



European
Spaces of
Culture /

BUILDING 
PARTNERSHIPS
FOR 
SUSTAINABLE 
IMPACT 

Introduction

“The European Spaces of Culture project has shown that co-created, locally rooted cultural initiatives can strengthen mutual understanding and generate lasting impact.”

This statement in the Culture Compass for Europe, launched in November 2025 as the European Union’s strategic anchor for culture, highlights European Spaces of Culture as an important instrument to promote culture as a recognised key strategic pillar of EU external action.

The latest cycle of the European Spaces of Culture programme closed at the end of February 2026, having supported eight projects implemented between June 2024 and October 2025. This publication aims to articulate the values of and learnings from the programme, centring around the latest projects: their ambitions, innovation and impact.

Geographically spread from Colombia to Indonesia and Bosnia and Herzegovina to Malawi, these projects have demonstrated creative ways of addressing urgent topics and the relevance of cultural relations in a collaborative manner.

The European Spaces of Culture programme and its supported projects offer valuable learnings for cultural relations practice. Special attention is therefore given to partnership processes: how can cultural relations projects be and stay inclusive to a wide diversity of stakeholders, and what is still to learn?

In addition, long-term perspectives of the projects and partnerships need attention to grow these initiatives into sustainable models of collaboration in cultural relations. The publication highlights a few examples of how this has been achieved.

Thanks go out to all the partners implementing the projects, for their courage to address important and often sensitive issues, curiosity to enter new partnerships, and creativity to do so in an innovative way.

Enjoy the read!

European Spaces of Culture: A movement

Started off as a Preparatory Action from 2019 until 2023 and continuing since, European Spaces of Culture has established itself as one of the frontrunning actions dedicated to EU cultural relations. The programme, managed by EUNIC, has created a collaboration model of exchange and cooperation that is based on equality, inclusion and reciprocity.

European Spaces of Culture explores cultural relations practice by supporting relatively small-scale and short-term projects, with as starting point a deeply rooted local relevance, and implemented by a triangular partnership of local cultural and civil society actors, EUNIC members and Delegations of the EU worldwide. Benefiting from the existing global network of EUNIC members, the invitation to all is to innovate and explore avenues of new initiatives and partnerships.

This collaborative and innovative approach stands out in today's international relations and is what is expected of Europe's contemporary role and relations with partners across the globe. In current turbulent times, such honest conversations and connections are much needed.

Since the start of the programme, the programme and its collaborative model has matured. Increasingly, ownership of projects is shared among a larger number of partners, with local partners taking a stronger leading role, which reflects a firmer local rooting and sustainable future of the projects. Attention to fair collaboration practice – at programme and project level – has accelerated that development, as has peer learning. Reflections on collaboration practice are further explored on page 22.

“At a time when hate speech and exclusion are increasing in many regions, the support of European Spaces of Culture becomes an essential action to defend and promote diversity. We hope this commitment continues to grow and strengthen projects that make historically marginalised communities visible and empower them.”

Reflection from a project team

The programme furthermore embodies a 'Team Europe' spirit, illustrated by a growing number EU Member States getting involved. Since 2019, 33 different EUNIC members and 120 EU Delegations have been involved in project proposals, with 19 EU Member States and 33 EU Delegations involved in implemented projects, including from cultural institutes and Member State embassies. With culture seldom part of their priority portfolios, the EU Delegations involved have found new ways of getting engaged in cultural relations, in various degrees.

At the core of the model is a framework that requires each project to be designed according to the local context and needs. Looking at the latest eight projects supported, the response to these contexts was compelling.

Limitations were for instance encountered in Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan, where the topical foci (introducing contemporary dance in Turkmenistan and amplifying female voices in Kazakhstan) went against existing conventions. Political unrest in regions of Ethiopia, with peace dialogue a starting premise of the project, posed a threat to localities of activities. Against such odds, the partners were still able to deliver their activities with impact on the targeted audiences.

Topics that are considered social taboo were brought forward in Bolivia (empowering queer communities) and Bosnia and Herzegovina (providing opportunities and visibility of marginalised groups). The projects were still able to meaningfully intervene, not least powered by a strong interplay between the different partners involved.

In other projects, unprecedented offers and collaborations came in the shape of the first all-female co-creation and mentorship programme in Malawi, an intercontinental capacity programme for contemporary dance in Colombia, and a revolutionary cross-sectoral programme tackling environmental emergency in Indonesia.

The topics at hand and the contexts they represent not only demonstrate the relevance and urgency of these projects, but also a high degree of innovation by finding ways to address these topics in environments and circumstances that are complex.

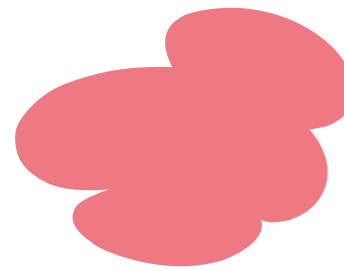
Pulling together the strengths of the different partners involved creates opportunities to overcome such barriers. An often-reported reflection of this complementarity was that European partners acted as enablers, not agenda-setters, supporting locally defined priorities.

Bringing the EU's strategic approach to cultural relations to life

Since 2007, the European Union's commitment to international relations has integrated culture as an important element of its external action.

In 2026, the end of this phase of European Spaces of Culture coincides with a crucial moment for the EU's external relations, at a time when international relations globally are becoming more volatile and divisive. International cultural relations, as a practice and an attitude, offer a counter vision to the global antagonistic international environment of the moment.

In contrast to authoritarian narratives that seek to influence public opinion and reshape global norms through coercion and top-down messaging, the EU's approach to international cultural relations is values based and participatory. By consistently and sincerely prioritising co-creation and dialogue, the EU has an opportunity to position itself as a credible and committed partner in global cooperation.



2016 — **Joint Communication “Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations” 2016**

2019-2025 — **European Spaces of Culture 2019-2025 (and ongoing)**

2025 — **Launch of Culture Compass for Europe “A Union that champions international cultural relations and partnerships”**

European Spaces of Culture started in 2019 when the European Parliament launched it as a Preparatory Action to test new policy avenues and prepare the ground for sustainable EU programming in cultural relations. This followed a pivotal moment when the Joint Communication “Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations” was published in 2016. The Joint Communication was launched to advance cultural cooperation between the EU and partner countries, with the aim to contribute to making the EU a stronger global actor. This milestone also made explicit the people-to-people approach to cultural relations, which is based on reciprocity, partnership, and mutual learning.

The Culture Compass for Europe, launched in November 2025, has made international cultural relations one of its four main strategic directions. The Compass states that the EU “must acknowledge and respond to a reality of global tensions by reinforcing a value-driven approach in cultural relations” and there is “growing expectation from the EU's Member States, partners, and international organisations for the EU to act with greater consistency and ambition”.

The Compass also aims to arrive to a defined strategy for EU international cultural relations, foreshadowed in the title of the 2016 Joint Communication.

These two book-end policy milestones are in close interaction, with European Spaces of Culture in between, which has turned the ambition and philosophy of EU cultural relations into practice, by:

encouraging people-to-people contacts through a bottom-up approach, based on local consultation and co-creation;

going beyond projection of the diversity of European cultures;

focusing on the process as well as on outputs and outcomes: a new spirit of dialogue, mutual listening and learning, where partners are on equal footing and engage in a joint capacity building process;

facilitating learning from and across experiences, including cross-fertilisation between the different collaboration models tested.

During its runtime, European Spaces of Culture has been recognised and referred to as “a real innovation laboratory for EU international cultural relations” (Pia Ahrenkilde Hansen, Director-General of DG Education and Culture), that brought to life these principles through concrete action. The results of the programme, alongside other cultural relations initiatives, therefore have been laying the groundwork to shaping these policy documents into a fully-fledged strategy for EU cultural relations, one of the objectives of the Compass’ strategic direction.

At the same time, EU cultural relations remain institutionally underpowered, lacking broad political leadership and suffering from fragmented coordination between EU institutions, Member States and civil society stakeholders. It is also constrained by limited resources and inconsistent political prioritisation. These structural weaknesses risk undermining its potential.

With the future EU budget for 2028-2034 on the horizon, now is the time to show ambition to evolve the commitment to cultural relations in a rapidly evolving geopolitical landscape through long-term investment. The EU’s new Culture Compass for Europe elevates the political leadership and commitment to international cultural relations at a crucial time. Now this support is in the process of becoming operational in dialogue between the EU institutions and Member States.

European added value

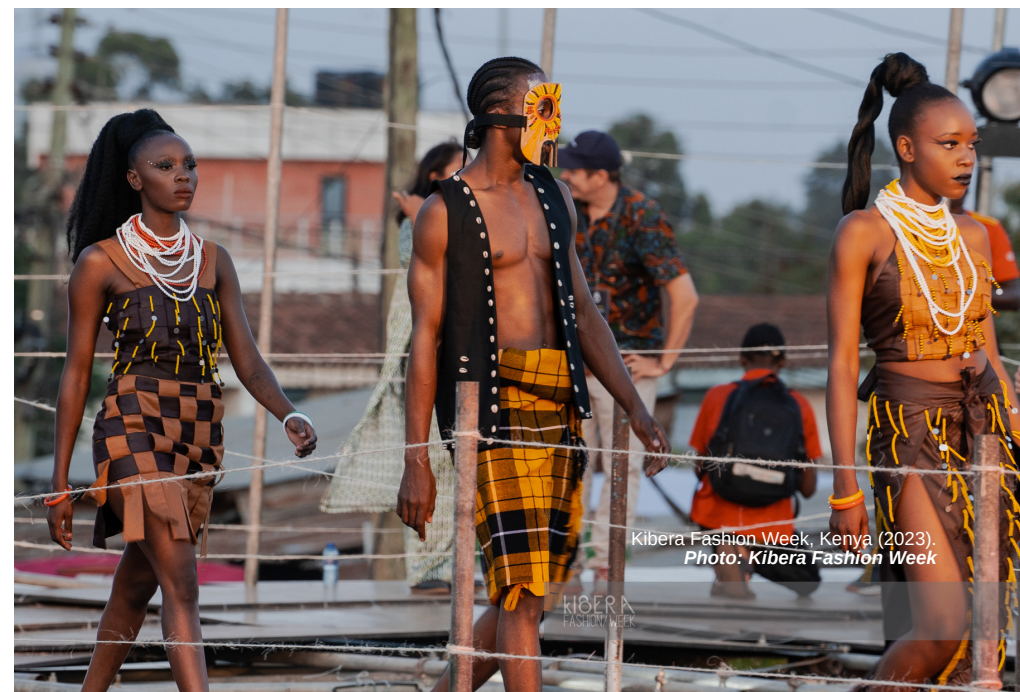
Zooming into the delivery of the 33 projects under European Spaces of Culture, a key strength is its truly global scope, able to accommodate and relate to vastly different contexts, challenges and opportunities. At the same time, a red thread of four main added values of the programme and the supported projects can be identified:

_____ All projects have been addressing EU priority topics – but through an organic lens of how these topics manifest culturally in different geographical settings, reinforcing not only the local relevance of these activities, but also what matters at EU level.

_____ European Spaces of Culture also demonstrates that the EU and Member States can step in when civic space is limited or shrinking – a situation increasingly visible across the globe.

_____ The programme’s financial and framework support steps in when structural and project funding for the cultural sector worldwide is shrinking. While the grants themselves do not exceed EUR 60,000, paired with a relatively short runtime and a leveraging effect, they do translate into meaningful investments.

_____ The programme, through its projects but also its framework of promoting and facilitating a community of practice, has boosted delivery capacity of European and local partners when implementing projects together, creating new or expanding existing networks. The programme also puts Team Europe into concrete practice.



Kibera Fashion Week, Kenya (2023).
Photo: Kibera Fashion Week

Through the immediate results and mid-term impact of these projects, European Spaces of Culture has offered both a global framework and local seeds for change, contributing to global trust building with the EU that is based on shared values and a collaborative spirit.

European Spaces of Culture has supported Member States in their international cultural collaboration, adding value to the mere sum of countries involved. The programme facilitates a stronger Team Europe approach to doing collaborative work. While, ultimately, convening Team Europe is a means to an end rather than the goal itself, involving a large plurality of EU Member States adds a variety of perspectives and strengths to the benefit of all involved. The EUNIC network, bringing together all EU Member States and associate countries, instinctively acts in a peer-oriented Team Europe spirit and continues to strengthen this convening of Member States.



Sin Limités, Uruguay (2022).
Photo: SODRE

The added layer of involving EU Delegation in the projects brings to the surface opportunities as well as challenges. The invitation to Delegations to collaborate can offer them conceptual clarity of cultural relations, networks of local cultural and civil society partners, higher visibility on priority topics and ultimately, a positive image of equal collaboration partner. In turn, EU Delegations can bring in expertise on funding, their own networks including additional EU Member States, expertise and networks in other areas of work, and where needed, influence to open doors.



Sayohati Sabz, Tajikistan (2022).
Photo: Bactria Cultural Centre

The potential of Delegations in these projects has yet to be fulfilled. Human and financial resources for cultural collaboration is limited – with culture often part of a multi-faceted portfolio –, communication on expected roles and responsibilities is not always provided, and cultural collaboration is often not recognised for its potential strategic relevance. The EEAS, and the Cultural Relations Platform have been developing ways to better support international cultural relations capacities in the EU Delegations. European Commission programmes at scale, often in partnership with EU National Institutes for Culture help deepen and support the EU's role as an international cultural relations actor.

European Spaces of Culture continues to evolve and adapt, also to region-specifics. Based on the results of the programme, the model has already been tailored to support collaborative projects in Sub-Saharan Africa as part of Africa-Europe Partnerships for Culture, funded by DG International Partnerships of the European Commission.

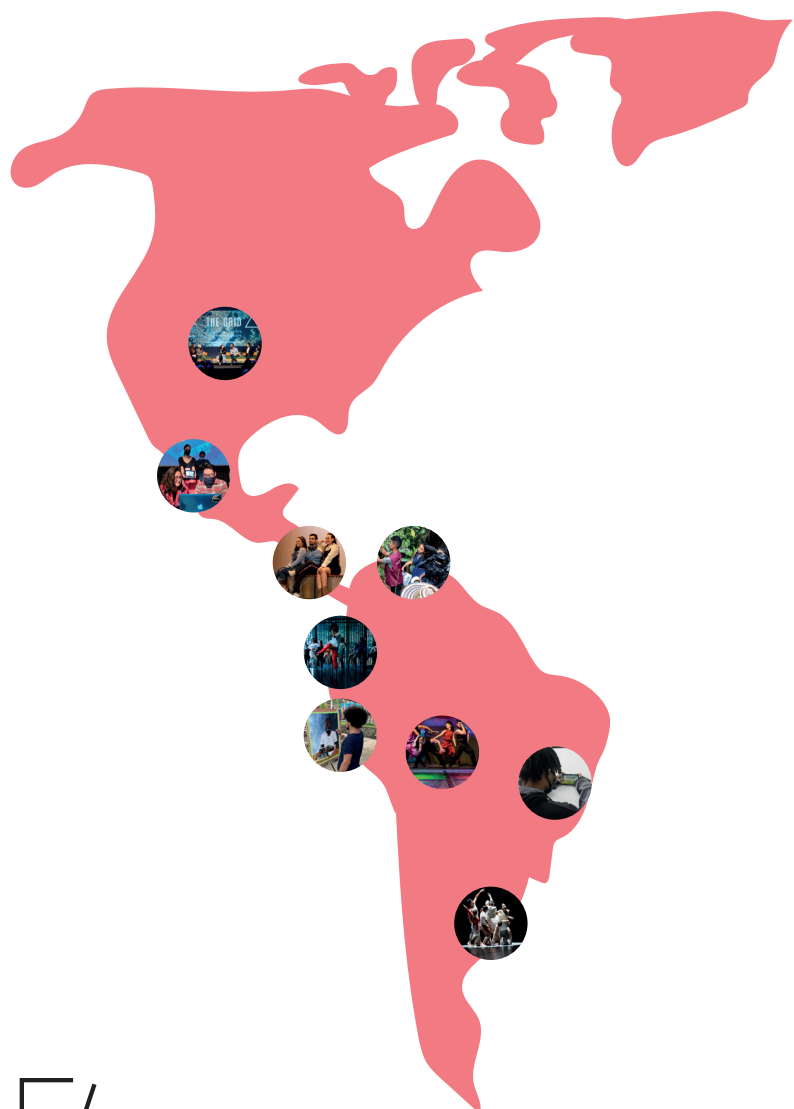
European Spaces of Culture continues to evolve and adapt.

This programme supports new and reshaped collaborations between artists and cultural organisations on the two continents. Africa-Europe Spaces of Culture will run until 2028, aiming to fund around 21 projects across Sub-Saharan Africa and to explore in depth approaches to fair collaboration in cultural relations on the continent.

In parallel, European Spaces of Culture will enter a new phase on a global scale in 2026, with a new programme foreseen until 2028. Due to its geopolitical strategic importance and to support the implementation of the EU Pact for the Mediterranean, and the flagship action on the Euro-Med in the Culture Compass, a specific partial focus is placed on the countries around the Southern Mediterranean. This offers opportunity to deepen difficult yet future-facing around cultural collaboration between the EU in the Southern Mediterranean and live up to the EU's aim to be a credible and reliable partner.

European Spaces of Culture

33 projects supported



Since 2019, 33 cultural relations projects were supported worldwide, taking place across 40 countries. More than 190 cultural and civil society partners worked together with 158 different branches of EUNIC members and 33 EU Delegations.

A variety of topics addressed in the projects, such as climate change, post-conflict reconciliation, democratic values, human rights, inclusion, decolonisation, digitalisation, and many more.

Read more about all the projects on europeanspacesofculture.eu.



European Spaces of Culture

Main messages from the eight projects supported in 2024-2025

Colombia – Danza en Construcción

Strengthening the upcoming generation of Colombian dance artists through a Colombian-European dialogue

- Non-formal education can significantly strengthen cultural ecosystems.
- Equity requires intentional design, not assumptions.
- International cultural cooperation is most effective when embedded in long-term capacity building.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

– ALL INCLUSIVE

Amplifying the creative voices of marginalised communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Inclusive cultural cooperation has strong transformative potential when engaging communities

- Coordinated programming within major cultural festivals and institutions extends the reach.
- Being part of European Spaces of Culture gives visibility and credibility to the initiative within the local cultural landscape.

Malawi – The Future is Female

Breaking barriers for female artists towards equitable representation in the Malawi arts sector

- Process-over-product approaches yield stronger learning outcomes and cohesion than competitive models.
- Integrating peer support and flexible participation strengthens accessibility to cultural programmes.
- Coaching and open dialogue supports evolving leadership among starting cultural managers.

Turkmenistan – Dance Turkmenistan!

Releasing the creativity of contemporary dance in Turkmenistan

- Cultural collaboration can open dialogue even in relatively closed contexts.
- International partnerships can create safe entry points for innovation.
- European Spaces of Culture provides unique leverage where local actors cannot act alone.

Bolivia – Festival Cultural Cuir

Advocating for the empowerment, rights and visibility of queer, dissident, and LGBTQ+ communities in Bolivia

- Culture can create safe spaces for visibility and dialogue, especially in fragile contexts.
- Fair collaboration strengthens legitimacy and community trust.
- European Spaces of Culture can function as a protective framework for rights-based cultural action.

Ethiopia – Stations of Culture – Stations of Dialogue

Co-creating dialogue for peace along the historic Ethio-Djibouti railway

- Dialogue is a process, not an event.
- Care and emotional resilience are essential components of cultural work.
- European Spaces of Culture can legitimise slow, trust-based approaches in fragile contexts.

Kazakhstan – Dybys: Female Voices Aloud

Opening a new needed space for public discourse on the role of women in contemporary Kazakhstan

- Ethical and conscious decision-making is central to fair cultural cooperation and working with marginalised groups.
- Flexibility and trust are essential in politically sensitive contexts.
- Voice and listening are forms of cultural infrastructure.

Indonesia – Design Matters Lab

Revolutionising sustainable design to tackle environmental emergency in Indonesia

- Culture and design can make sustainability visible and actionable.
- Innovation benefits from small-scale, locally grounded infrastructures.
- Fair collaboration enables experimentation without extractive dynamics.

Festival Cultural Cuir

Bolivia

Queer individuals face pervasive discrimination in various aspects of life in Bolivia, whether on the job market, in educational institutions or in healthcare. They often even endure mistreatment and abandonment by their own families.

In October 2024, Bolivia became the epicentre of a vibrant and transformative celebration with the realisation of the Festival Cultural Cuir: Celebrating Cuir Culture in Public Spaces. The festival positioned the city of La Paz as a key meeting point for "cuir"/queer realities in Bolivia and the region, filling the city with art, dialogue, and resistance. With the participation of 123 cuir artists in more than 20 scheduled activities distributed across 6 cultural spaces in La Paz, the festival attracted more than 2,000 attendees, establishing itself as a cultural and social reference for inclusion and diversity in the region.

The festival promoted expression and social integration through innovative activities that seek to make cuir realities visible in Bolivia and the region. It was fully organised by cuir individuals, building the cuir category as an organising principle collaborating with cuir artists and allies.

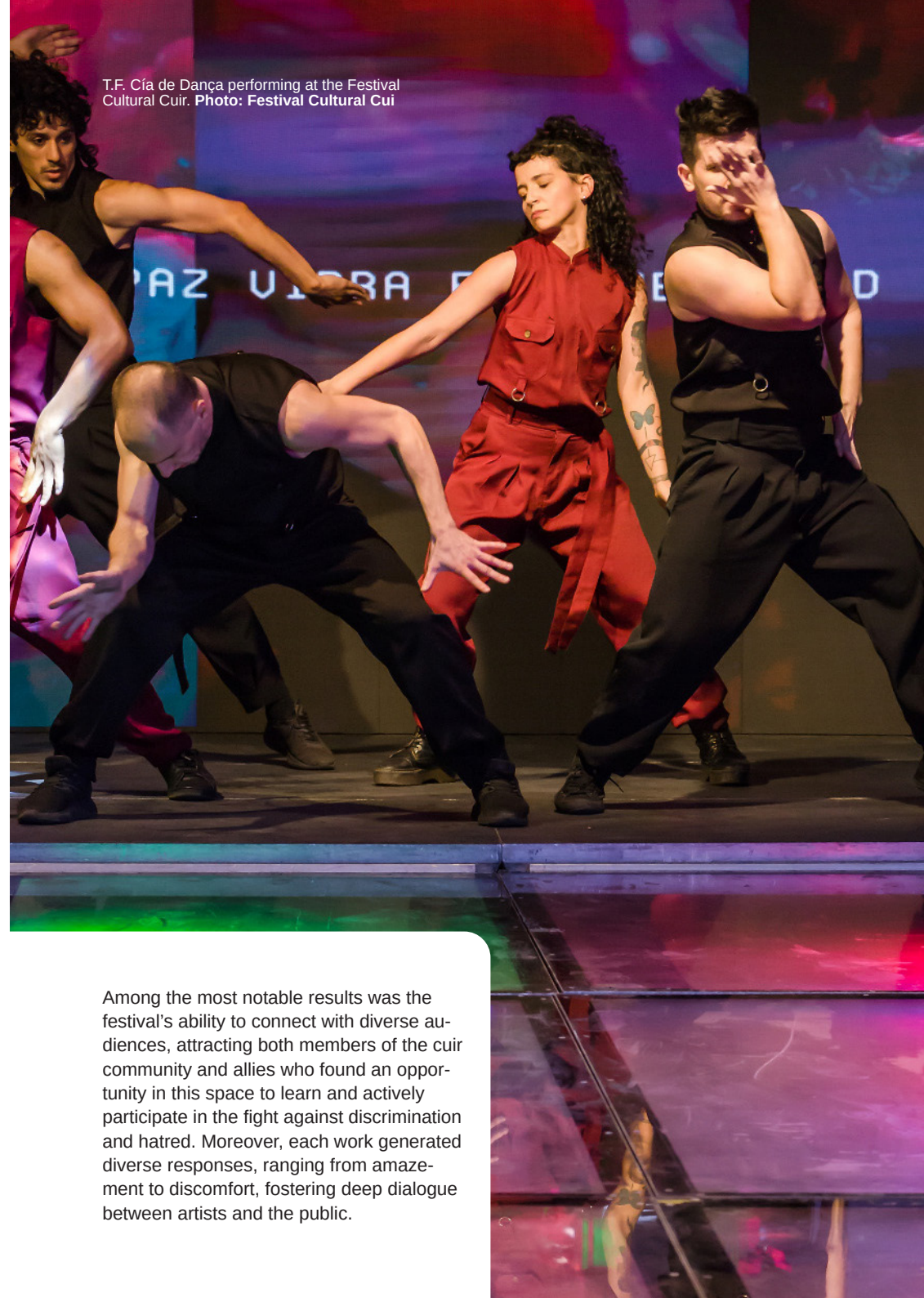
Political instability, social polarisation, and strikes created uncertainty and logistical difficulties. Safety and inclusion therefore had to be carefully managed in public-facing activities. Each of the festival's activities – from artistic exhibitions to literary workshops, performances, fashion shows, and film screenings – provided a space for reflection and the construction of new narratives about identity, gender, and diversity.

The festival not only demonstrated its cultural relevance but also its ability to generate a significant impact on Bolivia's social fabric. The festival reaffirmed that art and culture are powerful tools for fostering social change and transforming collective imaginaries.

"The festival not only makes our struggles visible but also transforms art into an act of resistance. It's a unique space that Bolivia needed."

Patricia Flores, facilitator of the festival's Literary workshop on cuir theory in literature

T.F. Cía de Dança performing at the Festival Cultural Cuir. Photo: Festival Cultural Cuir



Among the most notable results was the festival's ability to connect with diverse audiences, attracting both members of the cuir community and allies who found an opportunity in this space to learn and actively participate in the fight against discrimination and hatred. Moreover, each work generated diverse responses, ranging from amazement to discomfort, fostering deep dialogue between artists and the public.

Design Matters Lab

Indonesia

Indonesia faces increasing environmental urgency, ranking among the top three of countries in climate risks. Coastal areas, housing 180 million people, confront flooding, extreme heat, and rising sea levels. With the world's 4th largest population, Indonesia generates significant waste, overwhelming landfills at 18.99 million tonnes annually. Unregulated waste disposal worsens pollution of waterways, soil, and air, posing threats to ecosystems, biodiversity, and human health.

“We envisioned Design Matters Lab as a response to the urgent environmental crisis we face today. At this pivotal moment, collaboration across disciplines and communities is essential – drawing from the wisdom of nature to restore balance and harmony.”

Athina Dinda, CAST Foundation

Design Matters Lab brought together five Indonesian–European designer duos and five Indonesian microfactories (small production hubs designed for local and on-demand manufacturing) to turn climate and waste challenges into tangible circular solutions. Through online labs, a residency in Bandung, and intensive material experiments inside micro-factories, the teams co-created a set of prototype products that transform agricultural and urban waste into low-impact furniture, lighting, and everyday objects, including fashion items and accessibility features like tactile guiding blocks.

Along the way, designers and microfactories deepened skills in material exploration, storytelling and climate-responsive design, building a shared language across disciplines and cultures. For micro-factories, the programme opened a rare R&D space and new product directions; for designers, it offered hands-on experience with production realities and local value chains.

Beyond individual prototypes, Design Matters Lab demonstrated how small, distributed production ecosystems – when connected to international cultural networks – can trial fairer, lower-carbon futures from the Global South outward.

By situating the project's work within public and cultural spaces, it encouraged knowledge exchange, raised awareness of emerging sustainable practices, and amplified the project's key messages. This approach strengthened public understanding and visibility, positioning design not only as a creative practice but as a tool for advocacy, diplomacy, and systemic change.

The project made visible how arts and culture can drive climate action and sustainable development in ways that are relatable and grounded. Rather than talking about climate only through statistics, the project translated complex issues into material stories: coffee waste turned into seating, discarded plastics reimaged as everyday objects, and local resources reframed as future-oriented materials.



Designers Cokorda Suryanata and Ciana Martin working on their project ESPRESSO, turning coffee waste and coffee skins into functional furniture.
Photo: Design Matters Lab

European Spaces of Culture

Towards fair and equitable partnerships

At the heart of European Spaces of Culture lies the aim to create fair and equitable partnerships between European and partners worldwide. Aside from the project activities, results and impact, it is therefore vital to reflect on how the project teams evaluate their process of collaboration.

Partners reflected on, amongst other things, co-creation of the projects, modalities to ensure equal access to decision making, navigating differences in capacity and working cultures, and the roles and responsibilities taken by each partner. These reflections show the challenges and efforts to make this work, and they offer learnings for future projects.

“Equitable collaboration is not achieved through uniform roles, but through recognition of different capacities, contexts and forms of expertise.”

Reflection from a project team

“One of the greatest achievements was placing co-creation at the centre of the experience.”

The premise of all partnerships involved in the project was a diversity in sector knowledge, operational expertise, and financial and human capacity. Key for all project teams was to make this diversity work to ensure a true co-creation.

Exploring complementarity requires a good understanding of each partner's capacities, but also strengths and weaknesses. It also requires generosity of bringing in expertise, human resources and physical spaces. It was noted that hosting events at a diversity of partners' spaces strengthened the diverse nature of projects, allowing for broader reach and greater audience connection.

Continuous involvement and ownership among all partners were challenging in many projects, as were differences in human and financial capacity. In some cases, a lack of clarity around the continuous commitments of some partners led to misunderstandings and delays at critical moments of the project. It is therefore key to formalise clear agreements from the start on roles and responsibilities.

At the same time, equal ownership does not always mean equal workload or input. As one project team pointed out: “a natural but asymmetric distribution of roles: responsibilities were not ‘equal’ in volume, but were proportional to each partner's mandate, resources, and comparative strengths.”

“Trust-based cooperation, regular coordination meetings and transparent communication help prevent major miscommunication or delays.”

In all cases, a small number of partners took an active role in coordinating the project as main reference point for all – including financial management and reporting.

For the implementation part, most partnerships operated through task-oriented working groups based on knowledge, organisational expertise and capacity available. Regular meetings and accessible communication channels kept information flowing and task tracking on schedule. This division of responsibilities allowed partners to operate within their strengths but also learn from each other. This balance between joint strategic direction and autonomous execution contributed to a strong sense of shared responsibility for both the process and the outcomes of the project in most cases.

At the same time, these experiences sometimes demonstrated that even stronger shared leadership across all facets of the project by more partners, e.g., by rotation, could further enhanced the effectiveness of this model. Earlier joint planning with all partners involved could further enhance collaboration in these projects.

“Differences in working cultures and expectations required continuous negotiation.”

Entering multi-stakeholder and multi-cultural collaboration can come with additional sensitivities and bring to the surface power imbalances. Project teams reported that cross-cultural partnerships require not only project management, but also ongoing work in aligning work cultures, timeframes, and communication styles within cross-cultural communities.

When time and effort is put into aligning these layers, complex and experimental programmes can be delivered in a meaningful way respecting each partner's starting point. Setting up working modalities, including agreeing on terminology used and ways of mindful communication, will ensure partners feel safe and comfortable to enter the collaboration space.

“Sometimes it was not easy to find one solution for all, but we met offline, speaking about doubts, challenges, difficulties.”

As is the risk with multi-stakeholder projects, even the most thorough design and planning cannot prevent emergency moments leading to precarious situations that risk project quality.

In a few cases, signed project partners pulled out, mainly for capacity reasons, but partly also because roles and responsibilities were not understood. Other partners had to step in taking on additional tasks, which meant a further pressure on their capacity as well as a recalibration of working modalities. This underlines the need for clear task allocation, as well as a firm formalised commitment, from the start.

Some projects reported that, during critical moments during project runtime, unilateral decisions had to be made, which created tension among other partners. Reserving time to meet offline helps navigating doubts, challenges and difficulties faced during the project, especially when topics of ethics and political sensitivities are at stake.

“The experience reinforced the importance of partnership-driven cultural relations.”

EU Delegations are a required partner in all projects. With cultural expertise mainly lying with local stakeholders and the EUNIC partners, part of the process is to examine what roles EU Delegations can play.

In one case, high-level dialogue was facilitated by the EU Delegation to ensure the necessary approvals from the authorities and avoid delays in implementation. Some Delegations were also involved in conceptualising the project, as well as in deploying their networks – both in Europe and in the host country – connecting artists and experts to the projects. Most EU Delegations were reported to contribute to communication efforts through their (social media) channels.

Project teams reported that working together on their project strengthened collaboration between EUNIC members and the EU Delegation. However, further understanding of their potential role and commitment to invest human resources in contemporary cultural relations, is needed to enhance their participation in such projects.

“European partners acted as enablers, not agenda-setters, supporting locally defined priorities.”

The specific roles the EUNIC members played in the projects varied heavily, from taking a strong leading role in coordination across the board, to relatively small and specific interventions.

In general, it can be concluded that all projects prioritised a locally led approach, where local organisations lead from context and content point of view, ensuring relevance and contextual alignment, and local and traditional knowledge application and leadership were prominent.

EUNIC partners contributed with, amongst others, funding, networks and visibility, reinforcing the European dimension and adding to diversity of perspectives represented, and other support enabling space for artistic creation – in that way, supporting experimentation rather than imposing formats. Teams reported that this added legitimacy to the projects.

Bringing together European and non-European actors for these projects certainly adds value with different perspectives, strengths and capacities, when all rallying behind the same objectives and purpose of a project. The institutional framework of EUNIC clusters helps in providing a structure to convene these actors. In countries where no cluster is established, this proved to be a limitation in coordinating the European input. Looking across borders to EUNIC presence in neighbouring countries helped fill these voids.

EUNIC is committed to explore and share what fair collaboration in cultural relations looks like for its members and partners. As such, EUNIC's programmes place emphasis on processes of shaping equitable and fair partnerships, and asking pertinent questions – as individuals, as professionals and as organisations operating within a system – to challenge and improve cultural relations practices, policies and procedures when engaging in cultural relations activities.

Fair collaboration in cultural relations

A concrete set of resources, Not a toolkit! Fair collaboration in cultural relations: a reflAction, is the result of a commission to six independent experts, providing concrete and user-centred tools and frameworks to support practitioners working in the field of cultural relations. Find out more about these resources on eunic.eu/fair-collaboration.

ALL INCLUSIVE

Bosnia and Herzegovina

People with disabilities, minorities like Roma and Sinti, and refugees in Bosnia and Herzegovina face discrimination and dehumanisation on a daily basis. Persistent tensions and unaddressed challenges remain. Despite advances in legislation, comprehensive inclusive practices are still lacking.

ALL INCLUSIVE transformed theatre stages, cultural institutions and community spaces in Bosnia and Herzegovina into vibrant spaces of dialogue, encounter and artistic co-creation. Through a special international programme at the MESS Theatre Festival, inclusive workshops, two exhibitions and the production of the original theatre performance PULSE, the project amplified voices that are too often unheard – including Roma and Sinti communities, people with disabilities and people on the move.

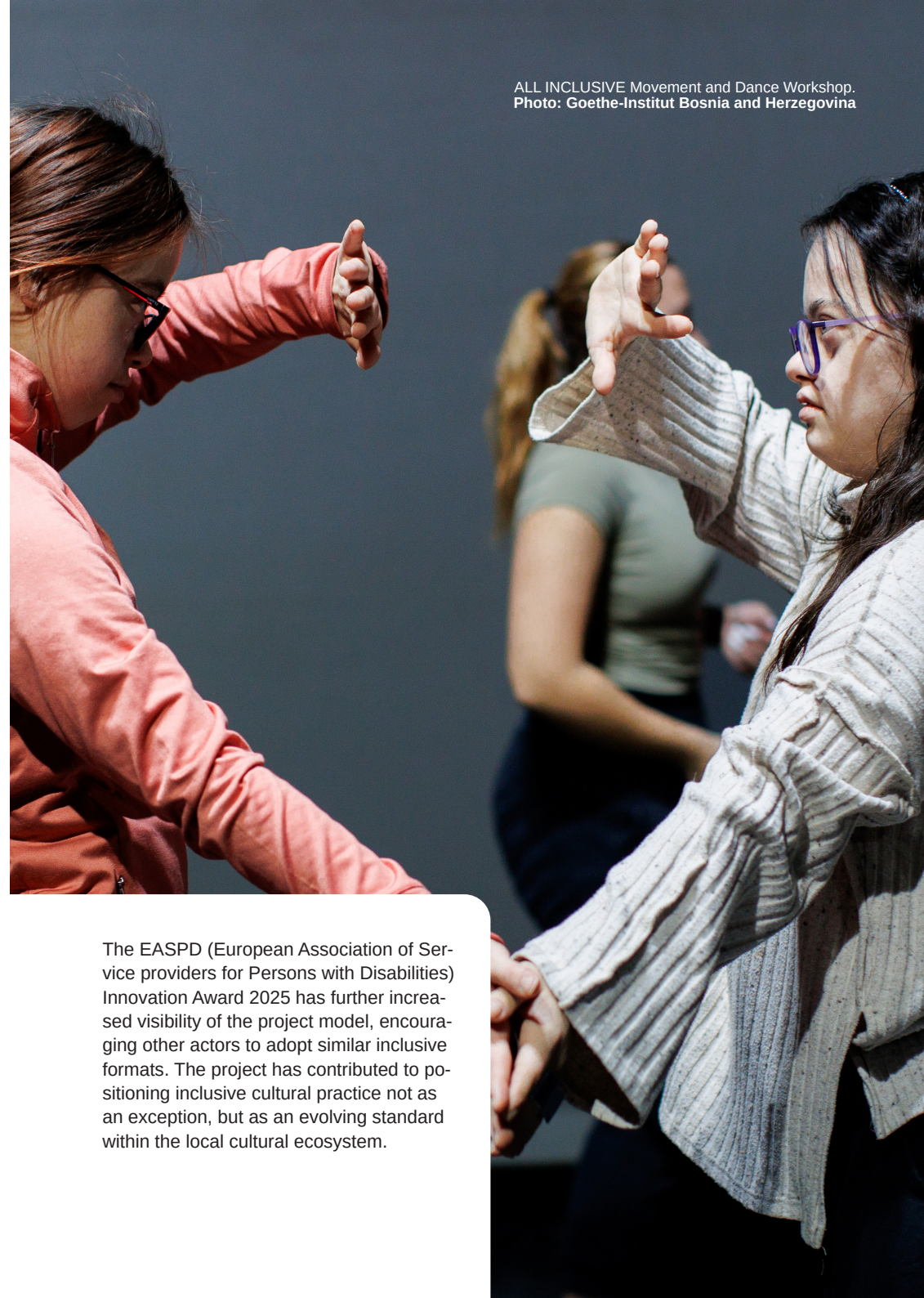
Over 1,200 spectators attended the performances, and more than 1,500 visitors experienced the exhibitions. Workshops in dance, music and storytelling brought together participants of diverse backgrounds in safe and welcoming environments, fostering artistic expression, mutual understanding and confidence. The inclusive theatre production PULSE, now part of the SARTR War Theatre repertoire, stands as a lasting artistic legacy of the project.

ALL INCLUSIVE demonstrated how culture can actively promote equality, artistic freedom and social cohesion, rather than merely thematise them. By strengthening collaboration between European and Bosnian partners and creating new networks for inclusive cultural work, the project leaves behind more than events – it leaves a sustainable platform for continued cooperation and inclusive cultural practice.

The project had a tangible impact on participants from marginalised communities. Workshops strengthened artistic skills, confidence and visibility. Participants reported feeling welcomed and empowered within institutional cultural spaces. For audiences, performances and discussions created opportunities to reflect on migration, disability rights and discrimination.

“As with all performances that deal with sensitive topics, the greatest praise goes to the authors and actors for the courage it takes to stand in front of people, point out injustices, and speak the truth.”

Audience feedback



ALL INCLUSIVE Movement and Dance Workshop.
Photo: Goethe-Institut Bosnia and Herzegovina

The EASPD (European Association of Service providers for Persons with Disabilities) Innovation Award 2025 has further increased visibility of the project model, encouraging other actors to adopt similar inclusive formats. The project has contributed to positioning inclusive cultural practice not as an exception, but as an evolving standard within the local cultural ecosystem.

Stations of Culture – Stations of Dialogue

Ethiopia

Ethiopia's rich cultural tradition and openness to cultural dialogue with external actors contrast with a shrinking space for civil society and rising financial challenges. With the country embarking on an ambitious National Dialogue process within a post-conflict setting featuring a rise in local and global tensions, the appetite for frank dialogue is substantial throughout the country.

“This is a place where trade, migration, and memory blur the lines between cultural origins. It's not about finding a fixed identity but witnessing how people shape and reshape culture together.”

Rediet Haddis, film and textile artist

Stations of Culture - Stations of Dialogue in Ethiopia was a multidisciplinary cultural initiative conceived as a project to create a platform to foster dialogue, critical reflection, and creative exchange through the arts. Originally imagined as a site-specific exploration of the historic Ethio-Djibouti railway, the project soon expanded its scope to encompass other parts of Ethiopia. This organic evolution allowed the initiative to respond more fluidly to pressing local issues while maintaining the central theme of 'stations' as symbolic spaces of encounter, transition, and dialogue.

57 participating artists – from a variety of artistic disciplines – and collaborators explored a wide range of interconnected themes: the layered histories embedded in Ethiopia's urban-architectural landscapes, the role of archives – both formal and living – in shaping collective memory, and the challenges faced by internally displaced communities. By weaving these elements together, the project became not only an artistic journey but also a collective exercise in remembering, questioning, and reimagining.

The coexistence of different mediums reflected the heterogeneity of Ethiopian culture itself, while also opening up possibilities for interdisciplinary collaboration between Ethiopian and European partners. Such collaborations resulted in cross-pollination of ideas that turned each 'station' into a dynamic and evolving site of cultural exchange.

Outputs of the project were intentionally public facing, with a focus on accessibility and participation. Exhibitions and installations invited audiences to engage directly with artworks that interrogated questions of cultural exchange, heritage, displacement, and identity.

By situating artistic practice within lived spaces – railway lines, historical neighbourhoods, and shelters for internally displaced people – the project bridged the gap between cultural production and social reality. In doing so, it underscored the role of art not merely as representation, but as an active participant in shaping dialogue, understanding, and transformation.



The Inner Peace Project, presented by by KATIM Disability Awareness and Support. Photo: Bemnet Fekadu

European Spaces of Culture

and the UN Sustainable Development Goals

EUNIC and its partners are well-placed to play a leading role in making explicit how cultural relations can contribute to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals, not least through European Spaces of Culture.

With SDG 17: “Partnerships for the Goals” apparent throughout European Spaces of Culture, all eight projects under European Spaces of Culture 2024-2025 proposed and reported on alignment with various SDGs. Read below snippets of how this materialised concretely in the projects.

Colombia – Danza en Construcción

A total of 16 workshop educational laboratories were held. A careful curatorial process was carried out to select European and Colombian choreographers, who were required to submit methodological frameworks of didactic tools for their workshop implementation.

Participants indicated sector qualification and training needs that Danza en Construcción was able to address.



Bosnia and Herzegovina – ALL INCLUSIVE

By enabling equal participation in artistic creation and public cultural life, the project reduced barriers to representation and visibility.

The inclusive theatre production PULSE placed performers with and without disabilities on equal footing within a mainstream theatre institution, challenging dominant narratives and redefining inclusion in practice.



Bolivia – Festival Cultural Cuir

One campaign focused on body autonomy, providing information on sexual and reproductive health and access to inclusive medical services.

As a result, more than 500 informational guides were distributed, and partnerships with local health networks were established to ensure adequate services for diverse communities.



Ethiopia – Stations of Culture – Stations of Dialogue

The project responded to a context marked by social fragmentation, post-conflict tensions, and restricted spaces for dialogue by using culture as a platform for exchange, listening, and civic expression. Through artist-led projects and collective processes, it created non-confrontational spaces where complex social realities could be addressed.



Malawi – The Future is Female

The project directly advanced gender equality in Malawi's creative sector by equipping over 40 women artists with new skills, confidence, and professional visibility. Through mentorship, leadership training, and creative bootcamps, participants strengthened their capacity to take up space in a male-dominated industry.

The project also fostered peer-to-peer support networks, enabling women to collaborate across disciplines and challenge systemic barriers to participation



Kazakhstan – Dybys: Female Voices Aloud

The project addressed gender inequality by amplifying women's voices that are often silenced or marginalised in public discourse. By centring women's lived experiences across generations, professions, and regions, the project challenged gender stereotypes and created space for feminist knowledge, agency, and representation.



Turkmenistan – Dance Turkmenistan!

By supporting the professionalisation of independent dancers and expanding their artistic competencies, the project contributed to improving working conditions and future employment opportunities in a highly restricted cultural labour market.

Independent dancers gained professional training and international exposure, the residency created pathways towards structured artistic careers beyond informal or precarious work, and there are ambitions to establish new training centres.



Indonesia – Design Matters Lab

The core programme design – pairing designers with micro-factories to work with waste or low-impact materials and supporting them via material-science and storytelling mentorship – directly targeted more sustainable forms of production and product development.

Participants reported insights gained into moving from “using waste materials” to more intentional, design-led circular products, reconsider material sourcing, durability, and end-of-life scenarios, and into shifting their practice from “using sustainable materials” to thinking in terms of full material lifecycles.



Dybys: Female Voices Aloud

Kazakhstan

Various activist and civil society initiatives are working on raising awareness of gender equality and women's rights in Kazakhstan, but there is still a lack of artistic and cultural discussion around the topic. There are few instruments that bring the issue to a broader audience, including men, and demonstrations and public meetings by female NGOs are often blocked by the government.

“We believe this experience demonstrates that the themes we explored are timely and significant – both for the participants themselves and for the women they inspire through their example, resilience, and love for what they do to create a more just and safe society.”

Dybys Project Team

The project Dybys: Female Voices Aloud opened an underrepresented and unheard chapter in contemporary Kazakhstan: the influence of women in social and political changes. The project gave voice to the role of women in Kazakh society, the commitment to combating violence against women and the desire to make the voices of female collectives audible.

Dybys (Kazakh for “sound” or “voice”) sought to illuminate the experiences of Kazakhstani women from various unheard groups, exploring their impact on societal, cultural, academic and political transformations. The project invited listeners to delve into audio stories voiced by women of different generations and backgrounds, depicting their lives and struggles in both urban and rural settings across Kazakhstan.

These narratives especially emphasise the challenges faced by women, including LGBTQ+ individuals, who confront significant prejudice, gender stereotypes and discrimination. Highlighting the restricted access to safe and inclusive spaces, the project was particularly poignant for women from rural areas, facilitating their self-expression and exploration of gender identity.

The initiative features 12 audio stories (both in Kazakh and Russian), based on in-depth interviews with women who are change-makers or whose voices have traditionally been marginalised. The audio stories are supplemented by original soundtracks symbiotically blending soundscapes, electronic music, and historical archive material. In addition, a special digital tool (Voice Constructor) allows users to create their own story, using the voice distortion technology, a selection of soundscape recordings and electronic music samples.

After conducting the research and interviews, and editing and publishing the videos, the project was presented in September 2025 in Almaty, in the presence of interviewees and an invite-only circle of interested audience in a deliberate intimate and trusting setting.



Interviewing heroine Zhanel Shanan. Photo: bULT

Danza en Construcción Colombia

In a society historically hit by violence, conflict and factors of inequality, dance is a resource for the reconstitution of social fabric, the preservation of its memory, the interrelation of its languages and its pluralities. While local institutions are currently showing renewed interest in promoting this intrinsic diversity and the role of dance in the lasting peace, there is a pressing need to provide better support for tomorrow's talent.

"The project enabled a vital and necessary strengthening of the national creative fabric: the act of encounter and the exchange of experiences, questions, and human knowledge."

Patrick Stenberg, Centro Nacional de las Artes

Danza en Construcción (Dance in Construction) in Colombia became a true milestone in strengthening the dance community by fostering an intercultural and cross-border dialogue between choreographers and cultural managers from the European diaspora and Colombian choreographers. Through meetings methodologically oriented towards co-creation and the construction of intercultural knowledge, dance artists found a fertile space to exchange visions and enrich their creative processes.

One of the main aims of the project was to strengthen the creative capacities of emerging choreographers by linking the challenges of writing and dramaturgy with contemporary issues such as decoloniality, gender diversity, cultural pluriversality, and climate change – while simultaneously innovating in dance and deconstructing existing models in dialogue with the specific context of Colombia's post-conflict era. This perspective included young artists who work with untrained dancers, people with disabilities, and older adults, as well as the participation and diversification of the artistic process.

The project also opened a space for reflection on diasporic processes in arts and dance, showing how migration and displacement enrich artistic practices and generate new forms of memory and resistance. Strengthening this axis would allow continuity and deepen cultural cooperation.

This project's Sustainability Forum emerged as an academic, reflective, and intercultural space for collective construction, where cultural managers, representatives from partner institutions, and experts from the dance and arts sectors engaged in open, horizontal dialogue and active participation.

For the first time in Colombia, a network of alliances was established among public and private sector institutions, embassies, universities, and language teaching institutions with the aim of implementing a high-impact training and creation project for the dance community.



Colombian and European choreographers worked alongside emerging artists and choreographers at a Danza en Construcción Workshop. Photo: Camilo Chong

Insights from the jury

Lynn Fu

For each round of European Spaces of Culture, project selection is done by groups of independent cultural relations experts. These experts come from different fields and backgrounds and have different experiences, but all share a deep understanding of contemporary cultural relations.

For the latest round of projects, Avril Joffe (economic sociologist and Post Graduate Coordinator of the Cultural Policy and Management Department at the Wits School of Arts), Kateryna Botanova (cultural critic, journalist, curator, former director of Foundation Center for Contemporary Art Kyiv and co-curator of multidisciplinary biennial Culturescape), Marijana Cvetković (independent cultural manager and cofounder of the Platform for theory and practice of the common) and Lynn Fu (Shanghai and New York based independent curator, consultant and producer).

Lynn Fu also coordinated the Diverse As We Are project in Shanghai in 2022, supported by European Spaces of Culture. From both perspectives, Lynn shared her insights into the relevance of the European Spaces of Culture programme and the projects, fair collaboration and where EU cultural relations should go next.



“When partnerships are built patiently and with trust, they can strengthen networks and confidence among local cultural actors in very meaningful ways.”

In 2022, you coordinated the European Spaces of Culture project Diverse As We Are (DAWA). Could you tell us a bit more about DAWA?

DAWA is the first international festival of its kind in China that embraces diversity, social inclusion and equal participation. It brought together artists, cultural organizations and disability communities from China and Europe through various exhibitions, live performances, movie screenings, workshops, talks and sports activities. What made it special for me was seeing accessibility treated as a creative driver rather than a constraint, as well as a safe space where artistic exchange and social inclusion could genuinely inform each other.

In a context such as China, how can international cultural relations work contribute to strengthening the cultural and civil society actors?

From my experience, international cultural relations can create valuable breathing space for exchange. In China, where contexts can be complex, culture often allows people to meet around shared interests - artmaking, learning, experimenting. When partnerships are built patiently and with trust, they can strengthen networks and confidence among local cultural actors in very meaningful ways.

What do you think is the added value of European Spaces of Culture as a programme?

What I appreciate about European Spaces of Culture is its emphasis on collaboration from the start. Projects are encouraged to grow from local realities rather than applying a fixed model. And the programme often works as a catalyst - bringing together partners who might not otherwise collaborate and creating relationships that continue beyond the project itself.

“In my experience, fair collaboration starts with honest conversations early on - about expectations, resources and decision-making.”

In today's world, ensuring fair partnerships and shared ownership is key to doing meaningful cultural relations work. How do you think this can be achieved best?

In my experience, fair collaboration starts with honest conversations early on - about expectations, resources and decision-making. Co-designing projects with local partners is essential, but so is recognizing that partners bring different capacities and contexts. Shared ownership does not mean everyone does the same thing, but it does mean everyone has a real voice in shaping the direction of the work.

You joined the jury for the last round of selection, reading and evaluating the incoming proposals. What were your impressions of the process and incoming applications, also having been 'on the other side' of the process?

Having led and coordinated a project myself, it was fascinating to sit on the other side of the process. What impressed me the most was the diversity of contexts and ideas - from environmental design to inclusive performing arts. The proposals that stood out were those where partnerships felt genuine and locally grounded, rather than projects driven primarily by artistic ambition alone.

Reading the reflections from the projects, what strikes you the most?

What struck me the most was how often project teams reflected on the collaboration process itself. Many mentioned the time and effort needed to navigate different working cultures, expectations and capacities. It is a good reminder that international cultural relations are not only about producing events, but about building trust and learning how to work together.

What steps do you feel still need to be taken to take EU cultural relations practice to the next level?

I think the next step would be supporting longer-term relationships. Many collaborations only begin to find their rhythm just as the project funding ends. Investing more in continuity, and in the curators, cultural managers and intermediaries who hold these partnerships together would help cultural relations grow in a more sustainable and meaningful way.

“Investing more in continuity, and in the curators, cultural managers and intermediaries who hold these partnerships together would help cultural relations grow in a more sustainable and meaningful way.”



Performance of Midnight Movie,
with Leona and Alice Hu Xiaoshu



'Gala', the opening performance of DAWA

The Future is Female

Malawi

Female participation in Malawi's cultural and creative landscape remains notably low, a reality echoed by artists, organisers, and cultural stakeholders across disciplines. Festival lineups often feature only one or two women, and applications from female creatives are disproportionately few. Malawi's broader creative ecosystem is also characterised by limited cross-disciplinary collaboration. Constrained resources and economic precarity have fostered competition rather than co-creation, producing a fragmented artistic landscape with uneven opportunities for women.

"The project has challenged me to be bold in putting my work out there."

Diana Nkhoma, participating artist

These observations and challenges provided the foundation for The Future is Female project. The Future is Female began as an experimental, one-of-a-kind initiative to uplift women in the arts through capacity building, co-creation, and showcasing. The project's vision was to travel with cohorts of women across Malawi, inviting them to discover their country in a new way while equipping them with tools to create together.

The project introduced interdisciplinary collaboration in a Malawian context where such practice is rare, and creative disciplines often operate in isolation. This experimental approach opened new possibilities for artmaking and community building. A series of bootcamps provided a more structured framework, equipping female creatives with practical skills and clear examples of how different artistic disciplines can merge into coherent, collaborative products.

Expanding into three additional, unplanned bootcamps, the project reached a significantly larger and more diverse group of female creatives than initially planned. This adaptive approach deepened impact by fostering interdisciplinary collaboration, strengthening creative capacity, and enhancing visibility for women in the arts.

While such a new approach to peer-learning is not without challenges of group dynamics and intercultural sensitivities, across all project phases participating artists moved from individual practitioners to collaborative creative leaders. The project arc produced consistent, observable shifts in voice, agency and professional identity, turning challenges into learning moments and opportunity.

Looking ahead, the project partners see ample potential to expand this model. With adequate funding, it can replicate bootcamps in more regions, bring in specialised trainers, and build pathways for participants to continue their journeys after the camps, whether through residencies, international exchanges, or entrepreneurial support. The demand is real, the thirst for growth is strong, and the groundwork is in place.

Participants of a bootcamp on installation practice and spatial storytelling. Photo: Zomba Arts Platform



Dance Turkmenistan!

Turkmenistan

Interest in new dance forms is on the rise in Turkmenistan, but the country lacks professional trainers and structural support for contemporary dance. In the early 2000's, ballet performances disappeared from Turkmenistan, and the Ashgabat Opera-Ballet Theatre was destroyed. For decades, only folkloric dances were seen on stage. Other, more contemporary forms currently exist at private and informal level only.

“The project promoted cultural cooperation between two Central Asian countries and supported development of the dance culture in both countries through expertise and experience sharing. We feel and hope it will lead to more and greater-scale regional projects.”

Jeanne Tulendy, Jolda Dance Theatre

The project Dance Turkmenistan! brought the first contemporary dance performance produced in Turkmenistan and the first international cooperation in the field of dance in the country. The project launched an unexpected dialogue between ancient Turkmen dance forms and European contemporary dance trends using digital arts on scene. For the first time, a professional training in contemporary dance was provided to Turkmen dancers, leading to a regional dance network and artistic collaborations within Central Asia through a residency in Almaty (Kazakhstan).

The project's highlight was the creation and world premiere of the dance performance RITUALS in May 2025 at the Mukam Palace in Ashgabat. The performance blended the Turkmen traditional dance Kushtdepdi with contemporary European choreography and digital multimedia art. It marked an unprecedented artistic development after decades during which only folkloric performances were publicly permitted in Turkmenistan.

In September and October 2025, three independent Turkmen dancers took part in a contemporary dance residency in Almaty. The residency aimed at supporting the development of contemporary dance in Turkmenistan and further highlighted the project's role in opening new opportunities for collaboration, cultural exchange, and artistic freedom, providing lasting inspiration for both the dancers and the host institution.

The project provided concrete examples of successful cooperation and artistic production that can support the development of more open cultural policies. The Turkmen authorities' warm reception of the show further demonstrated its positive influence and its potential to shape a more supportive environment for contemporary artistic practices.

Generally isolated from the external cultural world, the Turkmen public showed strong interest in contemporary dance during the project, with audience feedback proving exceptionally positive.

The strong interest shown by local dancers, audiences, and international partners suggests that this momentum can lead to new collaborations and a broader recognition of contemporary arts within the Turkmen cultural landscape.



Performance of PULSE at the Mukam Palace in Ashgabat. Photo: EU Delegation to Turkmenistan

Beyond European Spaces of Culture

Sustaining the projects

European Spaces of Culture grants are relatively short-term, for a period of 12 to 18 months. While this creates a framework for concentrated activity and is in correspondence with the maximum grant amount of EUR 60,000, the question of project sustainability comes up quickly in the process.

The programme therefore stands for projects that do not focus on one-off events, but rather for long-standing partnership building that creates future opportunities of diverse funding, long-term strategic thinking and scaling up of activities.

“European Spaces of Culture represents an important instrument for strengthening collaborative, value-based cultural relations. The programme also highlighted the importance of long-term partnership building rather than one-off cultural events.”

Reflection from a project team

While longer-term perspectives for the eight latest projects is difficult to assess just after their completion, some immediate leads for future projects or activities can be seen, as well as expanded and deepened partnerships ‘beyond European Spaces of Culture’.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the inclusive theatre production PULSE has been integrated into the Sarajevo War Theatre SARTR repertoire until 2026, ensuring long-term visibility and continued audience engagement. Other prominent institutions have expressed commitment to continuing inclusive programming. In addition, a direct follow-up is already secured through the project “ReWeave – Slow Fashion for Shared Futures,” which builds on the partnerships and community networks established within ALL INCLUSIVE and is supported by the EUNIC Cluster Fund, EUNIC’s most important internal financial instrument, financed by voluntary contributions by members.

In Colombia, Danza en Construcción will continue – under the name Danza en Expansión – supported by the EUNIC Cluster Fund as well. Rooted in the learning process of the first edition, Danza en Expansión proposes a model of cultural cooperation that works on being more inclusive, sustainable and co-owned, and goes beyond the capital Bogotá.

In Indonesia, project partners report that Design Matters Lab’s main immediate legacy is not a fixed programme structure, but a set of relationships, practices, and narratives that partners are already re-deploying in new configurations, such as hybrid capacity building, cross-cultural residencies, micro-factory co-creation and integrate policy and government actors in partnerships from the start.

In Kazakhstan, the plan is to continue Dybys: Female Voices Aloud for the next years, with more audio and video stories added, including self-made stories by visitors to the platform, and to expand the project to a cultural and urbanistic project about feminist locations in Almaty.

“Participants noted that sustainability is not only about ‘securing another grant’, but also about opening pathways for business models, micro-factory income streams, and designer livelihoods that can carry forward the work in market and policy arenas.”

Reflection from a project team

All project teams reflected on the potential of continuing or future editions of their projects. Aside from individual reflections on project- or sector-specific adaptations or changes in strategy, some key learnings that they are taking on for project sustainability are:

It is important to seek and strengthen relationships with the private sector and international organisations. Aside from EU funding, public-private models such as the Franco-German and Swiss cultural funds have provided valuable input that inspires and enriches this initiative. In particular, the diasporic angle can be crucial to expanding and opening horizons both in the short and long term.

Continued dialogue with the EU Delegation and strategic alignment with relevant EU priorities, e.g., on climate action, human rights, support to local cultural sectors, helps to enhance the chances of future projects.

Public institutions and policy makers need to stay engaged to ensure buy-in from important stakeholders at national level. Planning for outreach and advocacy to these target groups from the start of the projects is key.

Continued cooperation among the partners is crucial, even on other projects and activities to keep momentum, and the future development of these projects should remain under discussion.

Including strategies on the future potential (apart from funding) and realistic opportunities for the project is key from the very beginning. It is recommended to take on learnings throughout the runtime and be prepared for the period after the initial funding.

Beyond European Spaces of Culture

Sustaining the projects

With the relatively short runtime of projects, European Spaces of Culture aims to ignite further collaboration, scaling of projects and most of all, plant seeds for sustainable cultural relations practice.

Over the years, many projects have been able to share produced works and performances, evolve, scale up and even branch out to other continents, finding alternative funding, pooling resources from the partners involved, teaming up with new partners and keeping the spirit of collaboration alive.



PoN! – A Ilha dos Tatus, supported in 2022, was a specially designed mobile game as an innovative way of addressing climate change to young audiences in Brazil, accompanied by a pedagogical toolkit.

After the funding ended in 2022, several educational boards at city and state level in Brazil started incorporating the game and the toolkit in their local school curriculums.

The game was also translated into several Spanish, English and German to cater for audiences across Latin America and even in Europe, and was presented at numerous high-level occasions, including COP30 in Bélem. In 2025, PoN was established as a legal entity in Brazil.

Photo: Alexandre Costa / Ag. Pará



The Cameroonian Cultural Network (CCN) was piloted in 2022 as a platform aiming to increase the mobility of artistic productions throughout Cameroon.

Ever since, the CCN has asserted itself as a structural movement in Cameroon, supported among others by the EU funding and different EU Member States' contributions.

An increased number of artists have been supported, connecting territories and building a sustainable professional dynamic within the performing arts, visual arts, and the creative and cultural industries.

Photo: Tegua photography



The first **International Community Film Festival** in Colombia, supported in 2023, brought together local film production companies from regions most affected by Colombia's armed conflict to show the work they have created as part of the reconciliation process.

In 2025, the festival expanded across three continents: in Colombia, Bangladesh and Kenya, cinema collectives and planted seeds for new generations of film makers across the globe. It also signalled an unprecedented large-scale South-to-South community film production carried out by teams trained through the programme.

Photo: Historias en Kilómetros



AfrOeste, initiated in 2022 under European Spaces of Culture, is a network for the exchange, learning, and dissemination of contemporary artistic creativity from Afro-descendant communities in Latin America, building bridges in ten countries on both sides of the Atlantic.

Carried by continuing collaborations across the Atlantic, the AfrOeste programme remains active and regularly issues calls for mobility and residencies for Afro-descendant and African creators and cultural managers. Often these residencies result in co-created pieces and performances.

Photo: Centro Cultural de España en Bata



Project partners

Thanks go out to the partners implementing the European Spaces of Culture projects in 2024-2025:

Bolivia

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Bosnia and Herzegovina

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Colombia

Centro Nacional de las Artes, Instituto Distrital de las Artes – Idartes Bogotá, Gerencia de Danza, Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Maestría Interdisciplinar en Teatro y Artes vivas, Red de Artes Vivas, Danza común, Embassy of Spain, Alliance Française, Institut français, Goethe-Institut, Embassy of the Netherlands, Embassy of Switzerland, and the EU Delegation to Colombia

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Addis Street Art, Addis Ababa University, Urban Center, Yared Music School, Tibebe Adebabay, Alliance EthioFrançaise, Embassy of Malta, British Council, Embassy of Austria, Embassy of Luxembourg, Camões, I.P., Embassy of Spain, Goethe-Institut, Italian Cultural Institute, and the EU Delegation to Ethiopia

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Kazakhstan

bULt Community, Feminist Initiative "Feminita", Urban Forum, Goethe-Institut, Alliance Française, and the EU Delegation to Kazakhstan

Malawi

Zomba Arts Platform, Music Crossroads Malawi, Tumaini Letu, British Council, Embassy of Ireland, British Council South Africa, Goethe-Institut South Africa, and the EU Delegation to Malawi

Turkmenistan

Ministry of Culture, Turkmen State Dance Ensemble, State Dance Ensemble Mengli, Ashgabat Mukamlar Palace Theatre, Almaty Jolda Dance Theatre (Kazakhstan), Institut français, Embassy of Italy, Goethe-Institut Kazakhstan, and the EU Delegation to Turkmenistan

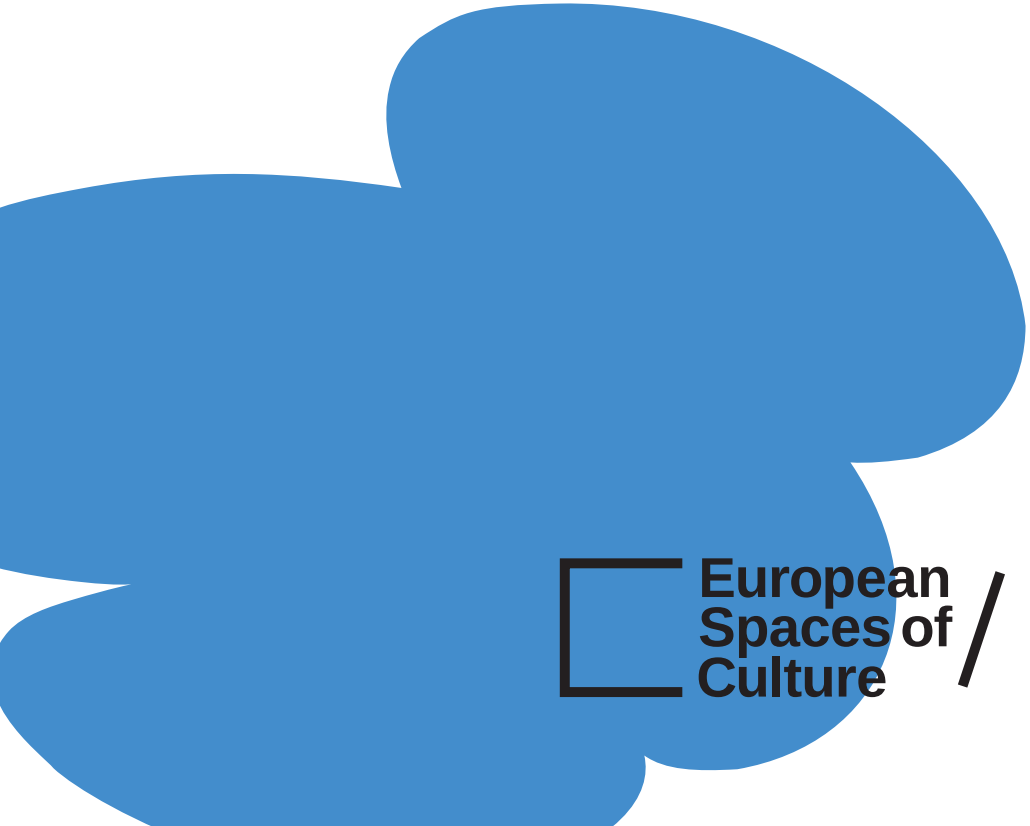
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