

Fonds Roberto Cimetta



Study on Artistic and Cultural Professional Profiles
in non-European Mediterranean Countries

Final Report

Study realized with the support of :

ECF (European Cultural Foundation)

Council of Europe

UNESCO

Research Assistant : Elena Di Federico

Senior Researcher: Judith Neisse

December 2007

List of Acronyms

ACAF	Alexandria Contemporary Art Forum
ACE	Arts Council of Egypt
AICA	International Association of Art Critics
ALF	Anna Lindh Foundation
BMDA	Moroccan Copyright Office
CCM	Moroccan Cinema Centre
CE	European Commission
CIC	Contemporary Image Collective
CMA	Moroccan Arts Coalition
CNIA	Compagnie Nordafricaine et Intercontinentale d'Assurances
CPR	Regional Education Centre
ICD	Intercultural Dialogue
EHESS	School for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences
ENACT	National School for Circus Arts
ESAC	Higher Institute of Audiovisual and Film Studies
ESC	European Council of Artists
ETUF	Egyptian Trade Union Federation
FITU	International University Theatre Festival
FRC	Roberto Cimetta Fund
INA	National Architecture Institute
ISAD	Higher Institute for Performing Arts
ISADAC	Higher Institute for Performing Arts and Cultural Facilitation
ITA	Institute of Applied Techniques
ONC	Syrian National Cinema Organisation
ONDA	National Office of Artistic Distribution
ONOV	National Office of University Welfare Works
OTPDA	Tunisian Organism for the Protection of Authors' Rights
SACERAU	The Arab Republic of Egypt Society of Authors, Composers and Editors
TNT	National Theatre of Tunis
EU	European Union
YATF	Young Arab Theater Fund

General Context

The Study on Arts and Cultural Professionals' Profiles in non-European Mediterranean Countries focuses on legal and social measures which concern the work of southern Mediterranean artists. It also examines the process of social recognition and the role of mobility in the recognition of the artist and the dialogue between cultures.

This study approaches several analytical fields concerning artistic and cultural creation in the Mediterranean. In doing so, it aims to formulate strategic recommendations for the attention of international funders and particularly for the European Commission, in the perspective of regional and Euro-Mediterranean actions.

The results of this research should also be presented to Ministers of Culture at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference which will take place in Spring 2008.

Although generally overlooked, the artist plays an increasingly important role in the human and cultural development of the societies in the south of the Mediterranean, and also in terms of cultural diversity.

The paucity of factual data regarding artists and their working and living conditions¹ hampers us from taking into account the conditions which are necessary for their work to flourish, as well as the political, economic and social guarantees to which they have rights as cultural workers and creators.

This study is a necessity, faced with:

- the lack of quantitative and qualitative data on the arts sector and mobility in the cultural sector, in the Southern Mediterranean
- the nature of the debate about artistic creation and mobility in the region
- the lack of reflection and solid analysis on this subject.

For these reasons the Roberto Cimetta Fund, in collaboration with its partners (UNESCO, the Council of Europe, the Anna Lindh Foundation and the European Cultural Foundation) launched a study on "Arts and Cultural Professionals' Profiles in non-European Mediterranean Countries". This research aims to define the types of beneficiaries of potential tools designed to encourage artistic creation and artistic mobility, as well as the means necessary to identify those tools.

Objectives and Analytical Elements

The study on professional 'profiles' in the arts sector aims to gather, complete and compare information concerning contemporary artistic creation in various Mediterranean partner countries (contemporary performing arts: dance, theatre, circus; contemporary visual arts: photography, video, cinema). The work is based on an evaluation of the professional recognition of artists in four countries around the Mediterranean : Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt and Syria.

By 'artist', we mean artists supported by or attached to public structures (national theatres, opera, choreographic centres...) and independent artists in the private sector who are not attached to any structure and thus are difficult to identify.

Following the dynamic launched by the UNESCO World Observatory on the Social Status of the Artist, this study is structured around the following problematics:

¹ The only research undertaken is that of UNESCO on 3 Arab countries, see http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=32692&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html
December 2007

- **legal recognition** of professionals in the arts and culture sector - to analyse the legal contexts which regulate the arts sector in the non-European countries of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership
- **public recognition** of professionals in the artistic and cultural sector - to analyse encouragement actions put into place by policies in service of creation and artists
- **social recognition** of professionals in the arts and cultural sector - focusing on an analysis of the place in civil society given to artists
- **role of mobility in the process of recognition** - increasingly, the mobility of professionals is considered as an indispensable step in the development of the professional careers of artists in the region. It is this dimension of mobility - in the development of artistic careers - that the study analyses.
- **contribution by the arts sector and of arts and cultural mobility to intercultural dialogue** - through exchanges in the framework of mobility which take place from one side of the Mediterranean to the other, artists can contribute to the dialogue between cultures. Linking with the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue, this study identifies and evaluates the contribution of artistic mobility to the dialogue of cultures.

Conclusions and final recommendations are presented following the problematics approached.

The method employed in the framework of the study uses: research (national legislation, national cultural strategies, annual reports, budgets, catalogues etc.); site visits to cultural operators in the surveyed countries; face to face interviews with stakeholders. The study is based on data gathered from approximately 90 individuals. The research sample to which we have had access allows us to have a valid basis for the conclusions and recommendations. (The sample is balanced in terms of the diversity of profiles and the range of people questioned : policy maker; political manager and administrator; individual artist; manager of public, municipal and private cultural space; art critic; cultural journalist; director of a European cultural institute; cultural programme officer at the European Commission Delegation; project leader of a cultural foundation or cultural enterprise etc.)

Conclusions and Recommendations

The present study is the first research of its type undertaken in the non-European Mediterranean countries. The fields explored and the data collected with the help of the people and institutions encountered, allow us to make an initial diagnosis of the living and working conditions - political, social and artistic - of artists. This process merits being deepened and extended to other Mediterranean countries in order to achieve the objective of serving as an action at the Euro-Mediterranean level in support of artists, their mobility and the circulation of their work.

Legal Recognition

On-the-ground analysis in the study's four countries provides data on legislation with respect to the social statute of the artist, the tools and the processes of legal recognition as well as working conditions. On the whole, artistic creation activities are exercised in conditions distinctly more precarious than the other liberal professions (such as doctors, lawyers etc.). This is linked partly to the regulatory and judicial framework which is still relatively weak. Note that this observation does not apply to artists who are civil servants.

This fragility is conditioned by various factors: first of all by the lack of political and social consideration accorded to the arts sector, then by the stifling weight of the State and by the elementary state of certain legislation concerning artists. However, two countries in the study (Morocco and Tunisia), show progress regarding the recommendation of UNESCO² which invites UNESCO Member States to adopt legislation which aims to improve conditions for artists and their participation in the cultural life and development of their country. It is important for these countries to continue this dynamic by improving the juridical framework, and important that the others (Egypt, Syria) initiate actions which lead in this direction

Recommendation 1

To encourage those countries which have chosen to follow UNESCO's recommendations on the statute of the artist (Morocco, Tunisia) to continue this dynamic and to **invest in the improvement** of the "conditions of social security, of work and taxation of artists, whether employed or independent" as UNESCO states³

To create mechanisms for transferring and **sharing experiences** between the different countries in terms of legislative measures which define and improve the statute of the artist.

The legal nature of artists' working contracts (employee, free lance, suspension of rights etc.) provides indicators about the state of advancement and efficiency of laws concerning artists' work.

Often, artists work without contracts or, when they do have contracts, the contracts are not respected. Artists are employed in different ways (regular employee, civil servant, author's contract or as an amateur). This diversity responds to the situation that artists cannot live from their work. This diversity of contracts also allows civil servants with low wages to do other jobs There are no standard contracts (standard contracts for the artistic field, standard conditions of remuneration, tax declaration obligations etc.). When work contracts are in default, it is impossible to apply labour laws and other legislation (authors' rights etc.) The law relative to **Copyright and related rights** has been adopted in the four studied countries. However, few artists know their rights. Thus it is important to base relations between artists and their employers (the State, a cultural enterprise, a cultural space...) on juridical measures and on a deontological respect for the profession.

Beyond the differences between the four countries regarding the application of specific legislation for artists, a common problem concerns the communication between, on the one hand the institutional and political level, and on the other hand, the artists and cultural operators. The contradictory responses of artists to diverse questions in the study prove that they sometimes do not know their laws, rights and responsibilities.

Recommendation 2

To encourage professional artists' organisations to create monitoring systems to ensure the minimum framework established by the law regarding the working conditions of artists (labour laws, statute of the artist, authors' rights).

To reinforce the application of the law concerning author's rights and to inform artists of their rights.

² http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13138&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html, Recommendation relative to the condition of the artist, 1980

³ idem

Public Recognition

In the countries covered by the study, the majority of cultural actors questioned (institutional and non-institutional) lament the absence of "real" cultural policies which are not limited solely to financial and administrative management of cultural actions but which develop an overall vision encouraging reflection, and which advocate the engagement of culture within the fabric of society. The study's respondents call for policies which will accelerate cultural democratisation, approach the relation between the State and other actors (the private sector) and take into account problems generated by the market economy and globalisation.

Recommendation 3

To introduce cultural policies which are not limited to mere budgetary and administrative management but which give a privileged place to reflection, long term strategic planning and the structuring and professionalisation of the arts sector, complementing cultural action itself. The capacity of policy makers in the countries should be reinforced (strategic planning, collection of data, research and analysis, prospective approach...)

Public policies in the four countries prioritise events (especially festivals), infrastructures (museums, galleries, cultural centres, opera, public theatres) and financial support in the form of State aid to certain artistic disciplines (film, theatre, traditional Arab or classical music). Very often State cultural structures are managed by civil servants who are also artists and lack management and communication skills and competences. This structural deficiency handicaps the capacity of these structures and institutional spaces to attract other types of public. It also makes it more difficult to transform a simple presentation space to one of creation and creativity, and to propose other forms of artistic mediation.

Recommendation 4

To support public cultural spaces which need reinforcement in terms of management, planning, communication, production... They could also become more attractive for a public which lacks artistic awareness and education, by transforming themselves into real places of cultural mediation and places which encourage artistic creation.

Professional training is offered particularly in the public sector and in only rare cases does one see the emergence of parallel structures in the private sector. The State manages training structures principally for **visual arts, fine arts, theatre, film and audiovisual, music and dance**. In general, local artists and students suffer from a lack of direct contact with international contemporary creation and foreign works of art. This problem is especially present in the Mashrek countries and can be explained in several ways: **lack of translation** of books and syllabi into Arabic; the **mentality** of teachers in art schools, **few opportunities for contact** with foreign artists. The lack of structure in the training weakens the arts system in general. This concerns all the countries except Tunisia where training in the different arts careers is more structured.

State government student bursaries are given either for social reasons or, with the help of international sources of funding, to finance internships abroad. A criticism can be made regarding procedural transparency and selection criteria for the artists sent abroad.

Recommendation 5

To improve the quality of professional training, especially the quality of trainers whose weaknesses are in part linked to the use of old fashioned methods, the lack of teachers' qualification, the lack of updated educational content, and the religious influence of the environment. Support is necessary for reinforcing the capacities of trainers (educational capacities, management of the training structures, editing of educational materials etc.).

The institutions, and especially foreign cultural institutes, should **make public** the criteria used to select artists for study bursaries abroad.

Insofar as an artist or a company does not deviate from the institutional circuit (training, union membership etc.), they can benefit from the recognition of the public sector and consequently from Government support. On the other hand, structures and independent artists who do not have diplomas from State schools or who are not members of a union cannot access public funding. This is less problematic in Morocco and Tunisia where Government support funds are accessible : in Morocco following selection by a committee, and in Tunisia after selection by a commission (which is also responsible for censorship).

Recommendation 6

To **allow access to State support for independent artists and structures**, where State support dominates the arts sector (Egypt, Syria and to a certain degree Tunisia). It is necessary to re-establish a degree of **confidence** and of **collaboration** between **institutional and independent levels**, considering that the contribution of independent cultural actors is indispensable for cultural development and for maintaining cultural diversity. It is also necessary to envisage solutions which surpass limits imposed by a centralist (and all-powerful) system and to develop spaces (physical et intellectual) which facilitate some forms of independence.

Social Recognition

The absence of coherent legal recognition regarding careers in the arts (social statute, social rights, fiscal rights, authors' rights) is reflected in the manner in which society perceives artists. This varies in the four countries depending on the artistic discipline, the social class, fame or the star system. When not speaking about stars, especially in film or music, artists receive different degrees of consideration – they may be perceived as subversive, as intellectuals, as entertainers, indeed as something nearer to clowns or comedians.

The Role of Artists in the development of society is not recognised. Either they are exploited in order to transmit or support a certain ideology (institutional), e.g. the construction of a national identity, ambassadors of the country etc. , or it is their market value which is considered (private sector) especially in film, music and sometimes visual arts. This market consideration is demonstrated in the field of publicity where well-known artists are used in order to sell different products. The new landscape of television and satellite channels only serves to accentuate this phenomena.

Recommendation 7

To **improve the recognition of the artist**, not as animator or star, but as a creator and the representative of the artistic profession, by means of education, awareness raising and cultural mediation, all of this reinforced by adequate legislation.

The difficulty (more or less of a formality according to the country) in **forming associations**, as well as policies which discourage independent initiatives, produces a rather weak civil society in terms of culture (the private or associative sector). Outside of the 'stars', the unifying role of art and culture in the expression of society's cultural diversity (different ethnic groups, languages, religions, social classes, urban and rural, etc.) is ignored. This is reflected by the state of the public funds dedicated to the arts but equally by the implication of the **private sector** as sponsor or investor. Only in Morocco does the private sector (banks, financial groups, the telecommunication sector etc.) invest in the arts sector in any significant way (In Tunisia, government 'incentives' (laws which favour the creation of cultural enterprises) have not shown the desired results regarding the implication of the private sector.

Another form of the 'private' exists: artists, companies, and independent spaces, all those who are outside of the State circuits in terms of their professional and life choices. This includes those who ask questions to their society regarding its progress; those who invite more diverse and expanded reflection; those who struggle to conceive of the arts field as a space for freedom and creation. Sometimes, as in Morocco, the implication of the private sector is salutary - it complements the State budgets, introduces the notion of the cultural economy, supports certain artistic disciplines overlooked by the State (such as video), offers space to independent artists and proposes forms of mediation, even if these are still limited to a certain public. Festivals, although sometimes of lesser quality, are another form of mediation which especially attracts youth and the more modest social classes.

Recommendation 8

To consider the private sector as an important ally of the public sector because it can intervene where the government lacks the competence or means to do so. It is necessary to create alliances and to propose incentives, all the while ensuring that aesthetic and artistic criteria are maintained.

In order to guarantee plurality and diversity, to propose forms of support for the independent sector, currently obliged to function as a private enterprise. (Tunisia, Egypt, Syria)

The social recognition of the artists also is also linked to their involvement in social issues. An artist is not obliged to be involved in the social field nor to be politically engaged in his/her country – this is a personal choice. On the other hand, artists who try to engage with the social sphere are met with obstacles: bureaucratic problems, lack of support, strict rules, lack of initiative on the part of the structures' Directors, lack of the public's awareness. The idea that art and citizenship are contradictory concepts is harboured by both artists and politicians. Rare are those artists who, led by a desire to enlarge their public and their wish to be involved in the life of their society, become engaged in work going beyond their artistic research to the social dimension. When they do, they work with socially or culturally excluded groups, often at the request of an association, on a one-off basis. Society's connection to art is not instantaneous. It requires mediation, especially that by the artists. Mediation is especially needed when and where the education system does not take charge of it. Teamed with education, it allows the creation of a real link, sometimes long-term, between the artist and his/her public. However, in different degrees in the four countries, forms of mediation and artistic education are weak, lack professional structures and suffer from lack of skills in mediation.

Recommendation 9

As an urgency, to put into place mechanisms of artistic and cultural mediation necessary to create the link between artistic creation and a public which is unaware of it. This should be done regardless of the character of the entity or the creator (institutional or independent). It is advised to put into place those forms of mediation in which artists themselves participate.

The Role of Mobility in the Process of Recognition

The mobility of an artist can be understood from different angles: from one working statute to another, from one artistic sector to another, according to geography, inside a country or outside. Conditions which force the artist to be more flexible or mobile are in the nature of the artistic work, the way in which the sector is structured and the dynamics of globalisation. This study bases itself particularly on geographic mobility - its forms: (bilateral, regional or international); barriers and solutions; the impact of the mobility (professional, personal, the artist's image etc.) and mobility as a part of international cooperation projects.

In one very widespread vision of mobility, two major dynamics exist: bilateral mobility - that of the State, which organises mobility within the framework of cultural agreements with target countries (Arab or European), and regional and multilateral mobility - that of individuals (artists), supported especially by non governmental funders. There is one common element in all of the interviews, it is the **importance of the mobility** of artists and cultural operators.

Concerning exchange with Europe it is important to aim for a balance which would allow us to get beyond the current North-South logic. Amongst the possible forms of mobility, bilateral exchanges with the European countries are the most common (especially with France, Spain, Belgium and Germany, Italy and Switzerland), for different reasons: links with the colonial past, funds offered by the host country, the highly professional structure in the arts sector (especially in France) which allows for apprenticeships, offers of residencies and links with the immigrant community in the host country. This observation confirms the persistence of the classical, bilateral, direction of circulation.

A large number of people in the South lament the weakness of **South-South mobility**, also influenced by visa problems, lack of funds, rivalry between some Arab countries, structural shortcomings in the local professional and artistic landscape including the lack of financing frameworks (institutional cooperation)⁴...

Recommendation 10

Mobility is an **indispensable reality** for artists. **Mobility routes remain traditional** (France-Morocco etc.). It is necessary to find means to encourage circulation towards other countries, including **South – South** mobility. A more sustained effort should be made regarding Syria which benefits from very little international mobility.

The study identifies three major obstacles to international mobility: **formalities** (visas, circulation of artistic works), **finances** (little money for culture in the South either on the public side, or on the private side; the dominance of international funds; the near-absence of regional funds; lack of finance for the mobility of artistic companies), the **professional structuring of the sector** (quality of the artists; of artistic products; access to information and to funders etc.).

It is surprising to note that visa problems do not present the only obstacle, as is often suggested by some actors in the associative and political fields. The precariousness and poverty of independent artists is sometimes a serious barrier. It is possible to confirm that even if visa problems are resolved, economic problems would limit the mobility of artists in the South. To get beyond these barriers, it is necessary to develop an approach which is integrated with political and economic solutions and with those related to the professional structuring of the arts field.

Recommendation 11

In order to surmount the barriers to mobility, to propose an **integrated approach** which works on administrative formalities, economic questions and structural shortcomings. In this context, pertinent solutions should be proposed (a regional fund for mobility, resource centres for mobility etc.).

To invent **solutions for visa problems**: a cultural passport reserved for culture professionals, long-duration visas for artists, cultural services within consular services, quotas for artists' visas etc.

The circulation of artistic works is hampered by structural obstacles: heavy bureaucracy; necessity of obtaining permits and authorisations; taxes to pay (for the works which have circulated to clear customs); censorship of certain artistic products... For the performing arts it is often a question of the mobility of the scenery and props. Laws which organise the circulation of works are particularly restrictive and not well-known by the profession. In addition, the costs associated with insuring artistic objects strongly limit their circulation.

Recommendation 12

To propose services of advice and accompaniment for the circulation of artistic works.

Intercultural Dialogue: the Contribution of the Arts Sector and of Arts and Cultural Mobility

The study uncovers a certain unease concerning intercultural dialogue and its monopoly by the institutional level. The notion of intercultural dialogue is perceived by study respondents as a Western perspective imposed on artists, which does not really relate directly to their competence, but rather responds to the needs of Europeans (problems related to terrorism, immigration, post-colonialism etc)

The study brings out two elements directly related to intercultural dialogue:

⁴ These elements once again confirm the conclusions of the **Mobility Assises** in Fes, conference report, p.7
December 2007

The need to listen: The North has developed a vision of the arts field in the South via those cultural operators who are passed on to them by the institutions and who are not part of the independent scene. Thus a partial and biased perception is created. Such visible artists have no real mobility problems. It is necessary to encourage direct interchange and contact between artists and cultural operators of the North and South, without the intermediary of the State. This will result in improving reciprocal knowledge and reducing prejudices (which also exist on the professional level). Support for this type of direct cooperation between artists and professionals can add artistic and aesthetic points of view to the intercultural dialogue even when focusing on 'political' subjects (religion, democracy, women, relationship to the body) and it will allow art and culture to have a real impact on civil societies.

Intercultural dialogue as an excuse for funding: intercultural dialogue naturally takes place between people, especially artists, when they meet and even more if they work on a common project. Artistic affinity and a sincere interest to cooperate are therefore indispensable. On the other hand, international (European) funders defend the idea of 'the intercultural dialogue' between States and cultures, without real critical judgement of the artistic or cultural quality of the project. Projects are sometimes supported which are not of high quality, as this criteria is not sought after; instead, the value of the 'dialogue' is considered. Such an approach brings a certain danger; in order to appear 'intercultural', one falls into the exaltation of 'identity', paradoxically contributing to a withdrawal into it. On the contrary, it is necessary to research the breaking down of one's own culture in order to allow for its reorganisation, nourished by elements transmitted by meeting, contact ('dialogue') with the other. It is this hybridity which gives the intercultural dialogue all its value. It is by this that we will have indicators of the change in society.

Recommendation 13

To strengthen the actions of 'people to people' dialogue between individuals and professionals because they allow for sensitive mutual communication and better mutual understanding. To complete these by the actions of the States ('cultural diplomacy')

To allow artistic projects to themselves define the moments, subjects and the themes of the dialogue; to abandon projects which exacerbate identity claims in favour of projects which integrate hybrid and diverse forms of cultural expression able to lead to cultural and social change.

1. The Context and Objectives of the Evaluation

The questionnaire used by UNESCO's World Observatory on the Social Status of the Artist⁵ is a rare attempt to evaluate the social statute of artists in the world, including in the south Mediterranean countries. The data available on the Observatory's site only concerns three Arab countries - Algeria, Lebanon and Oman.

In many European and Mediterranean countries, there is no legal or social statute recognising the profession of 'artist'. This absence is notably linked to the fact that the notion of the 'artist' is ambiguous, covering a large and varied field of activities.

According to the **Recommendation concerning the Status of the Artist** from the UNESCO conference in Belgrade (1980)⁶, an " 'Artist' is taken to mean any person who creates or gives creative expression to, or re-creates works of art, who considers his artistic creation to be an essential part of his life, who contributes in this way to the development of art and culture and who is or asks to be recognized as an artist, whether or not he is bound by any relations of employment or association."

The ECA (European Council of Artists) conference in Vilnius (November 2003), considered that the Recommendation of UNESCO's General Conference in 1980, and the final declaration of the World Congress of 1997 on the Condition of the Artist, which took place in Paris, "remain the principal documents which define the condition of the artist in contemporary society".

Very few UNESCO member countries, including European countries, have translated these recommendations into the frameworks of their national cultural policies. The federal government of Canada was the first to adopt a law entitled "Law on the Statute of the Artist" (June, 1992). Nevertheless, the UNESCO Recommendation can serve as a 'guiding instrument' for national politicians and legislators. Indeed, it addresses, systematically and coherently, nearly all the main questions that national regulatory frameworks should address. This initiative would imply modification of the current regulatory frameworks, and the adaptation of the social, economic and cultural rights of artists into national rights, adapting them to the specific needs of creators.

In Europe, the European Parliament's study on the status of Artists in Europe⁷ attempts to clarify the legal and social statute of 'artistic professionals'. It examines innovative measures in certain EU Member States to improve the socio-economic situation of artists, with regard to different domains: labour relations; professional representation; social security; fiscal policy; mobility... The study recommends the implementation of active dialogue between different government services (Interior, Social, Employment, Culture) to define objective criteria for the granting of visas to artists from Third Countries.⁸ Yet, the creation of the Schengen Area and a single market in Europe have brought to light obstacles to artistic mobility between Europe and her Mediterranean partners. Putting a community visa policy in place has had the notable effect of isolating the south Mediterranean - the refusal to deliver visas for security reasons or over-long delays in delivering them, elevated costs, validity periods which are too short - are so many obstacles to the circulation of the neighbours to the south of Europe, including the mobility of artists.

For the south Mediterranean - the region covered by the action of the Roberto Cimetta Fund - no similar study of the artistic sector has yet been made. The work of UNESCO's World Observatory on the Social Status of the Artist is a first step, but unfortunately it only covers three countries and is especially concerned with professional artists. Certain programmes or actions aiming to directly or indirectly support the sector and artistic creation in the Mediterranean do exist, such as: the cultural activities of the Delegations of the European Commission in the Mediterranean partner countries; some action lines of the Anna Lindh Foundation; the bilateral cultural cooperation of the Member States with beneficiary countries; and existing mobility funds (YATF, AMA, Al Mawred, Safar Fund, European Culture Foundation and The Roberto Cimetta Fund). These examples highlight the necessity of a diagnosis to serve policy makers and funders in the formulation and implementation of support frameworks for the artistic sector in the south Mediterranean countries. It is important here to note that the

⁵ http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=32056&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

⁶ http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13138&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

⁷ The Status of Artists in Europe, Study by the EU Parliament EU, IP/B/CULT/ST/2005_89
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/EST/download.do?file=13248>

⁸ Idem, page V

initiator and project manager of this study, the Roberto Cimetta Fund, considers the present study as a pioneering pilot exercise similar to a snapshot of the actual situation on the ground at this moment.

General Objective

Faced with the lack of quantitative and qualitative data about the statute of the artist and mobility in the cultural sector, the Roberto Cimetta Fund and its partners the Anna Lindh Foundation, the European Culture Foundation, the Council of Europe and UNESCO, have identified the urgency to conduct a study on the professional 'profiles' in the arts sector. For partners who support the mobility of artists, it is especially a matter of identifying tools which the Mediterranean entities have, to legally and socially recognise artists. This recognition often leads to the possibility to have 'artist' mentioned on their passport, which can play a role in the granting of visas and in the putting into place of formalities which facilitate mobility. This new survey should allow UNESCO to gather fundamental information for the World Observatory regarding those countries which have not yet been covered by its survey.⁹

The study attempts to define typologies of the beneficiaries of potential and specific measures which would encourage their mobility, and the means to identify those measures. It aims to gather, complete and compare information concerning contemporary artistic creation in the different Mediterranean partner countries by examining, in particular, the recognition as professionals in their own countries, of non-European artists of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

Specific Objective

The "Study on Arts and Cultural Professionals' Profiles in non-European Mediterranean Countries", proposes to approach several analytical fields regarding Mediterranean artistic and cultural creation, via research and surveys. In so doing, it foresees the formulation of strategic recommendations addressed to international funders and in particular to the European Commission. In an international institutional partnership with the Anna Lindh Foundation, the Council of Europe, UNESCO and the European Culture Foundation, the Roberto Cimetta Fund aims to formulate strategic lines within the domain of contemporary artistic creation. These recommendations may be presented to Ministers of Culture at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference in Spring 2008 in order for them to consider putting an action into place at the Euro-Mediterranean level, supporting artists, their mobility and the circulation of their work.

1.1 Evaluative Questions

The study has been structured around the following problematics: the legal recognition of artists; their public recognition; their social recognition; the role of artists' mobility in the recognition process; the contribution of arts and cultural mobility to intercultural dialogue. The formulation of these issues has been particularly inspired by the questionnaire created by UNESCO for their survey on the social situation of creators, artists and interpreting artists. The initiative is also based on the concerns of the existing funds which actively aid mobility (especially the Roberto Cimetta Fund and the European Culture Foundation) who wish to define the targets of their support better and to remove barriers which obstruct mobility. The issues have been approached in the form of evaluative questions in the interview questionnaire used for the collection of data.

Evaluative Question 1 : Legal Recognition

The objective is to analyse the juridical contexts which regulating the arts sector in the non-European countries of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. The evaluative sub-questions principally follow the format taken by the UNESCO study:

- which legislation is applied to artists?
- what is the juridical statute of an artist?
- how is the artists' statute granted to them ? (a professional card)?
- is there free access to the profession ?
- what are their rights and responsibilities (professional, social)?
- to what types of contracts are they subject ?

⁹ Algeria, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestinian Authority, Turkey and Israel
December 2007

- what levels of wages can they claim ?
- can they benefit from social or fiscal aids? (social cover, personal aids etc.)?
- do organisations/centres exist which represent them from a legal point of view?

This analysis should allow a better understanding of the professional infrastructure and of the artistic and cultural landscape in these countries.

Evaluative Question 2 : Public Recognition

Here it is a question of analysing facilitating measures implemented via public policies in the service of artistic creation and of artists:

- what are the cultural policies (programmes) of these countries?
- what are the public cultural institutions ?
- which types of initiatives/projects/events are put in place ?
- are some artistic disciplines or types of artistic production supported more than others ?
- which aids to creation/ distribution/ commercialisation exist?
- are there approved professional training opportunities: internships, schools...
- is there arts education at the school level ?

This analysis should allow us to evaluate the importance accorded by the public authorities in these countries to artistic creation.

Evaluative Question 3: Social Recognition

The study focuses here on an analysis of the place given to artists in their own society:

- what level of respect is given to artists and their work ?
- what level of public awareness exists for artists? (at what level ? by which media ?)
- which non-State structures present the work?
- to which types of public are they addressed?
- what kinds of mediation are used in order to ensure a good reception and understanding of the work?
- what kind of work do artists do in social situations (hospitals, prisons) or in education (schools) ?
- what is the impact on civil society? (local initiatives and events?)

This analysis should permit a better understanding of the social role of artists in the societies of the South, and the manner in which this social perception influences their legal recognition.

Evaluative Question 4: the Role of Mobility in the Recognition Process

Increasingly, the mobility of professionals is considered indispensable to the development of an artist - by the artists themselves, by policy-makers and by funders. The objective here is an analysis of mobility in the career paths of artists:

- what is the impact of mobility on the local and international recognition of an artist's work?
- is mobility a medium for fame?
- which are the target countries for artists' mobility?
- what legislation exists ?
- what are the needs ?
- what are the restrictions ?

This analysis should permit us to confirm or invalidate the assumption that artists' mobility influences their recognition as professionals at national and international levels.

Evaluative Question 5 : the Contribution to Intercultural Dialogue by the Arts Sector and by Artistic and Cultural Mobility

Through the exchanges based on mobility which take place throughout the Mediterranean region, artists contribute to the dialogue between cultures. In the context of the "European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008", this study aims to clarify the possible links between artists' mobility and intercultural dialogue, using the evaluation and analysis of the following questions:

- which artistic fields and what types of events are favourable to the meeting of and the dialogue between cultures ?

- what are the subjects of intercultural dialogue which emerge in artistic creation? (taboos, relaxation of morals, relationship to the body, the place of women...)
- which cultural cooperation projects are there?
- what are the effects with regard to the development of civil society ?

This examination should allow us to strengthen arguments around issues of professional mobility in arts and culture and to promote the creation of specific procedures to encourage the mobility of professionals in this sector.

1.2 Research Methodology

The methods used by the researchers (Judith Neisse, President of the Roberto Cimetta Fund and Elena Di Federico, independent consultant) comprise:

1. Standard research methods used in the framework of development projects (consultation with the stakeholders, site visits)
2. A method of political and social analysis (research and analysis of political reference documents, subjective questioning of respondents, comparing an 'autobiographical approach' with an objective approach.).

The study turned to analytical tools (single questionnaire for all respondents, desk research for the assembled data, comparative analysis of the countries studied), anthropological tools and social tools (individual interviews for all key people in their working environment).

In order to take into account in a systematic way the different actors concerned: stakeholders (policy makers; policy managers and administrators; individual artists; managers of public, municipal and private cultural spaces; art critics; cultural journalists; directors of European cultural institutes; project managers at the EU Delegations; project managers at cultural foundations or cultural enterprises etc.) certain survey techniques, semi-structured questionnaires etc. were used.

Three phases were adopted to materialise this work:

- Phase 1 : establishment of the evaluation framework (assessment questions, typologies of respondents, countries covered in the study etc.).
- Phase 2: collection of primary data (personal interviews) and secondary data (national legislation, national cultural strategies, annual reports, budgets, catalogues etc.) by means of the tools drawn up during the first phase.
- Phase 3 : the analysis of the collected data, summary and recommendations

1.3 Strengths and Weaknesses of the Methodological Approach

Strong Points :

- A single questionnaire was used for all of the sectors, respondents and countries. This principle allows for the comparison of comparable elements, working on the same elements and letting both common elements and variable elements emerge.
- Site visits and face to face interviews more adequately suits a culture which is still strongly based on the oral and thus which prioritises direct human contact.
- On the ground visits allowed direct meetings with the key players. (see point below). They highlighted the importance of being able to share the experiences, working conditions and urgent needs.
- The profiles of the interviewees include a very large number of cultural professions : policy-makers; policy managers and administrators; individual artists; managers of public, municipal and private cultural spaces; art critics; cultural journalists; directors of European cultural institutes; project managers at the EU Delegations; project managers at cultural foundations or cultural enterprises etc. The advice, experience and responses of each allowed for the construction of a « puzzle », comparing responses in order to come closer to an objective 'truth' and to have a certain clarity about the points of view of the people questioned.

- This first diagnosis also allowed the gathering of a large volume of information about artists in the countries visited without which the data would be dispersed and fragmented.
- The fact that the researcher on the ground was independent from any of the study's partner institutions and organisations put several interviewees at ease and allowed them to freely express certain opinions about the activity of the international funders and partner institutions.

Weak Points :

- The large number of questions needed interviews lasting at least two hours, which the majority of our interviewees could not give. This lack of time prevented us from deepening certain questions, (notably those linked to intercultural dialogue).
- It was difficult to get into contact with institutional players in certain countries – an activity which needed much more preparation time than that which was permitted by the budgetary and time constraints.
- There was an imbalance concerning the different relations with the different countries, resulting from the degree of cooperation of public authorities and the types of documents which were made available to the researchers.
- There was a difficulty in maintaining a balance between the specific (the situation in each of the countries) and the general and global (regional comparisons). The present document prioritises both because both the detail as well as the global present drawbacks.
- The need to use a language which was not always the mother tongue of the interviewees or the interviewers, sometimes made the task of nuancing the responses difficult (especially in the Mashrek countries).
- The scarcity of days 'on the ground', which was due to contractual obligations and time restrictions prevented direct contact with key people in the countries who were identified in the first interviews.

1.4 Phases of the Study

Phase 1: Establishment of a Framework for the Study.

The framework of the study consists of:

- The collection and the exploitation of secondary data (national legislation, national cultural strategies, annual reports, budgets, catalogues etc.)
- The formulation of analytical fields based on the study's objectives (the different areas of recognition).

Phase 2: The Collection of Primary and Secondary Data¹⁰ by means of the data-gathering tools drawn up in the first phase.

1. The collection of secondary data (national legislation; national cultural strategies; annual reports; programmes and publications by independent artists etc.) was undertaken progressively, on the basis of requests made to key players who hold the relevant information (the relevant public authorities, cultural and artistic entities etc.).
2. The collection of primary data was undertaken in the context of visits to certain countries in the region: two to the Maghreb (Morocco, Tunisia) and two to the Mashrek (Egypt, Syria) through:
 - targeted interviews with representatives of ministries, cultural entities, international funders, artists.
 - visits to a sample of artistic and cultural entities. Discovery on the ground is indispensable in order for the researcher to situate theoretical information gathered in their own geographic and cultural contexts. This is imperative in order to understand the climate, the working conditions of artists, the distribution of information, the relations between the artists and with the institutional level.

It is important to note here that analysis of the situation in at least four Mediterranean countries does not solely aim to provide profiles specific to one or the other country. The study wishes, rather, to identify common problematics or characteristics, as well as good practices or innovative solutions to the problems which are posed. The conclusions and the recommendations following from the study should serve as a source of inspiration for the Ministers of Culture in the Euro-Mediterranean and for other policy-makers, in order to envisage a strategy at the regional level.

Phase 3: Analysis of the Collected Data with Summary and Recommendations

¹⁰ Primary data is that which is gathered directly from the targets, via questionnaires or interviews. Secondary data includes reference documents (policy, economic etc.) concerning the object of the research.

The analysis of the different fields of study was done according to the criteria defined in Chapter 3, from the data gathered and processed. **The present text, in principle, comprises two parts:**

- the **mapping/snapshot**, on the ground, with respect to the assessment questions and to the problematics studied; it compiles the primary data (interviews with the interested parties) and the secondary data (reference texts). It attempts to remain true to the affirmations and contributions of the people questioned and to the texts consulted. It might be used as a primary base of knowledge and data on the political, social and artistic statute of artists in the non-European Mediterranean.
- The other part, **the analytical part** which is included in the chapter **'Conclusions and Recommendations'**, is a first attempt to strategically problematise, analyse, conceptualise and interpret the collected data (primary and secondary) in order to construct from it a tool for policy planning, for professional cooperation and for the proposition of new action frameworks.

The conclusions of the study make it possible:

- to bring elements of a response to the question concerning the creation of certain measures which are able to facilitate arts mobility in the Euro-Mediterranean space (Mediterranean Cultural Passport, arts mobility fund, artistic creation support programme) and to dismantle certain barriers,
- to recommend a certain number of measures to policy-makers of the different countries of the MEDA¹¹ area and the EU, aiming to improve the professional infrastructure of the Mediterranean cultural and artistic landscape,
- to recognise the contribution of arts and cultural mobility to intercultural dialogue in the Euromed¹² region

Please note that we prefer to place the analytical section before the mapping/ inventory section.

1.5 The Range of Data

The data used to justify the study's conclusions and recommendations come from the following sources:

- **Number of countries visited** : 4 countries - 2 in the Maghreb: Morocco and Tunisia; 2 in the Mashrek: Egypt et Syria
- **Number of people met and interviewed**: 91 people: 27 in Egypt; 28 in Morocco; 16 in Syria; 20 in Tunisia
- **Number of institutions met**: 8 in Morocco (2 public cultural institutions; 1 municipality; 1 training institute; 1 municipal theatre; 1 Ministry; 1 financial institution; 1 cultural centre). 8 in Tunisia (3 public professional training structures; 2 departments in the Ministry of Culture; 3 public cultural institutions). 2 in Egypt (the Supreme Council of Culture and the Anna Lindh Foundation). 4 in Syria (2 professional training institutes, 1 public cultural institution, 1 Theatre Department at the Ministry)
- **Types of cultural operators/players met**: artists (visual artists; dancers; choreographers; theatre and film actors; theatre directors; musicians); producers (film, theatre); cultural operators; directors public training institutes; teachers; festival directors; gallery owners; directors of non-State and State cultural spaces; State and municipal civil servants; art critics
- **Types of documents collected**: legal texts; promotional and communication materials concerning the activities of foreign cultural centres, private galleries, public spaces; statistical data on public spaces; specialist magazines; publications; CDs and DVDs.

2 General Conclusions and Recommendations

2.1 Legal Recognition

Field analyses in the four countries studied provide data on legislation concerning the statute of the artist, the tools and the process of legal recognition as well as the conditions of work. On the whole, activities of artistic creation are carried out in conditions which are definitely more precarious than other professions (lawyers, doctors, journalists...). This observation does not apply to artists who are civil servants.

This insecurity is influenced first of all by the weakness of the arts sector (statute, working conditions, State policy), by the stifling weight of the State in certain cases and by the elementary state of certain legislation (statute of the artist, arts enterprises...).

¹¹ The 9 partner countries : Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, Israel, and the Palestinian Authority

¹² The 9 countries of the MEDA region and the 27 of the EU.

Two of the countries studied – Morocco and Tunisia – show progress concerning the UNESCO recommendation¹³ which invites member countries of UNESCO to adopt legislative measures to improve the condition of artists and their participation in the life and cultural development of their countries. It is important for these countries continue this dynamic by improving their juridical frameworks, and for the other countries to begin this work (Egypt, Syria).

Among the various structural measures, the study has identified:

- law n° 71-99 (Dahir « Qanun el Fannan) promulgated in 2003, addressing the statute of the artist in Morocco
- medical cover for artists, including independents, in Morocco and in Tunisia
- a professional card which also allows the definition of « artist » to be mentioned on identity cards and passports (Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt)
- possibility for graduates of Fine Arts schools to find employment as civil servants. (Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Syria)
- *fiscally* the exoneration of taxation on art works (Syria)
- law for the creation of cultural enterprises in Tunisia
- law relative to authors' rights and related rights (Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Syria)
- structures for collective representation (artists' unions), although they are not independent and are subservient to the State (Egypt, Syria)

Everywhere in the world, the atypical character of the work of artists not employed in the civil service leads to different types of contracts. In the four countries studied this situation is quite unstructured. Often artists work without contracts and when they do, the terms of the contracts are not respected. Artists are employed under various forms. They may have regular employment or work as a civil servant and, within the same period, be contracted as an author or amateur. This plurality of contracts responds to the situation that artists cannot live from their art, but it also permits those receiving the lowest pay scales of public authorities to have other jobs. It is also necessary to point out that artists themselves sometimes do not respect oral or written agreements. There are no norms concerning artists' contracts (standard contracts for the arts sector, conditions of remuneration, tax declaration obligations etc.). In the absence of employment contracts, it is impossible to safeguard the correct application of employment law and other legislation (authors' rights etc.). Insofar as these contracts play a role in the recognition of the artist in certain countries (Morocco, Tunisia), it is essential to clarify this.

The laws which cover the legal recognition of artists also reflect the degree of paternalism (maintaining dependency on the State, the inexistence of the private sector in culture...) and intervention (censorship), on the part of the State regarding to the arts sector. Some countries are opening and show progress (Morocco, and Tunisia to a certain extent) but others rather reinforce this attitude (Egypt, Syria).

Beyond the differences between the four countries concerning the existence or application of specific legislation for artists, a common problem concerns communication between the institutional / political levels and artists and cultural operators. Contradictory responses by artists to various questions in the study prove that sometimes their own laws, rights and responsibilities are unknown to them.

In the light of observations provided by the respective analyses of the countries and mentioned in the above texts, it is proposed to:

- Encourage those countries who have chosen to follow UNESCO's recommendations regarding the statute of the artist (Morocco, Tunisia) to continue this dynamic and to invest themselves in improving the "social security conditions, working conditions and taxation of the artist, whether employed or independent" as set out by UNESCO.
- To create mechanisms for the transfer and sharing of experience regarding legislative measures which define and improve the statute of the artist, between the different countries;
- Separate legal recognition from professional representation and encourage the creation of unions with the legal right of representation in Morocco and Tunisia; to free the artists unions in Egypt and Syria from State supervision.
- Very often the arts sector is ignorant of the legislation which covers it. It is necessary to launch highly visible initiatives which make available information on the rights and responsibilities of artists.
- The various artistic disciplines and their working modes generate different types of contracts and working conditions, but it is important that professional artists' organisations have the means for monitoring, in order to ensure the minimum conditions established under the law (labour law, statute of the artist, authors' rights).

¹³ http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13138&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html, Recommendation the Status of the artist, 1980
December 2007

- The application of the law concerning authors' rights must be strengthened, and artists must be informed of their rights. .

The *Assises de la mobilité* in Fes, Morocco, organised by the Roberto Cimetta Fund, stressed the effect of mobility on the structuring of the "the cultural and artistic landscape" and its contribution "to the diversification of professional competencies and to a clear definition of the various degrees of specialisation : managers, producers, technicians, programmers, artists" - professional categories necessary for the organisation of the cultural sector. However, this diversification is almost nonexistent in the southern countries...¹⁴ Coherent law texts which apply to the status, working and social conditions of the artist can also have the same structuring effect. In Morocco, for example, the new law on the statute of the artist presents the following categories: artist, artistic enterprise, artistic service agency... This is a first attempt to define and to structure the arts sector. This is proof of how much a law can contribute to the differentiation of the levels of professional activity and thus aim at the professionalisation and efficiency of the sector.

For artists' mobility and funds supporting artists' mobility such as the Roberto Cimetta Fund, the legal recognition of the artist, especially via a legal text which allowed the explicit mention of the term 'artist' on a passport, would facilitate the work of political advocacy seeking practical solutions regarding visa formalities.

2.2 Public Recognition

Here it is a question of analysing the encouragement initiatives established by policies which serve artists and artistic creation and which integrate professional activities. How does the State translate this recognition into a pertinent framework including a range of measures which aim to improve the general economic and social statute of artists?

In the countries covered by the study, the analysis brings out some elements which influence and condition public recognition of the arts sector. For example:

Absence of real cultural policies - the majority of those questioned (institutional and non-institutional) regret the absence of "real" cultural policies, those which are not only limited to financial and administrative management of cultural action but which are visionary, which encourage reflection and which advocate for the engagement of culture in the fabric of society. This is also true for the artistic sector. In what one could call 'arts policies' in the four countries, priorities include: **events** (especially festivals), **infrastructure** (museums, galleries, cultural centres, opera, public theatres etc.) and certain **artistic genres** (film, theatre, traditional or classical Arab music). One would hope that these policies would be capable to speed up the democratisation of culture, to approach the relationship between State support and support from other actors (private sector) and to debate the problems engendered by the market economy and globalisation...

"Culture for all" : Democratisation under Control : especially in the two Mashrek countries, inheritors of the socialist tradition, culture should be for everyone. This 1960's approach has led to the dependence of State cultural structures (from the Minister of Culture to the unions, including the Palaces and Houses of Culture, public theatre, training structures). Public cultural institutions function as heavy and hermetic structures which do not really consider themselves to be in the service of artists. The training of trainers is still inspired by the model of the Soviet Union and is old fashioned, out of date, not in step with the real needs of society. This 'institutional deficit' and its incapacity to renew itself and to be reconciled with other sectors (independent, private, associations) leads to an attitude of political and social control aiming to ensure the subordination of artists to the regime.

The role of the State: Closely linked to the point above, the State plays a role which is different in each of the countries. In **Morocco**, often it is the artists who take the initiative to undertake actions (with many difficulties!). If successful, the State (or other representatives of the public sector) supports them, financially or "in kind". In **Tunisia**, State support coincides partially with the control and censorship of Commissions who decide on the allocation of subsidies and funds. In **Egypt**, the State clearly controls the sector either via its support or via the unions which are emanations of the Minister. In **Syria**, control is even stronger, as much by the unions who authorise

¹⁴ Report » *Assises de la mobilité*, Fes, p. 8

access to the profession as by the close link of the unions to the political power. Very frequently in the four countries, State culture structures are managed by civil servants who are also artists and lack competence in management and communication. This structural shortcoming handicaps the capacity of these structures and State spaces to attract other types of public, to pass from the stage of a simple presentation space to a space of creation and creativity, and to propose forms of artistic mediation.

Training : professional training is mostly limited to the public sector and only in rare cases one can see the emergence of approved private training structures. The State manages training structures principally for: **Visual Arts (Fine Arts), Performing Arts, Film and Audiovisual, Music, Dance**. It is particularly focused on the 'central' arts professions (artists, dancers, musicians) but much less on the professions around these (technicians, make-up) and training for management, animation etc. A training structure is lacking and this weakens the arts system in general. This concerns all of the countries except Tunisia where training in the different arts professions is more structured.

Exposure : in principal there is a lack of direct 'exposure' of arts students and local artists to foreign artists' work. This problem is especially notable in the Mashrek due to a **lack of translation** of books and syllabi into Arabic, the **mentality** of teachers in art schools (not up to date and who are not interested in events proposed by private structures, very few **opportunities to be in contact** with foreign artists...). This poses problems for the training of young people and for everyone's professional development. **Grants** awarded by the State to Fine Arts students for study periods abroad, with the help of international funders, also provide opportunities for exposure. Unfortunately they are few and sometimes awarded to a small number according to political or favouritist criteria.

Recognition of Independents: Insofar as an artist or a company does not deviate from the institutional circuit (training, membership in a union etc.), he or she can benefit from the recognition of the public sector and thus from State support. The independent structure or artist, on the other hand, who is not really a product of the State schools, or member of the union, has no access to State support. This is less problematic in Morocco and in Tunisia where State funds are accessible following selection by a committee (in Morocco) and a Commission (also responsible for censorship) in Tunisia.

Amongst supporting measures and recognition measures which help to 'structure' the sector are:

- Funds for theatre production and distribution (Morocco, Tunisia).
- Promotion of the visual arts through regional, national and international exhibitions (Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Syria)
- The recognition of private training structures (Morocco, Tunisia)
- The purchase of further workshops at the Cité internationale des arts in Paris (Morocco, Tunisia)
- The organisation of festivals and of national and international biennials (theatre, music, film, dance) especially in Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt and a bit less in Syria
- Support to cultural initiatives from local authorities (Morocco, Tunisia, Syria) and for those organised by civil society (Morocco)
- Cooperation with cultural institutes for the organisation of events (festivals), of exhibitions, of study grants, of trainers for State training structures

Considering these conclusions as well as those in the country analyses, the following recommendations are made :

- **To support public cultural spaces** which need capacity building (management, planning, communication, production...) in order to become attractive to a public which has little awareness or has not benefited from arts education, in order for these spaces to become real places of cultural animation and of engagement with artistic creation.
- Where the State dominates the artistic scene (Egypt, Syria and to a certain extent in Tunisia), it is necessary to re-establish a certain degree of **confidence and collaboration between institutions and independents**, to find solutions to escape the limits imposed by the centralist, all-powerful system and to develop spaces (physical and intellectual) to allow a certain form of independence. .
- **Introduce the practice of 'cultural policies'** which are not limited to simple financial and administrative cultural management, but which prioritise reflection, strategic planning, (including long term) and the structuring and professionalising of the arts sector as a complement to "cultural unrest".

2.3 Social Recognition

In professional reference texts, the social recognition of the artist is very often assimilated to a social statute which is defined by government legislation. This chapter, complementing the chapters on legal and political recognition, proposes social recognition as a process of communication: expressing the fact that a person, in this case the artist, is assumed to possess a social 'value'.

"An individual only constitutes a person when he or she learns to see themselves from the perspective of an approving or encouraging 'other', as beings endowed with positive qualities and capacities."¹⁵ Here social recognition signifies social respect which does not depend only on normative (politico-legal) recognition.

Each society assigns functions to art. The idea was to analyse the current process of redefinition of the arts and their social legitimacy. The study aimed in particular to analyse the many interdependencies between the artist and the society. The results of this analysis of social recognition focus around the following elements:

- **The Public:** The lack of coherent legislation with regard to the profession of artist (statute, social rights, fiscal rights, authors rights) necessarily reflects society's perception of the artist. This perception is nuanced in the four countries of the study in relation to the artistic discipline, the social class, the fame or star value of the artist. When it is not a matter of stars and especially film or music stars, artists are considered variously, going from the subversive, comedian or clown, to the dreamer or the intellectual. Except for some artists or intellectuals, the idea that artists are as essential for a balanced society as oxygen is for the ecosystem, and that the arts contribute to the harmonious and healthy development of the community, is totally absent. Either they are exploited to promote or support a certain ideology (institutional), e.g. construction of the national identity, cultural ambassadors for the country etc. or it is solely their commercial value which begins to be recognised (private sector), specifically in film, music and sometimes the visual arts. Another manner to consider their market value is demonstrated in publicity, where stars are used to sell products. The new landscape of television and satellite channels only aggravates this dimension. Often, the social classes which appreciate and benefit from art are limited to the higher economic and intellectual classes, in some cases very close to the political power, who form the clients of the State cultural institutions, or the foreign cultural institutes, or independent spaces and galleries. Contemporary culture risks to address itself only to an elite! In addition, in the countries studied, there are two specific problems: poverty and low levels of education, a lack of arts education at school level.
- **Engagement in the social field:** the artist is not obliged to be engaged socially or politically in these countries; this is a personal choice. On the other hand artists who try to work on the social level are confronted with obstacles: bureaucratic (need for authorisations), lack of support (no specific support for this type of action), very strict rules (e.g. Egyptian prisons), lack of initiative by the directors of structures (e.g. hospitals), lack of public awareness. The idea that art and citizenship are not opposites has not yet taken root, either by artists or by politicians. Rare are those artists, led by a wish to find a new public, as well as by the desire to engage in the life of society, whose work goes beyond their artistic research to achieve a social dimension. They work in communities confronted by exclusion (social or cultural) but usually on a one-off basis or at the request of associations.
- **Civil society:** the difficulty (more, or less formal, according to the country) to form associations together with policies which discourage independent initiatives, serve to maintain a rather weak cultural civil society (private or associative sector). Going beyond the 'stars', the unifying role of art and culture for the expression of society's diversity (different ethnic groups, languages, religions, social, urban and rural levels etc.) is virtually unknown. This is reflected in the level of public funds dedicated to the arts but also the implication of the private sector as sponsor or investor. The only country where there is a budding interest by the private sector (banks, financial groups, telecommunications companies etc.) is Morocco. In Tunisia, government 'incentives' (laws favouring the creation of cultural enterprises) have not brought the desired results. There is also another form of 'private': artists, independent companies and spaces, all those who are outside of the government circuits as a life and professional choice...those who pose a question to their society about the direction of its progress, who propose more open and plural reflection, and who struggle to conceive the artistic world as a space of freedom and intellectual creation. Sometimes the implication of the private sector, as in Morocco, is beneficial because it complements the State budgets, introduces the concept of the cultural economy, supports artistic genres (video makers) which are

¹⁵ ¹⁵Axel Honneth, *The Struggle for Recognition*, Cerf (from the French translation of the German edition of 1992

ignored by the State, offers space to independent artists and proposes forms of cultural animation even if limited to a certain public. Festivals, although sometimes of lower quality, are another form of animation which especially attracts youth and the more modest social classes.

With regard to the conclusions presented here and those at the end of the country analyses, the following **recommendations** follow:

- that public esteem for the artist, not as animator or star but as a creator and representative of a professional body must change and improve, by means of education, awareness raising and cultural mediation strengthened by adequate legislation.
- to consider the private sector as an important ally of the public sector because it can intervene where the governmental level lacks the competence or means. It is necessary to create alliances and to propose incentives, always ensuring that aesthetic and artistic criteria are maintained.

Arts mediation is very urgent as it must create the link – currently lacking – between artistic creation and its audience. It is advised to set up forms of mediation in which artists are involved.

2.4 The Role of Mobility in the Process of Recognition.

The mobility of an artist can be seen from different angles: from one working status to another (independent, waged, civil servant), from one artistic sector to another or still yet from the point of view of geographic mobility inside or outside of the country. It is the nature of artistic work, the way that the sector is structured and the dynamics of globalisation which force the artist to be more flexible or mobile. The study especially looks into geographic mobility: its forms (bilateral, regional or international); barriers and solutions; the impact of the mobility (professional, personal, effect on the artist's image etc.) and international cooperation projects.

In a very wide vision of mobility, there are two major dynamics: the State – which, within the framework of cultural agreements with target countries (Arab or European) organises bilateral mobility, and the dynamic of the individual (i.e. artists) – particularly supported by non-governmental funders such as YATF (Young Arab Theatre Fund), El Mawred, the Ford Foundation, the Roberto Cimetta Fund – addressing regional and multilateral mobility.

Mobility as an obvious fact: if there is a common element shared between all the interviewees, it is the recognition of the importance of mobility for artists and cultural operators. With Europe, a more balanced exchange is desired (to get beyond the existing North-South logic). Amongst all the possible forms of mobility, the bilateral with European countries is the most common (especially with France, Spain, Belgium and Germany, Italy, Switzerland). This is for reasons which include: colonial history and links; language; funds offered by the host country; a high quality of cultural infrastructure (particularly in France) which lends itself easily to apprenticeships, artists' residencies etc.; links with the immigrant community. The result of all this is the persistence of the classic bilateral directions of circulation.

A great many people in the South are deeply concerned about the weakness of South-South mobility which is also affected by visa problems, lack of funds and the rivalry between certain Arab countries, structural weaknesses in the local and artistic landscape including the lack of financial frameworks (institutional cooperation)¹⁶...

For artists, mobility should be an element of **training**; of **professional development** (to compensate for the local structural deficit linked to lack of training and to have access to a better artistic education); of **personal development** (to allow one's creativity to flourish, to detach oneself from a local situation which is not supportive enough); for the creation of **networks** (for the circulation of information, to break professional isolation and to construct partnerships which are based on affinities with other artists, to seek new sources of financial support); for building up **visibility** for the artist and for the national arts scenes of the South (to present their art to different audiences and other professionals, to give value to their role as artists); for the accumulation of **knowledge** (to get to know the international touring and exhibition circuits, to learn about new tendencies in order to develop oneself); to strengthen **diversity** (to fight against the withdrawal into one's own identity and to give opportunities for intercultural dialogue).

¹⁶ These elements once again confirm the conclusions of the Mobility Assises in Fes, report of the Assises, p. 7
December 2007

Barriers to Mobility: the study identifies three major obstacles to international mobility: **bureaucratic formalities** (visas, circulation of artworks), **finances** (lack of money for culture in the South, both from the public and the private sectors; the predominance of international funds; a near absence of regional funds; lack of funds for the mobility of touring companies), **the sector's infrastructure** (quality of artists and of artistic products, access to information and to funders etc.).

It is rather surprising to observe that visa problems do not represent the only disadvantage, as is often suggested by some representatives of associations and the political field. The social fragility and also sometimes the poverty of independent artists is a serious barrier. It is possible to state that even if visa problems were resolved, the mobility of artists in the South would not increase because of economic problems. In order to get beyond these barriers, an integrated approach is essential: political, economic and artistic-structuring.

The Circulation of Artworks: one must not forget that the circulation of artworks is hampered by structural obstacles: heavy bureaucracy; the need to obtain permits and authorisations; taxes to pay (in order to bring back the goods which have been circulating through customs); censorship of some artistic products... For the live performing arts it is a matter of the mobility of the scenery. The laws which apply to the circulation of works are particularly restrictive and not well known by the professionals. In addition, the costs associated with insurance for art objects highly limit their circulation.

In the light of the problematics presented here, it is possible to conclude that :

- Visa problems occupy a central place in the mobility debate but other **barriers are obstacles to international mobility** and should be considered (finance, lack of information and of networks, the low quality of projects). **Pertinent solutions should be proposed** (regional mobility funds, resource centres for mobility etc.)
- The **visa question** remains essential, the **solutions are still to be invented**: a cultural passport reserved for culture professionals, long-duration artists' visas, cultural services among the other services of the consulates, minimum quotas for artists' visas etc.
- The **directions of mobility** remain traditional (France-Morocco etc.). It is necessary to find means to **encourage mobility towards other countries**. A more sustained effort should be made with regard to Syria which benefits very little from international mobility.

2.5 The Contribution of Arts Sector and Arts Mobility to Intercultural Dialogue

Dragan Klaić defines dialogue as an act of communication and exchange between two individuals. For him, on the one hand, cultures cannot dialogue between themselves because they are not individuals; when individuals dialogue, on the other hand, they only represent themselves because who can claim to represent a whole culture with all its facets... In the end is intercultural dialogue a political term which does not reflect any reality, either of the individual or of the collective? Several comments by interviewees lead in this direction.

The concept of intercultural dialogue is judged by them as a Western concept imposed on artists, which does not really fall under their competence and which responds to the needs of Europeans (problems related to terrorism, immigration, post-colonialism etc.).

The study manages to highlight two elements essential for dialogue:

The Need to Listen: due to the difficulties of circulation for artists and cultural operators in the South, especially those in the independent scene, the vision that the North can construct of the arts sector's situation in these countries threatens to be partial and biased. International funders and cultural operators manage to meet and thus to listen only to certain artists - those supported by the State who don't really have mobility problems or some 'lucky' independents who have networks of colleagues in Europe which allow them to travel.

Encouraging meeting and direct contact between artists and cultural operators of the North and South without the mediation of the State would encourage better reciprocal understanding and relinquish prejudices (which also exist on the professional level). Support for this type of direct cooperation between artists and professionals can introduce artistic and aesthetic points of view into the dialogue even when it is a matter of 'political' topics (religion, democracy, women, relation to the body) and allow art and culture to have a real impact on civil society.

Intercultural dialogue as an excuse for funding: intercultural dialogue takes place naturally between people, especially artists, when they meet and even more when they work together on a common project. But for that to happen, artistic affinity and a sincere

interest in cooperation are indispensable. On the other hand, international (European) funders propagate the idea of 'the intercultural dialogue' between governments and cultures, without a genuinely critical view of the artistic or cultural quality of the project. It happens that cooperation projects with the label of 'intercultural dialogue' are initiated only to obtain funds because it is the only means of survival in the absence of State support! This is a vicious circle. Projects are supported which sometimes are not of good quality because it is not artistic quality which is sought, but rather 'dialogue'. Such an approach carries with it a certain danger because in appearing 'intercultural' one falls back into the celebration of one's 'identity' and thus the withdrawal into 'own identity' is encouraged. On the contrary, it is the deconstruction of one's own culture which is necessary in order to allow a reconstruction of it, nourished from elements transmitted through the encounter, the contact ('dialogue') with the other. It is this hybridity which gives value to intercultural dialogue. It is only in this case that we will see the indicators of change in society.

Taking account of these observations, it is proposed:

- To reinforce dialogue initiatives between individuals and professionals ('people to people') because they allow for mutual communication and better reciprocal understanding, and to complement these by governmental actions of 'cultural diplomacy'.
- To allow artistic projects to define for themselves the moments, subjects and focus of dialogue, to stop supporting projects which reinforce a withdrawal into identities in favour of projects which integrate diverse and hybrid forms of cultural expression which can lead to cultural and societal change.