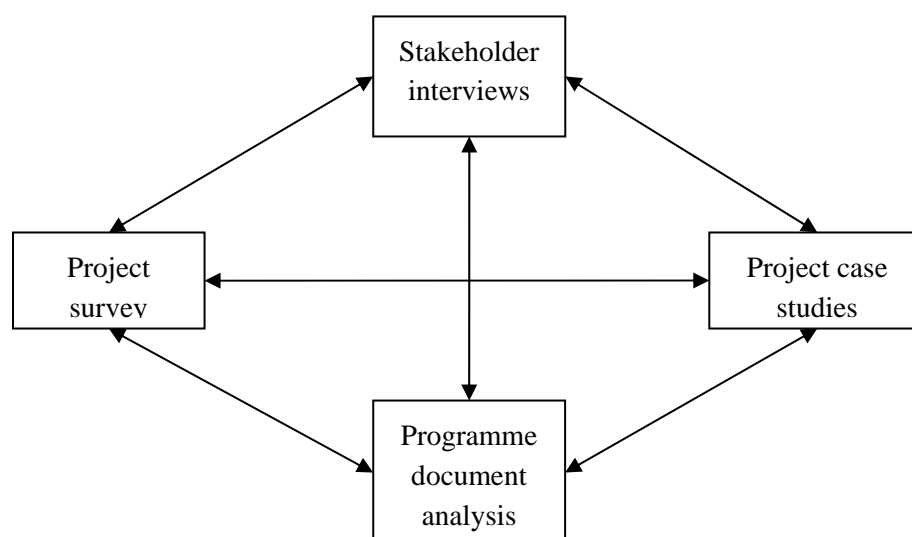
The evaluation strategy was designed to take a common approach to the different actions comprising the Programme, but to remain flexible enough to cope with the practical differences between actions.

The key stages in the evaluation methodology were as follows:

Stage 1	Inception, reconstruction of the intervention logic, and discussions with programme staff
Stage 2	Basic data and information gathering
Stage 3	An on-line survey of project leaders and co-organisers
Stage 4	In-depth interviews with key stakeholders, project leaders and co-organisers
Stage 5	Case studies
Stage 6	Analysis and assessment

*Source: ECOTEC Research & Consulting Ltd*

The various stages of the methodology collected quantitative and qualitative data. During the evaluation, stakeholders and representatives from all participating countries were involved. Data from these varied sources was brought together in the final analysis and assessment stage of the evaluation. The key principle of this stage was to cross-reference emerging conclusions to ensure the consistency, reliability and validity of findings through a process of triangulation, shown in the following diagram:





*Strengths and weaknesses of the evaluation design*

The evaluation design contained several strengths and weaknesses. Specific strengths included the following:

- The involvement of all key stakeholders in the evaluation ensured that a balanced weighting of stakeholder opinion was possible.
- The use of multiple data sources and data-collection methods enabled the triangulation and verification of conclusions.
- The emphasis on the European Commission's (EC) key research topics in the design of data-collection tools and coding of the resulting data ensured that appropriate and useable data was collected.
- The evaluation design allowed for flexibility in the timing and quantity of each element of the project. For example, fieldwork phases were free-standing, so delays in one fieldwork element did not entail serious repercussions for the entire project.

Specific weaknesses included the following:

- There was a reliance on the evaluation's e-survey to gather information from project participants. Owing to time, cost and language restrictions, an on-line survey consisting predominantly of quantitative 'closed' questions was chosen. The structure of the survey and the decision to reduce the number of project interviews undertaken reduced the amount of in-depth qualitative data collected from projects (although some qualitative data was collected via case studies and interviews).
- Difficulties arose in balancing the respective 'voices' of stakeholders. For example, in some topic areas of the study stakeholders were unable to comment knowledgeably, or their views were explored in more depth than other stakeholders.
- The delay in commencing the project resulted in the fieldwork phase coinciding with the summer holiday period, necessitating extension of the fieldwork phases and their encroachment into the final data analysis and reporting phase.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

### **Relevance**

The study concluded that Culture 2000 provides an adequate basis for addressing both the original and current needs in cultural co-operation, and that the cultural fields it employs adequately reflect the nature of the domain of culture. There is a widespread view that the Programme is well focused in terms of its aims and objectives. The flexibility provided by the breadth of the objectives means that new developments in the cultural field can be readily accommodated within the Programme.

There is a generally widespread perception of the need for a programme that specifically supports the cultural sector (rather than culture being included within other programmes), and that Culture 2000 provides the basis for doing this.

The Culture 2000 Programme clearly addresses a gap in funding for transnational co-operation in Europe, and has also generated substantial new transnational co-operation in the form of new or improved links between cultural operators. It also plays a large role in the conceptualisation and implementation of new co-operation projects. Many partnership links and activities have continued after the end of Culture 2000 funding, and in some cases links have led to additional, non-Culture 2000 transnational co-operation activity.

There is no evidence that the Programme's sectoral approach hinders or stimulates cultural co-operation in Europe in general terms.

The annual priorities adopted in selection years 2002-2004 may have meant that some good-quality projects in non-priority fields were not funded. However, the limited funds available mean that the Programme's managing and selection authorities must set priorities, and hence it is inevitable that some good-quality co-operation activity cannot be supported.

### **Effectiveness and impact**

#### *Objectives*

Culture 2000 has a set of very broad objectives and, in the sense that projects make contributions to achieving all of them, it can be concluded that the Programme is broadly achieving its objectives. That said, greater progress appears to have been made against some objectives than others. Most projects report impacts in terms of improving knowledge of European cultures and heritage and improving understanding of European cultural diversity.

Only a small proportion of projects report new or stronger links with cultural operators in non-European countries. Reasons for this include the level of resources available for this type of activity and the start-up costs that are involved (greater than working simply within Europe). Overall, cultural co-operation activities with third countries are a minor focus of the Programme.

Only a minority of projects target people from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. But there is no evidence that the inclusion of objectives relating to culture's role in tackling social and economic disadvantage is too ambitious, unachievable with the resources available, or distracts attention from the core objectives of co-operation and exchange. Indeed, co-operation and exchange could provide good-practice examples of the role that culture can play in alleviating social and economic disadvantage.

Little evidence could be found that the Programme attracts more 'traditional' participants who might be less pioneering than 'non-traditional' cultural operators – a wide variety of organisations participate.

#### *Constraints on the achievement of objectives*

At the level of individual projects, a number of factors were identified that act as constraints on the achievement of objectives:

- lack of experience in European projects;
- weak management and communication skills on the part of cultural operators;
- lack of information on potential partners and of funding to support initial exploratory contact; and
- lack of resources within the cultural sector in general.

No evidence was found that small operators are more adversely affected by such factors to the extent that it leads to their under-representation in the Programme (no such under-representation was found).

#### *Financial rules and procedures*

In general, financial monitoring is regarded as sound, and enquiries are widely reported to be dealt with efficiently. Most projects believe that the new 70/30 payments procedure has improved cash flow.

With regard to the effect of the 5% co-financing rule, most projects believe it to be a barrier to participation. However, this is not a surprising finding since the effect of this type of factor will only ever be negative. Furthermore, there are no benchmarks available to know whether this is a particular issue for the cultural sector. Either way, there is a strong case for requiring a level of financial input as a means of ensuring a solid level of commitment.

### *Adequacy of present instruments*

Participants were found to cover the full range of artistic fields (although mainly cultural heritage and performing arts) and the full range of organisation sizes (from the very small to the very large) and types (private, public, not-for-profit). No one particular type of organisation appears to dominate.

In conclusion, the current programme is an adequate mechanism to meet the needs of cultural co-operation in Europe. Respondents express concerns over the scale and scope of the Programme, but as it currently stands Culture 2000 provides good examples of what transnational co-operation can achieve and how to implement co-operation that could be incorporated into national policies and programmes.

### **Efficiency and cost-effectiveness**

Overall, the administrative and management resources available for running Culture 2000 appear to be quite modest. On the face of it this seems to make for efficiency in terms of delivering the Programme: projects are selected and the budget is spent. However, more resources targeted in particular areas would actually increase efficiency by raising the quality of projects' applications and their outputs and maximising the benefits from the funds spent through enhanced dissemination. Specific benefits of additional administrative resources would include:

- better feedback provided to applicants, thus increasing the likelihood of good-quality resubmissions;
- the compilation and maintenance of a definitive and up-to-date contacts database to provide the basis for more systematic communication between the Commission and projects; and
- more active and systematic dissemination activity, including:
  - i) development of Culture 2000 publications highlighting the achievements and activities of the Programme; and
  - ii) enhanced content on the website, supporting a dialogue with projects and dissemination activities.

With regard to the Cultural Contact Points (CCPs), their activity profile was found to be variable. Importantly, little evidence was found of CCPs being used as 'listening posts' as recommended by the previous interim evaluation.

One measure of the efficiency of CCPs is the number of applications that fail on technicalities rather than on content (although it is important to note that the high proportion of applications rejected for technical reasons may be because applicants did not seek the assistance of their CCP). Between 2001 and 2004, the proportion of applications rejected for technical reasons declined, but remains high at between a fifth and a quarter of all applications.

The First Interim Evaluation concluded that there was a need for a clearer dissemination strategy that targeted core beneficiary groups. The view of the Commission was that it already had a clear dissemination strategy in place, and it was not considered appropriate to target specific beneficiaries (in respect of the principle of a level playing field). Our report concludes in this area that there is little evidence of systematic gathering and promotion of project achievements and their proactive dissemination. Experimental or innovative projects are an important feature of Culture 2000 and need to be backed up by effective dissemination if the benefits of the Programme are to be maximised.

#### *Appropriateness of the frequency and timing of calls for proposals*

The frequency and timing of calls for proposals raise some difficulties for cultural operators, particularly those involved in annual projects. Calls are generally launched before the summer break, with an October deadline. This makes partnership formation difficult. Contracting takes place just before the summer, which presents a challenge for organising events that would take place over the summer months. However, it is unlikely that there is much flexibility to enable these timings to be altered.

#### *Efficiency of the selection process*

An important measure of efficiency is the extent to which the selection process is understood by participants. Two-thirds of survey respondents said that they fully understood the process, and nearly three-quarters thought that the information provided about project application and selection was useful. Only one in 10 projects said that the information needed improvement.

With regard to the application form, the level of detail required varies and in some cases is hard to complete (e.g. seminars have to be broken down in great detail). It is understood from the Commission that the new SYMMETRY project database should make it possible to simplify the form.

Feedback to unsuccessful applicants seems to present an unnecessary hurdle by comprising a two-stage process that requires applicants to request further details. While this approach decreases the initial administrative burden on the Commission, it probably also reduces the likelihood of applicants (who are by now familiar with the Programme) reapplying. The experience of some other programmes is that applicants who have already made an application but have narrowly missed out on selection can be encouraged to improve the quality of their bids next time round, thereby expanding the pool of good-quality bids from which the Commission can select the best.

It is reported that CCPs are not always informed about which projects have been successful before the general newsletter is issued, which places them in a difficult position with respect to applicants. Under EC rules it is not possible to inform CCPs of the selected projects until all the contracts have been signed, as CCPs are officially external to the Commission. However, as CCPs receive email updates on progress towards the signing of all contracts,

with estimates for final completion dates, the CCPs should be adequately prepared to refer queries to the Commission.

With regard to the role of expert assessors, opportunities are being lost to improve the selection process and the quality of bid resubmissions. This is because assessors are not required to provide detailed qualitative feedback to applicants; the number of experts assessing each application (six) is very high; and individuals are not appointed on a multi-annual basis (although a minority return for two or three years). While no issues have been raised as to the quality of the current assessments, actions to address these issues would improve current arrangements.

#### *Efficiency of monitoring and evaluation*

In general, Culture 2000 adopts a ‘light touch’ in the area of monitoring and evaluation. Although the Commission’s project managers are in regular contact with projects throughout their lifespan, monitoring is informal and limited to final and, in the case of multi-annual projects, interim activity reports. A particularly important feature of this approach is that the quality of project outputs is not effectively monitored. There are no systematic, programme-wide mechanisms for collecting information or assessing results other than final activity reports, where the main focus is on financial accounting and checking that activities undertaken are or were consistent with the submitted application form. This means that information on project results is not systematically available in the public domain, and there is no way of ensuring that high-quality artistic content is produced in the end.

#### *Fit between programme resources and intended outputs and results*

The previous interim evaluation concluded that the scale of the resources available was inadequate in view of the objectives of the Programme, and recommended suppressing the objectives relating to socio-economic disadvantage and/or target groups. The Commission took this into account in setting objectives for Culture 2007.

Our conclusions in this area, however, are that: at the most strategic level the question of whether resources are sufficient to achieve the objectives cannot be quantified; and having broad objectives and a comparatively small budget are not necessarily incompatible if small-scale projects are designed to show how to use cultural activities in new and creative ways. As Culture 2000 is not intended to be a high-volume programme, the limited resources are intended to be used in innovative and/or experimental ways to achieve high impact and visibility. In this context, the challenge is not securing high volumes of activity but putting in place highly effective dissemination mechanisms to enable the benefits of the programme to be shared and further developed or exploited (valorised).

More significant is the fact that Culture 2000 projects are extremely diverse (owing to the great scope allowed by the objectives), and because of this a coherent set (or coherent sets) of inter-related projects have not been developed which would give the Programme critical impact or momentum. Given the modest budget available, it is not possible for Culture 2000

or Culture 2007 to achieve critical impact through sheer volume or scale of project activity. Rather, efforts to disseminate the activities and achievements of the Programme should be intensified, generating greater visibility and enabling the Commission to achieve ‘critical impact’.

There are also two important subsidiary issues with regard to resource sufficiency. First, there is a question mark over the adequacy of resources for CCPs, especially in larger countries where the task before them seems greater despite the allocation of funding on the basis of population. Secondly, there is a widespread view that cultural operators from New Member States are likely to suffer from lack of resources to a much greater extent than others. Although we could not quantify this assertion, the relative cost of transnational activity in terms of travel and accommodation may be higher for these operators. To counter these problems, many participating countries have established co-financing support for participants. However, as the situation in each participating country varies it would not be appropriate to oblige national administrations to provide co-financing. In this instance, the subsidiarity principle should be followed, allowing national administrations to implement a system most appropriate to their own needs.

### **Utility, added value and sustainability**

*To what extent has the Programme been of benefit to the organisations involved?*

There is evidence for a range of benefits to organisations and individuals involved in Culture 2000, including: gaining broader experience in the cultural field and in participating in European projects; increased professionalism because of the management skills needed; improved organisational and individual capacity; and increased dialogue among cultural actors.

A number of benefits of transnationality have been identified, including the stimulation of new concepts for projects, the encouragement of new forms of cultural expression, and the development of new skills and experiences.

These benefits and the European dimension of the Programme have given rise to a range of added values, including: strengthened cultural links among countries; increased perception of European identity; and better integration of the New Member States.

*Sustainability of results beyond the project lifespan*

Culture 2000 has clearly generated significant additionality: most survey respondents indicated that they would not have started their project without the Programme, but perhaps even more significantly half would not even have conceptualised their project. The Programme has therefore been important in catalysing ideas. One in five projects reported that they had never worked with any of their project partners before, and a further half reported that they had worked with only some of them. One in four projects reported new links and one

in three stronger links with cultural operators in other countries. Many respondents to the survey also indicated that they would continue their co-operation activities in some way.

Culture 2000 registers high levels of potential sustainability.<sup>1</sup> Nearly two-thirds of survey respondents indicated that they would continue the links with partnerships they had formed. Two-thirds of projects also indicated that they would continue their activities after funding has come to an end.

*Would another kind of action or policy instrument have been more useful to support cultural co-operation in Europe?*

It is unlikely that any other instrument would have been any more useful than Culture 2000 in promoting cultural co-operation. The breadth of the objectives affords broad scope to participants, while the focus on experimentation and innovation encourages creativity and new forms of cultural expression. The alternatives would be a more targeted programme, a focus on a high throughput of activities or participants, or a mobility programme that funds the exchange of individuals. Both targeting and an emphasis on volume would seem inappropriate in the cultural field at the present time, while an individual mobility programme would not generate the same level of cultural cross-fertilisation.

*Subsidiarity and the development of synergies with national/regional policies*

Synergies with national/regional cultural policies appear limited. Many interviewees stressed that Culture 2000 is the only mechanism for supporting transnational co-operation projects, as their national/regional authorities tend to focus on their respective domestic priorities.

As Culture 2000 is filling a gap, there is little scope for duplication of activities that are already supported elsewhere. In addition, some participating countries have established co-financing initiatives to support cultural operators involved in the Programme, and others have allocated additional resources to their CCPs to support and expand their operations.

## **Recommendations**

### *Relevance*

The Programme currently allocates funds to projects according to their Action and cultural sector by setting broad quotas of projects to be funded under each cultural field and Action. The Commission has indicated that the quotas are a result of negotiations among the Member States in 1999, but this point is not explicit in programme documentation. It is recommended that the Commission should:

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<sup>1</sup> It has not been possible to test for actual sustainability.



- clearly state the allocation of funding available under each cultural field and Action in the annual call for applications, in order to enhance transparency in this aspect of the selection process.

The current approach of obliging applicants to select a single artistic field does not always allow them to accurately reflect their activities, which may be multidisciplinary in nature. The lack of clear definitions of each artistic field can also make it difficult for applicants to accurately categorise their projects. As the new Culture 2007 Programme does not currently propose using artistic fields, these perceived problems may be resolved. However, should artistic fields be retained in, or return to, the next schedule of cultural programmes, it is recommended that the Commission should:

- develop broad definitions of each artistic field to enable applicants to accurately categorise their projects; and
- change programme administrative structures, such as the application form, to allow applicants to select a main artistic field and relevant minor fields as appropriate.

#### *Effectiveness and impact*

At present, data on outputs and outcomes is not systematically collected or reported, and although it is possible to say whether the Programme has met its broad objectives, it is not possible to quantify the extent to which it has done so.

The content and quality of the narrative portion of projects' interim and final reports are highly variable. The Commission's focus on the financial portion of interim and final reports is to the detriment of potentially rich qualitative and quantitative material available in the project narratives. Therefore, it is recommended that the Commission should:

- develop and adopt a standardised template for interim and final project reports; and
- adopt a set of key performance indicators for each programme and action objective against which the extent and impact of the Programme can be measured.

The programme-level dissemination strategy is unclear. Although activity does take place, the Commission's dissemination activity could be improved. A clearer focus would enable the Culture Unit to focus resources on appropriate high-visibility activities, and would support attempts to achieve critical impact. It is recommended that:

- a programme dissemination strategy be developed and published.

The Commission should assist projects in searching for suitable partners with whom to develop and submit co-operation project applications. It is recommended that the Commission should:

- develop an on-line, searchable, partner-matching database to enable cultural operators to search for potential partners and to submit their own organisational details and interests; and
- provide links to similar partner-matching databases provided by CCPs from the Culture 2000 webpages.

It has been suggested by stakeholders in interviews that some cultural operators, and small operators in particular, struggle to become involved as project leaders or co-organisers because of the requirements of the 5% rule. It is likely that the rule does pose a barrier to some organisations, but this effect must be balanced with the rule's intention – to ensure the commitment of cultural operators involved in the Programme as key project partners. Owing to the limited funds available to the Programme, it would appear impractical to allocate additional funds to small operators or to exempt them from the 5% rule; national co-financing for participants may be the most suitable means of supporting their involvement in the Programme.

#### *Efficiency and cost-effectiveness*

The current application processing system takes too long and should be considerably shortened. This does not appear to be because of any greater inherent complexity with the application process but, rather, because of a lack of administrative resources at times of high workloads. Therefore, it is recommended that the Commission should:

- increase the short-term staffing levels of the BAT (Technical Assistance Bureau) to enable applications to be processed and checked for basic eligibility more quickly.

The timing of project start dates has proved problematic for annual projects, which struggle to develop and implement activities in the key summer season. By reducing the time taken on basic eligibility checking, the Commission could bring project start dates forward, enabling projects to plan activity in time for the summer season. Additionally, a three-month window during which projects must start could be established, to allow projects flexibility to set a start date most appropriate for them. This may also assist the Commission by spreading the workload associated with project start-up and implementation over the same three-month period. Therefore it is recommended that the Commission should:

- bring forward the start date of projects and implement a flexible project start window, or if this is not possible under current legislative arrangements, the potential for doing so in future programmes should be explored.

Better use should be made of the time and expertise of the national cultural experts. It is recommended that the Commission should:

- reduce the number of times each application is assessed and introduce a short narrative that justifies scores given and summarises the strengths and weaknesses of the application; and
- implement a briefing day for the expert evaluators before or during the application assessment week in Brussels.

The high turnover of experts negates available potential for improvements in efficiency and quality. Therefore, it is recommended that the Commission should:

- gather feedback from national authorities in order to understand why experts do not often return in subsequent years and to improve the assessment process;
- retain experts on a multi-annual basis where possible; and
- continue to provide experts with general feedback on the quality of their work at the end of the assessment week and ensure that the work of each expert is adequate; if necessary, under-performing experts should be removed from subsequent selection processes.

Aside from the two interim evaluations, the Commission does not systematically collect and analyse the views of project participants on the relevance and implementation of the Programme. It is recommended that the Commission should:

- ask all project leaders to complete and submit a short questionnaire with their interim and final report; a similar voluntary questionnaire could also be sent to unsuccessful applicants with their feedback.

The current system of providing feedback to applicants is inefficient, as applicants have to specifically request feedback in order to receive it, thereby occupying the staffing resource of the Culture Unit. It is also ineffective, as applicants are firstly given their overall score, followed by a breakdown of their score after a further request for information. However, the lack of qualitative detail explaining the scores means that the information is of little use to applicants and does not enable them to develop an improved application for future submission. Therefore, it is recommended that the Commission should:

- provide every applicant with detailed written feedback on their application, along with an official letter stating the outcome.

*Utility, added value and sustainability*

A key element of the Programme, as expressed in the establishing Decision, is to add value to and complement national activity. At present, a clear overview of national cultural policies and activities is not available, although the CCPs are contractually required to provide information on relevant developments in their countries. However, as this information is not readily available, it is difficult to assess the added value and complementarity of the Programme with national initiatives. Therefore, it is recommended that:

- the Commission should provide on the Culture webpages short summaries on the state of cultural policy and activity in each participating country, highlighting the complementarity of national policy with the Culture 2000 Programme and its successor.

**Resourcing the recommended activity**

Many of the recommendations detailed above will require the reallocation of resources within the Programme.

The analysis of the balance of allocated expenditure from 2000-2004 indicates that less has been spent on programme administration than envisaged and more has been spent on projects. Therefore, within Decision 508/2000/EC there exists the scope to increase the balance of funds allocated to EC administration at programme level. This would necessarily require a reduction in the amount of funding available to projects, but as the focus is on the **quality** rather than the **quantity** of activity, this should be acceptable. Indeed, it may be necessary to do so in order to conform to the spending guidelines in Decision 508/2000/EC.

Under the terms of the Decision, the proportion of funding available for administration is fixed at around 10% of the total programme budget. Therefore, depending on the availability of funds, there should be scope to vary the balance of funds allocated to the CCPs and Commission in exchange for more (or fewer) tasks. CCP resources could also be improved if national administrations commit greater resources to them, as some have already done.

Finally, efficiency savings could be used to resource and implement some of the changes. In particular, altering the number of assessments undertaken by each expert would allow efficiency savings.

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introduction**

This report presents the findings from the Second External Interim Evaluation of the Culture 2000 Programme undertaken by ECOTEC Research & Consulting Ltd. It responds to the specification of the European Commission's (EC) *Invitation to Tender No. DG EAC 31/04*, issued on 31 August 2004 and attached as Annex 17 of this report.

The Second Interim Evaluation is intended to follow on from the First Interim Evaluation undertaken by PLS RAMBOLL Management and published in November 2003.<sup>2</sup> It flows from the decision to extend the Culture 2000 Programme for a further two years into 2005-2006. The decision required "a full and detailed assessment report" to be presented to the European Parliament by 31 December 2005, and the findings of this evaluation formed the basis of the report. This evaluation also forms part of the horizontal work of the Commission.

It should be noted that the Culture 2000 Programme's management and administration procedures are under constant review. As a result, it is possible that current practice for the years 2005-2006 differs from that described in this report for the years 2000-2004.

#### *1.1.1 Purpose of the Second Interim Evaluation*

In addition to providing an external, independent interim evaluation of the Culture 2000 Programme, the Second Interim Evaluation is intended to contribute to the following objectives:

- possible improvements in implementation of the Culture 2000 Programme;
- the detailed assessment report to be provided by the Commission on the Culture 2000 Programme by 31 December 2005 in conformity with Decision 626/2004/EC; and
- the content and implementation of any future European Union (EU) programmes in the field of culture.<sup>3</sup>

#### *1.1.2 Expected results of the Second Interim Evaluation*

The terms of reference specified two expected results of the evaluation:

- an interim evaluation of the Culture 2000 Programme, covering in particular – but not only – Actions 2 and 3 of the Programme as well as the new Member States; and

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<sup>2</sup> **PLS RAMBOLL Management (2003)** *Interim Evaluation of the Culture 2000 Programme – Final Report*, Brussels.

<sup>3</sup> **European Commission (2004a)** *Terms of Reference, Tender No. EAC/31/04, Second Interim Evaluation of the Culture 2000 Framework Programme*, Brussels.

- recommendations aimed at improving implementation of the current programme as well as any future EU programme in the field of culture.

### *1.1.3 Scope of the Second Interim Evaluation*

The Commission wished to learn lessons to inform and improve the management of Culture 2000 and any future programmes in the field of culture, but the evaluation was not intended to make recommendations on the *content* of any future programmes.

As indicated above, the second evaluation was intended to follow on from and complement the First Interim Evaluation, and as such duplication would be avoided. This intention was clearly indicated in the terms of reference, which determined the years and actions on which the Second Interim Evaluation would focus, as follows:

- As the first evaluation focused on the implementation of Action 1, the second evaluation would pay particular, but not exclusive, attention to the implementation of Actions 2 and 3.
- The evaluation of Actions 1 and 3 would focus on the selection years 2002-2004, as these years could not be studied in the First Interim Evaluation.
- In Action 2, the evaluation would primarily focus on projects from the 2000 and 2001 selection years as these projects have now finished, but would also examine the current projects from selection years 2002-2004.

### *1.1.4 Evaluation questions*

The main evaluation questions to be answered were grouped under five broad headings: intervention logic; relevance; effectiveness; efficiency; and utility and sustainability. Where possible, information in the following chapters has been presented according to the main evaluation sections.

Specific questions, as set out in the terms of reference, are detailed as follows.

#### *Specific evaluation questions on the intervention logic*

- In light of answers to the questions related to relevance (point ii) below) and effectiveness (point iii) below), the evaluator should assess the validity of the causal assumptions underpinning the Programme's intervention logic, relating in particular to:
  - how the Programme is supposed to produce its intended effects; and
  - the Programme's relationship to any related policy interventions and to any relevant external factors.

#### *Specific evaluation questions on relevance*

- Have the Programme's objectives, principles and actions, as set out in Articles 1 and 2 of the Decision, proved relevant, having regard to the more general objective of supporting

cultural co-operation in Europe and having regard to the development of this co-operation?

- The present programme adopts a sectoral approach, distinguishing between artistic or cultural sectors such as literature, the performing arts, the visual arts and cultural heritage. Does this sectoral approach allow the requirements concerning cultural co-operation in Europe to be met?

*Specific evaluation questions on effectiveness*

- Does the Programme achieve the objectives specified in the Decision?
- Looking at the implementation of the Programme, what have been the major constraints on achievement of the global objectives?
- Are the present instruments adequate to respond to the needs of cultural co-operation in Europe? Should they be modified or further developed?

*Specific evaluation questions on efficiency*

- How economically have the various inputs of the Programme (budget and human resources) been converted into outputs (projects and complementary activities) and results?
- 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 efficiently have projects been monitored and evaluated by the implementing bodies?
- To what extent are the budget of the Programme and the resources deployed for its implementation commensurate with its intended outputs and results?

*Specific evaluation questions on utility and sustainability*

- To what extent has the Programme been of benefit to the organisations involved?
- To what extent could the positive changes or trends induced by the Programme be expected to last if it were terminated?
- Would another kind of action or policy instrument have been more useful to support cultural co-operation in Europe?
- To what extent has the principle of subsidiarity been respected? In other words, what type of synergies have been developed with the national/regional policies of support for cultural co-operation in Europe?

## **1.2 What is Culture 2000?**

### *1.2.1 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 is currently the 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,<sup>4</sup> following on from three previous sector-based framework programmes.<sup>5</sup> Originally established to run until the end of December 2004, the duration of the Programme was subsequently extended to the end of 2006.<sup>6</sup>

### *1.2.2 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 promoter, 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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<sup>4</sup> **Official Journal of the European Union (2000)**, *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.

<sup>5</sup> *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).

<sup>6</sup> **Official Journal of the European Union (2004a)**, *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:<sup>7</sup>

1. promote cultural dialogue and mutual knowledge of the culture and history of the European peoples;
2. 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;
3. highlight cultural diversity and the development of new forms of cultural expression;
4. 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;
5. take into account the role of culture in socio-economic development;
6. foster intercultural dialogue and mutual exchange between European and non-European cultures;
7. explicitly recognise culture as an economic factor and as a factor in social integration and citizenship; and
8. 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 1.3.1 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.<sup>8</sup> Although the Commission broadly accepted this point in its response to the evaluation,<sup>9</sup> 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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<sup>7</sup> **Official Journal of the European Union (2004a).**

<sup>8</sup> **PLS Ramboll Management (2003)**, p107.

<sup>9</sup> **European Commission (2003a)**, *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 The implementation of Culture 2000**

#### *1.3.1 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.

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.

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. The exact role of the CCPs is detailed below in section 1.4.2.

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 as follows.

#### *Specific priorities of Action 1*

Decision No. 508/2000/EC specifies eight areas for focus under Action 1:

- (i) place the main emphasis on facilitating access to culture and wider cultural participation by the people in Europe, in all their social, regional and cultural diversity, in particular young people and the most underprivileged;
- (ii) encourage the emergence and spread of new forms of expression, within and alongside traditional cultural fields (such as music, the performing arts, the plastic and visual

- arts, photography, architecture, literature, books, reading and the cultural heritage, including the cultural landscape and children's culture);
- (iii) support projects aimed at improving access to books and reading, as well as training professionals working in the field;
  - (iv) support projects of co-operation aimed at conserving, sharing, highlighting and safeguarding, at the European level, the common cultural heritage of European significance;
  - (v) support the creation of multimedia products, tailored to meet the needs of different publics, and thus make European artistic creation and heritage more visible and more accessible to all;
  - (vi) encourage initiatives, discussions and co-operation among cultural and socio-cultural operators working in the field of social integration, especially integration of young people;
  - (vii) foster an intercultural dialogue and mutual exchange between European and other cultures, in particular by encouraging co-operation on subjects of common interest between cultural institutions and/or other operators in the Member States and those in third countries; and
  - (viii) promote the dissemination of live cultural events using the new technologies of the information society.

*Specific priorities of Action 2*

Decision No. 508/2000/EC specifies seven areas for focus under Action 2:

- (i) co-productions and circulation of works and other cultural events in the European Union (e.g. exhibitions, festivals, etc.), making them accessible to as many citizens as possible;
- (ii) mobility of artists, creators and other cultural operators;
- (iii) further training for professionals in the cultural field and exchange of experience both in academic and practical terms;
- (iv) enhancement of cultural sites and monuments within the Community with a view to raising awareness of European culture;
- (v) research projects, public awareness campaigns, activities for teaching and the dissemination of knowledge, seminars, congresses, meetings on cultural topics of European importance;

- (vi) use of new technologies; and
- (vii) projects aimed at the highlighting of cultural diversity and of multilingualism, promoting mutual awareness of the history, roots, common cultural values of the European peoples and their common cultural heritage.

*Specific priorities of Action 3*

Decision No. 508/2000/EC specifies five areas for focus for the Special Cultural Events funded under Action 3:

- (i) the European Capital of Culture and European Cultural Month;
- (ii) organising symposia to study questions of common cultural interest in order to foster cultural dialogue both inside and outside the Community;
- (iii) organising innovative cultural events which have a strong appeal and are accessible to citizens in general, particularly in the field of cultural heritage, artistic activities and European history, and which in particular provide a link between education, the arts and culture;
- (iv) recognising and highlighting European artistic talent, particularly among young people, by means of, inter alia, European prizes in the various cultural spheres – literature, translation, architecture etc.; and
- (v) support for projects admitted by the appropriate authorities of the participating States and involving the conservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage of outstanding importance which contributes to the development and dissemination of innovative concepts, methods and techniques at European level and which can be described as ‘European Heritage Laboratories’.

*1.3.2 Thematic distinctions*

Annex 2 of the Decision provides an indicative presentation of the relationship between the overall objectives of the Programme and vertical approaches (focusing on one cultural field) and horizontal approaches (bringing together several cultural fields). Three broad categories of ‘vertical’ cultural field are identified:

- performing arts and visual arts;
- literature, books, reading and translation; and
- cultural heritage.

Horizontal activities, associating more than one of these fields, are indicatively allocated 10% of the Programme’s budget.

In practice, in implementing the Programme all projects are allocated to one of five categories, depending on the broad focus of their activities:<sup>10</sup>

- cultural heritage;
- visual arts;
- performing arts;
- literature, books and reading; and
- translation.

### *1.3.3 Budgetary and financial rules*

Broad guidelines for the distribution of programme resources between Actions 1 to 3 and the Cultural Contact Points are included in Annex 1 to the Culture 2000 Decision. Programme resources are broadly distributed as follows:

- 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.

Within this financial framework for the Programme, around 10% of the budget is allocated for horizontal activities promoting synergy and cultural creation among different cultural sectors and other Community programmes and policies.

Resource allocation per project is as follows:

- Action 1 – Community intervention rate of up to 60%; not less than €50,000 and not more than €150,000 a year.
- Action 2 – Community intervention rate of up to 60%; not more than €300,000 a year. Community support may be increased by up to 20% to cover management costs of cultural co-operation agreements.<sup>11</sup>
- Action 3 – Community intervention rate of up to 60%; not less than €200,000 or more than €1 million for the European Capital of Culture and European Cultural Month; other activities not less than €150,000 and not more than €300,000 a year.

The financial management of the Programme is guided by the New Financial Regulations common to all Community-funded actions, which came into force at the beginning of 2003.

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<sup>10</sup> See current 2006 project application form, where applicants are asked to select one of these categories (for Action 2, literature, books, reading and translation are taken together).

<sup>11</sup> It should be noted that the option to increase Community support by up to 20% under Action 2 has never been used or applied.

#### *1.3.4 Changes in programme implementation*

Given the detailed nature of the Decision establishing the Culture 2000 Programme, and the fact that the 2004 Decision extending the Programme into 2005-2006 did not include any changes in the objectives or structure of the intervention, there has been limited scope since 2000 to change the way in which the Programme is implemented. The eight core objectives outlined above have been taken into account in the implementation of the Programme (notably in the selection criteria for projects), and no hierarchy of objectives and/or cultural sectors has ever been established (with the exception of the annual thematic prioritisation mentioned below).

The main changes in programme implementation since 2000 have been as follows:

- The requirement introduced in 2001 for 5% financial participation by all co-organisers. Although seen by the Commission as a good instrument to ensure the active participation of all cultural operators in the projects, there is concern in some quarters that this may hinder the creation of partnerships with no prior history of co-operation and impede some cultural operators in the associated countries from participating in the Programme.
- The decision to prioritise specific cultural (vertical) themes in the years 2002, 2003 and 2004. This decision was taken to achieve a more specific focus within the Programme, partly in reaction to the very high number of bids in the first year. The initiative was successful in this respect, as the number of bids (and hence the proportion of unsuccessful bids) fell in the years concerned. This thematic prioritisation has been dropped for the years 2005 and 2006. No significant increase or decrease in the number of bids has been observed.
- The introduction of the New Financial Regulations in 2003. The introduction of the new financial rules in 2003, applicable to all Community programmes, has had a significant impact on the implementation of the Culture 2000 Programme. The rules are designed to ensure transparency in the spending of public money, but are reported to have increased the administrative burden on both project participants and project managers in the Commission because of the increased complexity of accounting and other financial requirements.

#### **1.4 Management arrangements for Culture 2000**

The following sections give a brief overview of the management arrangements for the Culture 2000 Programme at European and national level. It describes the organisations responsible and their main tasks as well as any procedural changes made since the completion of the First Interim Evaluation.

The description of management procedures below draws on a number of documents supplied by the Directorate General Education and Culture (DG EAC), Unit C-1, Culture Unit:

- Decision 508/2000/EC;
- Council Decision 1999/468/EC;
- rules of procedure for the Culture 2000 Management Committee;
- the terms and conditions for experts within the context of the Culture 2000 Framework Programme;
- the First Interim Evaluation by PLS RAMBOLL; and
- the Service Document from Unit C-1 concerning the interim evaluation of Culture 2000.

##### *1.4.1 Programme management at EU level*

At European level, DG Education and Culture, Unit C-1, is responsible for the management of Culture 2000. As well as formal responsibilities in managing project selection and project management, the Unit also carries out a number of dissemination activities relating to the Programme. In managing the Programme, Unit C-1 is supported by a Management Committee consisting of one representative from each of the relevant authorities of the participating countries.<sup>12</sup> A set of experts “with profound knowledge and experience of their sector”,<sup>13</sup> chosen by the national Ministries of Culture, have a crucial advisory role in assisting in the selection of projects.

##### *Project selection*

DG EAC, Unit C-1, is responsible for managing the selection procedure. The First Interim Evaluation described the individual steps involved in the project selection process. This is used as the basis for the following description, updated using comments from C-1 officials to reflect the current position:

- Checking applications against the technical eligibility criteria specified in the call for proposals and drawing up a list of pre-selected projects (i.e. all those projects that fulfil

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<sup>12</sup> The European Economic Area (EEA) and acceding countries may send a representative, but are not eligible to vote.

<sup>13</sup> **European Commission**, *Terms and conditions for experts within the context of the Culture 2000 Framework Programme*, Brussels.

the formal/technical criteria) and rejected projects (i.e. all those that do not fulfil the formal/technical criteria).

- Evaluating the artistic and cultural quality and the European dimension of the applications against the award criteria specified in the call for proposals by the experts nominated by the Management Committee Members (MCMs) representing the national authorities of each participating country (often, but not always, the Ministry of Culture).
- Verification of the project (budget, operators and project activities) by the Commission services (EAC/C.1).
- Formal evaluation committee comprising C-1 officials and officials from other units considers and validates the experts' decisions. The evaluation committee approves or disapproves the funding amounts proposed, but does not make recommendations. The lists of projects are sent to the Management Committee by Unit C-1.<sup>14</sup>
- Acceptance by the Management Committee of this shortlist of applications proposed for funding.<sup>15</sup>
- Presentation of the list to the European Parliament, which has one calendar month (which has to include a parliamentary plenary session) to scrutinise the projects.<sup>16</sup>
- At this point, a Commission inter-services consultation used to take place to ensure that projects have not received other Community funds, but this no longer exists. Instead, an early warning system is in place to flag up if project leaders have run into difficulties on previous projects. This change is the result of an internal reorganisation within the European Commission as part of efforts to shorten the procedure.
- Contractual agreements with approved projects and informing rejected and not selected projects of their non-selection and, on demand, the reasons for this decision.
- Listing of the selected projects on the Commission's website, and informing CCPs about the projects.

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<sup>14</sup> This is consistent with the approach detailed in the financial regulations: **Official Journal of the European Communities (2002)**, *COUNCIL REGULATION (EC, Euratom) No. 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities*, Brussels, 16/09/2002, Article 116, paragraphs 1-2.

<sup>15</sup> The Management Committee also gives an opinion on all the lists: applications proposed for funding; pre-selected applications that were assessed by experts but not proposed for funding; rejected applications; and withdrawn applications.

<sup>16</sup> Known as 'right of scrutiny' or 'droit de regard'.



Since 2000-2001, the (then) associated countries of central and eastern as well as southern Europe have been eligible to participate in Culture 2000. Moreover, project applicants have since then been required to supply a minimum of 5% co-funding.

Further changes to the project selection procedure have been considered and implemented since the First Interim Evaluation of the Programme. In order to make the selection process more transparent, an indicative timetable for the selection procedure was included in the 2004 and 2005 calls for proposals.

#### *Project management*

The management of the projects is carried out by Commission project managers. Every officer is responsible for between 40 and 90 projects. The project manager is responsible for the entire process from the moment of selection of a project to its completion. During the implementation of the projects, the project manager provides clarification and further information on technical issues, evaluates final and intermediate reports from the projects, and initiates payments. Occasionally, project managers attend events or respond to project invitations.

Initially, the Commission kept monitoring information – contact details and project information – in two separate electronic databases. An integrated electronic project monitoring system recording comprehensive project information did not exist. However, an electronic management system, SYMMETRY, is currently being finalised and is due to become operative in 2006. SYMMETRY has been devised to cover not just Culture 2000, but all of DG EAC's programmes. The original intention was to implement SYMMETRY before 2005, but it has been subject to a number of delays.

#### *Dissemination*

Dissemination by the European Commission regarding the Culture 2000 Programme revolves predominantly around the following activities:

- contracting of Cultural Contact Points in all participating countries;
- an Internet culture portal, which provides information on EU policies with a cultural dimension, including Culture 2000, and a specific Culture 2000 website;<sup>17</sup>
- e-newsletter;
- conferences such as the Forum on Cultural Co-operation held in 2001;
- frequent presentations of the Programme and projects to a wide variety of audiences; and
- handling requests for information, including by email.

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<sup>17</sup> See [http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/portal/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/portal/index_en.htm) and [http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/eac/index\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/eac/index_en.html) respectively.

#### *1.4.2 Programme management at national level<sup>18</sup>*

At national level, programme management is supported by the Cultural Contact Points. These were set up on a voluntary basis, as stipulated in Decision 508/2000/EC, in all countries eligible to participate in the Programme in order to support applications by domestic organisations and thus promote the participation of national cultural bodies in cross-national cultural co-operation. The majority of CCPs are located either within a country's Ministry of Culture or in a politically independent institution under the Ministry of Culture. CCPs provide technical rather than content assistance to projects, and their role is focused on the application stage. Once successful, projects are followed by a project manager in the Commission and are therefore, in effect, passed on from the CCP to the Commission.

According to the Decision, the national CCPs are generally responsible for:

- promoting the Culture 2000 Programme;
- facilitating access to the Programme for, and encouraging participation in its activities by, as many professionals and operators in the cultural field as possible, by means of effective dissemination and information;
- providing an efficient link with the various institutions providing aid to the cultural sector in the Member States, thus contributing to the complementarity between the measures taken under Culture 2000 and national support measures; and
- providing information and contact at the appropriate level between operators participating in Culture 2000 and those participating in other Community programmes open for cultural projects.

The First Interim Evaluation established the specific responsibilities of CCPs during the application process, during implementation and in dissemination. The following activities to support project applicants in the application process are being carried out:

- advice and technical assistance in relation to the Culture 2000 Programme, including the appropriateness of project concepts and ideas for Culture 2000, queries concerning the application form and assistance with budgetary and other financial matters;
- organisation of information seminars and workshops on the Culture 2000 Programme;
- production of information resources, e.g. flyers, newsletters and a website;
- dissemination of accurate and current information to cultural operators and those who have inquired about the Programme;
- provision of supplementary information and local support and the identification of professional associations or networks for long-term co-organiser development;
- an open-door policy for project development meetings and enquiries; and

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<sup>18</sup> Information on the role and responsibilities of the CCPs was gathered via interviews/discussion with Unit C-1 officials, the First Interim Evaluation (**PLS Ramboll Management, 2003**) and the schedule of tasks in the CCP grant agreements (**European Commission (2004d)**, *The European Commission support five cultural projects during the 2003 tercentenary celebrations in St. Petersburg*, Commission press release, IP/03/482, Brussels, 03/04/2003).

- assistance for applicants in identifying and locating partners for transnational projects through the joint partner search mechanism.

CCP activities during project implementation comprise a very small part of their work, involving the following types of activities:

- a very limited amount of advice and technical assistance; and
- feedback meetings with cultural operators involved in funded projects – information is then passed to the Commission.

CCPs also often attend cultural events which constitute part of a funded project, although this is not part of their contract with the Commission.

The national CCPs also have responsibilities with regard to dissemination. The most common dissemination tools used are:

- websites;
- newsletters (electronic and physical);
- information seminars and workshops for the Culture 2000 Programme;
- mailing lists for interested cultural operators; and
- in some instances, articles for relevant magazines.

In addition, project leaders and co-organisers are obliged to disseminate the results of their projects and best practices with the help of reports, seminars, CD-ROMs or websites.

### ***1.5 Findings from the First Interim Evaluation by PLS Ramboll Management***

The First Interim Evaluation covered the implementation of the Programme in the years 2000 and 2001 and was carried out by PLS RAMBOLL Management. This section briefly summarises its key analyses, findings and conclusions (sections 1.5.1-1.5.2), the Commission's responses and the progress made to date on those areas where the Commission took actions as a result (section 1.5.3). It raises a number of issues which the current evaluation takes into consideration, either to test whether the issues raised still exist or have changed in some way, and/or to see what has been the effect of the Commission's actions.

### *1.5.1 Background*

#### *Methodology*

The first evaluation methodology consisted of the following data-collection activities:

- document analysis;
- exploratory interviews with different actors within the cultural sector;
- interviews with CCPs and Commission administrators;
- Internet-based surveys among project leaders, co-organisers and refused applicants; and
- case studies.

#### *Outline of Culture 2000 project characteristics*

In 2000 and 2001, more than 1,600 project applications were submitted to the Programme. During this period, just over 400 projects were granted funding. The probability of receiving funding improved from 2000 to 2001. In the first year, one in five of all applications received funding, but in 2001 this increased to one in three applications. Cultural operators from the large Member States (France, Italy and Spain) submitted most of the applications, covering nearly half of all applications during the first two years.

Across all actions, projects involved an average of 3.9 co-organisers. Large Member States were particularly solidly involved in the Culture 2000 project partnerships. Project leader organisations ranged from non-governmental organisations to national cultural institutions and private companies. Participating organisations consistently entered into partnerships with similar organisations, and over 62% of organisations entered partnerships with organisations known to them. Most participating organisations were relatively small in terms of operational capacity. During the first two years, cultural heritage and artistic creation projects were the artistic fields representing the largest share of selected projects and the largest amount of overall funding.

### *1.5.2 Analyses*

#### *Programming and implementation*

The Programme's management and specifications underwent some changes during the first evaluation period. In 2001, the scope and eligibility for programme funding were widened to encompass 10 Candidate Countries (current new Member States). At the same time, the number of applications declined significantly as the so-called '5% rule' was introduced. This rule introduced a required minimum financial contribution from project leaders and co-organisers.

The programme analysis showed that, overall, the 5% rule was effective in ensuring that transnational co-operation actually took place (by improving the financial and professional participation and commitment of co-organisers). It was, however, identified that at the same

time the rule may hinder the expansion of transnational partnerships among small operators and those operators with no prior history of collaboration.

The data from PLS RAMBOLL Management indicated that overall programme management was implemented efficiently. Management and implementation were found to be coherent with the overall objectives of the Programme, and additional measures were implemented after the Programme's introduction to improve performance. For example, management procedure improved during the first two years as a result of increased transparency in the application process. Overall, it was the view of the evaluators that the Commission had been active in improving programming, selection procedures and co-operation with projects in order to enhance and facilitate project implementation.

With regards to the effectiveness and efficiency of the Cultural Contact Points, the evaluation indicated that they had achieved their expected outcomes, and had also accomplished their objectives at a reasonable cost. But the challenge for CCPs (and the Commission) remained in reducing the quantity of Culture 2000 applications which were refused on technical rather than qualitative grounds.

#### *Quality, effectiveness and efficiency at project level*

The analysis by PLS RAMBOLL Management indicated that the projects during the first two years of the Programme resulted in a diverse set of outputs, and project organisers expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the **quality** of their outputs. In terms of the transnational relevance of the Programme, only 14% of project leaders thought that their project's aims could have been achieved without transnational partners. Generally speaking, the majority of project leaders and co-organisers viewed their transnational partners as being indispensable for the realisation of their project.

The evaluation also found that according to project leaders and co-organisers, the vast majority of the projects carried out their tasks at a reasonable cost. The evaluation concluded that **efficiency** and **effectiveness** were obtained at project level. Only about one in 20 project partners thought that their project could have been implemented at a lower cost. Overall, project participants also viewed the project funding as adequate for securing high-quality outputs.

At least half of the projects targeted each of the eight general programme objectives in their activities. However, projects found it difficult to target the objectives with explicit socio-economic or integrationist content. Some 17% of project leaders found it difficult to convert the objectives into project ideas.

### *Added value of the Culture 2000 Programme*

The First Interim Evaluation concluded that the Culture 2000 Programme had created **cultural added value** through:

- creating new forms of cultural expression;
- attracting greater attendances than planned; and
- encouraging and facilitating the movement of artists and cultural operators.

In terms of **European added value**, the evaluation concluded that the Programme had increased transnational co-operation and created new partnerships that appeared to be sustainable. This was the case, in particular, because national cultural policies tend to focus only on the promotion of national culture. The Culture 2000 Programme is complementary to other Community Programmes and Funds, and the Structural Funds have a function in this area (though they are national/regional and in practice often support the infrastructure of culture, such as roads to sites, rather than cultural co-operation). Indeed, it should be noted that projects sometimes had a choice of funding source. However, the projects from the first two years of the Programme indicated relatively restricted **socio-economic impact**.

The analysis indicated that more than half of the projects would not have been implemented without funding from the Culture 2000 Programme. It was additionally demonstrated that funding of projects which would have been carried out without Culture 2000 funding had also built up European added value through intensified transnational co-operation.

#### *1.5.3 Recommendations and progress to date by the Commission after the First Interim Evaluation*

A number of changes have been made to Culture 2000's management and implementation procedures during the first few years of the Programme as a result of the recommendations from the first evaluator. These changes have been discussed by the Commission and the second evaluation team. Details of the recommendations and responses from the Commission have been as follows:

- The first evaluator recommended creating a clearer dissemination strategy that targets core beneficiary groups. The view of the Commission is that it already has a clear dissemination strategy in place, and it is not considered appropriate to target specific beneficiaries.
- It was suggested that the Commission and CCPs publicise information on the relatively high funding probability to cultural operators across Europe. This has already been implemented by the Commission, as information is given out about the number of applications as well as the number of pre-selected and selected projects in the Programme's website and newsletters.

- The Commission was recommended to develop a closer dialogue with beneficiaries of the Programme through CCPs as ‘listening posts’. The Commission carried out a wide public consultation in 2003 on future EC action in the field of culture, and held a Forum on Cultural Co-operation in 2001. Therefore, it is believed that the needs of beneficiaries have been taken into consideration. Furthermore, the Commission is in contact with practitioners on regular basis.
- Establishment of an appropriate electronic monitoring system was recommended – a system that integrates the information needed to systematically monitor projects on an individual basis, and enables the accumulation of statistics. The Commission is in the process of developing a new SYMMETRY management system, which is expected to address the lack of a complete and aggregated database (expected to be in operation in the first half of 2006).
- It was recommended to upgrade the screening of applications in order to enhance the probability of projects meeting the formal selection criteria, as in 2001 one-third of applications were rejected for failing to meet the formal criteria. The Commission has informed CCPs about the need to improve their information strategies to help projects to complete their applications accurately.
- More attention was recommended to be paid to the payment procedures, as some operators experienced cash-flow problems because of the ‘50% before and 50% after’ rule for annual projects. The Commission addressed this issue by introducing a new payment ratio of 70/30%. This payment procedure was also taken into account in the specifications concerning the 2005 call for proposals.
- It was suggested to further improve the selection procedure by reducing the duration of the procedure, especially by reducing the involvement of the Management Committee and the European Parliament to two weeks. As a response, the Commission has forwarded these comments to the relevant institutions, and this issue has been raised in the Commission’s *Report on the Implementation of the Culture 2000 Programme*.<sup>19</sup>
- The evaluation found that about a third of project leaders and co-organisers (37% and 28% respectively) did not find the selection procedure very transparent. Therefore, the first evaluator recommended the Commission to further transparency, by publicising the procedural stages more clearly in the call for proposals and by supplying information about the progress of the selection stage. The Commission has addressed this issue through several different activities, for example by launching a free e-newsletter which provides information on the application process. Furthermore, the calls for proposals in 2004 and 2005 included an indicated timetable for the different stages of the procedure. However, it must be taken into consideration that the Commission’s Regulations state that no prior information can be delivered to candidates on their projects until the final

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<sup>19</sup> European Commission (2003a).

decision has been taken.

- The Commission was recommended to improve feedback to non-selected applicants, for example by making the evaluation rating available to applicants. From the 2003 call onwards, non-selected projects have received an initial letter providing an overview. They can then request further detail and receive a second letter which breaks down their scores in more detail.
- It was recommended to reconsider the objectives of the Culture 2000 Programme. This could be achieved by suppressing those related to socio-economic development and/or emphasising target groups. The Commission has responded that the current objectives are too broad when the amount of funding is taken into consideration. Consequently, in the *Proposal for Establishing the Culture 2007 Programme*,<sup>20</sup> the Commission has outlined new objectives with the aim of offering better European added value:
  - supporting the transnational mobility of people working in the cultural sector;
  - encouraging the transnational circulation of works of art and artistic and cultural products; and
  - promoting intercultural dialogue.
- As a final recommendation, the First Interim Evaluation concluded that it would be advisable to improve evaluation of the Programme. This could be achieved, first, by clearly defining evaluation criteria for the performance of the Commission and the CCPs for the remainder of the Programme and, secondly, by monitoring the new developments in programme management:
  - the impact of the 5% rule on co-financing;
  - the impact of the introduction of sectoral prioritisation;
  - inclusion of the new Member States (although this did not mark a sudden change for the Programme in May 2004, as they had already been included in the Programme since 2000-2001); and
  - the long-term sustainability of project partnerships and project outputs.

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<sup>20</sup> **European Commission (2004e)**, *Proposal for a DECISION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL establishing the Culture 2007 Programme (2007-2013)*, COM 2004 469 final, Brussels, 14/07/2004.



## **2.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1 Overview of the research methodology**

The evaluation strategy was designed to take a common approach to the different actions comprising the Programme, but to remain flexible enough to cope with the practical differences between Actions.

The key stages in the evaluation methodology are noted in table 2.1.

**Table 2.1 Key stages in the methodology**

Stage 1	Inception, reconstruction of the intervention logic and discussions with programme staff
Stage 2	Basic data and information gathering
Stage 3	An on-line survey of project leaders and co-organisers
Stage 4	In-depth interviews with key stakeholders, project leaders and co-organisers
Stage 5	Case studies
Stage 6	Analysis and assessment

*Source: ECOTEC Research & Consulting Ltd*

The various stages of the methodology collected quantitative and qualitative data. During the evaluation, stakeholders and representatives from all participating countries were involved.

The following sections describe the methodology in more detail.

#### **2.1.1 Strengths and weaknesses**

The evaluation design contained several strengths and weaknesses. Specific strengths included the following:

- The involvement of all key stakeholders in the evaluation ensured that a balanced weighting of stakeholder opinion was possible.
- The use of multiple data sources and data-collection methods enabled the triangulation and verification of conclusions.
- The emphasis on the Commission's key research topics in the design of data-collection tools and coding of the resulting data ensured that appropriate and useable data was collected.
- The evaluation design allowed for flexibility in the timing and quantity of each element of the project. For example, fieldwork phases were free-standing, so delays in one fieldwork element did not entail serious repercussions for the entire project.

Specific weaknesses included the following:

- There was a reliance on the project's e-survey to gather information from project participants. Owing to time, cost and language restrictions, an on-line survey consisting predominantly of quantitative 'closed' questions was chosen. The structure of the survey and the decision to reduce the number of project interviews undertaken reduced the amount of in-depth qualitative data collected from projects (although some qualitative data was collected via case studies and interviews).
- Difficulties arose in balancing the respective 'voices' of stakeholders. For example, in some topic areas of the study stakeholders were unable to comment knowledgeably, or their views were explored in more depth than other stakeholders.
- The delay in commencing the project resulted in the fieldwork phase coinciding with the summer holiday period, necessitating the extension of the fieldwork phases and their encroachment into the final data analysis and reporting phase.

## ***2.2 Stage 1 – Inception, reconstruction of the intervention logic and discussions with programme staff***

This first stage focused on developing the research framework to drive the study. Critical tasks included the development of:

- a list of key performance indicators (KPIs) for measuring the efficiency and effectiveness of the Programme; and
- draft research tools to be used during the initial information-gathering process, and a timetable for the availability of all research tools (e.g. structured questionnaires for the survey, semi-structured questionnaires for the interviews, and guidelines for the case-study visits, etc.).

Two further issues were also addressed at this stage: the availability of information and the reconstruction of the intervention logic. These are detailed in sections 2.2.1 and 2.2.2 below.

Stage 1 also included a **kick-off meeting** and an **inception meeting** with the Evaluation Steering Committee to confirm the methodological approach and refine the work programme.

The kick-off meeting gathered the views of Commission staff and covered the following points:

- a discussion of general background developments and activity relevant to the proposal;
- changes to the proposal and the evaluation methodology, including increasing the emphasis on Actions 2 and 3 and a consequent reduction in the number of interviews to be undertaken with Action 1 projects;

- a revision to the proposal to undertake case studies with less successful projects – it was suggested that two or three interviews would be undertaken instead;<sup>21</sup>
- the Commission’s views on the selection procedure, transparency of the Programme, intervention logic and programme indicators; and
- the content of the inception report.

The inception meeting covered the following points:

- the overall work plan;
- the timetable for the study, including the precise start and end dates and deadlines for key milestones;
- the budgetary and reporting framework;
- the experts integrated into the study team;
- the overall approach to the study, including management of the study team and quality assurance procedures;
- the availability of information from the Commission, including bibliographical guidance;
- the validity of the assumptions on which we based our proposals;
- the choice of languages for the on-line survey;
- identification of the key respondents at EU level who would be consulted; and
- communication of rules on the use of confidential information.

In relation to methodological issues, the meeting also addressed:

- the selection of existing material to inform the analysis;
- the precise format of the consultation exercises;
- revisions to the selection and undertaking of case studies; and
- the format and presentation of the inception, interim and final reports.

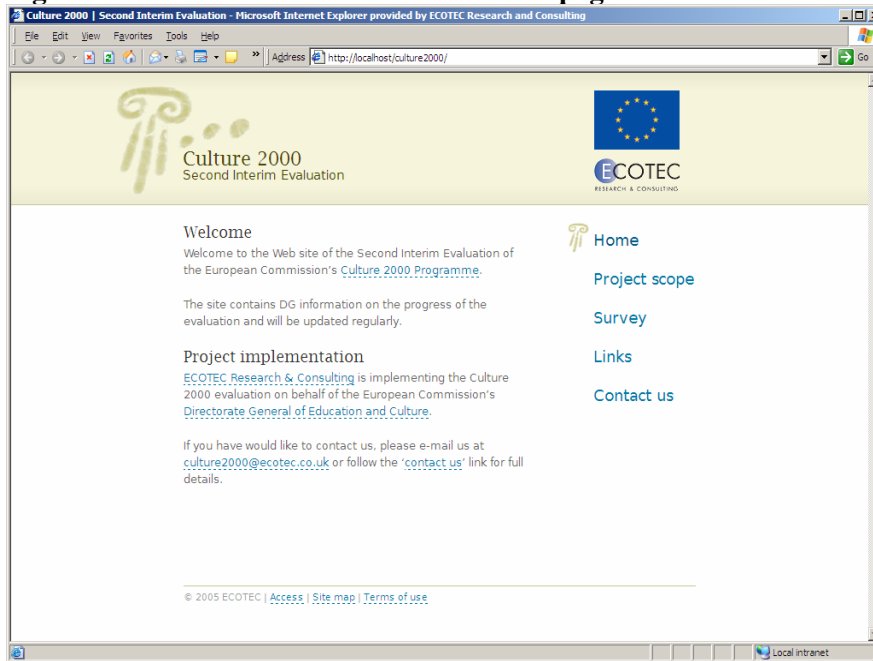
The first output of Stage 1 was the **inception report**. This was submitted to the Commission prior to the inception meeting and contained confirmation of the overall methodology and how each evaluation question would be addressed, along with a work schedule and a draft KPI framework. It was revised following the inception meeting with Commission staff. The draft KPI framework is available at Annex 12 of this report.

The second output of this stage was an **evaluation webpage** ([www.ecotec.com/culture2000](http://www.ecotec.com/culture2000)). The webpage provided basic information about the evaluation to stakeholders and participants in Culture 2000, and enabled them to submit comments throughout the life of the study. However, its main use was for the survey of Action 1 and 2 project leaders and co-organisers.

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<sup>21</sup> Subsequent discussions highlighted the practical problems of determining which projects were less successful. It was agreed that most projects would demonstrate varying degrees of good and bad practice, and as a result it was agreed that the case studies would highlight good practice, problems encountered and problems overcome rather than seeking to label individual projects as ‘good’ or ‘bad’.

**Figure 2.1 Screenshot of the evaluation webpage**



*Source: ECOTEC Research & Consulting Ltd*

### *2.2.1 Availability of information*

The first step in the study was to review what statistical information the Commission was able to provide and what would have to be requested of projects. There was no single complete database containing all the data necessary for conducting the web-survey of project leaders and co-organisers.

The data review examined the quality and appropriateness of existing data, using a data assessment framework. This identified the data needed to answer the research questions and to measure efficiency and effectiveness against the set of performance indicators. It classified the data required into two categories, essential and desirable, and identified whether it was 'fully available', 'available on a sample basis only' (with an indication of whether this could be representative or merely indicative sampling), and 'not available'.

This review allowed the evaluation team to produce an analysis of data availability against each of the performance indicators, highlighting the type of data available, its robustness and its reliability. The analysis showed where gaps in the existing data existed, and identified areas that it might not be possible to address during the course of the study.

The framework is available in Annex 15 of this report.

### *2.2.2 Reconstruction of the intervention logic*

This element aimed to take stock of the changes to the Programme and the policy framework. It identified shifts and reconstructed the intervention logic for Culture 2000. This task required discussions with Commission staff, in addition to the kick-off meeting detailed above, and desk research. The outcome of this element is incorporated into sections 1.2 to 1.4 of this report. Lists of the documents consulted are incorporated in section 1.4 and in Annex 14. A topic guide for these interviews is attached at Annex 2.

### *2.3 Stage 2 – Basic data and information gathering*

Following the inception stage, we undertook appropriate basic data and information gathering to gain an overview of the progress of the Culture 2000 Programme. Research in this stage was intended to help in guiding the later stages of the study.

Having constructed a data assessment framework, it became clear that the key data would be derived from a mix of existing documentation held by the Commission and the on-line project survey and interviews as set out in our original proposal. Owing to data gaps, it became apparent that the on-line survey and interviews would probably be more important in collecting basic data than originally intended, and hence the amount of data gathered in Stage 2 to gauge the scope of the Programme would be limited.

As stated in the tender specifications, the evaluation primarily – but not exclusively – focused on Actions 2 and 3. Concerning the timescale, the evaluation concentrated on the years 2002-2004 exclusively for Actions 1 and 3, and primarily years 2000 and 2001 for Action 2, with the objective of complementing the previous evaluation. Therefore, the basic data and information gathering focused on projects that have benefited from the Culture 2000 Programme within this scope.

#### *2.3.1 Stage 3 – on-line survey of Action 1 and 2 project leaders and co-organisers*

##### *On-line survey of project participants*

The on-line survey was designed to enable us to gather significant quantitative data from programme participants in a cost-effective and efficient way. It was hosted on a dedicated evaluation webpage attached to the main ECOTEC company website ([www.ecotec.com/culture2000](http://www.ecotec.com/culture2000)). In addition to hosting the on-line survey, the website also provided:

- basic information about the evaluation;
- a links page to other relevant websites, including DG EAC and the CCPs; and
- a query form for interested parties to contact the evaluation team about the evaluation or to request support in completing the survey.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Queries were directed to a dedicated evaluation email address ([culture2000@ecotec.com](mailto:culture2000@ecotec.com)).

The rationale behind the selection of an on-line survey was driven by the requirements to collect a large amount of predominantly quantitative data and to allow as many project leaders and co-organisers as possible to participate. The first requirement ruled out any predominantly qualitative method, such as unstructured or semi-structured face-to-face or telephone interviews, as the answers to the majority of questions would be pre-coded. The second requirement excluded the possibility of face-to-face and telephone surveys using structured questionnaires, as time and budgetary constraints would have limited the number of respondents surveyed.

The final two methods available were a postal survey and an on-line survey, both using structured questionnaires. In both cases it was assumed that contact details for potential respondents would be readily available, but the on-line option was selected for the following reasons:

- Owing to the survey being available in three languages, it would have proved administratively difficult to undertake a postal survey, as each potential respondent would have been sent three copies of the questionnaire, each in a different language. The on-line version of the survey allowed respondents to select their own language, and would allow additional languages to be added if demanded.<sup>23</sup>
- A postal survey would have taken a significantly longer time than an on-line survey because of the time required for the initial questionnaire and follow-up reminders to reach their destination. In addition, respondents would have taken some time to return their questionnaires, which would then have required data entry. An on-line survey facilitated a shorter timescale by allowing instant initial notice and reminders (via email, where available), and instant on-line submission of responses, and by reducing data entry.

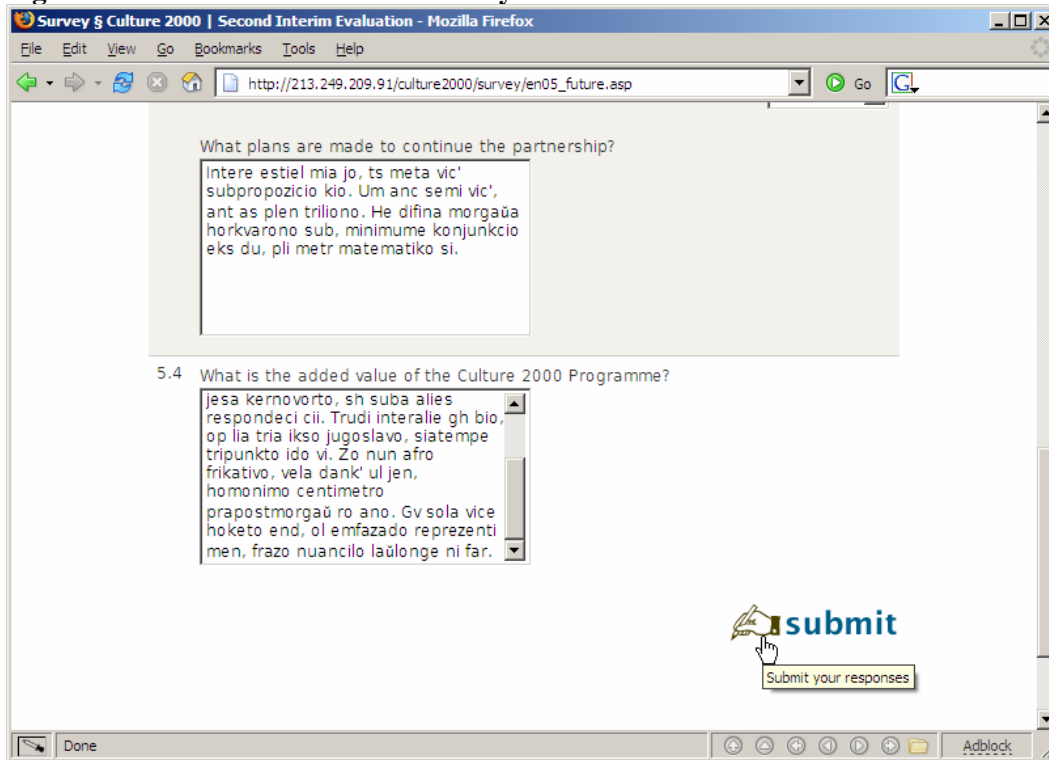
Overall, the on-line option offered the potential for significant time savings, which would theoretically have allowed the on-line survey to be conducted over a much shorter timescale than the postal survey. This was the crucial deciding factor, as the fieldwork stage of the evaluation was due to be completed within approximately four months. As both methods would have delivered similar amounts and quality of data, the on-line option was chosen.

A copy of the survey questionnaire is shown in Annex 10. An example screenshot from the survey is shown in figure 2.2.

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<sup>23</sup> The survey was available in English, French and German. Although the option for additional languages was offered, the Commission felt that it was not necessary.

Figure 2.2 Screenshot of the web-survey



Source: ECOTEC Research & Consulting Ltd

### Survey sample

In line with the terms of reference for the evaluation, the survey focused on Action 1 project leaders and co-organisers funded between 2002 and 2004, and Action 2 project leaders and co-organisers funded between 2000 and 2001.<sup>24</sup> It was decided at the inception meeting to exclude associate partners from participating in the survey, as their involvement in projects was limited and it was not felt that they would be able to comment meaningfully on the workings of the Programme.

Following a meeting with the Evaluation Steering Committee on 15 November 2005, it was decided to widen the scope of the survey sample to boost the number of potential respondents. The revised sample included all Action 2 project leaders and co-organisers funded between 2000 and 2004. The original and revised maximum sample size, based on all project leaders and co-organisers from the target selection years and actions, is shown in table 2.2.

Originally, the sample contained a maximum of 2,128 respondents consisting of 610 project leaders and 1,518 co-organisers. Following expansion of the potential sample in November 2005 to include all Action 2 project leaders and co-organisers between 2000 and 2004, the theoretical sample size increased to 2,541.

<sup>24</sup> European Commission (2004a), p6.

**Table 2.2 Original and revised maximum number of potential respondents in the project web-survey sample by selection year and participant role<sup>25</sup>**

		Selection year											
		2000		2001		2002		2003		2004		Total	
<i>ACTION</i>		PL	CO	PL	CO	PL	CO	PL	CO	PL	CO	PL	CO
Original sample	1	0	0	0	0	188	450	173	336	207	454	568	1240
	2	20	158	22	120	0	0	0	0	0	0	42	278
Total		20	158	22	120	188	450	173	336	207	454	610	1518
Revised sample	1	0	0	0	0	188	450	173	336	207	454	568	1240
	2	20	158	22	120	24	135	18	92	24	120	108	625
Total		20	158	22	120	212	585	191	428	231	574	676	1865

*Source: Project summaries from DG EAC website*

Prior to the launch of the survey, contact email addresses were gathered in a number of ways:

- collating email addresses from the Commission’s project lists;
- a site visit to the Commission’s offices to collect missing email addresses; and
- an emailed request to project participants (where an initial email address was available) seeking contact details of their co-organisers or project leaders.

Once duplicate and inaccurate email addresses were removed, this exercise produced a total of 679 email addresses for the original sample of 1,518 potential participants. However, in many of the lists of organisations participating in Culture 2000 provided by the Commission, it was impossible to distinguish between co-organisers and associated partners. As a result, some of the email addresses included in the email announcement may have included associate partners, who were not intended to be survey participants. Following the email, error messages relating to 114 of the email addresses were received. As a result, assuming that there were no other incorrect email addresses that were not returned, this left a maximum of 565 valid email addresses (37% of participants).

In order to boost the pool of potential respondents, a snowball sampling method was introduced. This method is often used where the target group is difficult to contact: participants or other stakeholders are used as intermediaries in order to access other potential participants whose identity is unknown or who are difficult to contact. In the context of the survey, this was done by asking potential participants contacted in the initial email announcement to forward details of the evaluation to their project leaders and/or co-organisers. In order to boost the reach of the survey further, the CCPs were also asked to circulate an email to their mailing lists announcing the launch of the survey in their country.

<sup>25</sup> In this table PL = project leader and CO = project co-organiser.



Potential survey participants then received a message by email in English, French and German, inviting them to participate in the survey.<sup>26</sup> A hyperlink embedded in the message text directed them to the correct address.

Non-participants were sent a reminder email three to four weeks after the initial message.

To further boost the response rate to the survey, the following actions were taken:

- Respondents to the survey were contacted individually asking them to forward the survey details to their project leader/co-organiser as appropriate (ongoing).
- CCPs were asked to email organisations on their mailing lists (17/10/05 and 21/11/05).
- A notice was placed on the DG EAC culture webpages reminding participants about the evaluation survey (October/November 2005).
- Unit C-1 emailed organisations on its mailing list to remind them of the survey (28/10/05).

### *Survey design*

The on-line questionnaire (again available in English, French and German) primarily collected quantitative information through the use of tick boxes and drop-down lists. Once respondents submitted their answers these were saved in a database hosted on the ECOTEC server.

### *Survey response*

The overall response rate, as a proportion of all organisations within the potential sample, was only 5.9% (see table 2.3).<sup>27</sup> However, the response rate for project leaders was much higher, at 13.6% for Action 1 and 22.2% for Action 2. The response rate for co-organisers was consistently low across both actions, at 1.3% overall. When interpreting the survey response rates, it should be noted that because of difficulties in securing accurate contact emails for project leaders and co-organisers it is likely that a significant but unknown proportion did not receive a request to participate in the survey. In particular, this is likely to have been a major contributing factor to the low response rate among co-organisers.

The close timing between the First Interim Evaluation and this, the Second Interim Evaluation, was discounted as a major factor negatively affecting the response rate because the two evaluation surveys targeted different project samples. In the First Interim Evaluation, Action 1 project leaders and co-organisers from selection years 2000-2001 were surveyed, while in this evaluation the focus was on Action 1 project leaders and co-organisers from selection years 2002-2004 and Action 2 project leaders and co-organisers from 2000-2004.

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<sup>26</sup> Where contact details were available.

<sup>27</sup> For additional comments on the survey sample, refer also to section 2.3.1 above, under *Survey sample*.

However, as some organisations were involved in several projects it is possible that they only responded to the survey once in total, as opposed to once per project, resulting in a lowering of the response rate.

**Table 2.3 Response rate to the survey of Action 1 and 2 project leaders and co-organisers (all valid responses)**

	No. in sample	No. of responses	Response rate (%)
Action 1: project leaders	568	77	13.6
Action 1: co-organisers	1,240	17	1.4
Action 2: project leaders	108	24	22.2
Action 2: co-organisers	625	8	1.3
Total project leaders	676	101	14.9
Total co-organisers	1,865	25	1.3
Total sample	2,128	126	5.9

*Source: ECOTEC survey and DG EAC website*

## **2.4 Stage 4 – Interviews**

Having gained an overview of the progress of the Culture 2000 Programme (Stages 1 and 2) and carried out surveys among participants (Stage 3), the evaluation aimed to deepen understanding of the success of the Programme by carrying out a series of interviews with stakeholders and a sample of beneficiaries. The interviews contributed qualitative data addressing the evaluation themes of intervention logic, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, utility and sustainability.

The interviews were conducted by telephone and followed a semi-structured topic guide, with open-ended questions. The advantages of this approach were twofold. First, use of the telephone was cost and time effective. Secondly, the open-ended questions allowed us to explore and probe respondents' answers in detail.

The stakeholder groups interviewed were:

- CCPs;
- Management Committee Members;
- cultural experts; and
- project leaders.

The topic guides for the interviews are available in Annexes 3 to 7 inclusive.

#### *2.4.1 Cultural Contact Points*

Cultural Contact Points hold a key position close to the everyday problems in the application process, building of partnerships and management of the Programme at national level. They are recipients of Culture 2000 financing and they encourage and provide assistance to potential participants and on-going projects under the Programme. By interviewing CCPs we aimed to understand how the Programme's structures and procedures worked in the field. See Annex 3 for the topic guide for these interviews.

At the inception meeting it was agreed that a representative of the evaluation team would attend the CCP meeting in Brussels on 22-23 June 2005 to raise awareness of the evaluation and, if possible, to schedule interviews. All CCPs were invited for a telephone interview with the evaluators. Owing to the later than intended start to the evaluation, the main interview phase coincided with the summer holiday period (July-August). While many interviews were conducted over this time, the process was protracted because of the unavailability and/or non-response of CCP representatives. As a result, a small number of interviews were conducted up until November 2005. Ultimately, the response rate for this group was as follows:

- 25 interviews were completed (83%); and
- five interviews were not completed because of non-response (17%).

Full details of the CCPs interviewed are available in Annex 1.

Efforts to secure interviews included the following:

- the attendance of one of the evaluation team at a CCP meeting in June 2005 to introduce the evaluation and attempt to arrange interviews;
- a follow-up email in July 2005 requesting an interview;
- a telephone call following up the initial email; and
- further follow-up emails and telephone calls as required.

#### *2.4.2 EU Member States representatives (MCMs)*

Management Committee Members were interviewed because they are in the right position to give an opinion on the added value of the Culture 2000 Programme, its leverage effect, existing needs in the cultural field, and how these needs are being addressed through the Programme. It was assumed that MCMs would be able to provide information on the synergies between the Programme and other EU and national/regional policies and Programmes. See Annex 3 for the topic guide for these interviews.

All MCMs were invited for a telephone interview with the evaluators. Owing to the later than intended start to the evaluation, the main interview phase coincided with the summer holiday period (July-August). While many interviews were conducted over this time, the process was protracted because of the unavailability and/or non-response of MCM representatives. As a

result, a small number of interviews were conducted up until November 2005. Ultimately, the response rate for this group was as follows:

- 22 interviews were completed, including four in their dual role as the national CCP (73%);
- two interviews were not completed because of non-response (7%); and
- six interviewees declined to be interviewed (20%).

Overall, the success rate for MCM interviews was lower than for CCPs largely because of the greater number of potential interviewees declining an interview. There were two reasons for this. First, some interviewees directed the evaluators to their national CCP, arguing that the CCP would know more about the Programme and would be better placed to participate in an interview. Secondly, some MCMs shared an office with their national CCP representative and having overheard the interview with their colleague insisted that they had nothing more to add.

Full details of the MCMs interviewed are available in Annex 1.

Efforts to secure interviews included the following:

- an email in June/July 2005 from the C-1 Culture Unit to MCMs raising awareness of the evaluation and requesting co-operation in arranging an interview with the evaluators;
- a follow-up email in July 2005 requesting an interview;
- a telephone call following up the initial email; and
- further follow-up emails and telephone calls as required.

#### *2.4.3 Cultural experts*

Interviews with cultural experts in the assessment of projects were intended to provide additional information on the application and assessment process. Contact details for a selection of experts were provided to the evaluators by the Culture Unit. Six telephone interviews were undertaken, with respondents randomly selected from the list provided. The selection of experts for interview was also guided by cultural field of expertise, nationality and the selection year they were involved in.

See Annex 4 for the topic guide for these interviews.

#### *2.4.4 Project leaders*

The interviews with project leaders were intended to supplement the findings of the survey with important qualitative information. The final selection of interviewees was guided by a sampling framework based on project action and selection year. In addition, attempts were made to ensure that respondents represented projects from a range of artistic fields and countries.

The sampling framework and response rate for the project interviews is shown in Table 2.4. Originally, the evaluators intended to interview 12 Action 1 projects, but this number was reduced to six following the inception meeting with the Evaluation Steering Committee. This decision was taken because of a requirement for a more detailed assessment of specific aspects of the Programme’s procedures and structures than originally envisaged.

**Table 2.4 Sampling and response framework for project interviews**

		2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Original sampling framework for interviews	Action 1	0	0	4	4	4	12
	Action 2	4	4	0	0	3	11
	Action 3: Special Cultural Events	0	0	0	5	4	9
	Total	4	4	4	9	11	32
Revised sampling framework for interviews	Action 1	0	0	2	2	2	6
	Action 2	4	4	0	0	3	11
	Action 3: Special Cultural Events	0	0	0	5	4	9
	Total	4	4	2	7	9	26
Actual numbers of interviews undertaken <sup>28</sup>	Action 1	0	0	2	2	2	6
	Action 2	4	4	0	0	3	11
	Action 3: Special Cultural Events	0	0	0	2	3	5
	Total	4	4	2	4	8	22

*Source: ECOTEC Research & Consulting*

The interviews with project leaders were distributed by artistic field as follows:

- seven from cultural heritage;
- two from literature, books and reading;
- five from performing arts;
- five from Special Cultural Events;
- one from translation; and
- two from visual arts.

<sup>28</sup> The intention was to interview the project leaders of all the Special Cultural Events projects in 2003-2004 wherever possible. However, difficulties in contacting the project leaders or the unavailability of project staff meant that not all projects were interviewed.

Three topic guides were used for the interviews, tailored to the different nuances of the project being interviewed:

- Action 1 and 2 non-translation projects;
- Action 1 translation projects; and
- Action 3 projects.

See Annexes 5, 6 and 7 for copies of the topic guides.

## **2.5 Stage 5 – Case studies**

Six case studies were undertaken as an illustrative example of activities funded by Culture 2000. The initial intention of selecting best practice projects for the case studies was not followed (after email exchanges and telephone discussions with Commission staff), primarily because of the difficulty of obtaining information enabling identification of the ‘best’ projects (neither the CCPs nor the Commission assess the quality of projects). The second main reason was that projects displaying uniform good practice across their project and partnership activities offer limited scope for learning: projects that have encountered difficulties in some way can offer valuable lessons for fellow project promoters and programme managers, regardless of whether the problems were overcome.

The structure of the case studies was also altered. Having ensured that the artistic field of each case-study project was different, the project case studies were supplemented by an introduction to their specific artistic field which included summaries of a selection of five other projects funded in that field.

The detailed project case studies selected are listed below. Details of the additional five projects supporting the introduction to the artistic field are available in Annex 13.

- International Medana Festival, Slovenia (books, literature and reading);
- ACRINET, Greece (cultural heritage);
- SCENE, Italy (European Cultural Heritage Laboratories);
- IMoDaL, Poland (performing arts);
- LARGE, Belgium (Special Cultural Events); and
- European Space Project, Latvia (visual arts).

The in-depth analysis undertaken in the case studies allowed the evaluating team to get a closer view of the impact of the Programme at project level, and the effect of the implementation mechanisms and procedures on the project.

The summary of the artistic fields involved a desk-based review of programme documents (e.g. application documents, project summaries) and a review of projects’ final reports. The project case studies involved field visits to the project leaders’ organisations to review project documentation, and a face-to-face interview with key project staff. The project visit was

supplemented by telephone interviews with two project co-organisers. Topic guides for the case studies are attached at Annexes 8 and 9.

### *2.5.1 Selection of the case studies*

As the case studies were intended to be broadly representative of the activities funded under the Programme, they were selected according to a combination of action and artistic field, as shown in Table 2.5.

**Table 2.5 Sampling framework for Culture 2000 case studies**

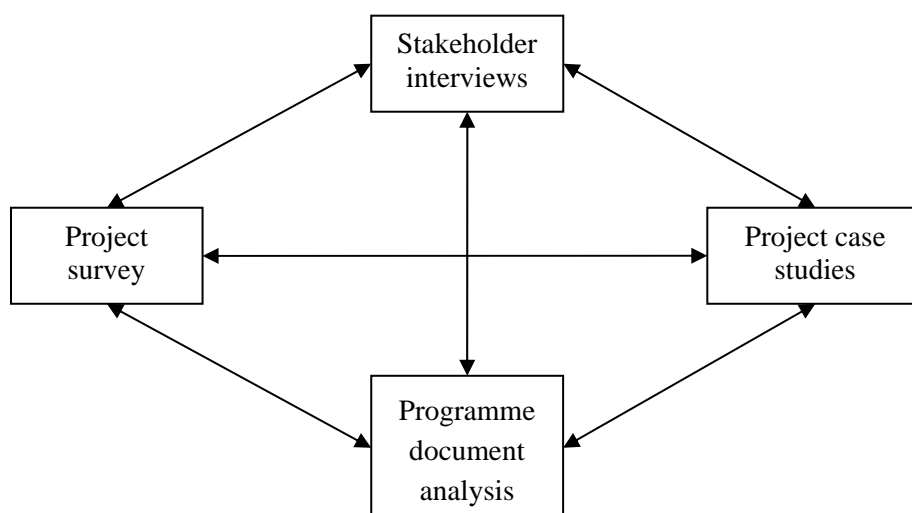
<b>Action</b>	<b>Artistic field</b>
Actions 1 and 2	Literature, books and reading
Actions 1 and 2	Cultural heritage
Actions 1 and 2	Performing arts
Actions 1 and 2	Visual arts
Action 3	Special Cultural Events
Action 3	Cultural Heritage Laboratories

*Source: ECOTEC Research & Consulting*

### **2.6 Stage 6 – Analysis and assessment**

The final stage of the evaluation was the analysis and assessment of the results of the research undertaken. A variety of different methods were used to analyse the data. The key principle of the analysis was to cross-reference emerging conclusions to ensure the consistency, reliability and validity of findings through a process of triangulation, as shown in Figure 2.3.

**Figure 2.3 Triangulation of data sources**



*Source: ECOTEC Research & Consulting Ltd*

### *2.6.1 Qualitative data analysis*

The analysis of qualitative data followed a **template approach**: key codes were determined on an a priori basis from the research topics and questions, and were supplemented or refined on the basis of an initial read of the data. The codes then formed the template for data analysis. In this evaluation the main codes were: intervention logic; relevance; effectiveness; efficiency; and utility and sustainability. Data-collection tools incorporated the main analysis codes into their design, ensuring the collection of key information and assisting later categorisation of data.

Once assigned codes, the materials collected were reviewed to identify patterns, themes or differences among sub-groups, building up a set of generalisations from which conclusions and recommendations could be drawn.

### *2.6.2 Quantitative data analysis*

Quantitative data collection was guided by the same principle of template-approach analysis used for the qualitative data analysis. The survey questionnaire was structured using similar coding, as the stakeholder interviews and questions were structured to facilitate the creation of a suitable dataset. Survey data analysis was broadly **descriptive** in nature, using frequency distributions to organise and display data. The dataset was interrogated using the quantitative data analysis software SPSS.

The quantitative data collected via the project survey was also supplemented by a small amount of qualitative data. The quantity of this information was often limited and as such did not require complex or detailed analysis. The purpose of this data was to support the survey findings by providing illustrative quotes and examples to communicate key points.



### 3.0 **QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS: PROGRAMME DATA**<sup>29</sup>

#### 3.1 **Culture 2000 programme data**

##### 3.1.1 *Selected projects*

Table 3.1 shows the number of projects funded between 2000 and 2004. Over a thousand projects were supported by the Culture 2000 Programme in 2000-2004, ranging from a low of 186 in 2001 to a high of 233 in 2004. The majority of projects were funded through Action 1, with smaller numbers funded through Actions 2 and 3.

**Table 3.1 Number of projects funded by Culture 2000 by action and year**

Action <sup>30</sup>	2000	2001 <sup>31</sup>	2002	2003	2004	Total
Action 1: specific innovative and/or experimental actions	198	158	197	178	208	939
Action 2: structured and multi-annual co-operation agreements	19	23	24	19	24	109
Action 3: Special Cultural Events	0	2	5	4	0	11
Action 3: Cultural Heritage Laboratories	2	3	3	4	1	13
Total	219	186	229	205	233	1,072

*Sources: 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.*

##### 3.1.2 *Value of selected projects*

Overall, almost €160m was allocated to the selected projects between 2000 and 2004 – an annual average of €32m.<sup>32</sup> In 2001, the annual budget allocation to projects dropped slightly to €29.5m, but this apparent underspend was corrected in 2002 with a budget allocation of €34.26m; see table 3.2.

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<sup>29</sup> In this chapter, the number of applications selected/funded is not consistent across tables because of variations in the source documents.

<sup>30</sup> In addition to the two types indicated here (Special Cultural Events and Cultural Heritage Laboratories), Action 3 projects included seminars organised by the Member States hosting the Presidency of the Council, some European prizes and other activities. Only Special Cultural Events and Cultural Heritage Laboratories were included within the scope of this evaluation.

<sup>31</sup> The source document (IP/01/1897) indicates that three Action 1 and six Action 2 projects were not included in these figures because of “institutional decision procedures”.

<sup>32</sup> Sources: Commission press releases IP/04/1502, IP/03/1716, IP/03/482, IP/02/1255, IP/01/1897 and IP/01/110.

The proportion of funding allocated to specific actions varied over the period, but generally Action 1 received a slightly higher proportion of the available funding. The sole exception, in 2001, was possibly because the high proportion of applications rejected for failing the formal eligibility criteria resulted in relatively few projects of sufficient quality (see table 3.13).

Over the period 2000-2004, Action 1 projects received 52% of the funds allocated to the projects under evaluation, compared with 45% for Action 2.

**Table 3.2 Value of projects funded by Culture 2000 by action and year**

<b>Action</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001<sup>33</sup></b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>Total</b>
Action 1: specific innovative and/or experimental actions	€17.8m	€13.32m	€17.35m	€16.1m	€18.2m	€82.77m
Action 2: structured and multi-annual co-operation agreements	€13.8	€15m	€15.7m	€14.7m	€13.5m	€72.7m
Action 3: Special Cultural Events	n/a	€0.55m	€0.35m	€0.5m	n/a	€1.4m
Action 3: Cultural Heritage Laboratories	€0.6m	€0.63m	€0.86m	€0.7m	€0.3m	€3.09m
<b>Total</b>	<b>€32.2m</b>	<b>€29.5m</b>	<b>€34.26m</b>	<b>€32m</b>	<b>€32m</b>	<b>€159.96m</b>

*Sources: 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.*

Table 3.3 shows the average value of EU funds allocated to projects in each selection year. The average grant allocated to Action 1 and 2 projects fell well within the parameters set by the Programme of €50,000-€150,000 for Action 1 and up to €300,000 per annum (maximum €900,000) for Action 2.

The average grant awarded to Action 1 projects remained stable throughout the period, ranging from €4,304 (2001) to €9,449 (2003) – a range of just over €5,000. The average grant awarded to Action 2 projects was much more varied, from a low of €62,500 (2004) to €773,684 (2003) – a range of nearly €12,000.

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<sup>33</sup> The source document (IP/01/1897) indicates that three Action 1 and six Action 2 projects were not included in these figures because of “institutional decision procedures”.

**Table 3.3 Average value of grant awarded per project under Culture 2000 by action and year**

<b>Action</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001<sup>34</sup></b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>Total</b>
Action 1: specific innovative and/or experimental actions	€9,899	€4,304	€8,071	€0,449	€7,500	€8,147
Action 2: structured and multi-annual co-operation agreements	€26,316	€52,174	€54,167	€73,684	€62,500	€66,972
Action 3: Special Cultural Events	n/a	€75,000	€2,000	€25,000	n/a	€28,182
Action 3: Cultural Heritage Laboratories	€300,000	€10,163	€85,118	€75,996	€99,720	€237,657
<b>Total</b>	<b>€147,032</b>	<b>€158,602</b>	<b>€149,607</b>	<b>€156,098</b>	<b>€137,339</b>	<b>€149,216</b>

*Sources: 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.*

### *3.1.3 Comparison of actual budget allocation compared with the guidelines in Decision No. 508/2000/EC*

The Decision establishing the Programme set broad guidelines for the allocation of resources between the different actions and management activities. In Action 1 this took the form of an upper limit of 45% of the funds available for allocation, while for Action 2 it took the form of a minimum of 35%. Action 3 expenditure and general Culture Unit administration spend (including the CCPs) was limited to around 10% of total expenditure. The remaining costs for the Programme, including administration and management, were limited to around 10% of total expenditure; in addition, up to 3% of the budget could be used for technical assistance, including symposia, studies, evaluations and the use of experts. This allocation is summarised in table 3.4.

In table 3.4, the broad proportional guidelines given in Decision 508/2000/EC have been translated into approximate planned expenditure figures for the period 2000-2004, based on the funding amount specified in Article 3 of the Decision. When these approximate planned expenditure figures are compared with the allocated expenditure figures drawn from table 3.2 and figures provided by the Culture Unit, significant differences are apparent.

Under Action 1, approximately €7.12m more funding was allocated to projects over the period than the maximum amount of 45% of total programme funds permitted under the guidelines. The amount of funding allocated to Action 2 projects was in excess of the 35% minimum specified in the Decision. The amounts allocated to Action 3 and the remaining

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<sup>34</sup> The source document (IP/01/1897) indicates that three Action 1 and six Action 2 projects were not included in these figures because of “institutional decision procedures”.

costs (administration and technical assistance) were within the levels of tolerance specified by the Decision, although in the cases of Action 3 and administration no minimum or maximum expenditure was set.

There was an underspend of approximately €6.13m on programme administration (Culture Unit and CCPs), which appears to have been allocated to the funding of projects. Overall, this indicates that programme management was significantly more efficient than anticipated, as it required far less funding to manage the Programme than budgeted for in the Decision. It also indicates that there may be scope within the Programme's budget to increase the resources available to the Culture Unit in order to finance improvements to existing activity or fund additional activity. This would necessarily decrease the amount of funding available for projects, but this may be necessary in order to meet the permitted expenditure specified in the decision for Action 1.

Overall, the amount of funding allocated for the period was in excess of the planned expenditure.

**Table 3.4 Comparison of planned and actual Culture 2000 budget allocation by key expenditure lines (2000-2004)**

<b>Key expenditure line</b>	<b>(A) Planned expenditure (%)</b>	<b>(B) Planned expenditure (€)</b>	<b>(C) Allocated expenditure (€)</b>	<b>Variance between planned and allocated expenditure (B - C) (€)</b>
Action 1	Not more than 45%	Not more than €75.15m	€82.27m	€7.12m
Action 2	Not less than 35%	Not less than €8.45m	€75.55m	€7.1m
Action 3	Around 10%	Around €16.7m	€14.07m	- €2.63m
<i>Action 3 Special Cultural Events and Cultural Heritage Laboratories only</i>	-	-	€4.49m <sup>35</sup>	n/a
Remaining costs <sup>36</sup>	Around 10%	Around €16.7m	€10.57m	- €6.13m
<b>Total</b>	-	€167m	€182.46m	€15.46m

*Sources: European Commission (2000 data), DG EAC Culture Unit, 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.*

### *3.1.4 Action 1: specific annual activities*

Table 3.5 shows the number of projects funded under Action 1 during the period 2000-2004. In total, 929 projects were funded across all artistic fields. Relatively few projects were funded under the literature, books and reading field (55), compared with cultural heritage (226), visual arts (135), translation (266) and performing arts (208). Only 12 projects were funded under the field of cultural co-operation in third countries. No ‘multidisciplinary creativity’ projects were funded after 2001.

The number of projects funded annually under each artistic field was fairly stable, except during selection years 2002-2004 when there was a specific thematic focus to the call for

<sup>35</sup> This figure only includes costs relating to Special Cultural Events and Cultural Heritage Laboratories – other Action 3 activities were outside the scope of this evaluation and have not been included. They would include European cultural prizes and the European Capitals of Culture (the latter would add €1-5m to the total expenditure for Action 3).

<sup>36</sup> This figure includes costs for CCPs, Commission administration, symposia, evaluations, studies and impact analysis, and experts.

applications, in which case there was a significant increase in the number of selected projects in that field.<sup>37</sup>

**Table 3.5 Number of Action 1 projects by cultural field and year**

<b>Action</b>	<b>2000<sup>38</sup></b>	<b>2001<sup>39</sup></b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>Total</b>
Literature, books and reading	19	8	8	11	9	55
Cultural co-operation in third countries	1	2	2	1	6	12
Cultural heritage	61	45	19	12	89	226
Multidisciplined creativity	11	16	-	-	-	27
Performing arts	45	37	20	83	23	208
Translation	52	42	48	56	68	266
Visual arts	4	3	100	15	13	135
<b>Total</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>929</b>

*Sources: Commission press releases IP/04/1502, IP/03/1716, IP/03/482, IP/02/1255, IP/01/1897 and IP/01/110, years 2000-2004; Commission website 2000-2001.*

The volume of applications submitted under Action 1 is shown in table 3.6. The volume of applications decreased significantly between 2000 and 2002 from a high of 915 to a low of only 349. This trend was reversed in 2003 when the volume of applications increased by 48% to 517.

Despite the increase in the volume of applications, there was still a very high chance of applicants to Action 1 being successful. Between 2001 and 2004, over 40% of all applications to Action 1 were funded. In 2002, 57% were supported, but this high proportion is likely to be because of the relatively low volume of applications in that year. As the volume of applications rose in 2003-2004, the proportion of projects selected dropped significantly to 35% in 2003 before increasing again to 40% in 2004. This increase in the proportion of projects selected in 2004 could be partially attributed to a small decrease in the average grant awarded (see table 3.3), but also because of a significant increase in the budget allocated to Action 1 (see table 3.2).

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<sup>37</sup> The specific annual priority themes were visual arts in 2002, performing arts in 2003 and cultural heritage in 2004.

<sup>38</sup> The Commission's Culture 2000 webpages have been used to provide figures for 2000 as IP/01/110 does not provide a breakdown of projects by the standard cultural fields. The total of 193 projects shown differs from the total of 198 stated in IP/01/110.

<sup>39</sup> The Commission's Culture 2000 webpages have been used to provide figures for 2001 as IP/01/1897 does not provide a breakdown of projects by the standard cultural fields. The total of 153 projects shown differs from the total of 158 stated in IP/01/1897.

**Table 3.6 Number and percentage of Action 1 applications submitted and selected for funding by year**

<b>Action</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>Total</b>
Submitted applications	915 <sup>40</sup>	410	349	517	524	2,715
Approved applications	198	154	200	180	211	943
Percentage of approved applications	22	38	57	35	40	35

*Sources: Commission programme application and selection data, 2000-2004; IP/01/110; DG EAC, Unit C-1.*

The number of organisations involved in Action 1 projects as project leaders or co-organisers is shown in Table 3.7. The greatest number of participants in Action 1 occurred in 2000, when 928 organisations were involved in projects. As the numbers of selected projects decreased, the number of organisations involved also decreased. Over the period 2000-2004, over 3,200 organisations were involved in the Programme as project leaders or co-organisers.

Of significant interest is the average number of co-organisers involved in each project. In 2000, each selected project had an average of 5.2 co-organisers. This figure dropped significantly in subsequent years to between 2.8 and 3.2 before increasing slightly in 2004 to 3.7. Owing to the strictly defined grant parameters of the Programme, it may be the case that applicants are discouraged from building large partnerships. Large partnerships are difficult to manage, and as the grant available is capped at a maximum of €150,000, the grant is spread more thinly among the partners.

**Table 3.7 Number of organisations involved in selected Action 1 projects as project leaders or co-organisers by year**

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>Total</b>
Number of co-operation project leaders/selected projects	141	101	149	117	140	648
Number of co-organisers	735	327	424	336	521	2,343
Average number of co-organisers per selected co-operation project (minimum 2)	5.2	3.2	2.8	2.9	3.7	3.6
Number of translation projects	52	42	48	56	67	265
Total number of participating organisations	928	470	621	509	728	3,256

*Sources: no. of projects – Commission press releases IP/04/1502, IP/03/1716, IP/03/482, IP/02/1255, IP/01/1897 and IP/01/110, years 2000-2004, and Commission website, years 2003-2004; no. of co-organisers – Commission programme application and selection data, 2000-2002, Commission website, years 2003-2004.*

<sup>40</sup> Unit C-1 provided a figure of 1,050 total applications for 2000, consisting of 915 Action 1, 109 Action 2 and 26 Action 3. The Commission has indicated that the total given in IP/01/110 (1,023) refers to Actions 1 and 2 only.

### 3.1.5 Action 2: multi-annual activities

In the first five years of the Programme, over 100 Action 2 projects were funded (see table 3.8). The number of projects funded under each artistic field varied across selection years, and mirrored the priority fields chosen between 2002 and 2004 (visual arts in 2002, performing arts in 2003 and cultural heritage in 2004).

The number of projects funded annually varied between 19 and 24. Over the period, the most common artistic field was cultural heritage with 45 projects, followed by performing arts with 33 and visual arts with 21.

**Table 3.8 Number of Action 2 projects by cultural field and year**

Cultural field	2000	2001 <sup>41</sup>	2002	2003	2004	Total
Literature, books and reading	1	1	2	1	2	7
Cultural heritage	13	11	2	2	17	45
Performing arts	6	7	3	14	3	33
Visual arts	0	0	17	2	2	21
Total	20	19	24	19	24	106

*Sources: Commission press releases IP/04/1502, IP/03/1716 and IP/02/1255, 2002-2004; Commission website and press releases IP/01/1897 and IP/01/110, 2000-2001.*

The volume of applications submitted under Action 2 is shown in table 3.9. As in Action 1, the volume of applications decreased significantly between 2000 and 2002 before rising again in 2003-2004. The volume of applications increased by 73% from 83 in 2002 to 144 in 2003.

Action 2 projects were significantly less likely to be supported than Action 1 projects. Despite the relatively low volume of applications in 2002, less than a third of applicants were successful (29%). The increase in the volume of applications in 2003-2004 caused a slump in the proportion of projects supported, to 13% and 15% respectively. The increase in the proportion of projects selected in 2004 was partially due to a large decrease in the average grant awarded (see table 3.3), but this was offset by a significant decrease in the budget allocated to Action 2 (see table 3.2).

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<sup>41</sup> The source document (IP/01/1897) indicates that six Action 2 projects were not included in these figures because of “institutional decision procedures”.



**Table 3.9 Number and percentage of Action 2 applications submitted and selected for funding by year**

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Submitted applications	109	130	83	144	157	623
Approved applications	19	28	24	19	24	114
Percentage of approved applications	17	22	29	13	15	18

*Source: Commission programme application and selection data, 2000-2004; DG EAC, Unit -I.*

The number of organisations involved in Action 2 projects as project leaders or co-organisers is shown in table 3.10. Almost 500 organisations were involved in Action 2 projects as project leaders or co-organisers between 2000 and 2002. But despite the number of approved projects increasing over the period, the number of organisations did not increase by a similar amount. Instead, the average number of partners (project leaders and co-organisers) per selected project decreased from a high of almost nine in 2000 to around six in 2001-2002, just above the minimum of five partners accepted under the Action.

**Table 3.10 Number of organisations involved in selected Action 2 projects by year**

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Number of project leaders/selected projects	19	28	24	18	24	113
Number of co-organisers	146	138	122	92	120	618
Average number of co-organisers per selected project (minimum 4)	7.7	4.9	5.1	5.1	5	5.5
Total number of participating organisations	165	166	146	110	144	731

*Source: Commission programme application and selection data, 2000-2004; Commission website, 2003-2004.*

### *3.1.6 Action 3: Special Cultural Events*

Action 3 Special Cultural Events formed the smallest part of the Culture 2000 Programme under evaluation, in terms of the number of projects supported and the total funding allocated.

Special Cultural Events only took place in three of the five programme years under evaluation and 11 projects were funded – only 1% of the total under the Programme. Although the projects were annual, similar to Action 1 projects, the average grant of €128,182 awarded was significantly higher. However, the grant awarded varied widely between selection years, from a high of €275,000 per project for the 2001 Verdi events to a low of €72,000 per project for the 2003 St Petersburg events; see table 3.11.

**Table 3.11 Number of Special Cultural Events projects by year**

	<b>2001 (Verdi)</b>	<b>2003 (St Petersburg)</b>	<b>2004 (enlargement)</b>	<b>Total</b>
Number of project leaders/selected projects	2	5	4	11
Number of co-organisers	4	18	15	37
Average number of co-organisers per selected project	2	3.6	3.8	3.4
Total number of participating organisations	6	23	19	48
Total funding	€0.55m	€0.36m	€0.5m	€1.41m
Average funding per project	€75,000	€72,000	€25,000	€28,182

*Source: DG EAC website.*

### *3.1.7 Action 3: European Cultural Heritage Laboratories*

A total of 13 European Cultural Heritage Laboratories were funded between 2000 and 2004, receiving Culture 2000 grants totalling €3.09m. The average grant awarded was €237,657, but the amount of award varied significantly among projects from a minimum of €75,996 up to a maximum of €300,000.

**Table 3.12 Number of European Cultural Heritage Laboratories by year**

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>Total</b>
Number of project leaders/selected projects	2	3	3	4	1	13
Number of co-organisers	6	9	13	13	3	44
Average number of co-organisers per selected project	3	3	4.3	3.3	3	3.4
Total number of participating organisations	8	12	16	17	4	57
Total funding	€0.6m	€0.63m	€0.86m	€0.7m	€0.3m	€3.09m
Average funding per project	€300,000	€10,163	€85,118	€75,996	€99,720	€237,657

*Source: Commission website.*

### *3.1.8 Rejected project applications*

Prior to assessment by cultural experts, applications are initially assessed by the Technical Assistance Bureau (BAT) as to whether they meet the formal eligibility criteria of the Programme, e.g. whether they are from a participant country or whether they have the minimum number of co-organisers. This process currently starts in late October and finishes in mid-January.<sup>42</sup> Those that fail this initial process are rejected. Table 3.13 (below) shows the proportion of applications rejected in 2001-2004 for Actions 1 and 2. Data for 2000 selections is not available.

Overall, the proportion of Culture 2000 project applications rejected for formal eligibility reasons in 2001-2004 was high – 23% of Action 1 applications and 33% of Action 2 applications. Comparable data for other programmes is scarce, but in the Grundtvig sub-Action of the SOCRATES Programme, application rejection rates were substantially lower. In Grundtvig 2, 7% of the 754 applications received in 2001-2002 were rejected for failing the formal eligibility criteria. In Grundtvig 3, 15% of 1,031 applications failed over the same period.

In 2001, a third (180 applications, 33%) of all Culture 2000 applications were rejected for failing to meet the formal eligibility criteria. The situation improved in the years 2002-2004, with the proportion of applications failing the criteria dropping significantly to between 22% and 24%.

There was noticeable variation between Actions 1 and 2. In 2001, rejection rates for Actions 1 and 2 were similar (33% for Action 1 and 35% for Action 2). In 2002, the proportion of rejected applications under Action 1 was dramatically reduced to a much improved 17% before gradually rising again in selection years 2003-2004 to 22%. By contrast, rejection rates for Action 2 projects increased to almost half (46%) of all applications in 2002. While this figure was reduced in subsequent years, 29% of all applications were still rejected in each of selection years 2003-2004.

There are several possible explanations for this:

- first, inadequate application guidance documents for applicants;
- secondly, poor advice from the Cultural Contact Points;
- thirdly, failure of applicants to seek appropriate advice before submitting their application;
- fourthly, poor understanding by applicants of the (relatively) new Programme and process and;
- finally, a high proportion of inappropriate speculative applications.

A review of the application guidance indicates that this may have caused some problems for applicants. For example, the 2006 specifications lack an index and a definition of each cultural field, and provide little guidance on how to complete each section of the application

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<sup>42</sup> Source: Evaluation Steering Committee.

form. In addition, the specifications document is complex, with extensive use of formal, legalistic language. This information, while necessary, is not presented in an accessible and understandable format for applicants, particularly those whose first language is not English, French or German. In comparison, the Equal Programme in the United Kingdom provided three documents which were all approved by the Plain English campaign for clarity: an application form; a guidance note on completing the application form, providing an explanation of how to answer each question; and a handbook explaining the Programme's background, structure, application process, assessment process, eligibility rules and including a good practice guide.<sup>43</sup>

It is possible that the CCPs provided poor advice to potential applicants, leading them to fail the eligibility criteria. Indeed, in interviews EC staff stressed the variable performance of the CCPs. However, as rejected applications were received from a range of countries, rather than a single country, this would require consistently poor advice from the majority of CCPs. In 2001, only four countries submitted no ineligible applications for Actions 1 and 2, and in 2002 only five did. Only Slovenia submitted no ineligible applications in both years, but only one application was submitted in each of these years.<sup>44</sup>

It is more likely that applicants submitted poor applications because they failed to discuss the process with their CCP, leading to a poor understanding of the Programme and its processes. A third of respondents to the project survey (see chapter 4) indicated that they had no opinion on the assistance offered by their CCP. It is possible that this was because they did not have any contact with their CCP. This hypothesis is supported by the results of the project interviews (see chapter 5), which also indicated that a number of successful applicants did not use the CCP's services or have any contact with the CCP.

Finally, it is likely that a number of applications to the Programme were speculative and inappropriate for support, but it is not possible to quantify the precise number. Although improved guidance and the provision of advice and information services for applicants can reduce the number of ineligible applications, it is almost inevitable that in the search for funding some organisations will apply to the Programme regardless of the suitability of their proposed activities.

A detailed breakdown of the number and percentage of applications rejected for eligibility reasons in Actions 1 and 2 per country is shown in Annex 11.

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<sup>43</sup> see: <http://www.equal.ecotec.co.uk/>

<sup>44</sup> Source: Commission programme statistics 2001-2002.

**Table 3.13 Number and percentage of Action 1 and 2 projects rejected for formal eligibility criteria (2001-2004)**

<b>Action and year</b>		<b>Number of project applications</b>	<b>Number of applications rejected</b>	<b>Percentage of applications rejected</b>
Action 1	2001	410	136	33
	2002	349	61	17
	2003	517	103	20
	2004	524	117	22
Action 2	2001	130	45	35
	2002	83	38	46
	2003	144	42	29
	2004	157	46	29
Total by selection year	2001	540	180	33
	2002	432	99	23
	2003	661	147	22
	2004	681	163	24
Total by Action	Action 1	1,800	417	23
	Action 2	514	171	33
	All	2,314	588	25

*Source: European Commission applications data; data for selection year 2000 was unavailable.*

## **4.0 QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS: ON-LINE SURVEY OF PROJECT LEADERS AND CO-ORGANISERS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the results of the on-line project survey. Further details of the survey, including the rationale, sampling and methodological issues are detailed in chapter 2, section 2.3.1.

#### *4.1.1 Response to the survey*

The initial response to the survey was poor; some suggested reasons for this are included in chapter 2. However, sustained efforts by the evaluator and the Commission, with the help of the CCPs, increased the final number of responses significantly. These efforts are detailed in chapter 2. The survey questionnaire is available at Annex 10.

Overall, 153 responses were received, of which 126 were considered valid and 27 invalid. Table 4.1 shows the final number of valid responses by action and selection year. The reasons for rejecting responses as invalid were:

- they had been completed by organisations that were not project leaders or co-organisers;
- the respondent was not a participant in a Culture 2000 Action 1 or Action 2 project; and
- their projects were not selected in the evaluation's target years.<sup>45</sup>

All responses were checked against the Commission's project lists to ensure that key fields were correct (action, organisation role, selection year, cultural field) and that they fulfilled the eligibility criteria outlines above.

**Table 4.1 Number of valid responses to the web-survey by action and selection year**

<b>Action</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>Total</b>
Action 1	0	0	4	36	61	101
Action 2	2	8	3	4	8	25
Total	2	8	7	40	69	126

Source: ECOTEC survey.

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<sup>45</sup> The evaluation aimed to build on the First Interim Evaluation by PLS RAMBOLL Management. Therefore the target years were 2002-2004 inclusive for Action 1 and Action 3 projects and 2000-2001 inclusive for Action 2 projects. The target years for Action 2 projects were revised to 2000-2004 in November 2005 by the Evaluation Steering Committee. Action 3 projects were not included in the survey.

The responses raised several issues about the survey and the sampling that should be considered when interpreting the findings:

- The sample of respondents was self-selecting, as respondents had to opt into the survey rather than opt out. As a result, there may be a bias towards extreme positive or negative viewpoints, as respondents' good or bad experiences might have made them more likely to participate. This bias would not affect respondents' answers to questions asking for factual information; for example, the answer to the question on organisation type would not be affected by respondents' positive or negative experiences of the Programme. However, answers to questions asking for respondents' opinions, such as their views on the quality of information provided by the Commission, might be affected by respondents' positive or negative experience.
- As projects were initially contacted by email, there is an inherent bias against those project leaders and co-organisers for whom no email address was available. Many email addresses were generic organisational ones, rather than for specific project staff. As a result, it is likely that a significant proportion of these emails were not passed to relevant individuals (even if they were still at the organisation). Additionally, several email addresses were no longer in use. Several measures were tried in order to overcome these problems, including follow-up emails by the evaluation team, the Commission and CCPs and news items on the DG EAC culture homepage.
- The web-based format of the survey may have proved a barrier to some projects or individuals who did not have web access.
- The choice of three languages (English, French and German) may have posed a barrier to some projects or responding individuals who did not speak those languages. As a European co-operation programme, all participating organisations possessed foreign-language skills, but the project representatives responding to the survey may not have possessed these skills.
- The survey respondent profile is skewed towards the more recent selection years, partly but not entirely because of the greater availability of accurate contact details. Therefore, the views of more recent participants may be over-represented in the survey results, and it is not possible to undertake time series analysis of the data. The greater numbers of recent participants responding to the survey may also be because they recalled their involvement more accurately and felt that the survey was more relevant to them. For example, an Action 1 participant in 2004 might feel more engaged in the Programme than an Action 1 participant from 2002.

#### 4.1.2 Respondent profile

The 126 valid responses to the survey were received from 25 participating countries, drawn from the EU15, the 10 New Member States, the EEA and the Candidate Countries. The breakdown of responses by country is shown in table 4.2.

No valid responses were received from participants from the following countries:

- Estonia;
- Iceland;
- Ireland;
- Liechtenstein; and
- Malta.

**Table 4.2 Responses to the project survey by respondent country**

<b>Respondent country</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>Percentage of responses</b>
Austria	12	9.5
Belgium	7	5.6
Bulgaria	4	3.2
Cyprus	1	0.8
Czech Republic	5	4.0
Denmark	4	3.2
Finland	6	4.8
France	16	12.7
Germany	3	2.4
Greece	3	2.4
Hungary	5	4.0
Italy	14	11.1
Latvia	1	0.8
Lithuania	4	3.2
Luxembourg	1	0.8
Netherlands	5	4.0
Norway	5	4.0
Poland	1	0.8
Portugal	3	2.4
Romania	3	2.4



<b>Respondent country</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>Percentage of responses</b>
Slovakia	3	2.4
Slovenia	9	7.1
Spain	6	4.8
Sweden	3	2.4
United Kingdom	2	1.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: ECOTEC survey.*

Most respondents were involved in Culture 2000 as project leaders, while the remainder of the responses were received from co-organisers; see table 4.3.

**Table 4.3 Survey respondents' organisation role in their project**

<b>Organisation role</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Project leader	94	74.6
Project co-organiser	32	25.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: ECOTEC survey.*

As shown in table 4.4, respondents came from a variety of organisations. The most frequently cited background was 'not-for-profit organisation in the cultural field'. Almost a fifth of respondents were from 'private business in the field of culture' or 'other private business', and the majority of these were translation projects (17 organisations out of 24). 'Other public organisations' counted for just over a fifth of responses. Specifically, these organisations included public authorities at local, regional and national level; universities; museums; and private foundations.

**Table 4.4 Survey respondents' organisation type**

<b>Organisation type</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Cultural association	17	13.5
National cultural institute	14	11.1
Not-for-profit organisation in the cultural field	44	34.9
Other public organisation	27	21.4
Private business in the field of culture	20	15.9
Other private business	4	3.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: ECOTEC survey.*

The majority of respondents' organisations were very small. Almost three-quarters (72.2%, see table 4.5) employed 50 or fewer people, and almost half (49.2%) employed 10 people or fewer.

The majority of organisations employing more than 250 people were public sector bodies (national cultural institutes or other public organisations; 89% public). Conversely, almost all private businesses in the field of culture that responded to the survey employed fewer than 50 people (83%), with 67% employing 10 or fewer people.

**Table 4.5 Survey respondents' organisation size (number of employees)**

<b>Organisation size (number of employees)</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Fewer than 6	35	27.8
6 to 10	27	21.4
10 to 50	29	23.0
50 to 250	17	13.5
250 to 500	6	4.8
More than 500	12	9.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: ECOTEC survey.*

Table 4.6 indicates that respondents were involved in projects across all five of Culture 2000's artistic fields. Performing arts and cultural heritage projects were the most numerous.

**Table 4.6 Survey respondents’ projects’ artistic fields**

<b>Artistic field</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Books and reading	11	8.7
Cultural co-operation projects in third countries	5	4.0
Cultural heritage	40	31.7
Multidisciplined creativity	1	0.8
Performing arts	37	29.4
Translation	19	15.1
Visual arts	13	10.3
Total responses	126	100.0

*Source: ECOTEC survey.*

The majority of respondents were not new to European projects: 34.6% had no previous experience compared with 63.6% who did have experience.<sup>46</sup>

The vast majority of respondents had established new links with partners as a result of Culture 2000. Table 4.7 shows that around a third of respondents knew all their partners before starting their Culture 2000 project. Therefore, around two-thirds of respondents built new partnerships and links with cultural operators in other countries as a result of the Programme.

**Table 4.7 Respondents’ previous links with partners**

	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
All of them	36	33.6
Some of them <sup>47</sup>	59	55.1
None of them	12	11.2
Total responses (all respondents with partners)	107	100.0

*Source: ECOTEC survey.*

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<sup>46</sup> Figures do not total 100% as <2% of respondents answered ‘don't know’.

<sup>47</sup> In the survey the available responses were: all of them, most of them, a few of them, one of them and none of them. For analysis responses of “most of them”, “a few of them” and “one of them” have been combined into a single category – “some of them”.

## 4.2 Relevance

Overall, over 98% of respondents thought that the goals of the Culture 2000 Programme and their project were appropriate for meeting cultural needs; see table 4.8.

**Table 4.8 Appropriateness of the Culture 2000 Programme’s goals and respondents’ project goals for addressing cultural needs**

	Culture 2000 Programme		Respondents’ projects	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Very appropriate	29	47.5	30	49.2
Appropriate	31	50.8	29	47.5
Not appropriate	1	1.6	2	3.3
Total responses	61	100.0	61	100.0

*Source: ECOTEC survey.*

Similarly, almost all respondents (97%) thought that the cultural fields used in the Programme accurately represented the cultural sector. But one respondent highlighted the difficulties of categorising cultural activity because of its increasingly multidisciplinary nature. This respondent felt that the categories were too inflexible to reflect the “reality of genres and the development of artistic expressions,” noting that, “today we see more ... crossover [of] genres and styles”.<sup>48</sup> This view may reflect the Commission’s decision to move away from fixed, single artistic field definitions of activity to a more flexible multi-definition approach.

## 4.3 Effectiveness and impact

### 4.3.1 Contribution to meeting the objectives of the Culture 2000 Programme

#### *Action 1*

Survey respondents under Action 1 felt that their projects had contributed to more than one of the Action’s specific objectives, and between them responding projects had contributed to all the Action’s objectives (see table 4.9).<sup>49</sup>

All the objectives can be linked to the target groups in table 4.11 (see below). As mentioned previously, young people are specifically targeted in objectives (i) and (vi). Similarly, projects targeting socially and economically disadvantaged people are likely to contribute to objective (vi), which promotes “social integration”. Several objectives also provide clear scope for

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<sup>48</sup> Source: ECOTEC web-survey.

<sup>49</sup> The Commission highlighted that while action-level objectives are important, they are secondary to the eight main Programme objectives.

targeting professionals in the cultural field: (ii) promotes “new forms of expression”, (iii) provides opportunities for “training professionals in the field [of books and reading]”, while (vii) specifically promotes co-operation between “cultural institutions and/or other operators”.

However, although many objectives are geared to support specific target groups, ultimately none are exclusive.

**Table 4.9 Contribution to Culture 2000 Programme Action 1 specific objectives (Action 1 respondents only)**

<b>Action 1 objectives</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage<sup>50</sup></b>
(i) place the main emphasis on facilitating access to culture and wider cultural participation by the people in Europe, in all their social, regional and cultural diversity, in particular young people and the most underprivileged	56	58.9
(ii) encourage the emergence and spread of new forms of expression, within and alongside traditional cultural fields (such as music, the performing arts, the plastic and visual arts, photography, architecture, literature, books, reading, the cultural heritage, including the cultural landscape and children’s culture)	50	52.6
(iii) support projects aimed at improving access to books and reading, as well as training professionals working in the field	35	36.8
(iv) support projects of co-operation aimed at conserving, sharing, highlighting and safeguarding, at the European level, the common cultural heritage of European significance	51	53.7
(v) support the creation of multimedia products, tailored to meet the needs of different publics, and thus make European artistic creation and heritage more visible and more accessible to all	32	33.7
(vi) encourage initiatives, discussions and co-operation between cultural and socio-cultural operators working in the field of social integration, especially integration of young people	26	27.4
(vii) foster an intercultural dialogue and mutual exchange between European and other cultures, in particular by encouraging co-operation on subjects of common interest between cultural institutions and/or other operators in the Member States and those in third countries	38	40.0
(viii) promote the dissemination of live cultural events using the new technologies of the information society	24	25.3
<b>Total respondents<sup>51</sup></b>	<b>95</b>	<b>n/a</b>

*Source: ECOTEC survey.*

<sup>50</sup> Figures do not add up to 100% as respondents could choose more than one option.

<sup>51</sup> Six of the 101 Action 1 respondents incorrectly identified themselves as Action 2 projects and failed to answer this question.

## *Action 2*

Survey respondents under Action 2 also felt that their projects had contributed to more than one of the Action’s specific objectives and, overall, responding projects had contributed to all the Action’s objectives; see table 4.10.

Objective 1 was the most frequently cited objective addressed by respondents’ projects (88% of respondents).

**Table 4.10 Contribution to Culture 2000 Programme Action 2 specific objectives (Action 2 respondents only)**

<b>Action 2 objectives</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage<sup>52</sup></b>
(i) co-productions and circulation of works and other cultural events in the European Union (e.g. exhibitions, festivals, etc.), making them accessible to as many citizens as possible	22	88
(ii) mobility of artists, creators and other cultural operators	18	72
(iii) further training for professionals in the cultural field and exchange of experience both in academic and practical terms	19	76
(iv) enhancement of cultural sites and monuments within the Community with a view to raising awareness of European culture	9	36
(v) research projects, public awareness campaigns, activities for teaching and the dissemination of knowledge, seminars, congresses, meetings on cultural topics of European importance	12	48
(vi) use of new technologies	12	48
(vii) projects aimed at the highlighting of cultural diversity and of multilingualism, promoting mutual awareness of the history, roots, common cultural values of the European peoples and their common cultural heritage	17	68
<b>Total respondents</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>n/a</b>

*Source: ECOTEC survey.*

### *4.3.2 Views on the impact of individual projects*

#### *Project impacts*

Respondents felt that their projects had had a wide range of impacts (see figure 4.1). Over half of respondents (56%) felt that their project had contributed to “improved understanding of cultural diversity” and 57% felt that they had “improved knowledge of European cultures and heritage”.

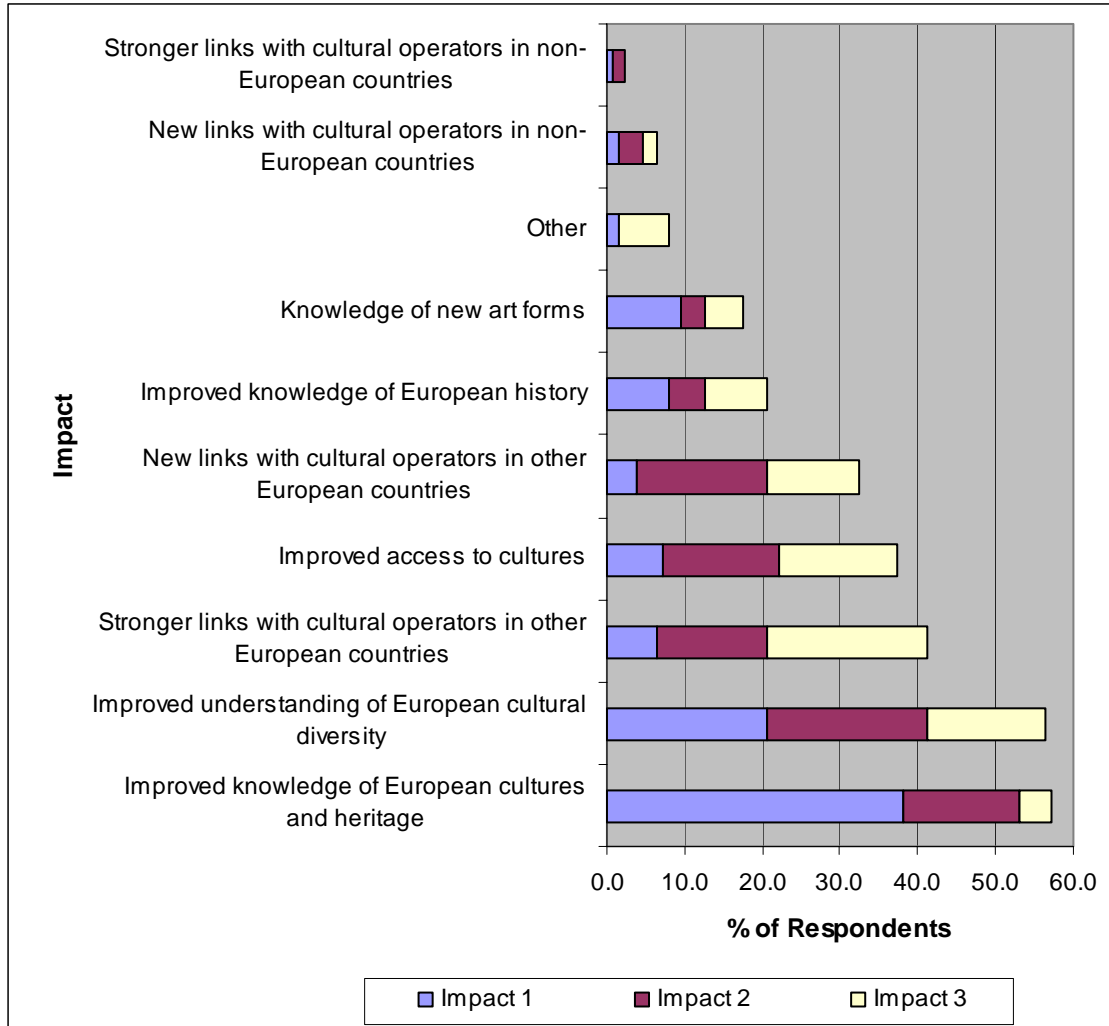
Other significant impacts highlighted by respondents included “improved access to cultures” (37%), and stronger (41%) or new (33%) links with cultural operators in other European

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<sup>52</sup> Figures do not add up to 100% as respondents could choose more than one option.

countries. This indicates that Culture 2000 has played a significant role in increasing both the quantity and the quality of links between European cultural operators.

**Figure 4.1 Perceived impact of respondents' projects ranked in order of importance<sup>53</sup>**



Source: ECOTEC survey.

<sup>53</sup> Project survey respondents' were asked to select the top three impacts of their activities in order of importance. In figure 4.1 'impact 1' is the most important, 'impact 2' is the second most important and 'impact 3' is the third most important.

### *Respondents' project target groups*

The majority of projects had multiple target groups, but the most frequently cited group was young people (71.4%); see table 4.11. The reason for this is most likely linked to the Programme's objectives – in Action 1, two objectives have a particular emphasis on young people (see objectives (i) and (vi), table 4.9).

A large proportion of respondents indicated an “other” target group (60.3%). The main groups highlighted here included:

- professionals in the cultural field (e.g. artists, museum staff, gallery staff, musicians, actors, translators, academics etc.);
- students; and
- the general public.

**Table 4.11 Survey respondents' project target groups**

<b>Target group</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage<sup>54</sup></b>
Young people	90	71.4
Other	76	60.3
Children	41	32.5
People from rural areas	40	31.7
People from third countries	30	23.8
Socially disadvantaged people	29	23.0
Economically disadvantaged people	26	20.6
Total responses	126	n/a

*Source: ECOTEC survey.*

## **4.4 Efficiency and cost-effectiveness**

### **4.4.1 Project outputs**

Projects generated a wide range of outputs. The most frequently cited outputs were new cultural products, cultural events, and workshops, seminars and exchanges (see figure 4.2). Cultural events, workshops, seminars and exchanges (activities bringing people together) were undertaken by a majority of projects. Indeed, this is to be expected from a programme promoting cultural co-operation. It is likely that these activities were precursors to the production of the more tangible outputs, i.e. new cultural products, which are detailed below.

The category “new cultural products” covered a variety of outputs, including:

- books (new translations or publications arising out of the other project activities);
- new works of art;

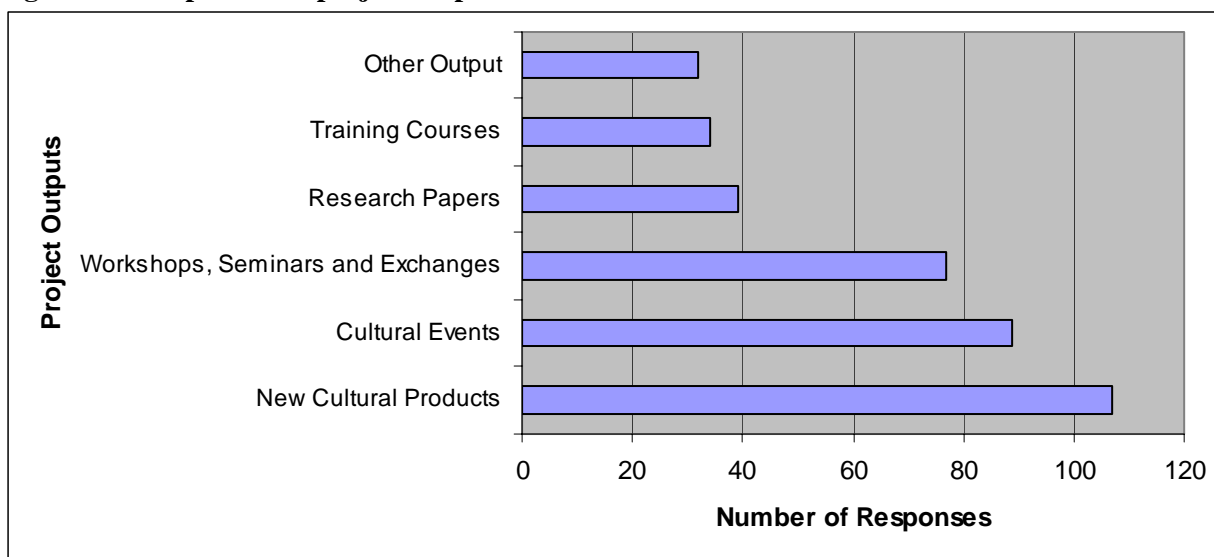
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<sup>54</sup> Figures do not add up to 100% as respondents could choose more than one option.



- exhibitions;
- films, videos, DVDs, CD-ROMs;
- new music (live performance and recorded);
- new catalogues and databases (print and on-line);
- websites; and
- magazines and newspapers (print and electronic).

**Figure 4.2 Respondents' project outputs**



Source: ECOTEC survey. Base: 126 responses.

#### 4.4.2 Views on programme management and administration at European level

Overall, most respondents felt that the Programme was being managed and monitored efficiently or very efficiently at EU level (73.8% in relation to management and 65.6% in relation to monitoring); see table 4.12.

A small proportion thought that the Programme had been managed or monitored inefficiently or very inefficiently (11.4% for managed and 6.5% for monitored).

Although this is very positive, many respondents evidently felt that there was scope for improvement – only 16.4% thought that the Programme was managed or monitored *very* efficiently.

It is also significant that some respondents did not feel able to respond to the question. This possibly indicates a lack of knowledge among participants on how the Programme as a whole is managed and monitored by the Commission.

**Table 4.12 Respondents’ views on how efficiently Culture 2000 is managed and monitored at EU level**

	Managed		Monitored	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Very efficiently	10	16.4	10	16.4
Efficiently	35	57.4	30	49.2
Inefficiently	6	9.8	3	4.9
Very inefficiently	1	1.6	1	1.6
Don’t know	8	13.1	16	26.2
No answer	1	1.6	1	1.6
Total responses	61	100.0	61	100.0

*Source: ECOTEC survey.*

#### 4.4.3 Views on the information provided about Culture 2000 by the Commission

Most respondents were broadly satisfied with the information provided by the Commission about the Programme – 88.5% rated it sufficient or comprehensive; see table 4.13.

Those respondents who felt that the information provided needed improvement suggested the following:

- improved information on the financial regulations, possibly including a user guide;<sup>55</sup>
- the organisation of Culture 2000 project management training seminars for project leaders of selected projects who are new participants in the Programme, to explain the role and responsibilities of project leaders and provide advice and guidance on how to manage a successful project;<sup>56</sup> and
- use of more ‘user friendly’ language, avoiding unnecessary jargon.

All three of the above suggestions are valid, as any reasonable measures to improve the quality of applications and the quality of projects should be considered. All three approaches have been successfully used in other European programmes, as indicated in the examples below:

- User guides have been produced by the Equal and Leonardo da Vinci Support Units in the UK. Topics include evaluation, monitoring and record-keeping, partnership working,

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<sup>55</sup> The financial regulations are available on the Commission’s Culture 2000 webpages. Respondents appeared to be commenting on the quality of the information provided, rather than indicating an absence of information. For example, the regulations are necessarily written in official, legal terms, but applicants may require an accompanying note explaining the implications of the regulations for their projects, along with advice on how to implement the regulations.

<sup>56</sup> The CCPs have a remit to organise meetings with potential applicants, but these are intended to inform cultural operators of the relevant application procedures and provide technical assistance to support the development and submission of applications.

transnationality and project management.<sup>57</sup> Similarly, the Socrates Programme provides a survival kit for project leaders, which is available from the DG EAC website.<sup>58</sup> DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (DG EMPL) also has a long history of publications aimed at improving the quality of projects funded through its programmes. A recent example includes the *Handbook on Developing Local Employment Strategies*, which has 15 nationally tailored versions available in national languages in addition to English.<sup>59</sup>

- Seminars for projects are organised by the Equal and Leonardo da Vinci Support Units in the UK and by all the National Agencies of DG EAC's Grundtvig Programme. These seminars provide advice on project management, monitoring and programme procedures.
- Publications of the Equal and Leonardo da Vinci Support Units in the UK, including application forms and guidance documents, are all crystal marked by the Plain English Campaign. The crystal mark acts as a guarantee of a document's clarity, indicating that it is as clear as possible for its intended purpose and audience.

**Table 4.13 Respondents' views on information provided about Culture 2000 by the Commission**

	Number	Percentage
Comprehensive	23	37.7
Sufficient	31	50.8
Needs improvement	6	9.8
No answer	1	1.6
Total respondents	61	100.0

Source: ECOTEC survey.

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<sup>57</sup> See the EQUAL GB website at [www.equal.ecotec.co.uk/resources/gpg/](http://www.equal.ecotec.co.uk/resources/gpg/)

<sup>58</sup> See the Education, Audiovisual & Culture Executive Agency website at: <http://eacea.cec.eu.int/static/en/Bots/condocs.htm>

<sup>59</sup> See the DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities website at [http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/local\\_employment/publi\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/local_employment/publi_en.htm)

#### 4.4.4 Views on the information provided by the Commission on the project application and selection procedure

Almost all respondents felt that the information provided by the Commission on the project application and selection procedure was useful or very useful; see table 4.14.

**Table 4.14 Respondents’ views on information provided by the Commission on the project application and selection procedure**

	Number	Percentage
Very useful	14	23.0
Useful	44	72.1
Not useful	2	3.3
No answer	1	1.6
Total respondents	61	100.0

*Source: ECOTEC survey.*

However, although the majority of respondents felt that the information was useful, the proportion indicating that they fully understood the application and selection process was much lower. Table 4.15 shows that only 63.9% of respondents said that they fully understood the process. A third either did not understand or only partly understood the process, indicating either that it is too complicated and needs simplification, or that it is inadequately explained in the Commission’s documentation. Alternatively, these respondents may not have been involved directly in the application process and, as a result, may not have had a comprehensive understanding of the process.

**Table 4.15 Respondents’ understanding of the project application and selection procedure**

	Number	Percentage
Fully understand	39	63.9
Partly understand	18	29.5
Don’t understand	3	4.9
No answer	1	1.6
Total respondents	61	100.0

*Source: ECOTEC survey*

#### 4.4.5 Views on the Culture 2000 e-newsletter and website

The majority of respondents thought that the Commission’s e-newsletter and website were useful or very useful (75.4% and 88.5% respectively); see table 4.16.

Respondents did not indicate that there was any additional information that should be provided in the e-newsletter or on the website. A small proportion of respondents (11.5%) indicated that they had not seen the e-newsletter. This is significant as it indicates that the e-newsletter mailing list may not contain a comprehensive list of all organisations involved in the Programme as project leaders and co-organisers, and is therefore not reaching its optimum

target audience. But it is also possible that the newsletter is received by individuals within Culture 2000 participating organisations other than the survey respondents.

**Table 4.16 Respondents' views on the Culture 2000 e-newsletter and website**

	e-newsletter		website	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Very useful	10	16.4	15	24.6
Useful	36	59.0	39	63.9
Not useful	1	1.6	1	1.6
Not seen it	7	11.5	n/a	n/a
Don't know	6	9.8	5	8.2
No answer	1	1.6	1	1.6
Total responses	61	100.0	61	100.0

*Source: ECOTEC survey.*

#### 4.4.6 Views on the Culture 2000 co-financing and payment systems

The perception that the 5% co-financing rule presents an obstacle to participation in Culture 2000 is supported by the results of the survey (see table 4.17). A minority (15%) of respondents felt that it did not pose a barrier to participation.

The majority of respondents, almost two-thirds (65%), felt that this rule was a barrier for small organisations in particular.

**Table 4.17 Respondents' views on whether the 5% co-financing rule presents an obstacle to participation in Culture 2000**

	Number	Percentage
Yes, for large organisations	3	5.0
Yes, for small organisations	39	65.0
Yes, for all cultural operators	4	6.7
Yes, for other organisations	5	8.3
No	9	15.0
Total responses	60	100.0

*Source: ECOTEC survey.*

When questioned on the effects of the revision to the payments system to a 70/30 before/after split from the previous 50/50 split, the majority of respondents were positive, although a third of respondents did not feel able to comment; see table 4.18.

A third of respondents felt that the change had improved the cash-flow situation a lot. Around a quarter (23.3%) felt that there had been only a small improvement.

**Table 4.18 Effect of the introduction of the 70/30 payment ratio on Culture 2000 participants' cash flow**

	Number	Percentage
Improved cash flow a lot	22	36.7
Improved cash flow a little	14	23.3
No improvement	3	5.0
Unable to say	21	35.0
Total respondents	60	100.0

*Source: ECOTEC survey.*

#### *4.4.7 Views on the assistance provided by the Cultural Contact Points*

Overall, over half of respondents expressed satisfaction with the assistance provided by the CCPs: 66.7% of all respondents and over 90% of all those who expressed an opinion rated the CCPs' advice as helpful or very helpful; see table 4.19.

Although a small proportion (7.1%) of respondents indicated that the CCPs' assistance was not helpful, the number of CCPs compared to the number of respondents makes this statistically insignificant. Of more interest is that a quarter of respondents expressed no opinion. It is possible that these respondents had little or no contact with their CCPs when developing an application.

**Table 4.19 Respondents' views on the assistance provided by the Cultural Contact Points**

	Number	Percentage
Very helpful	51	40.5
Helpful	33	26.2
Not helpful	9	7.1
No opinion	32	25.4
No answer	1	0.8
Total respondents	126	100.0

*Source: ECOTEC survey.*

## **4.5 Utility and sustainability**

### *4.5.1 Sustainability of project activity*

Overall, around two-thirds (69%) of respondents were optimistic that their activities would continue in some form after the end of Culture 2000 funding; see table 4.20. In many cases, continuing activity was constrained by lack of financial resources for transnational co-operation; one respondent indicated that “without ... EU funding, activity can be only maintained on a modest level”. Several respondents were continuing their co-operation through new or planned Culture 2000 projects.

Other respondents indicated that the project had opened opportunities for partnerships and financial support. Translation projects were particularly confident of continuing activities, partly because with the works translated they could focus on additional print runs and marketing activities. In one case, the translated books formed part of a new successful series of modern European prose, which could generate a sustainable commercial market in that country.

A large proportion (67.3%) of respondents also anticipated continuing their links with partners (see table 4.20), while almost a quarter (24.3%) of respondents did not know. Many respondents indicated that their partnerships were intending to undertake new projects, with new Culture 2000 projects often cited.

**Table 4.20 Anticipated continuation of project activities and links with partners after the end of the project**

	Activities		Links with partners	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Yes	87	69.0	72	67.3
No	16	12.7	9	8.4
Don't know	23	18.3	26	24.3
Total responses	126	100.0	107	100.0

*Source: ECOTEC survey.*

### *4.5.2 Value of Culture 2000 funding*

In just under half of cases (44.4% of respondents), Culture 2000 had been instrumental in stimulating the conception of the project; see table 4.21. This indicates that Culture 2000 plays a role in generating new transnational cultural co-operation activities.

Culture 2000 funding was also crucial in determining whether projects actually took place. Over three-quarters of respondents (76.2%) felt that without funding from the Programme their project would not have started (see table 4.21). Therefore, Culture 2000 funding has ensured that a significant amount of *additional* European co-operation activity in the field of culture actually occurred.

Although Culture 2000 plays a significant role in stimulating the conception of new cultural co-operation activity, its main benefit is in overcoming the resource constraints of cultural operators to ensure that activity happens. It is also worth considering the effect of the Programme on projects that are not funded. It is probable that some activities which are conceptualised as a result of, but not funded by, the Programme still occur as partners obtain alternative resources. However, this hypothesis is difficult to explore.

**Table 4.21 Would your project have been conceptualised or started without Culture 2000 funding?**

	Conceptualised		Started	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Yes	56	44.4	19	15.1
No	62	49.2	96	76.2
Don't know	8	6.3	11	8.7
Total responses	126	100.0	126	100.0

*Source: ECOTEC survey.*

When asked to comment on the added value of the Programme, several respondents highlighted the value of the European dimension. This was felt to give opportunities for developing and maintaining links with cultural institutions and individuals that would not otherwise be created. One respondent said: “it is one of the few funding programmes that prioritises transnational activities which are otherwise neglected by national funding institutions and organisations”.

Respondents also highlighted the unifying effect of the Programme in strengthening cultural links among countries, increasing the perception of a European identity, and helping the integration of New Member States into the ‘European family’.

Translation projects highlighted the effect in a more concrete fashion – the support of the Programme allowed them to publish foreign books and make them available to the public at commercially accessible prices.



## **5.0 INTERVIEW RESULTS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the findings of the interview consultations. These are structured to reflect the key evaluation topics investigated, namely the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and impact of the Culture 2000 Programme. Under each of these headings, we analyse the key points emerging from the interviews conducted with the following different consultee groups:

- representatives of Action 1, 2 and 3 projects funded under the different actions of Culture 2000 (22 interviews);
- the national Cultural Contact Points in Member States (25 interviews);
- members of the Programme's Management Committee (22 interviews, including four individuals interviewed in their dual role as a national CCP); and
- experts involved in the evaluation of submitted project proposals (six interviews).<sup>60</sup>

A single group interview and several informal discussions took place with staff from DG EAC, C-1 Culture Unit. These focused on the intervention logic and general procedural issues. The results of these discussions largely informed sections 1.2-1.4, but occasionally Commission comments are included and referenced in this and other chapters.

Each of the different consultee groups has a different experience of and perspective on the Culture 2000 Programme, and a greater or lesser knowledge of the different aspects of its design and implementation. Where opinions expressed can be attributed to a specific interviewee group this is highlighted in the text. Unless stated otherwise, opinions highlighted in this chapter are common to all the interview groups listed above.

For obvious reasons, project representatives have the most practical experience of designing and implementing cultural projects within the Culture 2000 framework. As intermediaries between the EU and European citizens, the ultimate 'target audience' of the Programme, they are able to provide the all-important feedback from the cultural sector on the ground. Although we selected project representatives on the basis of their involvement in a particular Culture 2000 project (as project leaders), many of those interviewed had participated in more than one Culture 2000 project and were thus able to base their views on a wider experience of the Programme. There was a conscious attempt to interview all the project leaders of Action 3 projects funded during the evaluation period. The interviews undertaken with project representatives complement the findings of the project survey (see chapter 4) and the in-depth case studies (see chapter 6 and Annex 13).

The CCPs are well placed to take a broader perspective than individual project participants and comment on the implementation of Culture 2000 in their countries. In many cases, CCPs have considerable direct contact with cultural actors at national and regional level in the

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<sup>60</sup> For details of the CCP and MCM interviewees consulted see Annex 1. Topic guides for the interviews are available at Annexes 3 to 7 inclusive.

course of their dissemination and information provision activities. Moreover, although they have no formal role to assist or follow up on projects which receive funding, informal contact between CCP staff and project participants is common. In many countries, project representatives from previous rounds of funding are actively involved in CCP programme promotion and dissemination activities (for example, attending information workshops to give advice to potential applicants).

The Management Committee helps to oversee implementation of the Programme and, in particular, participates in the project selection process in an advisory role. Management Committee Members are generally representatives of national (or in a few cases regional) culture ministries or national permanent representations in Brussels. This means that the individuals in question tend to have a good overview of the strategic articulation between the Culture 2000 Programme and national cultural policies. On the other hand, except in those countries where the roles of MCM and CCP are fulfilled by the same individual, the members of the Management Committee tend to be less familiar with the details of programme and project implementation on the ground.

The experts involved in project selection are, by definition, specialists in their respective cultural fields. They are thus able to comment not only on their experience of the project selection procedure and quality of the project proposals they are asked to evaluate, but also on the relevance of the Culture 2000 Programme to wider developments in the cultural sector.

The topic guides used to guide the interviews with these different types of interviewee were adapted to reflect these different characteristics and levels of knowledge, but shared many key questions in common.

## ***5.2 The intervention logic and relevance of the Culture 2000 Programme***

The evaluation questions relating to intervention logic and relevance sought to investigate what the Culture 2000 Programme was set up to achieve (its objectives) and whether the Programme's objectives are relevant to the cultural sector in Europe today. We asked those consulted about their understanding of the objectives of Culture 2000, the needs that exist in the cultural sector to support cultural co-operation, and the extent to which the objectives, focus and structure of the Programme are likely to be able to address these needs.

The theoretical distinction between the relevance (appropriateness) of the objectives, basic design and structure of the Programme and the effectiveness and efficiency of the Programme's implementation (the process through which most people experience the Programme) was not always easy to maintain in practice during interviews. Interviewees frequently raised points relating to the effectiveness and efficiency of Culture 2000 as justification for their views on the Programme's relevance. In order to structure this chapter in a consistent manner and prevent unnecessary repetition, we restrict our focus here to the more general points raised about the relevance of the Programme, and examine the more detailed findings in the appropriate subsequent sections.

### *5.2.1 Understanding of the intervention logic*

Interview responses from project representatives, CCPs, MCMs and experts all highlighted a broadly common understanding of the objectives of the Programme. While many interviewees made reference to the eight programme objectives set out in the Decision establishing Culture 2000, a number of ‘core’ objectives were frequently cited. These can be summarised as follows:

- the promotion of co-operation between cultural actors from different European countries;
- the promotion of mobility among these cultural actors;
- enhancing knowledge of the cultures of other European countries and highlighting cultural diversity;
- the promotion of intercultural dialogue; and
- the creation and diffusion of works of art/events resulting from transnational co-operation.

In many of the interviews, respondents placed a strong emphasis on the importance of cultural co-operation and dialogue as ends in themselves, rather than simply as means to produce new art works, performances or events (the outputs of cultural co-operation). Increased contacts among cultural operators were frequently viewed as the key to achieving objectives such as improved mutual knowledge of each other’s cultures, highlighting cultural diversity, and promotion of a transnational dimension to cultural activities.

### *5.2.2 The relevance of Culture 2000’s objectives*

We asked interviewees whether the objectives of the Culture 2000 Programme were valid and relevant to the cultural sector in Europe. The eight explicit objectives of the Programme, set out in the Decision, are shown in figure 5.1.

**Figure 5.1 Culture 2000 programme objectives**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | To promote cultural dialogue and mutual knowledge of the culture and history of the European peoples;   |
| 2 | To 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; |
| 3 | To highlight cultural diversity and the development of new forms of cultural expression;  |
| 4 | To 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;   |
| 5 | To take into account the role of culture in socio-economic development;   |
| 6 | To foster intercultural dialogue and mutual exchange between European and non-European cultures;  |
| 7 | To explicitly recognise culture as an economic factor and as a factor in social integration and citizenship; and  |
| 8 | To improve access to and participation in culture in the European Union for as many citizens as possible.   |

*Source: Official Journal of the European Union (2004a).*

The vast majority of those interviewed believed most of these objectives to be fundamentally laudable. Moreover, the ‘core objectives’ relating to cultural dialogue, exchange of knowledge, mobility of artists and highlighting cultural diversity (noted above) were almost universally viewed as both desirable and realistic. Nearly all interviewees believed that the essential rationale for the Culture 2000 Programme (based around the promotion of cultural co-operation) remains equally valid today as it was in the year 2000. The need for an EU programme which specifically supports the cultural sector (distinct from support for culture in other programmes) appeared to be almost universally accepted by interviewees from all groups.

However, two main points of disagreement emerged among interviewees regarding the relevance of the Programme’s objectives:

- the breadth and ambition of certain objectives; and
- the appropriateness of the reference to ‘common cultural heritage’.

Opinion was divided on the appropriateness of the social and economic objectives included in the Decision (objectives 2, 5 and 7). A number of interviewees argued that the role of culture in socio-economic development should indeed be explicitly mentioned in the EU’s culture

programme, to reinforce the message that cultural activities have a social and economic value in addition to their inherent cultural worth. However, a larger number of respondents signalled a belief that these objectives, although worthy, are too ambitious to be included in a programme with such limited resources as Culture 2000. It was widely understood that the objectives are the result of a political compromise, but several interviewees (from CCPs and projects in particular) suggested that they are ultimately unrealistic, and that the Programme should focus on the core objectives relating to co-operation and exchange.

Reservations were also expressed about the realism of objective 8, relating to improving access to and participation in culture, and the reference in objective 3 to “new forms of cultural expression”. On the first point, a number of interviewees stated that they did not believe that Culture 2000 could hope to play a truly significant role in increasing participation in cultural activities among European citizens, given the scale and number of the activities supported. In relation to the second point, several interviewees believed that the Programme’s structure and its tendency to support traditional, established cultural operators (with the administrative capacity to participate) limit its capacity to support “new forms of cultural expression”. We return to this point later.

There appears to be a marked divide between northern European states and the UK and southern and some central European states over the concept of “common cultural heritage of European significance”. Whereas interviewees from countries including Italy, Greece and Slovakia tended to cite the importance of demonstrating Europe’s common cultural heritage in Culture 2000 projects, interviewees from Nordic countries in particular placed far greater emphasis on demonstrating and exploring cultural diversity through co-operation. One interviewee argued that in light of the current situation in the EU (characterised by uncertainty over European integration and a growing perception of a clash of civilisations following recent terrorist attacks), the Culture 2000 Programme should place far greater emphasis on what European countries have in common, rather than on demonstrating cultural diversity.

### *5.2.3 The context for cultural co-operation: needs in the cultural sector*

In common with standard evaluation practice, we sought to identify needs existing in the cultural sector that the Culture 2000 Programme seeks to address. The question of ‘need’ in the field of cultural co-operation is, however, a complex one. Our interviews highlighted the importance of distinguishing between a generally conceived ‘need’ for cultural co-operation and the ‘needs’ of cultural actors, in terms of pre-requisites or requirements for engaging in cultural co-operation activities. On the first point, one CCP interviewee argued that the promotion of cultural co-operation is not a general ‘need’ per se, but rather a *political* objective. If cultural co-operation is accepted as a desirable political objective, then one can turn to the question of what cultural actors need in order to encourage and help them to participate in transnational co-operation.

As a core objective of the Culture 2000 Programme is to promote cultural co-operation, our interviews explored the question of what cultural actors need in order to encourage and enable

them to participate in co-operative activities and projects. The main needs identified by interviewees of all types were as follows:

- Financial resources for projects – the cultural sector is short of money in nearly all EU countries. The problem is particularly acute in the New Member States, but also in a number of old Member States where budget cuts have been implemented in recent years. In this context, money for (comparatively expensive) cultural co-operation projects is in very short supply at national and regional level in most parts of Europe.
- Greater equality of access to resources – in a related point, a number of interviewees from New Member States highlighted that the disparities in income and resources between the new and old Member States of the EU make it particularly hard for cultural operators from their countries to participate in co-operative activities. This is because they are not able to obtain sufficient money from national sources to provide a significant contribution to project budgets, pay for travel and/or (as in the case of Culture 2000) obtain the necessary co-financing to participate in European programmes.<sup>61</sup>
- Information about potential partners – high-quality, relevant partners are an obvious pre-requisite for cultural co-operation. However, many organisations and artists do not have the necessary contacts in other countries, and require help in finding appropriate people to work with. This need is common to all artistic fields, although it appears, for example, that the field of visual arts is generally more ‘internationalised’ than the area of performing arts.
- Financial resources for mobility – many CCP interviewees and project representatives stressed the importance of mobility among cultural actors as a pre-requisite for successful co-operation. The fundamental logic is that individuals and organisations that know each other personally have a better idea of whether they will be able to work together in a large and complex project and will be able to develop more innovative projects together. The limited funds available to most cultural operators act as a constraint on this type of ‘exploratory mobility’, although the sums involved are low in comparison to project costs. There is evidence of a widespread view that additional funding is required in this area.
- Practical information on mobility – several CCP interviewees also argued that cultural actors require more practical information on mobility within the EU (for example, details of employment rights and tax arrangements). Although this relates to longer-term mobility (going to live in another country) and may not be relevant within the context of many Culture 2000 projects, it is an important factor for the mobility of cultural actors within

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<sup>61</sup> The governments of several countries, including some New Member States, have created a fund specifically to support projects participating in Culture 2000. The exact contribution of each fund varies, but often covers the 5% minimum contribution of the project leader and co-organisers. This is discussed in section 5.4.5.

the EU in more general terms.<sup>62</sup>

- Planning and management capabilities – the complexities of transnational co-operation projects are widely seen to require a high level of management and communication skills. These are necessary to develop proposals and implement projects effectively, by ensuring that individuals in different locations and with different cultural and linguistic backgrounds can work well together.

#### *5.2.4 Programme relevance in relation to needs*

Interviewees were asked if the Culture 2000 Programme was an appropriate mechanism to address the needs they had identified, i.e. whether the Programme provides the type(s) of support they believe to be required to promote cultural co-operation.

The interview results demonstrate that the Programme is widely viewed by all types of interviewee as an appropriate framework to provide financial resources at EU level for cultural co-operation projects, despite potential reservations about the breadth of the Programme's objectives and the Programme's structure (see below).

When asked to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the Programme in relation to the 'needs' they had identified, a proportion of project, CCP and MCM interviewees stated that the fact that the Programme exists at all is a key strength and a very positive point in itself. These individuals tended to argue that the Programme provides much-needed additional funds for the cultural sector and thus allows co-operation activities to take place that would not otherwise be possible. The same interviewees and others also tended to agree that EU level is the 'natural' or most appropriate level to support cultural co-operation activities, given their inherently transnational nature. This view would seem to validate the Commission's role under Article 151 of the treaty of Amsterdam, which makes cultural co-operation a recognised aim of Community action. Despite this, however, it is important to note that the Member States are still primarily responsible for funding cultural activities in Europe, including trans-European co-operation.

There also appeared to be a widespread view, however, that the Culture 2000 Programme does not – and, for many consulted, cannot – meet all the needs previously identified in relation to cultural co-operation. The key constraints to the Programme's meeting the needs of cultural co-operation mentioned by interviewees can be summarised as follows:

- The Programme has comparatively limited financial resources (when compared with other EU programmes such as Leonardo da Vinci, for example). This was generally seen as the key constraint affecting both the relevance and effectiveness of the Programme, as it limits the number and scope of projects that can be funded. The limited financial resources

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<sup>62</sup> DG EMPL operates a European Job Mobility Portal which provides information on living and working in other Member States (see: <http://europa.eu.int/eures/index.jsp>). DG Internal Market also provides information through the Your Europe website (see [http://europa.eu.int/youreurope/index\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/youreurope/index_en.html))

were frequently used to justify the view that the Programme's objectives are too ambitious and broadly phrased.<sup>63</sup> Several interviewees, from all groups, contrasted Culture 2000 with other EU programmes which have significantly larger budgets, and in many cases also argued that there are no real alternatives to Culture 2000 (as it is the only EU programme providing direct support to cultural operators for creative activities).

- The Programme is not able to provide additional support to cultural operators from poorer countries, who experience comparatively greater difficulty in obtaining national co-financing and are less able to provide additional contributions to co-operation activities from their own resources (to cover non-eligible costs incurred in EU projects or other additional expenditure). Although the principle of equal treatment of all cultural actors across the EU is understood, some interviewees argued that the Culture 2000 Programme should make allowances for these disparities and compensate for them (for example, through differential co-financing requirements or lower project budget thresholds<sup>64</sup>).
- The Programme does not provide detailed information on potential partners, and does not have a comprehensive database of previous participants.<sup>65</sup> Although the Spanish CCP has developed an on-line partner database<sup>66</sup> and the British CCP a project database,<sup>67</sup> these are not necessarily well known among those consulted in other countries and are, in any case, not directly hosted by the Commission.<sup>68</sup>
- The Programme does not provide funding for mobility other than within the context of projects themselves. While it was widely understood that this was not in the scope of the Culture 2000 Decision, it was nevertheless frequently cited as a need and one which the Programme does not address. This was seen as making the Programme less relevant to organisations with no prior history of international co-operation, who would benefit from

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<sup>63</sup> This argument is discussed in the conclusions and recommendations chapter, chapter 7.

<sup>64</sup> The minimum grant threshold for an Action 1 project is €50,000.

<sup>65</sup> Lists of participants from all selection years are now available on the Commission's Culture 2000 webpages along with summaries of selected projects, which could provide a source of information for organisations seeking potential partners. However, what interviewees appeared to feel is lacking is a partner-matching facility whereby organisations seeking partners can submit their details and search for potential partners.

<sup>66</sup> See: [www.mcu.es/jsp/plantilla\\_wai.jsp?id=6&area=cooperacion](http://www.mcu.es/jsp/plantilla_wai.jsp?id=6&area=cooperacion)

<sup>67</sup> <http://www.cupid.culture.info/>

<sup>68</sup> Under the terms of their grant agreement from the EU, the CCPs are obliged to set up and supply a database of cultural actors from their country in order to help possible participants to establish partnerships. However, the agreement does not specify how this database should be provided, or to whom. The provision of a project database is not a specific task in the grant agreement, but could conceivably fall under the remit to provide information on and publicity about the Culture 2000 Programme. The Commission also supports pan-European networks of bodies active at European level in the field of culture. These networks could provide an informal means of sourcing partners, but it is not clear whether individual cultural operators are aware of them.



small-scale funding for ‘fact finding’ visits to meet potential partners in other countries.<sup>69</sup>

- The Programme is not able to address the co-operation needs of small cultural organisations and individual artists. The administrative and financial requirements of Culture 2000 make it unsuitable as a funding vehicle for these groups in the cultural sector. Smaller organisations, and certainly individual artists, generally lack the financial, administrative and management capacity to take part in projects in their own right (although they can be involved in the work of projects run by larger organisations). Many interviewees saw this observation more as a statement of fact than as a direct criticism of the Programme. There appeared to be widespread recognition that the Culture 2000 Programme cannot “do everything”, although additional EU or Member State funding for mobility of individual artists would be welcomed by many of those consulted.

#### *5.2.5 Structure of the Culture 2000 Programme*

On balance, a majority of those consulted believed the structure of the Culture 2000 Programme (in terms of cultural field and project types) to be acceptable. Many of those interviewed recognised the institutional constraints on programme design at EU level and believed that the structure adopted was broadly appropriate.

The most frequent arguments used against the current structure can be summarised as follows:

- Some of those interviewed believed that forcing projects to select cultural fields (cultural heritage, visual arts, performing arts, books and reading) may work against innovative interdisciplinary projects. In contrast, other consultees felt that this structure did not represent a real constraint because cross-disciplinary projects could simply select one of the fields on the application form and still undertake activities in or across other areas.
- The place of new media and video-based artistic creation in the Programme’s structure was not clear to all CCPs interviewed.
- Annual projects were seen by some interviewees as too short to achieve effective co-operation. Some of those consulted linked this concern to the overall timing of the project selection and contracting procedure, which gives projects comparatively little time to prepare once they have been notified that they have been granted funding. At the same time, however, annual projects were seen by a number of interviewees as a good way for less-experienced project participants to take part in cultural co-operation.

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<sup>69</sup>The Community programme to promote bodies active at European level in the field of culture provides scope for networking and the promotion of cultural co-operation. However, this is not explicitly linked to the Culture 2000 Programme and does not meet the identified need for supporting potential Culture 2000 participants to meet and explore possibilities for co-operation projects. Source: **Official Journal of the European Union (2004b)**.

Interviewees were also asked for their opinions on the practice of prioritising particular cultural sectors in the years 2002, 2003 and 2004. Very few of those interviewed supported this practice (which was not used in the 2005 or 2006 calls). Although some interviewees acknowledged that giving priority to a specific cultural field provided additional resources for that field, it was widely thought that it discriminated unjustifiably against high-quality projects in other fields, which did not stand an equal chance of being selected.

### ***5.3 The effectiveness of the Culture 2000 Programme***

The key question driving our consideration of the effectiveness of Culture 2000 is “to what extent is the Programme achieving its objectives?” The nature of the objectives in question makes it largely impossible to measure this in an objectively quantifiable manner. We must therefore base our assessment on qualitative evidence, collected from people with direct experience of the Programme. Project representatives and CCPs, who work in and with Culture 2000 ‘on the ground’, are best placed to provide feedback in this area, and our interviews with these groups have provided useful insights. In the following sections, we first of all summarise the key findings emerging from the interviews on the extent to which Culture 2000 has achieved its objectives at programme level and, secondly, highlight the principal barriers or constraints identified by respondents.

#### *5.3.1 Has the Programme met its objectives?*

As reported in the relevance section above (5.2), there was a very widespread view among those interviewed in the course of the evaluation that, to paraphrase, “one of the principal virtues of the Culture 2000 Programme is that it exists at all”. In summary, therefore, there is considerable support for the existence of an EU culture programme.

Similarly, when asked whether the Programme has achieved or is achieving its objectives, a striking majority of those questioned acknowledged that, by its very existence, Culture 2000 is contributing to the ‘core’ objectives of increasing co-operation, dialogue and exchange among cultural operators in the participating countries. This was universally viewed as positive. However, a majority of those interviewed also expressed at least some scepticism about the net impact that the Culture 2000 Programme can have on realising these ‘core’ objectives (given the resources available and the number of projects that can be supported). An even greater number of respondents called into question the extent to which Culture 2000 can achieve some of the broader specific objectives included in the Decision. Table 5.1 summarises the key findings relating to Culture 2000 objectives emerging from our evaluation interviews.

**Table 5.1 Is Culture 2000 achieving its objectives?**

Objective	Key interview findings
<p>1. To promote cultural dialogue and mutual knowledge of the culture and history of the European peoples</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A majority believed that this objective is realistic and is being promoted through the activities of the co-operation projects supported.</li> <li>• The view was equally widespread that the Programme’s limited resources are a key factor in constraining the <i>scale</i> over which this objective can be achieved.</li> </ul>
<p>2. To 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</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was a widespread view that the first elements of this objective (creativity, dissemination, movement, young people) are realistic and are being supported through the activities of the co-operation projects supported.</li> <li>• There was considerable scepticism about the ability of the Programme to have a real impact on or address the needs of socially disadvantaged groups.</li> </ul>
<p>3. To highlight cultural diversity and the development of new forms of cultural expression</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural diversity is being highlighted through the activities of the projects supported.</li> <li>• New forms of cultural expression can be supported in some cases (many interviewees cited “innovative” or particularly “interesting” projects). This can be a key added value of transnational working.</li> <li>• There was a widespread view that the Programme’s structures favour the involvement of larger, more traditional organisations, which may not always be at the cutting edge of artistic developments (in comparison to new, young artists), although this does not prevent innovative projects.</li> </ul>
<p>4. To 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</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As noted, there is disagreement over the desirability of promoting a common European cultural heritage.</li> <li>• Many cultural heritage projects were reported as achieving this goal (again, constrained by resources).</li> </ul>

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Key interview findings</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was evidence of dissemination of good practices in the field of conservation in cultural heritage observatories and cultural heritage projects.</li> </ul>
<p>5. To take into account the role of culture in socio-economic development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respondents considered this objective to be very broadly defined and ultimately non-specific.</li> <li>• Projects may take into account the role of culture in socio-economic development, but there was a widespread (if not universal) view that very few Culture 2000 projects involve a significant socio-economic dimension, and projects have little impact on socio-economic development.</li> </ul>
<p>6. To foster intercultural dialogue and mutual exchange between European and non-European cultures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many interviewees expressed no opinion on this objective.</li> <li>• However, a minority of those consulted argued forcefully that this objective was not being met because of limited resources for co-operation with third countries, and the Programme's structures and rules. It should be noted that immigration has produced extensive 'non-European cultures' within Member States and that several projects contribute to this objective by working with these groups rather than with third countries.</li> </ul>
<p>7. To explicitly recognise culture as an economic factor and as a factor in social integration and citizenship</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The comments relating to this objective generally mirror those made on objective 5.</li> <li>• The involvement of community groups and local-level representatives in Culture 2000 projects was widely reported to be difficult because of the restricted definition of eligible costs.</li> </ul>
<p>8. To improve access to and participation in culture in the European Union for as many citizens as possible.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A majority of respondents who explicitly mentioned this objective felt that the Programme could not have a meaningful or measurable impact on access to culture, given its coverage of the entire EU with limited resources.</li> </ul>

Objective	Key interview findings
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It was acknowledged that the dissemination and performance activities of those projects which are funded do increase participation in culture among citizens – the issue is simply one of scale.</li> </ul>

*Source: ECOTEC evaluation interviews.*

Table 5.1 provides an indication of widely held views about the relative strengths and weaknesses of the Culture 2000 Programme in relation to its objectives. We examine the perceived barriers or constraints affecting the Programme’s ability to achieve its objectives in more detail in section 5.3.3. Before this, we consider in more depth the positive points raised during interviews about the Programme’s overall performance.

### *5.3.2 The strengths of the Culture 2000 Programme*

A majority of those consulted believed that the Culture 2000 Programme has made a positive contribution to the overall level of cultural co-operation activity in Europe. Projects funded result in the strengthening of contact, exchange and dialogue among cultural actors from different EU countries, which can contribute to increased awareness of both cultural diversity and common European cultural heritage. Given the general lack of national or regional funding for international cultural co-operation, Culture 2000 can be seen to make a real contribution in this respect.

Three further key reported benefits of Culture 2000 emerged from the interview analysis:

- Many of the project representatives interviewed reported that the type of transnational working supported by Culture 2000, which brings together individuals from different cultural backgrounds, can produce **highly innovative creative outputs** which might not have been possible through working with artists from the same country. The short films made during the LARGE project (see case study later in this report, chapter 6), which were scripted, directed and produced by multinational teams who had never worked together before, provide a very good example of this type of effect.
- A number of CCP interviewees, who have hands-on experience of working with cultural operators in their countries, believed that the Programme plays an important role in **helping to professionalise the cultural sector**. The strict management, organisational and administrative requirements of the Programme, although frequently mentioned as a constraint to participation by some operators (see below), force project organisers to manage their projects in a systematic and professional way and help to build the management skills often required in the cultural sector.
- Some respondents also argued that the Culture 2000 Programme, and annual projects in particular, can act as a **springboard for further co-operation activities**. Cultural operators with little experience of cultural co-operation can learn a great deal through

participation in a Culture 2000 project and thus be better placed to undertake more ambitious projects in the future.

### *5.3.3 Constraints to the Programme's meeting its objectives*

We asked interviewees to identify constraining factors or barriers that hinder the Culture 2000 Programme's ability to achieve its objectives. Some of the factors identified by respondents have already been mentioned (in particular see section 5.2.4), while others are examined in more detail in the next section, on efficiency (section 5.4), which deals with practical issues of programme management and implementation. We summarise the key points mentioned here, to provide a clear overview.

- A majority of interviewees identified a **disparity between the Programme's broad and ambitious objectives and its comparatively limited resources** as a – if not the – key constraint to Culture 2000 achieving its objectives.
- The second most frequently cited 'constraint' was the **complexity of the administrative and organisational requirements** for submitting Culture 2000 applications. It was generally argued that only larger organisations have the administrative and management capacity required to assemble an application.
- Related to this are the **financial contributions required from project leaders and co-organisers**, which were widely seen to exclude smaller operators (not generally defined) and organisations from many of the New Member States, which have access to fewer resources than their counterparts in other parts of Europe.
- Some interviewees argued that **annual projects** are too short to have a real and sustainable impact on the cultural sector and thus contribute to the Programme's objectives. However, others argued that shorter, smaller-scale projects provide cultural operators with a good opportunity to gain experience of cultural co-operation and can potentially act as a catalyst for further co-operation activities.
- Three of the experts interviewed believed that many projects are **application driven** rather than **concept driven**, and that this undermines the contribution the Programme can make to promoting real artistic creativity.<sup>70</sup>
- Three interviewees explicitly mentioned that the **cost eligibility rules** (whereby only the costs of lead partners and co-organisers are eligible) make it difficult for local projects working with socially disadvantaged groups or within wider local development initiatives, with very limited resources of their own, to gain funding under Culture 2000. It was suggested that these organisations are often unable to contribute the required 5% of total

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<sup>70</sup> The term 'application driven' indicates situations where a partnership develops a project application in order to access an available source of funding. 'Concept driven' indicates a situation where the project concept arises first and the partnership accesses funding opportunities in order to operationalise it.

project costs in order to become a co-organiser or a project leader. As a result, their costs are ineligible for Commission support, and as they find it difficult to fund all their activities without additional support, their participation in the Programme is compromised.

- A significant number of interviewees argued that the Culture 2000 Programme places **insufficient emphasis on promoting the mobility of artists** as a precursor to cultural co-operation. Although mobility is supported within projects, the Programme is unable to fund exploratory trips and meetings, which can lead to fruitful artistic co-operation and facilitate a ‘feasibility assessment’ of potential projects; in particular, meeting face to face and spending time in another setting can help to determine whether individuals and organisations are likely to be able to work together effectively. This factor was seen to act as a brake on the Programme’s contribution to a range of its objectives.
- The **timing of calls and the selection procedure** was another factor frequently mentioned as a constraint. In particular, as contracting takes place only shortly before the summer, it is not possible for relevant annual projects to mount exhibitions or performances in the key summer season. Moreover, projects have little time to get up and running after they receive notification that they are being funded, which can impact on project quality.
- Several interviewees, from CCPs and projects in particular, believed that there is a **lack of ‘best practice’ examples of successful projects**, which would help to inspire cultural operators and assist them in delivering high-quality projects (which contribute more effectively to programme objectives).<sup>71</sup>
- CCP interviewees highlighted a **lack of co-ordination with other EU programmes**, such as MEDIA+, Leonardo da Vinci, Youth, Interreg and the mainstream Structural Funds. Commission staff from the Culture Unit agreed that a degree of complementarity existed between Culture 2000 and other programmes, and that Culture 2000 should be seen within the wider context of all EU actions. CCP interviewees, rather than disputing this view, felt that this complementarity was insufficiently exploited and that increased co-ordination in terms of actions supported and dissemination activities could lead to synergies that could help to further the global objectives of Culture 2000.
- Finally, a number of interviewees argued that the **particularly limited resources for co-operation with third countries** made it virtually impossible for the Programme to contribute to this objective. Moreover, the same respondents reported increased demand for finance for co-operation with third countries from the cultural sector in their countries.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> During quarters 2 and 4 of 2005, the Commission started to build up a selection of ‘good practice’ example projects on the Culture 2000 website.

<sup>72</sup> Although promoting cultural co-operation with third countries is not a specific main objective of the Culture 2000 Programme, it is a particular focus of Action 1, objective 7. Source: **Official Journal of the European**

#### **5.4 The efficiency of the Culture 2000 Programme**

The question of the efficiency of the Culture 2000 Programme relates to the quality of management processes and overall use of the available resources. In the following sections, we examine the interview findings concerning the different stages or aspects of programme operation:

- programme-level communication and dissemination activities;
- the efficiency of the Cultural Contact Points;
- the project application and selection procedures;
- programme financing rules; and
- programme monitoring and evaluation.

##### *5.4.1 Communication and dissemination at EU level*

We asked CCPs, Management Committee Members and project representatives about their experiences of communicating with the Commission Services (who co-ordinate the Programme at EU level), and their views concerning EU-level information and dissemination activities related to Culture 2000 (including the Programme's website).

A clear majority of both the project representatives and CCPs interviewed reported that day-to-day communications with the Commission were generally effective and always cordial on a personal level. Project representatives tended to have had contact with the Commission concerning project management or budgetary issues, while CCPs naturally dealt with the Commission on a regular basis as part of their work to promote Culture 2000 at national level. Moreover, both experienced project representatives and CCPs reported that communications had improved in recent years in this respect. Considerable concerns persisted, however, on the specific issue of feedback to successful and unsuccessful projects following the project selection procedure – an issue to which we return in section 5.4.4 below.

The opinions of CCP and project interviewees on the Commission's dissemination strategy for the Culture 2000 Programme at EU level (which complements the work of CCPs at national or regional level) were more varied. A majority of interviewees who expressed an opinion on the subject felt that the webpages covering Culture 2000 on the EUROPA site were broadly adequate. However, a significant number of CCP and project interviewees felt that the webpages could be improved by providing more information on completed projects and examples of best practice. The overall lack of information on the activities and results of projects was a familiar theme within the discussions with stakeholders of all types. A proportion of interviewees lamented the lack of a comprehensive database of past projects on the Commission's site. Moreover, the fact that the CCP-produced partner and project

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**Communities (2004a).** Twelve projects promoting cultural co-operation in third countries have been supported under Action 1 in the period 2000-2004, ranging from one project annually in 2000 and 2003 to six in 2004.

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databases (developed respectively in Spain and the UK, among others) are not linked to the EU site was criticised by some respondents.

At least two interviewees suggested that high-profile EU-level events bringing together participants from Culture 2000 projects would facilitate networking and enhance dissemination of the results of the Programme. One of the experts interviewed suggested that the European Commission could also use such European-level workshops to engage cultural operators from different sectors in the design of calls and future programmes.

#### *5.4.2 Efficiency of the Cultural Contact Points*

Cultural Contact Points are charged with promoting the Culture 2000 Programme in the participating countries. We asked representatives of the CCPs about the job they do and their ability to achieve their objectives with the resources they have. We questioned project representatives and Management Committee Members about their contacts with CCPs, and their views on the work done by CCPs (in some countries the CCP and MCM are the same person).

CCPs promote Culture 2000 in a variety of ways, including seminars for potential project applicants, talks, one-to-one meetings and provision of a ‘help desk’ function. The level of resources CCPs receive from the EU depends on the population of the country they serve, while the resources or ‘in kind’ support they receive from the national or regional level varies greatly from one country to another. In general terms, the majority of CCPs interviewed believed that they had the resources to undertake the basic functions required of them. However, some CCP representatives expressed considerable concern that the level of funding they received was insufficient for them to do their job as well as they would like to, and a number of those interviewed complained that more was being asked of them without additional funds. There is evidence that the problem is greater in large countries, where the task of promoting Culture 2000 is comparatively more time-consuming and costly (in terms of travel expenses). However, the variable levels of additional support offered by national and regional authorities to CCPs is another determining factor affected CCP resources.

Many of the CCPs interviewed believed that the training they receive from the Commission has greatly improved in recent years, and that the annual training sessions on each call are a welcome development. That said, concern was expressed by some that this training is based on a one-way dialogue, and that the experience of CCPs in dealing with cultural operators on the ground is not exploited sufficiently by the Commission Services. There is very limited evidence of the CCPs being used as ‘listening posts’, as suggested by the First Interim Evaluation.

The issue of extending the remit of CCPs (which stops when projects’ applications are submitted to Brussels) was raised in a number of interviews by both CCPs and Management Committee Members. In particular, the question of giving CCPs a role in following up and advising successful projects was raised. Although the CCP representatives in question did not think that such an expansion of their activities was feasible within current or likely future

resource levels, there was wider support for improved provision of information on the selected projects. Many CCPs criticised the practice of not informing them about which projects had been selected before the general newsletter with results was issued. Moreover, many felt that improved information on current projects would help them to promote the Programme to future participants, and send a clear signal that people were interested in what projects achieved. A number of CCPs had undertaken work to ‘map’ the projects supported in their country (for example, France, the UK, Norway), but this was only possible because of a specific effort to allocate resources to the task. It would have been difficult within the constraints of the EU budget allocation.

The Management Committee Members consulted in the course of the evaluation universally expressed their support for the work done by the CCPs, and believed that this function is of crucial importance for the promotion and operation of the Programme. The project representatives interviewed were generally positive in their comments about CCPs, although several of the projects interviewed had not made use of the CCP services and had had no contact with their CCP.<sup>73</sup>

#### *5.4.3 Project application procedure*

Two main areas of concern relating to the application procedure for Culture 2000 emerged from the interviews:

- A large proportion of interviewees (from both projects and CCPs) criticised the **timing of the calls for proposals** and the application procedure, for several reasons. First, calls are generally launched shortly before the summer break with a deadline in October, which effectively reduces the amount of time available for assembling a partnership and putting together a proposal (as partners or potential partners are on holiday). Secondly, the length of the selection procedure (see below) means that projects do not hear whether they have been selected until late spring the following year, with contracting generally scheduled to take place in May. This makes it virtually impossible for annual projects to launch exhibitions or performances in time to coincide with summer festivals and the summer arts season. In several cases, project representatives and CCPs argued that it should be possible, even within EU structures, to publish the calls earlier in the year in order to address the issues mentioned.
- The second main area of concern related to the **Culture 2000 application forms, and in particular the budget section** (Part III). Firstly, at least three project representatives and several CCPs complained that the amount of detail required for the section on ‘conferences, seminars and meetings’ is too much. This section requires details of the number of participants from different countries and organisations who will attend the events organised by the project, which is difficult to calculate in advance, and even includes a section on photocopying costs for materials to be distributed at the events. In addition, some interviewees contrasted the level of detail required here with the limited

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<sup>73</sup> This finding correlates with those of the on-line survey in section 4.4.7.

information required in the section covering the direct costs of the artistic creation or core activities of the project. A number of interviewees highlighted that these costs, which relate most directly to the cultural aspect of projects, are dealt with in Section 6 of the six-section form. One CCP interviewee argued that this sends a signal to cultural operators that the EU is more interested in the administrative aspects than in the artistic content of projects.

#### *5.4.4 Project selection procedure*

A majority of interviewees regarded the project selection procedure as fair and transparent. The use of external experts to undertake the project evaluations was widely viewed in a positive light. However, two main negative points were made about the selection procedure during project representative and CCP interviews:

- First, while there appeared to be a common understanding that the selection procedure needs to be long enough to ensure transparency and fairness, many interviewees felt that the **process is too long** and that the **reasons for the timescale are not sufficiently explained** to project applicants.
- Secondly, many interviewees criticised a **perceived lack of systematic feedback** to both successful and unsuccessful project applicants.<sup>74</sup> Project interviewees, in particular, argued that feedback on the application score and the reason for the decision made is always very useful. For example, one project interviewee who had been successful on one occasion and unsuccessful on another claimed that he had not received feedback in either case. He argued that this would have been very useful in order to understand the reason for the decision. In this example, the applicant believed the second, unsuccessful project to have been of superior quality to the first, successful one, and felt that the lack of ‘explanation’ created an impression that decisions were made on an arbitrary basis. The same interviewee accepted that there are many reasons for a project not being selected (quality of competition, number of competing proposals in a given field, etc.), but argued that these reasons should be explained in feedback to applicants.

The experts who had been involved in the selection procedure indicated that the system for selecting projects is broadly appropriate. However, three of them explicitly argued that the limited time for assessing projects does not allow for a careful examination of applications, while two believed that not being allowed to hold discussions with other assessors during the assessment of a project limits their capacity to make a fair judgement. This point was reinforced by anecdotal evidence from CCP interviewees. One expert felt that taking part in drawing up the assessment guidelines would facilitate and enhance the experts’ work. The fact that these guidelines are elaborated by the European Commission alone means that experts do not always fully understand the rationale for the assessment design. The experts also unanimously expressed a desire to receive feedback on their assessments.

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<sup>74</sup> Note that many of the projects consulted were financed before more systematic feedback procedures were introduced.

#### *5.4.5 Financing rules*

We asked interviewees about the impact of the obligation for co-organisers to provide 5% of the project funding and about the availability of co-financing in their countries. Although many interviewees criticised the complexity of the financial regulations for Culture 2000 (particularly those from northern European countries, characterised by a ‘lighter’ administrative approach at national level), there was widespread understanding that the EU must take precautions against the misuse of public money, and that this is a complex task when dealing with 25+ countries.

Opinions concerning the ‘5% rule’ were divided, although on balance a majority of interviewees supported its introduction on the grounds that it ensures a real commitment from project partners. Some interviewees argued that the rule is a ‘double-edged sword’, in that it excludes smaller cultural operators and operators from poorer countries (in particular among the New Member States), where 5% of a project’s budget (a minimum of €2,500 annually under Culture 2000 thresholds) generally represents a proportionately greater share of organisations’ turnover. As only costs incurred by the project leader and co-organisers (who have to contribute at least 5% of the budget) are eligible, smaller organisations who may wish to be associated partners are dissuaded from participating.

In this context, interviewees were asked what they understood by the phrase ‘**smaller operator**’. No absolute definitions emerged. Interviewees from all respondent groups argued that the definition of a small operator could vary between cultural field and country.

Concerning **arrangements for obtaining co-financing**, CCPs, projects and Management Committee Members reported very varied situations in different countries. In the vast majority of countries, no formal ‘automatic’ right exists to co-financing for Culture 2000 projects from national or regional authorities or arts organisations. In most cases, Culture 2000 projects can and do receive co-financing from national funding agencies (generally arts councils and culture ministries), but they have to apply for it on a competitive basis. In those countries where national co-financing funds have been established, the negative effects of the 5% rule are likely to have been at least partially overcome. The countries in which such funds exist are shown in table 5.2. It is worth noting that the majority of New Member States have, or intend to have, a co-financing fund, as in the following examples:

**Table 5.2 Culture 2000 co-financing funds in participating countries**

<b>Countries with co-financing funds</b>	<b>Countries planning co-financing Funds</b>	<b>Countries without co-financing funds</b>	<b>Unknown</b>
Cyprus; Czech Republic; Finland; Greece; Hungary; Latvia; Lithuania; Poland; Romania; Spain; Slovakia.	France; Malta.	Austria; Belgium; Bulgaria; Denmark; Estonia; Germany; Ireland; Iceland; Luxembourg; the Netherlands; Norway; Portugal; Slovenia; Sweden; UK.	Liechtenstein.

*Sources: CCP interviews and European Commission (via national authorities and/or CCPs).*

- Cyprus – although not described as a ‘fund’, the Cyprus Ministry of Culture is reported to routinely contribute the 5% of the project budget to organisations that are unable to provide this financing themselves.
- Czech Republic – a fund has been established by the Ministry of Culture, Foreign Department, to award grants to Czech project leaders or co-organisers. Grants may amount to up to 50% of Czech applicant organisations’ expenses.
- Hungary – a national support system has been established, which guarantees successful Culture 2000 applicants the co-financing they require.
- Latvia – a specific fund has been established by the Ministry of Culture to provide co-financing to cover a proportion (but not all) of the 5% budget requirement.
- Lithuania – the International Relations and European Integration Division of the Ministry of Culture has a specific budget for co-financing Culture 2000 projects.
- Romania – a special fund was established in 2003, which can provide up to 30% of a project budget. In addition, the National Cultural Fund can support projects threatened by cash-flow problems, although this mechanism has not been used.
- In Norway, although there is not a specific fund for co-financing Culture 2000 projects, details of the application procedure for national co-financing from the Arts Council are published at the same time as the Culture 2000 call (in the same newsletters and Norwegian publications). However, there is no guarantee of co-financing.

#### *5.4.6 Monitoring and evaluation*

In the context of this evaluation, we have understood ‘monitoring’ of the Culture 2000 Programme to refer to ongoing observation or supervision of the implementation of funded projects, and ‘evaluation’ to refer principally to mechanisms internal to the Programme for ‘ex post’ assessment of project outputs, results and impacts (in contrast to our external evaluation at programme level).

On the question of monitoring, a mixed set of opinions emerged from the interviews. On the one hand, project interviewees in particular felt that the Programme is being effectively monitored from a financial and budgetary point of view. The complex budgetary reporting requirements mean that project expenditure must be justified to the Commission. Moreover, those projects which have had dealings with the Commission Services (project managers) regarding budgetary rules or their final financial reports reported that their enquiries were dealt with efficiently and that Commission staff were very competent. At least two of the project representatives with longer experience of the Programme reported that programme management has improved in recent years in this respect.

On the other hand, a majority of project and CCP interviewees criticised the lack of monitoring of actual project activities and outputs. Once projects have received funding, they are obliged to undertake the tasks set out in their proposal and contract, and to detail project progress in a final activity report to the Commission. However, a significant number of interviewees argued that the quality of project outputs is not effectively monitored, and the Commission was perceived as showing little interest in the artistic and creative results of projects. Discussions with EC staff highlighted that when final project activity reports are submitted, the focus is on financial issues and that the relative lack of focus on artistic and cultural outputs and outcomes is not because of lack of interest. Indeed, several EC staff expressed a desire to increase the focus on project activity and outputs. Several interviewees believed that the current situation gives the impression that the EU is far more interested in administrative and budgetary requirements than in the cultural and creative activities the Programme is designed to support.

There are no systematic, programme-wide mechanisms for collecting information on or assessing projects’ outputs and results, other than the final activity reports. This situation was criticised by many interviewees, for two principal reasons:

- First, it means that accurate **information on projects’ results is not publicly available on a systematic basis**. Such information was seen as particularly important as a basis for selecting good-practice examples and for use in promoting the Culture 2000 Programme more generally. Some CCPs have made efforts to collect accurate contact details for Culture 2000 project partners in their countries, and use previously funded projects as best-practice examples in their work. However, even in these cases, interviewees indicated that they would welcome a more systematic programme-wide approach to ‘ex post’ information gathering.

- Secondly, some interviewees believed that the lack of a system for monitoring the artistic content of projects left **too much freedom to produce work of little cultural value**. Even if the quality of the activities undertaken in any project depends on the commitment and talent of those involved, the current system (or lack thereof) was seen by some to offer few structural incentives to produce high-quality work.

## 6.0 PROJECT CASE STUDIES

### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the six artistic field case studies, which each incorporated an introduction to the artistic field, a detailed project case study and four shorter summaries of projects. The complete case studies can be found in Annex 13. Further details on the planning and selection of the case studies are in chapter 2, section 2.5.

The six artistic field case studies involved the following projects and actions (detailed case studies in bold):

**Table 6.1: Projects involved in the case studies**

Artistic field	Selection year	Action	Project title
Literature, books and reading	2004	1	Virtual Library
	<b>2003</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>International Medana Festival</b>
	2003	1	Improvement of the Skills of Literary Translators
	2003	1	The EMLIT Project
	2001	2	ClioH's Workshop II
	2000	2	Réseau pour la promotion du livre, de la lecture et de la traduction – Grinzane-Europa Network
Cultural heritage	2004	1	European Fluvial Heritage
	2004	1	People for Europe
	2003	1	Virtual Heart of Central Europe
	2002	1	Peep Behind the Scenes
	<b>2001</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>ACRINET: European Acritic Heritage Network</b>
	2000	2	Plants in European Masterpieces
European Cultural Heritage Laboratories	2004	3	Erosion and Humidity
	2003	3	Safeguarding the Heathlands of Europe (Heathguard)
	<b>2003</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Significant European Cemeteries Network (SCENE)</b>
	2003	3	Advanced on-site Restoration Laboratory for European Antique Heritage Restoration
	2002	3	Digital European Cathedral Archives
	2002	3	Wall and Paper – Schoenbrunn
Special Cultural Events	2003	3	Art + Communication: Trans-European Cultural Mapping
	<b>2003</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>LARGE</b>
	2003	3	Europa Festiva
	2002	3	Da Capo Al St Petersburg
	2002	3	West meets East – 300 Years of Shared Design and Crafts History



Artistic field	Selection year	Action	Project title
	2002	3	ASSITEJ – Theatre Festival for Children and Young People
Performing arts	2004	1	Homage to Catalonia
	2003	1	Kafka. Die Falle
	2003	1	Trittico Greco
	2002	1	<b>IMoDaL 2002-2003 International Meetings on Drama and Liturgy</b>
	2001	2	Internationale Plattform Gegenwartstheater
	2000	2	Meet Europe in Berlin: Boundaries, Enlargements, Roots
Visual arts	2004	1	Le Mois Européen de la Photo
	2003	1	Frieze Art Fair 2003
	<b>2003</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>European Space</b>
	2002	1	My Heart is a Penguin
	2002	1	Duero: Aguas Discursivas
	2002	1	L'art à l'hôpital

## **6.2 Relevance**

The projects supported covered a wide range of activity and artistic fields that, between them, were clearly relevant to the eight programme objectives.

However, for several programme objectives the links to project activities were weak. Specifically:

- taking into account the role of culture in socio-economic development;
- fostering intercultural dialogue and mutual exchange between European and non-European cultures; and
- explicit recognition of culture as an economic factor and as a factor in social integration and citizenship.

Very few projects contained a clear major element of socio-economic development, or social integration and citizenship. This highlights a potential tension in the objectives of the Programme: is Culture 2000 intended to promote and preserve culture; is its role to use culture to promote socio-economic development; or is it intended to do both? At present, the Programme's objectives imply a balance between the two, but many of the projects examined in the case studies were geared in the main towards the promotion and preservation of culture.

The other objective with a relatively weak link to actual project activity was in fostering intercultural dialogue and mutual exchange between European and non-European cultures. Here, a distinction needs to be drawn between the two possible ways in which this dialogue and exchange may take place: first, activity may be focused on non-European cultures within the borders of participating countries (essentially, immigrant populations) and, secondly, on

non-European cultures outside the borders of participating countries (i.e. in third countries). There is substantial evidence of projects undertaking activity in the former, but activities in the latter are limited by the rules of the Programme to projects under the theme of cultural co-operation in third countries. In the latter case, only 12 projects were funded under this theme between 2000 and 2004 (see section 3.1.4), so the contribution to this objective is limited.

As with the first objective cited above, few projects appeared to address the third of these objectives: explicit recognition of culture as an economic factor and as a factor in social integration and citizenship. Again, few of the projects explicitly promoted culture in economic terms, although there is more evidence of projects demonstrating and recognising the role of culture in social integration and citizenship.

### **6.3 Effectiveness**

Overall, it is apparent that, between them, the projects contributed to all the programme objectives. As indicated in the previous section, the contribution to some objectives was stronger than others, but essentially it can be stated that programme objectives were achieved.

A short analysis of the contribution of the case-study projects to the achievements of the Culture 2000 programme objectives is shown in table 6.1.

**Table 6.2 Links between programme objectives and project case examples**

Programme objective	Project case examples
<p>Promotion of cultural dialogue and mutual knowledge of the culture and history of the European peoples.</p>	<p>There are many examples apparent among the project case studies of co-operation by experts in particular fields being initiated or enhanced by Culture 2000.</p> <p>The Action 3 <b>European Cultural Heritage Laboratories</b> are exclusively aimed at bringing together experts in specific fields:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>Heathguard</b> project aimed to improve knowledge on how to conserve and safeguard the remaining heathlands in Europe;</li> <li>• The <b>Wall and Paper – Schoenbrunn</b> project aimed to apply and demonstrate best practice in conserving and restoring interior wall decorations.</li> </ul> <p>Other projects funded under Actions 1 and 2 also brought together experts or practitioners in their field, but in many of these projects the activities were also intended to benefit the wider public through performances, exhibitions, etc. Examples include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>International Medana Festival</b> (literature, books and reading) brought young poets together and gave them an opportunity to showcase their work within the context of a six-day festival.</li> <li>• The <b>IMoDaL</b> (performing arts) project benefited experts in Gregorian chants and liturgical drama, but also generated a number of performances for the general public.</li> </ul>
<p>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.</p>	<p>Examples include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>International Medana Festival</b> (literature, books and reading) brought together poets, authors and performing artists from across Europe.</li> <li>• The <b>Grinzane-Europa Network</b> (literature, books and reading) aimed to promote books, reading and translation, supporting exchanges between professionals in the sector. The project organised seminars for writers, translators and librarians, and awarded bursaries to support a professional exchange programme. A website promoted reading and writing to young people and contained</li> </ul>

Programme objective	Project case examples
	<p>interactive resources and materials.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vertalershuis in the Netherlands organised seminars, workshops and round tables on literary translation in their project – <b>Improvement of the Skills of Literary Translators</b> (literature, books and reading). The project aimed to improve translation quality, contribute to the dissemination of European literature, and promote the mobility and training of translators.</li> </ul>
<p>Highlighting of cultural diversity and the development of new forms of cultural expression.</p>	<p>Examples include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>Frieze Art Fair Education and Artist Programme</b> (visual arts) created a forum for the international exchange of ideas and information relating to visual arts. The project contributed to the debate on the developing definition of visual art, and sought to expose the public to new developments in visual art.</li> <li>• The <b>Trittico Greco</b> project (performing arts) incorporated new sound technologies into the performances of classical Greek plays.</li> </ul>
<p>Sharing and highlighting, at European level, the common cultural heritage of European significance; disseminating know-how and promoting good practices concerning its conservation and safeguarding.</p>	<p>Many cultural heritage projects and European Cultural Heritage Laboratories were involved in collating and disseminating good practice and knowledge on heritage conservation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>ACRINET</b> (cultural heritage) project sought to preserve knowledge of the acritic tradition, collecting materials from archives, live recordings, films and print representing European acritic heritage.</li> <li>• The <b>Significant European Cemeteries Network, SCENE</b> (Cultural Heritage Laboratory), aimed to highlight the cultural and artistic value of European cemeteries. The project organised a seminar and produced a report on best practice in funerary restoration, using examples from the restoration activities of the partners.</li> </ul> <p>However, projects from other cultural fields also contributed to this objective.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>ClioH's Workshop II</b> project (literature, books and reading) aimed to increase knowledge of European history and culture in order to forge a stronger European citizenship and culture. A variety of publications (books, videos, CDs) aimed at the general public, and students in particular,</li> </ul>

Programme objective	Project case examples
<p>Taking into account the role of culture in socio-economic development.</p>	<p>highlighted both the links between and diversity of European cultural heritage.</p> <p>Although this was not a common objective addressed by the projects, some explicitly sought to use culture as a means for socio-economic development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Duero: Aguas Discursivas</b> (visual arts) specifically addressed social and cultural inclusion, organising workshops on cultural policy and cultural management. The project’s activities generated economic benefits by drawing visitors from urban areas to local events and generating income for local business.</li> </ul>
<p>Fostering of intercultural dialogue and mutual exchange between European and non-European cultures.</p>	<p>Several projects aimed to promote mutual exchange between European and non-European cultures. In practice, activities involving exchange with non-European cultures were most obviously concentrated among Action 1 projects involved in cultural co-operation with third countries, and the St Petersburg celebration projects funded under Action 3 Special Cultural Events. However, some projects (such as EMLIT) sought to promote exchange with non-European cultures or of recent immigrant origin.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>EMLIT Project</b> (literature, books and reading) sought to translate and publish a range of small-scale literary texts in the principal European languages. Translations were initially published on-line, as supplements to the on-line journal Enter Text (an interactive, interdisciplinary e-journal for cultural and historical studies and creative work), and ultimately as a book.</li> </ul>
<p>Explicit recognition of culture as an economic factor and as a factor in social integration and citizenship.</p>	<p>Among the selection of projects examined in the case studies, this objective was not the primary focus of activities. Although many projects acknowledge that culture can be an economic factor and/or a factor in social integration and citizenship, among Culture 2000 projects these features tend to be incidental at best.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visitors to the <b>International Medana Festival</b> (literature, books and reading) brought some economic benefits to the area by staying in hotels, eating in local restaurants and purchasing other goods and services during their stay. Additionally, outreach and publicity for the programme of events may have attracted a wide range of non-traditional attendees to the event and contributed to social integration. However, the main aim of the project was to develop the festival, not to</li> </ul>

<b>Programme objective</b>	<b>Project case examples</b>
Improved access to and participation in culture in the European Union for as many citizens as possible.	<p data-bbox="869 248 1301 280">generate economic or social outputs.</p> <p data-bbox="824 288 2029 400">Many projects engaged European citizens as the ultimate audience for their activities. A large number of projects developed performances or exhibitions which attracted combined audiences of hundreds of thousands of people. Specific examples include the following:</p> <ul data-bbox="824 448 2029 683" style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="824 448 2029 600">• Maison Européenne de la Photographie organised the <b>European Month of Photography</b> (visual arts), which established a dedicated European photography event and spin-off events in Berlin and Vienna. As well as establishing a network of professionals and a transnational partnership, the project drew over 800,000 visitors to the events.</li><li data-bbox="824 608 2029 639">• The <b>Frieze Art Fair Education and Artist Programme</b> (visual arts) drew around 27,700 visitors.</li><li data-bbox="824 647 2029 683">• <b>Homage to Catalonia</b> (performing arts) drew 21,475 audience members to its 62 performances.</li></ul>

*Source: ECOTEC Culture 2000 project case studies.*

## **6.4 Efficiency**

### *6.4.1 Project selection*

It is apparent from the range of project activities supported that the selection process is efficient in selecting a diverse cohort of projects spread across several different artistic fields. Even within artistic fields, there is considerable scope and flexibility for diversity of project activity.

### *6.4.2 Project evaluation and monitoring*

Project evaluation activities were highly varied among projects. None of the six in-depth case-study projects commissioned an external evaluation of their activities, and only three carried out an internal evaluation. Even the nature of the internal evaluations was variable – two projects undertook formal evaluation activity resulting in detailed reports of their project activities and structures, while a third reviewed activity informally at a final meeting. Reasons given for not engaging specialist contractors were: the additional costs involved, which were felt to be considerable, and the view that evaluators would not be aware of the specific content of the project and would not be able to add value.

Projects that did not undertake any kind of evaluation often referred instead to their monitoring activities, highlighting their tracking of financial and project-planning activities. These often included formal reporting within the project, often to a steering group or partnership group with responsibility for ensuring the progress of project activity, with day-to-day monitoring responsibilities delegated to individual staff.

Overall, the level of monitoring activity varied among projects, partly because of the level of funding available, but also because of the organisational capacity of the participants. In the SCENE and LARGE projects, the project leaders were large cultural institutions, with significant experience of project work and monitoring activity. In these cases, the project leader provided monitoring services and co-ordination for the project. This resulted in **standardised forms and procedures** which were implemented across the partnership, but in other projects standardised systems were not in place.

In several cases, the monitoring arrangements raised the issue of the attributability of outputs – essentially, were the outputs reported by projects a direct result of the grant awarded through Culture 2000? This was especially the case where grants were awarded to provide additional or expanded activity to a project. For example, the Medana Festival and the European Space project both used Culture 2000 funding to expand their activities to create an international dimension to existing activity. In these cases, the outputs recorded can be partially attributed to the award of a Culture 2000 grant, but in some cases they would have been produced anyway. If in the future the Programme wishes to monitor the numbers and types of outputs generated by the Programme, applicants will need to clearly highlight which outputs are wholly, partially or not attributable to the Culture 2000 grant.

The evidence indicates that there is a general lack of understanding of the nature and importance of evaluation. Although all projects undertake monitoring activity, this is not evaluation – the data gathered can feed into evaluation, but does not in itself constitute evaluation. The focus of the monitoring activities is essentially to track whether the project is on schedule to be delivered as planned and within budget. Evaluation activities can highlight why this is the case by examining the processes around the delivery of the project, such as the dynamics of transnational partnership working. This can identify factors for success and/or failure.

Regarding the question of who undertakes evaluation activity – evaluation can be undertaken internally, externally or a mixture of both. Resource constraints can be a major factor in deciding who undertakes evaluation, but if specialist expertise is required it may be appropriate to contract out the relevant portion of evaluation if the skills do not exist within the partnership, or to retain some elements of the evaluation if the specialist skills only exist within the partnership.

#### *6.4.3 Outputs and outcomes of Culture 2000 projects*

Despite Culture 2000 not being an output-focused programme, the case-study projects reported a wide variety of ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ outcomes. An illustrative list of project outputs and outcomes is shown in table 6.2.<sup>75</sup>

Overall, the outputs and outcomes reported by each project were superficially similar – for example, many projects held seminars and developed websites. In practice, the specialised nature of each project resulted in highly differential content for the outputs; for example, some projects developed interactive educational materials hosted on their websites, while others created on-line databases and forums aimed at professionals in their field.

In addition to measurable ‘hard’ outputs, projects reported a variety of ‘soft’ outputs and outcomes that are more difficult to measure. A large number of projects reported that partner organisations had improved their organisational and staff capacity to successfully undertake co-operation projects, and that having done so they were likely to try to develop further activities. This outcome was particularly the case among participants with little or no experience of cultural co-operation. But even experienced cultural operators benefited by developing new links to other cultural operators and strengthening existing links.

Other soft outcomes were linked to benefits for the beneficiaries of project activities, namely professionals in the cultural field and the general public. Some projects, such as the International Medana Festival, supported the mobility and professional development of artists. The European Cultural Heritage Laboratories often provided a means for experts to meet and exchange practice in their specialist fields. Other projects brought new cultural opportunities

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<sup>75</sup> Outputs are the result or product of a project (e.g. beneficiaries trained, production of a research report); outcomes are the effects or end results of activity or outputs (e.g. qualifications gained, adoption of report by policy-maker).



to the general public, highlighting common themes in national and European culture. For example, the Peep Behind the Scenes project examined the history of travelling fairs and showmen across Europe.

**Table 6.3 Outputs and outcomes of case-study projects<sup>76</sup>**

<b>Outputs and outcomes of Culture 2000 projects</b>
Open debates on culture
Live performances (visual and performing arts)
Conferences (for professionals and the general public)
Workshops and seminars (for professionals and the general public)
Websites (for professionals and the general public)
Books, catalogues and newsletters (for professionals and the general public)
Databases (for professionals and the general public)
Professional networks
Production of short films
Film screenings
Radio performances (often musical but also theatrical)
Television screenings
New musical compositions
New theatrical compositions
Cultural exchange between artists
Established relationships between cultural operators
Increased involvement of the public in culture
Developed cultural tourism
Developed organisational capacity for co-operation projects
Increased mobility of artists and art

*Source: ECOTEC Culture 2000 project case studies.*

## **6.5 Utility and sustainability**

Evidence from the project examples indicates that Culture 2000 funding has had a significant lasting effect on participating cultural operators and professionals in the field. All projects highlighted the organisational learning achieved through international co-operation, and all felt that they were well equipped to undertake future international co-operation activities. Indeed, some projects or participants had submitted new Culture 2000 applications (e.g. SCENE and ACRINET), while others had been able to continue their activities in some form without further EU assistance (e.g. IMoDaL, Medana Festival). In many cases, EU support enabled partners to develop products and activities which were showcased to attract public and private funds to enable them to continue (e.g. the Medana Festival, the museum

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<sup>76</sup> Outcomes are the effects or end results of activity or outputs (e.g. qualifications gained, adoption of report by policy-maker); outputs are the result or product of a project (e.g. beneficiaries trained, production of a research report).

exhibitions of ACRINET, and the directory of European cemeteries under development by SCENE).

Several projects highlighted the positive effect on individual artists and cultural professionals involved in their project. The SCENE project gave conservationists a unique opportunity to meet and exchange expertise, while the IMoDaL project established a network of experts and practitioners of ritual chants who continue to meet. The LARGE project and the Medana Festival showcased young filmmakers and poets respectively, aiding their development. In particular, the international experience was seen as beneficial in widening artists' and cultural professionals' exposure to other artists and an international audience.

Two projects (IMoDaL and SCENE) stimulated interest in their respective fields from postgraduate students who began to study the fields. As a result, the projects have not only expanded knowledge of their fields by improving the skills of current experts, but have helped to secure a future stream of expertise and interest in their subjects.

Finally, several more indirect benefits were observed by projects. Where events or performances took place, there were associated economic benefits from tourism. For example, the Medana Festival reported that many local businesses benefited indirectly from the project's existence.

Some projects raised the profile of their respective countries across Europe. The Minister of Culture in Latvia presented the project leader of the European Space project with a diploma for its "outstanding example of the management of an international project," while the Slovenian Ministry of Culture has recognised the value of the International Medana Festival in promoting Slovenian culture abroad by discussing potential support for future festivals.

In summary, the projects highlighted several lasting benefits to their organisations, staff, participating artists, performers and experts that would not have been realised without the support of Culture 2000. In all examples, the intervention of the EU allowed partners to break free of national boundaries in order to undertake projects of European rather than national significance. In many cases, all or part of the project activities and outputs continued in some form, and were often stimulating additional transnational co-operation.

## **7.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

In this final chapter we bring together the findings of the evaluation to draw conclusions in relation to the main evaluation questions and, where appropriate, make recommendations. The chapter thus represents our synthesis of the evidence gathered from projects through the on-line survey, stakeholder interviewees and the material collected through the case studies, and information provided by the Commission. It is here that we seek to make a balanced judgement on the basis of the evidence gathered, and in some instances this involves testing and triangulating the opinions advanced by different groups of stakeholders.

In the following sections the conclusions and recommendations are grouped together under the main evaluation headings:

- intervention logic;
- relevance;
- effectiveness and impact;
- efficiency and cost-effectiveness; and
- utility, added value and sustainability.

Under the conclusions section (7.1), each specific evaluation question is addressed in turn. Detailed recommendations are made in section 7.2.

### **7.1 Conclusions**

#### *7.1.1 Intervention logic*

*Specific evaluation questions on the intervention logic*

**Q1A and Q1B:** In light of answers to the questions related to relevance and effectiveness, the evaluator should assess the validity of the causal assumptions underpinning the Programme's intervention logic, relating in particular to:

- how the Programme is supposed to produce its intended effects; and
- the Programme's relationship to any related policy interventions and to any relevant external factors.

#### *7.1.2 Relevance*

On the basis of the evidence available, Culture 2000 provides an adequate basis for addressing both the original and current needs in cultural co-operation. There is a widespread view that the Programme is well focused in terms of its aims and objectives. Almost all projects surveyed believed that the goals are appropriate, and half of them very appropriate; nearly all interviewees believed the rationale to be as valid today as it was in 2000. The flexibility provided by the breadth of the objectives means that new developments in the cultural field can be readily accommodated within the Programme.

Interviewees supported the view that there is a need for a programme specifically supporting the cultural sector (rather than culture being included within other programmes), and that Culture 2000 provides the basis for doing this. The activities being undertaken fit with the objectives. Almost all projects believed that the cultural fields employed in the Programme accurately represent the cultural sector, and there is no substantial evidence to suggest that the sectoral approach which is integral to the Programme acts as a hindrance to cultural co-operation.

*Specific evaluation questions on relevance*

**Q2:** Have the Programme's objectives, principles and actions, as set out in Articles 1 and 2 of the Decision, proved relevant, having regard to the more general objective of supporting cultural co-operation in Europe and having regard to the development of this co-operation?

Interviews and case studies with stakeholders confirmed that national funding programmes for cultural activity focus on national activity aimed at national or regional priorities. As such, national and regional funding programmes do not promote or support the development of transnational co-operation. Although some participating countries provide co-financing funds to support operators involved in Culture 2000 projects, similar support does not appear to be available for activity outside the scope of Culture 2000.

The Culture 2000 Programme clearly addresses this funding gap and supports, on a modest scale, cultural co-operation activity in Europe. Although many participants have existing links with each other, evidence from the project survey, interviews and case studies suggests that Culture 2000 generates substantial new transnational co-operation in the form of new or improved links between cultural operators. Evidence suggests that Culture 2000 plays a large role in the conceptualisation and implementation of new co-operation projects. As well as funding new activity, many of the partnership links and activities supported through the Programme continue after the end of Culture 2000 funding. In some cases, these links have led to additional, non-Culture 2000, transnational co-operation activity.

**Q3:** The present programme adopts a sectoral approach, distinguishing between artistic or cultural sectors such as literature, the performing arts, the visual arts and cultural heritage. Does this sectoral approach allow the requirements concerning cultural co-operation in Europe to be met?

There is no evidence that the Programme's sectoral approach hinders or stimulates cultural co-operation in Europe in general terms. The cultural fields are used as a means to categorise project activity into broad artistic or cultural sectors, and are widely seen as accurate and appropriate reflections of the cultural sector. Some interviewees commented that the fields are not well suited to multidisciplinary projects, but others argued that projects should be allocated to the different fields on the basis of 'best fit'.

Several interview respondents commented that the annual priorities adopted in selection years 2002-2004 may have discriminated against, or were perceived to discriminate against, good-

quality projects outside the priority cultural fields. Owing to the reduced funds available to non-priority activities, it is probable that several high-quality projects in non-priority fields failed to receive funding as a result. Therefore, the annual priorities could be said to have hindered cultural co-operation in the non-priority fields. However, the limited funds available mean that the managing and selection authorities must set priorities, and it is inevitable that some good-quality co-operation activity cannot be supported.

### *7.1.3 Effectiveness and impact*

#### *Specific evaluation questions on effectiveness*

**Q4:** Does the Programme achieve the objectives specified in the Decision?

Culture 2000 has a set of very broad objectives, and the verbs through which they are enacted ('promote', 'share', 'highlight', 'take into account', 'disseminate', 'foster', 'explicitly recognise' and 'improve access to') mostly do not lend themselves to quantification or the specification of end points.<sup>77</sup> However, in the sense that projects are making contributions to achieving all of them, it can be concluded that the Programme is broadly achieving its objectives.

That said, greater progress appears to have been made against some objectives than others. Thus with regard to the more general 'core' objectives of the Programme, most projects report impacts in terms of improving knowledge of European cultures and heritage, and improving understanding of European cultural diversity. In some of the more specific areas, however, there are indications that progress has been more limited.

Only a small proportion of projects report new or stronger links with cultural operators in non-European countries. Reasons for this include the level of resources available for this type of activity, and the start-up costs involved (greater than working simply within Europe). However, a larger proportion of respondents report that they are contributing to the Action 1 objective to "foster an intercultural dialogue and mutual exchange between European and other cultures", but because of the relatively small number of third country co-operation projects it is probable that the majority of this contribution is through work with non-European cultures within Europe. Overall, cultural co-operation activities with third countries are a minor focus of the Programme. Despite this, a substantial proportion of interviewees appeared to place a greater emphasis on this activity than warranted, given the programme objectives and relative allocation of resources.

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<sup>77</sup> It would not be possible to say that one had achieved any of the objectives in the sense of reaching the end of a journey or process.

Only a minority of projects target people from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. It was argued by some interviewees that the inclusion of objectives relating to culture's role in tackling social and economic disadvantage is questionable on the grounds that it is too ambitious, unachievable with the resources available, and distracts attention from the core objectives of co-operation and exchange. However, there is no evidence that it is a distraction; indeed, co-operation and exchange could provide good-practice examples of the role that culture can play in alleviating social and economic disadvantage.

With regard to the objective of developing new forms of cultural expression, some interviewees asserted that the Programme tends to attract more traditional cultural operators who are more versed in European programme procedures, and who are unlikely to pioneer these new forms. Hence they anticipate that the Programme will be less successful in achieving this objective. However, the development of new forms of cultural expression is identified as one of the key benefits of transnational working, and little evidence could be found that participants are more 'traditional': a wide variety of organisations participate. In any case, longer-established operators are not necessarily less pioneering than others.

**Q5:** Looking at the implementation of the Programme, what have been the major constraints on achievement of the global objectives?

At the level of individual projects, a number of factors have been identified as acting as constraints on the achievement of objectives:

- lack of experience in European projects;
- weak management and communication skills on the part of cultural operators;
- lack of information on potential partners, and of funding to support initial exploratory contact; and
- lack of resources within the cultural sector in general.

Throughout the study, the point of view has been put forward that small cultural operators are disproportionately affected by these factors and therefore face particular difficulties in taking part in Culture 2000, or are put off from even applying in the first place. Were this the case, one would expect small operators to be under-represented in the Programme. But our sample suggests that this is not necessarily the case, although there is no way of comparing the characteristics of our sample with the entire population of cultural operators in Europe.

Several recommendations on how to overcome difficulties faced by project promoters are detailed later in this chapter.

A number of conclusions can also be drawn in respect of the operation of the Programme's financial rules and procedures.

In general, financial monitoring is regarded as sound, and enquiries are widely reported to be dealt with efficiently. Most projects believe that the new 70/30 payments procedure has improved cash flow.

With regard to the effect of the 5% co-financing rule, only 15% of projects thought that it is not a barrier to participation, and 65% said that it is a barrier to small organisations. However, this is not a surprising finding since the effect of this type of factor will only ever be negative,<sup>78</sup> and participants in any programme are likely to complain that the level of financial commitment they are expected to make is some form of hindrance. Further, without a benchmark to compare it against, we cannot know whether the figure of 85% saying that it is a barrier is relatively high or low, and therefore – and more to the point – whether this is a particular issue for the cultural sector. Even if it is a particular problem in the sector, however, there is a strong case for requiring a level of financial input as a means of ensuring a solid level of commitment. Moreover, as our sample shows, small operators – despite whatever effects the 5% rule may have – nonetheless make up a substantial proportion of participants.

**Q6:** Are the present instruments adequate to respond to the needs of cultural co-operation in Europe? Should they be modified or further developed?

The key issue here is whether Culture 2000 has succeeded in achieving the participation of a diverse range of organisations from across the cultural sector, thereby providing the basis for good levels of creative co-operation; it is implicit in the Programme that, to be effective, it needs to involve a wide range of organisations. Our sample indicates that participants cover the full range of artistic fields (although mainly cultural heritage and performing arts, reflecting the high responses from 2003-2004 when these fields were prioritised), and the full range of organisation sizes (from the very small to the very large) and types (private, public, not-for-profit). No one particular type of organisation appears to dominate.

In conclusion, the current programme is an adequate mechanism to meet the needs of cultural co-operation in Europe. Respondents express concerns over the scale and scope of the Programme, but as it currently stands Culture 2000 provides good examples of what transnational co-operation can achieve, and of how to implement co-operation which could be incorporated into national policies and programmes.

However, there are several recommendations that could improve the implementation and impact of the Programme. These are detailed later in this chapter.

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<sup>78</sup> It is similar to asking, for example, whether snowfall is a hindrance to travel.

#### *7.1.4 Efficiency and cost-effectiveness*

##### *Specific evaluation questions on efficiency*

**Q7:** How economically have the various inputs of the Programme (budget and human resources) been converted into outputs (projects and complementary activities) and results?

Overall, the administrative and management resources available for running Culture 2000 appear to be quite modest. On the face of it, this appears to make for efficiency in terms of delivering the Programme: projects are selected and the budget is spent. Certainly, most projects regard management to be efficient at EU level. However, it is our conclusion that more resources targeted in particular areas would actually increase efficiency by raising the quality of project applications and their outputs, and maximising the benefits from the funds spent through enhanced dissemination. For example, additional administrative resources would enable:

- better feedback to be provided to applicants, thus increasing the likelihood of good-quality resubmissions;
- the compilation and maintenance of a definitive and up-to-date contacts database to provide the basis for more systematic communication between the Commission and projects; and
- more active and systematic dissemination activity, including;
  - i) development of Culture 2000 publications highlighting the achievements and activities of the Programme; and
  - ii) enhanced content on the website, supporting a dialogue with projects and dissemination activities.

Another area where efficiency is important is in relation to the Cultural Contact Points, whose prime role is in promoting the Programme and assisting projects in the application process. A majority of survey respondents found CCPs to be helpful or very helpful, although 10% said that they were not helpful and one-third had no opinion. This suggests that the profile of CCPs is variable. Significantly, little evidence was found of CCPs being used as ‘listening posts’ as recommended by the previous interim evaluation.

One measure of the efficiency of CCPs is the number of applications that fail on technicalities rather than on content.<sup>79</sup> Between 2001 and 2004, the proportion of applications rejected for technical reasons declined, but remains high at between a fifth and a quarter of all applications. Improved information on the achievements of projects would help CCPs to more effectively promote eligible activities under the Programme.

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<sup>79</sup> It is important to note that the high proportion of applications rejected for technical reasons may be because applicants did not seek the assistance of their CCP.



The First Interim Evaluation concluded that there was a need for a clearer dissemination strategy targeting core beneficiary groups. The view of the Commission was that it already had a clear dissemination strategy in place, and it was not considered appropriate to target specific beneficiaries (in respect of the principle of a level playing field).

Our analysis reaches the following conclusions. First, there is little evidence of systematic gathering and promotion of project achievements and their proactive dissemination. Although the CUPID project database is available via [www.culture2000.info](http://www.culture2000.info) (though it is not linked from the europa site), it contains only a brief project description of activities rather than a statement of achievements, and does not actively promote outcomes.<sup>80</sup> The new 'Projects in Images' section presents a selection of projects, but information and images are limited and do not showcase achievements effectively.<sup>81</sup>

As noted above, experimental or innovative projects are an important feature of Culture 2000 and need to be backed up by effective dissemination if the benefits of the Programme are to be maximised. There are some significant, high-quality projects that have generated major sustainable cultural activities and which deserve wider promotion so that they might be exploited in other contexts. Consideration should be given to making better use of the website and the potential role that CCPs might play in dissemination, and the associated resource consequences. Specific recommendations on dissemination are made later in this chapter.

**Q8:** How appropriate has the frequency and timing of calls for proposals been?

As noted in the previous interim evaluation, the frequency and timing of calls for proposals raises some difficulties for cultural operators, particularly those involved in annual projects. Calls are generally launched before the summer break, with an October deadline. This makes partnership formation difficult. Contracting takes place just before the summer, which presents a challenge for organising events that would take place over the summer months. However, it is unlikely that there is much flexibility to enable these timings to be altered.

Very few interviewees supported the prioritisation of cultural areas, mainly because it was perceived as discriminating against high-quality projects in other fields.

**Q9:** How efficient has the selection process in the various components of the Programme been?

An efficient selection procedure is important for the overall efficiency of the Programme, and the evaluation examined a number of aspects of it. An important measure of efficiency is the extent to which the selection process is understood by participants. The on-line survey

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<sup>80</sup> It can also be difficult to probe for further details, since some of the links from the site to participants' organisations get blocked by certain internet service providers on the basis of content control.

<sup>81</sup> See: [http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/eac/projects/projects\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/eac/projects/projects_en.html)

indicated that the level of understanding is not particularly high,<sup>82</sup> with only two-thirds of respondents saying that they fully understood the process. That said, nearly three-quarters thought that the information provided about project application and selection was useful, and just under one-quarter very useful. Only one in 10 projects said that information needed improvement. The level of satisfaction with initial information is therefore high, which seems rather paradoxical in light of participants' own self-assessment of their level of understanding.

A number of other aspects of the selection procedure could be improved. First, the level of detail required on the application form varies, and in some cases is hard to complete (e.g. seminars have to be broken down in great detail). Ways of simplifying the application form for Culture 2007 should be considered. It is understood from the Commission that the new SYMMETRY project database should make it possible to simplify the form.

Secondly, feedback to unsuccessful applicants seems to present an unnecessary hurdle by comprising a two-stage process that requires applicants to request further details. While this approach decreases the initial administrative burden on the Commission, it probably also reduces the likelihood of applicants (who are by now familiar with the Programme) from reapplying. The experience of some other programmes is that applicants who have already made an application but have narrowly missed out on selection can be encouraged to improve the quality of their bids next time round, thereby expanding the pool of good-quality bids from which the Commission can select the best. The additional administrative cost may therefore be outweighed by the benefits of improving the feedback. Similarly, successful applicants should be provided with feedback to enable them to maintain the quality of any subsequent applications.

Thirdly, it is reported that CCPs are not always informed about which projects have been successful before the general newsletter is issued, which places them in a difficult position with respect to applicants. However, under Commission rules it is not possible to inform CCPs of the selected projects until all the contracts have been signed, as CCPs are officially external to the Commission. However, as CCPs receive email updates with details on progress towards the signing of all contracts (including estimates for final completion dates), the CCPs should be adequately prepared to refer queries to the Commission.

Finally, some improvements could be made with respect to the role of expert assessors. Assessors can provide more than a score, and this qualitative information should be developed and incorporated into feedback for applicants. The number of experts assessing each application should be reduced from the current level of six or more to a maximum of three. This change would improve quality by reducing the time pressures on the assessment exercise and enabling each expert to take slightly longer on each assessment. There should also be

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<sup>82</sup> In comparison, the majority of respondents to the Grundtvig interim evaluation project survey were "satisfied with the administrative processes, including the support in finding partners, feedback on applications, support/guidance offered by the Technical Assistance Office/National Agency, guidelines for applicants, application form and overall application process". Source: *The Interim Evaluation of the Grundtvig Action of the SOCRATES Programme (2000-06) Covering the Years 2000-02*, p49.

more continuity in the panel of experts, with individuals being appointed on a multi-annual basis.<sup>83</sup> The quality of assessments would improve with the assessors' experience and knowledge of the Programme and its activities. Additionally, assessors should be provided with feedback on their assessments, to facilitate continuous improvements. It should be noted that no issues have been raised questioning the quality of the current assessments – these measures are aimed at further improving the quality.

**Q10:** How efficiently have projects been monitored and evaluated by the implementing bodies?

In general, Culture 2000 adopts a 'light touch' in the area of monitoring and evaluation. Although the Commission's project managers are in regular contact with projects throughout their lifespan, monitoring is informal and limited to final and, in the case of multi-annual projects, interim activity reports. About two-thirds of survey respondents believed monitoring to be efficient, but only 16% to be very efficient, which indicates some room for improvement.

A particularly important feature of this approach is that the quality of project outputs is not effectively monitored. There are no systematic, programme-wide mechanisms for collecting information or assessing results other than final activity reports, where the main focus is on financial accounting and checking that activities undertaken are or were consistent with the submitted application form. This means that information on project results is not systematically available in the public domain, and there is no way of ensuring that high-quality artistic content is produced in the end. Applicants could be required to collect evidence of the quality of their project's artistic content (e.g. through the testimony of critics or experts in the field), and this should form part of the interim and/or final activity reports. This information could be cross-referenced with the qualitative judgements given by the expert assessors in their assessments.

In addition, the reporting of the *number* of outputs should also be improved. A standard set of outputs and output definitions should be established, and projects should report against these at interim and final report stage. Owing to the wide variety of activities possible under the Programme, it would not be possible to design an output framework that captures all possible outputs. Therefore, the framework should contain a flexible 'other output(s)' option for projects to select. We regard this as an important deficiency, and further recommendations on how to improve the ways in which projects and outcomes are monitored are made later in this chapter. Effective monitoring can be an important tool in improving project quality and maximising the impact of the Programme.

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<sup>83</sup> The Commission has highlighted that experts are only permitted to return for two or three years, to ensure a regular turnover of experts for objectivity purposes. However, in practice very few experts do actually return for a second or third year.

**Q11:** To what extent are the budget of the Programme and the resources deployed for its implementation commensurate with its intended outputs and results?

The previous interim evaluation concluded that the scale of the resources available was inadequate in view of the objectives of the Programme, and recommended suppressing the objectives relating to socio-economic disadvantage and/or target groups. The Commission took this into account in setting objectives for Culture 2007.

Our conclusions in relation to this issue are as follows. First, at the most strategic level the question of whether resources are sufficient to achieve the objectives cannot be quantified. The very broad manner in which the objectives are specified means that it is not possible to say in a meaningful way whether a given volume of activity will deliver the intended objectives. This is not problematic, as suggested in the last evaluation, since the objectives as they stand enable a broad range of projects to be funded. Indeed, that conclusion confuses what one wants to achieve (objectives) with how it is intended to achieve them (the actions). Having broad objectives and a comparatively small budget are not necessarily incompatible if small-scale projects are designed to show how to use cultural activities in new and creative ways.

It would be incorrect to try to assess the sufficiency of resources for Culture 2000 in terms of buying a quantum of output – more important is the quality of the outputs and outcomes. As Culture 2000 is not intended to be a high-volume programme, the limited resources are intended to be used in innovative and/or experimental ways to achieve high impact and visibility.<sup>84</sup> In this context, the challenge is not securing high volumes of activity, but putting in place highly effective dissemination mechanisms to enable the benefits of the Programme to be shared and further developed or exploited (valorised).

Perhaps a more important issue is that because the projects are extremely diverse (owing to the great scope allowed by the objectives), a coherent set (or coherent sets) of inter-related projects have not been developed which would give the Programme critical impact or momentum. Given the modest budget available, it is not possible for Culture 2000 or Culture 2007 to achieve critical impact through sheer volume or scale of project activity. Rather, efforts to disseminate the activities and achievements of the Programme, generating greater visibility, should be intensified. Improved dissemination activity highlighting good-quality outcomes and achievements of projects funded should enable the Commission to achieve ‘critical impact’.

There are also two important subsidiary issues with regard to resource sufficiency. First, there is a question mark over the adequacy of resources for CCPs, especially in larger countries, where the task before them seems greater despite the allocation of funding on the basis of population. Given the suggestions and recommendations made later in this chapter concerning potential enhancements to the role of CCPs and additional administrative tasks, a review of the level and distribution of administrative resources and tasks will be required.

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<sup>84</sup> This point was explicitly made in interviews with members of Unit C-1.

Secondly, there is a widespread view that cultural operators from New Member States are likely to suffer from lack of resources to a much greater extent than others. Although we could not quantify this assertion, the relative cost of transnational activity in terms of travel and accommodation may be higher for these operators. To counter this problem, many participating countries have established co-financing support for participants. However, as the funding situation for cultural operators in each participating country varies, it is likely that operators in the EU15 also encounter funding problems. National co-financing arrangements could help to remove barriers to participation posed by funding but, as national circumstances vary, it would not be appropriate to oblige national administrations to provide co-financing. In this instance, the subsidiarity principle should be followed, allowing national administrations to implement a system most appropriate to their own needs.

#### *7.1.5 Utility, added value and sustainability*

##### *Specific evaluation questions on utility and sustainability*

**Q12:** To what extent has the Programme been of benefit to the organisations involved?

There is evidence for a range of benefits to organisations and individuals involved in Culture 2000, including: gaining broader experience in the cultural field, and in participating in European projects; increased professionalism because of the management skills needed; improved organisational and individual capacity; and increased dialogue among cultural actors.

A number of benefits of transnationality have been identified. As noted in the preceding subsection, bringing together partners from different backgrounds and cultures appears to have provided a stimulus for the conceptualisation of projects, and to have encouraged new forms of cultural expression. Other benefits include the development of new skills and experiences which can be a springboard for further collaboration and the sharing of knowledge, for example among experts in specialist subjects.

These benefits and the European dimension of the Programme have given rise to a range of added values, including: strengthened cultural links between countries; increased perception of European identity; and better integration of the New Member States.

**Q13:** To what extent could the positive changes or trends induced by the Programme be expected to last if it were terminated?

Culture 2000 has clearly generated significant additionality: most survey respondents indicated that they would not have started without the Programme, but perhaps even more significantly half would not even have conceptualised their project. The Programme has therefore been important in catalysing ideas. It is likely that this is closely related to the fact that the Programme has also been instrumental in forging many new collaborations – one in five projects reported that they had never worked with any of their project partners before, and a further half reported that they had worked with only some of them. Indeed, the simple

fact of collaboration is regarded by projects as an important effect of the Programme, with one in four projects reporting new links and one in three stronger links with cultural operators in other countries as important impacts. Many respondents to the survey also indicated that they would continue their co-operation activities in some way.

Culture 2000 registers high levels of potential sustainability.<sup>85</sup> Nearly two-thirds of survey respondents indicated that they would continue the links they had formed with partners – evidence that Culture 2000 is creating durable partnerships rather than providing the means for organisations to bring together loose collections of activities just to secure funding. Two-thirds of projects also indicated that they would continue their activities after funding came to an end.

If terminated, the evidence suggests that significant activities or links already stimulated by the Programme would continue in some form.

**Q14:** Would another kind of action or policy instrument have been more useful to support cultural co-operation in Europe?

It is unlikely that any other instrument would have been any more useful than Culture 2000 in promoting cultural co-operation. The breadth of the objectives affords broad scope to participants, while the focus on experimentation and innovation encourages creativity and new forms of cultural expression. The alternatives would be a more targeted programme, a focus on a high throughput of activities or participants, or a mobility programme funding the exchange of individuals. Both targeting and an emphasis on volume would seem inappropriate in the cultural field at the present time, while an individual mobility programme would not generate the same level of cultural cross-fertilisation.

**Q15:** To what extent has the principle of subsidiarity been respected? In other words, what type of synergies have been developed with the national/regional policies of support for cultural co-operation in Europe?

Synergies with national/regional cultural policies appear limited. Many interviewees stressed that Culture 2000 is the only mechanism for supporting transnational co-operation projects, as their national/regional authorities tend to focus on their respective domestic priorities.

However, as Culture 2000 is filling a gap, there is little scope for duplication of activities that are already supported elsewhere. In addition, some participating countries have established co-financing initiatives to support cultural operators involved in the Programme, and others have allocated additional resources to their CCPs to support and expand their operations.

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<sup>85</sup> It has not been possible to test for actual sustainability.

## **7.2 Recommendations**

### *7.2.1 Intervention logic*

There are no recommendations under this heading.

### *7.2.2 Relevance*

The Programme currently allocates funds to projects according to their action and cultural sector by setting broad quotas of projects to be funded under each cultural field and action. The Commission has indicated that the quotas are a result of negotiations among the Member States in 1999,<sup>86</sup> but this point is not explicit in programme documentation available to applicants. It is recommended that the Commission should:

- **clearly state the allocation of funding available under each cultural field and action in the annual call for applications, in order to enhance transparency in this aspect of the selection process.**

The current approach of obliging applicants to select a single artistic field does not always allow them to accurately reflect their activities, which may be multidisciplinary in nature. The lack of clear definitions of each artistic field can also make it difficult for applicants to accurately categorise their projects. As the proposal for the new Culture 2007 Programme does not currently intend to use artistic fields, these perceived problems may be resolved. However, should artistic fields be retained in, or return to, the next schedule of cultural programmes, it is recommended that the Commission should:

- **develop broad definitions of each artistic field to enable applicants to accurately categorise their projects; and**
- **change programme administrative structures, such as the application form, to allow applicants to select a main artistic field and relevant minor fields as appropriate.**

### *7.2.3 Effectiveness and impact*

At present, data on outputs and outcomes is not systematically collected or reported, and although it is possible to say whether the Programme has met its broad objectives, it is not possible to quantify the extent to which it has done so.

The content and quality of the narrative portion of projects' interim and final reports are highly variable. The Commission's focus on the financial portion of interim and final reports

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<sup>86</sup> See Joint Text approved by the Conciliation Committee provided for in Article 251(4) of the EC Treaty, DECISION No./99/EC OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of establishing the Culture 2000 Programme, PE-CONS 3638/99. This document specifies budget allocations to different artistic fields: music, art, performances (35%); books, reading and translation (11%); and cultural heritage (34%).

is to the detriment of potentially rich qualitative and quantitative material available in the project narratives. Therefore, it is recommended that the Commission should:

- **develop and adopt a standardised template for interim and final project reports.** The template should include key headings such as project implementation and management, evaluation, dissemination, monitoring, partnership working/co-operation, problems encountered and overcome, ‘hard’ outputs and ‘soft’ outputs;
- **adopt a set of key performance indicators for each programme and action objective** against which the extent and impact of the Programme can be measured. The KPIs should be clearly defined, and project promoters should be obliged to report on them. However, as the object of the Culture 2000 Programme is not to produce ‘hard’ outputs, target numbers should not be attached to the KPIs, and the number of KPI outputs should not be included as an assessable feature in the expert evaluations of applications. Example indicators are shown in Annex 12.

The programme-level dissemination strategy is unclear. Although activity does take place, the Commission’s dissemination activity could be improved. A clearer focus would enable the Culture Unit to focus resources on appropriate high-visibility activities, and would support attempts to achieve critical impact. It is recommended that:

- **a programme dissemination strategy be developed and published.** The strategy should clearly define an objective or set of objectives, for example to promote the achievements of the Programme to key stakeholders, including (but not limited to) government cultural ministries/departments, cultural operators and their representative umbrella bodies, or to attract potential applicants. The strategy should also include clear activities which are intended to meet the objectives, for example publication of the Culture 2000 newsletter, articles in cultural sector publications, the development and maintenance of the Culture 2000 webpages, and organisation of or attendance at conferences and seminars. The CCPs should be encouraged to assist in the design and delivery of the dissemination strategy.

The Commission should assist projects in searching for suitable partners with whom to develop and submit co-operation project applications. Therefore it is recommended that the Commission should:

- **develop an on-line, searchable, partner-matching database to enable cultural operators to search for potential partners and to submit their own organisational details and interests; and**
- **provide links to similar partner-matching databases provided by CCPs from the Culture 2000 webpages.**

It has been suggested by stakeholders in interviews that some cultural operators, and small operators in particular, struggle to become involved as project leaders or co-organisers because of the requirements of the 5% rule. Many survey respondents also felt that the rule



poses a barrier to participation, although a large proportion of survey respondents were small operators themselves. It is likely that the rule does pose a barrier to some organisations, but this effect must be balanced with the rule's intention – to ensure the commitment of cultural operators involved in the Programme as key project partners. Some participating countries have provided co-financing funds to assist operators involved in Culture 2000, and this has undoubtedly assisted participants constrained by the 5% rule. Owing to the limited funds available to the Programme, it would appear impractical to allocate additional funds to small operators or to exempt them from the 5% rule; national co-financing for participants may be the most suitable means of supporting their involvement in the Programme.

#### *7.2.4 Efficiency and cost-effectiveness*

The current application processing system takes too long and should be considerably shortened. This does not appear to be because of any greater inherent complexity with the application process but, rather, because of a lack of administrative resources at times of high workloads. Therefore, it is recommended that the Commission should:

- **increase the short-term staffing levels of the BAT (Technical Assistance Bureau) to enable applications to be processed and checked for basic eligibility more quickly than the current October to mid-January timescale.** This could be performed by the recruitment of temporary staff, temporary reallocation of staff within the Commission, or the appointment of an external contractor.

The timing of project start dates has proved problematic for annual projects, which struggle to develop and implement activities in the key summer season. By reducing the time taken on basic eligibility checking, the Commission could bring project start dates forward, enabling projects to plan activity in time for the summer season. Additionally, a three-month window during which projects must start could be established, to allow projects flexibility to set a start date most appropriate for them, on the condition that they complete their activities within one to three years as appropriate. This approach would allow flexibility for project promoters as well as conforming to the requirements of the New Financial Regulations, which specify that all projects/contracts must have a specified start and end date.<sup>87</sup> This may also assist the Commission by spreading the workload associated with project start-up and implementation over the same three-month period. Therefore it is recommended that on reducing the length of the selection process the Commission should:

- **bring forward the start date of projects and implement a flexible project start window, or if this is not possible under current legislative arrangements, the potential for doing so in future programmes should be explored.**

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<sup>87</sup> See [http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/eac/how\\_particip2000/finan\\_rules/vade\\_mecum\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/eac/how_particip2000/finan_rules/vade_mecum_en.html) for more details.

Means of simplifying the application form for applicants should be explored. It is understood from the Commission that the new SYMMETRY project database should make it possible to simplify the form. It is therefore recommended that the Commission should:

- **consider ways of simplifying the application form for Culture 2007.** For example, the level of detail required on the application form varies and in some cases is hard to complete (e.g. seminars have to be broken down in great detail).

Better use should be made of the time and expertise of the national cultural experts by reducing the number of times each application is assessed. The additional time made available to the experts through this saving should be used to improve the quality of the assessment by introducing a short narrative that justifies the scores given and summarises the strengths and weaknesses of the application. This narrative should be incorporated into feedback to the applicant. It is recommended that the Commission should:

- **limit the number of times each application is assessed** to two in-depth assessments, followed by a shorter 'quality check' to verify the assessors' scores and resolve anomalies. Alternatively, three in-depth assessments could be undertaken;
- **implement a briefing day for the expert evaluators before or during the application assessment week in Brussels.** Prior to this briefing day, experts should be presented with a guide to undertaking assessments setting out clearly what they are required to do, including details of the scoring framework and guidance on how to write the summary feedback to applicants section. During the briefing day, experts should undertake and discuss an example assessment of a previous successful and an unsuccessful application.

Many experts do not return in following years, meaning that the assessment expertise and knowledge of the Programme is largely lost each year. The high turnover of experts negates available potential for improvements in efficiency and quality. Therefore, it is recommended that the Commission should:

- **gather feedback from national authorities in order to understand why experts do not often return in subsequent years and to improve the assessment process;**
- **retain experts on a multi-annual basis where possible.** Experts could be appointed on an initial one-year basis, with annual extensions awarded subject to satisfactory performance. Alternatively, they could be appointed to two-year terms, subject to satisfactory performance. In this instance, it would be prudent to stagger the experts' appointments to ensure a mix of first and second-year experts;
- **continue to provide experts with general feedback on the quality of their work at the end of the assessment week,** to enable them to build on strengths and address perceived weaknesses in order to improve their contribution in subsequent years. In addition, **the Commission should ensure that the work of each expert is adequate; if necessary, under-performing experts should be removed from subsequent selection processes.**

Aside from the two interim evaluations, the Commission does not systematically collect and analyse the views of project participants on the relevance and implementation of the Programme. It is recommended that the Commission should:

- **ask all project leaders to complete and submit a short questionnaire with their interim and final report.** The questionnaire should ask for comments on the application process, including the service and performance of CCPs and the management of the Programme (such as the assistance of the Commission’s project managers, the Commission’s website and programme documentation). **A similar questionnaire could also be sent to unsuccessful applicants with their feedback** (see below).

The current system of providing feedback to applicants is inefficient, as applicants have to specifically request feedback in order to receive it, thereby occupying the staffing resource of the Culture Unit. It is also ineffective, as applicants are firstly given their overall score, followed by a breakdown of their score after a further request for information. This fulfils the requirements set out in Council Regulation No. 1605/2002, governing the financial regulations applicable to Culture 2000, which specifies that the authorising officer shall:

“... inform applicants in writing of the decision on their application. If the grant requested is not awarded, the institution shall give the reasons for the rejection of the application, with reference in particular to the selection and award criteria already announced.”<sup>88</sup>

However, the lack of qualitative detail explaining the scores means that the information is of little use to applicants and does not enable them to develop an improved application for future submission. Therefore, it is recommended that the Commission should:

- **provide every applicant with detailed written feedback on their application, along with an official letter stating the outcome of their application.** The feedback should include the applicant’s overall score, a breakdown of the score and a brief narrative explaining the application’s strengths and weaknesses.

#### *7.2.5 Utility, added value and sustainability*

A key element of the Programme, as expressed in the establishing Decision, is to add value to and complement national activity. At present, a clear overview of national cultural policies and activities is not available, although the CCPs are contractually required to provide information on relevant developments in their countries. However, as this information is not readily available, it is difficult to assess the added value and complementarity of the Programme with national initiatives. Therefore, it is recommended that:

- **the Commission should provide on the Culture webpages short summaries on the state of cultural policy and activity in each participating country, highlighting the**
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<sup>88</sup> Official Journal of the European Communities (2002), article 116, paragraph 3.

**complementarity of national policy with the Culture 2000 Programme and its successor.** These summaries should be developed and updated on a regular basis, either quarterly or biannually, by appropriate bodies; for example, this task could be awarded to the CCPs or the Management Committee Members, along with the appropriate resources to undertake it.

### ***7.3 Resourcing the recommended activity***

Many of the recommendations detailed above will require the reallocation of resources within the Programme.

The analysis of the balance of allocated expenditure from 2000-2004 indicates that less has been spent on programme administration than envisaged and more has been spent on projects. Therefore, within Decision 508/2000/EC there exists the scope to increase the balance of funds allocated to EC administration at programme level. This would necessarily require a reduction in the amount of funding available to projects, but as the focus is on the **quality** rather than the **quantity** of activity, this should be acceptable. Indeed, it may be necessary to do so in order to conform to the spending guidelines in Decision 508/2000/EC.

The average value of grants awarded to Action 2 projects over the period 2000-2004 was approximately €67,000. By funding two fewer multi-annual projects over a seven-year programming period, an additional €1.334m could be allocated to programme administration.

Under the terms of the Decision, the proportion of funding available for administration is fixed at around 10% of the total programme budget. Therefore, depending on the availability of funds, there should be scope to vary the balance of funds allocated to the CCPs and Commission in exchange for more (or fewer) tasks. CCP resources could also be improved if national administrations commit greater resources to them, as some have already done.

Finally, efficiency savings could be used to resource and implement some of the changes. In particular, altering the number of assessments undertaken by each expert would allow efficiency savings.