

BUILDING THE MISSING LINKS WITH CULTURE

Why and how policymakers should invest in
better Africa-Europe Europe Africa relations
to accelerate local sustainable development on both continents!



An optimistic
(policy)
vision based
on good
relations!

AT A GLANCE

WHY CULTURE CAN GENERATE POSITIVE CHANGE?

Think of **cultural, social and economic impacts for local development visible for citizens** like

- the Egyptian culture or the city of Venice and the cultural and economic effects generated for hundreds of years by their investments in architecture, arts and craft. **Culture makes places and visualises interactions.**
- how the K-Wave has **generated intercontinental communities of fans** while at the same time **shaping a modern and creative image** of South Korea.
- our **daily cultures** and how an inspiring sound at breakfast can bring you in a good mood for the whole day or how you are performing a good speech when well-dressed.
- the impressive figures about **raising trade in cultural goods and creative services**, cross-sectoral **innovation and employment** in cultural and creative sectors – **in all world regions.**

All this (and much more) is culture and the result of public and private action for cultural development. **A lot of untapped potential in culture on the African and European continents requires your action as decision-makers. We invite you to write with us a new positive story of cooperation with culture!**

WHAT ARE THE OBJECTIVES?

The geopolitical framework has changed. This is also the case between Europe and Africa, Africa and Europe. However, **more cooperation is needed to cope with the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century. The proposed actions in and with culture will ensure sustainable development including income and cohesion on both continents.** Therefore, **both continental frameworks need to evolve to ensure fully functioning cooperation eco-systems with a huge potential for the world.**

WHICH KEY PROBLEMS TO BE OVERCOME?

- **We do not talk enough** to each other and much more about each other. Understanding of connectivities is fragmented and (negative) emotions not sufficiently channelled.
- **We raise new barriers** and misunderstandings are growing. The full comprehension of a number of hard and soft access barriers and structural imbalances is not fully addressed.
- **We do not meet frequently enough** as common structures of exchange like intercontinental networks are not in place and create dependencies by supporting projects not intermediaries.
- **We are not well-informed**, building actions on assumptions and without careful analysis. This is especially harmful in media spaces influencing public opinions and decisions of voters.
- **We are not learning enough from each other** and continue hierarchies of knowledge, languages and cultures instead of building intercontinental spaces of exchange of know-how.

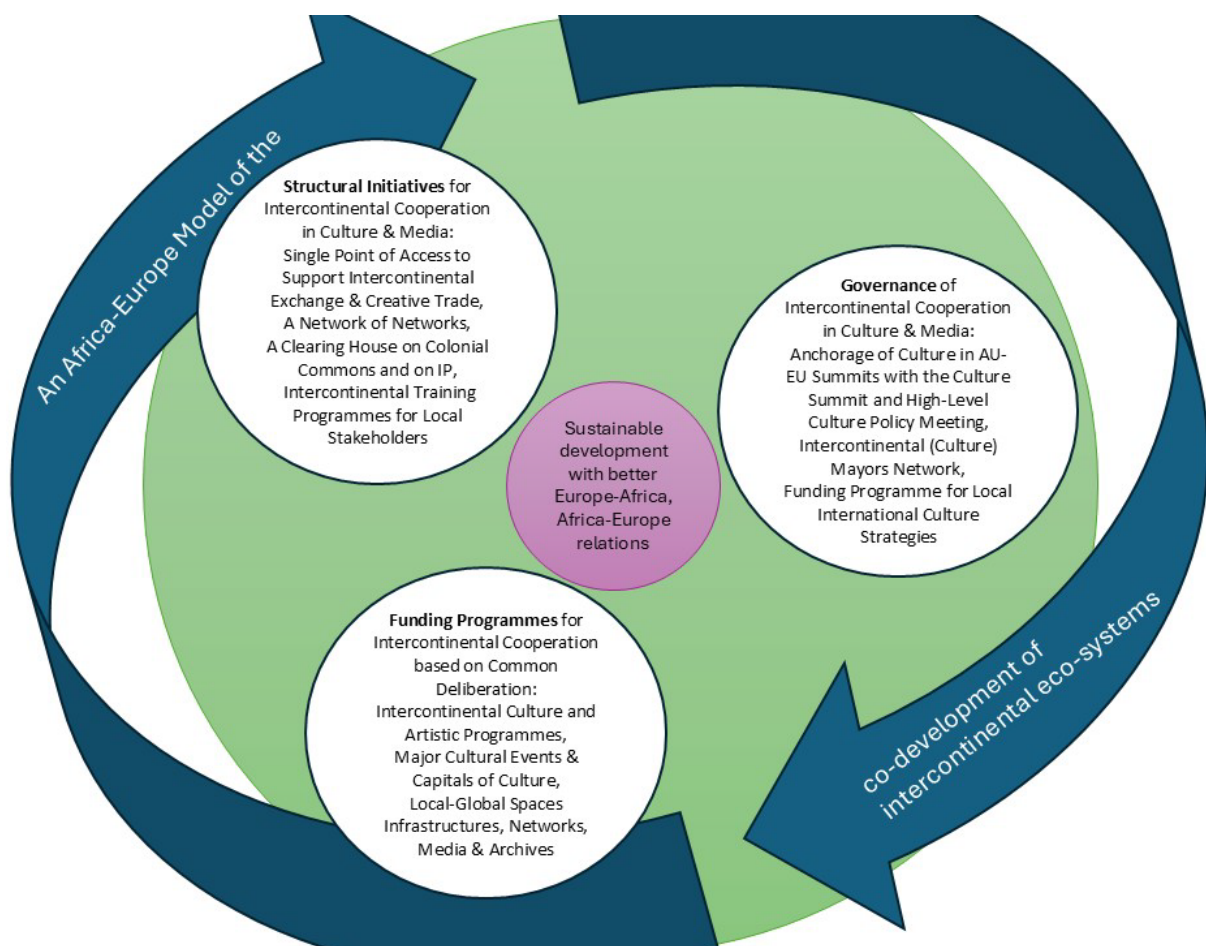
Culture has the potential to showcase better relations while having considerable impacts. **It is time to go ahead with better frameworks and improved (culture, trade, industry, interior, external, ...) policies.**

WHICH MAIN IMPACTS FOR COOPERATION BY CULTURE?

Culture relations:

- **To bring on board the people for international cooperation** (agendas) with accessible stories of inter-connectedness of continents, diversity and wealth of cultural achievements and the beauty of the two continents to overcome stereotypes and prejudice including on local level
- **To accelerate intercontinental cooperation and trade of creative sectors** by opening-up and professionalise mobility and earning options as well as strengthening the continental eco-systems together built on a prototype for better relations for local (culture) development
- **To benefit of updated governance formats for 21st century (culture) policy-(making)** based on honest exchanges of required modernisations on both continents and long-term formats of reciprocal learning and exchange with a focus on the internationalisation of local governments

WHICH ACTIONS TO TAKE IN AN ECO-SYSTEM OF POLICYMAKERS & STAKEHOLDERS?



HOW TO IMPLEMENT THESE ACTIONS?

We invite **AU, EU, national as well as local and regional policy-makers, international organisations and stakeholders** to consider these initiatives for sustainable eco-systems built on better relations:

- The establishment of **cooperative governance structures (1)**
- The mainstreaming of the **intercontinental dimensions in all funding programmes (2)**
- The **engagement of the private sector** including with Corporate Social Responsibility **(3)**
- The anchorage of **culture as a key driver in main (international) policy initiatives (4)**
- The **involvement of main** culture, media and creative industries **events (5)**
- The **full integration of cities and regions as well as citizens** in intercontinental relations **(6)**

WHICH NEXT STEPS TO BUILD STEP-BY-STEP AN ECOSYSTEM OF POSITIVE COOPERATION?

The First Culture (Ministers / High-Level) Summit at the AU-EU Summit 2025

- **Why?** Long-term anchorage of Culture (Policy) Cooperation, Symbolic value of culture
- **When?** First edition at the next AU-EU Summit and then as a permanent format
- **Who?** Member States of the AU and the EU, Parliamentary Assemblies, AU and EU Commission, the EU delegation to the AU, mayors, regional governors, their networks, etc.
- **Next steps:** The establishment of a committee of supporting bodies from both continents

The Intercontinental Single Point of Access for Cooperation and Trade in Culture

- **Why?** Build synergies in cooperation / trade know-how to accelerate cooperation benefits
- **When?** Between 2025 and 2027 for building-up the framework
- **Who?** Networks and structural initiatives in/for creative sectors, cultural and creative industries
- **Next steps:** Commission a study on access barriers (e. g. European Parliament, ACUNA-ACF)

The Network of Networks for better Africa-Europe Europe-Africa Cooperation by Culture

- **Why?** Accelerate intercontinental connectivity and common action for synergies
- **When?** Between 2025 and 2026 for building-up the network (structures)
- **Who?** (Culture, media, local governments) networks and initiatives from both continents.
- **Next steps:** Investigate Global Gateway options and co-funding potential on both continents

The Mayor's and Local Governments Initiative for Intercontinental Cultural Relations

- **Why?** Fully involve local stakeholders and decision-makers close to citizens in cooperation
- **When?** Starting from 2025 and then as a permanent engagement
- **Who?** Cities, regions, mayors and local governors; capitals of culture, UNESCO creative cities as well as other major events and their networks
- **Next steps:** Anchorage of intercontinental cooperation in the new European Capitals of Culture rules, focus on intercontinental relations in conferences / trainings of networks

These actions to get better relations for local development started, are **embedded in a range of policy and stakeholder actions in a spirit of common intercontinental efforts:**

OVERVIEW ON FUTURE POLICY AND STAKEHOLDER ACTIONS FOR THE ECO-SYSTEMS:

(1) THE ESTABLISHMENT OF COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES	
AU-EU Summit & Member States & Parliamentary Assemblies, AU and EU Commission, the EU delegation to the AU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce the format of a cultural summit • Introduce the format of High-Level Culture Policy Meetings with a permanent intercontinental secretariat • Develop a sustainable format for the involvement of local governments • Commission a study on intercontinental access barriers and imbalances (African & European perspectives)
(2) MAINSTREAMING OF THE INTERCONTINENTAL DIMENSIONS IN ALL FUNDING PROGRAMMES	
Main Public Support & (policy) Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elaborate (updated) international culture strategies in the EU and the AU • Include in the EU MFF (2028-34) the topic of International Cultural Relations • Continue a priority on international cooperation in all three strands of the EU Creative Europe Programmes (2021-2027 & 2028-2034) • Continue to strengthen research cooperation (Mission International) between Europe and Africa in the EU Horizon Programmes (2021-2027 & 2028-2034). • Develop a phasing-in (co-)financing programme by the African Union and the African Development Bank to overcome current imbalances • Develop an intercontinental learning exchange programme with the EU Erasmus • Enlarge third country cooperation in the Erasmus, CERV, Cohesion, Urban, Rural Development programmes including Leader Transnational Culture (2028-2034)
(3) ENGAGING THE PRIVATE SECTOR INCLUDING WITH CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY	
Main Private Funds & Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a phasing-in (co-)financing programme by the African Culture Fund (ACF), the Heva Fund, CANEX, etc. to overcome current imbalances • Develop an intercontinental learning exchange programme with EU Erasmus • Encourage intercontinental (grassroots) media and (culture) journalists' cooperation for better visibility of intercontinental exchanges and creative trade • Consider the opening-up of the Europeana initiative for a pilot project with African partners on digital archives and knowledge generation
(4) ANCHORING OF CULTURE AS A KEY DRIVER IN MAIN (INTERNATIONAL) POLICY INITIATIVES	
Global Gateway, Team Europe as well as EEAS, EU delegations, DG INTPA, Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument, ACP, DG NEAR, EU-Funding, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish an intercontinental single point of access for exchange and trade • Establish an intercontinental clearing house covering decolonialisation, narrative commons and content sovereignty as well as intercontinental IP enforcement. • Establish an intercontinental network of networks • Enlarge the Global Gateway Civil Society Platform with culture stakeholders • Establish an initiative for investments in civic spaces, learning structures as well as intermediary structures with strategic partners • Establish a support programme / learning programme for local governments • Consider the establishment of an intercontinental cultural research platform • Envisage the establishment of an investment programme for local (informal) education structures with programmes dedicated to intercontinental learning
(5) INVOLVING OF MAIN CULTURE, MEDIA AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES EVENTS	
Major Culture Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the Capitals of Culture initiatives with mandatory international cultural relation plans and engagement in international networks • Invest in strategic intercontinental media coverage of high-level cultural events and initiatives with strategic partnerships with main (grassroots) media
(6) FULLY INTEGRATING OF CITIES AND REGIONS AS WELL AS CITIZENS IN INTERCONTINENTAL RELATIONS	
Cultural Mayors & their networks & Local and regional governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustain the format of Intercontinental (Culture) Mayor's meetings and networks • Complement the meeting with enhanced intercontinental activities of the Members of the Parliaments on both continents (culture, local development) • Support networks of local governments to enhance the intercontinental cultural cooperation in EU programmes like CERV, URBACT, etc. • Include funding options for international cultural strategies of local governments in the EU Creative Europe Programmes (2021-27 & 2028-34)

WHO WE ARE?

We are a group of people from the European and from the African continent having gathered in autumn 2024 to bring forward the policy recommendations you could explore on the previous pages.

We are individual artists and experts, represent continental networks and cultural organisations, as well as global networks of local governments and intermediaries like Capitals of Culture initiatives.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND DISCLAIMER:

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You may also consult the **ARNIE Handbook for practical advice in intercontinental cultural cooperation and relations:**



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