

Interview guide Estonian Institute

1. How is the future of Culture developing in Hungary?

a. Under the current development?

that is the hardest question of all, because I don't know how the Hungarian culture are going to develop because everything is changed at the time, and even those thing you don't need to change in my point of view is also changed, and you can't get a clear answer from the partners what will happen with them, yesterday we received a letter from the ethnography museum and they don't know what is going to happen if they are going to clashed together with others with the summer event which is a huge summer project, and they don't know what will happen, but I think the cultural institutes will stay here and we can stay here and we have to cooperate with our partners whatever and whoever they are. Right now it is difficult because there is so much changes and this autumn was the toughest time I think because all the partner or our friends in the radio we didn't know if they would stay there anymore or not, and you can't promote your program if you don't know your partners are there or not and even the institutes have new names, so you have to be very reactive to see what will happened.

in the time being we are initiations for bigger projects, but I don't like these projects which people already have done because we are not a fond, we can maybe pay this little fund, but we have to a part of that project from the beginning, and the projects I prefer is where the local people are involved and it goes forward. We are currently working with the literature program between the Estonian and Hungarian children literature and children books and illustrations, so it was our initiation, so we contacted their centre for children literature in Estonia and we contacted the main person for children literature in Hungary and this is going to be a big project and big exhibition and we order significant text from authors and Hungarian illustrators combined with the Estonian stories and there will be a big exhibition in Hungarian and Estonian, this is the cooperation that we prefer, there is the possibility for these events to make contacts and at some point that you are not needed as a mediator, and that is the best thing if you bring two things together and you are not needed anymore, this is also a very important part of our existence. and if they want you to promote and support then the small regions for example Norgrad in the northern region which are very poor and have a lot of minorities, they wanted to make a photo exhibition which became popular and now they are doing it every year something with Estonian culture and sometimes they are just asking for ideas and that is fine, they are promoting now and we are not needed at all, but we are very happy that their children maybe someday they would raise up with a knowledge concerning Estonian culture, I like that idea. With the museums we had some huge exhibitions 10 years ago and now they are making the connections themselves, and this is our job.

In the meantime our job is to promote and promote and put up arrangements for our culture, and to get your small niche culture out, and this is very hard. the small institutes knows that the job by promoting their arrangements and events is a even bigger assignment than to arrange the events, if the balance between these could be more equal then it could be optimal and all those open nights of institutions with their big promotion with their huge posters on the metro line or on the streets, then you have to have a cooperation to have this kind of publicity.

It is very interesting when you say that EUNIC have accepted the Euromania program because all of the programs which is accepted by the EUNIC (or here the institutions within EUNIC) is based in Budapest, so very centralized.

2. Is Eunic an important part of this development?

As you properly this question were raised at the last Eunic meeting, should we say something, should we influence the policy makers? Well we could try to, but we can't say what they should do because we are representative from other countries, yes for instance one question which was raised several times was: How can we promote or influence policymakers at the language teaching and language knowledge better, for instance Simon said several times why are they synchronizing all of their films, so could we do something in this field, that is a field we can work in yes. But now I heard yesterday that one commercial channel Erder that they will show the films in original languages and with subtitles and that is a development, and that is a very important development that the media and TV channels are changeling, the small things we can influence.

3. How do you see Eunic's role in Hungary?

a. Especially in the time being

Well the huge big role is to promote European values together and officially it is not nice to say that we can use Eunic to be more visible as small institutes can but that is not nice to say but everybody is think about it, it is more easy to be visible as one individual institution but as a European institution as well, it will take its time very slowly to a part of the Hungarian society, and I think that those programs like literature night and night of Institutes they were already a little bit part of the side of the people showing that institutes are working together. I think here we really have an active Eunic cluster but this is not the case in every country, as I know in Estonia they were not so active. I think Hanne can tell you very well that when she was the president of the our cluster the assignment was to make us known as one institution. Now the cultural institutions they don't want to contact every institute individually, they go to the cluster the president and they are saying can we do this together could you spread this information, that is a positive movement already. Also visa versa the president or Eunic always try to ask some institution to promote us all together so there is no need to do it individually to promote themselves and off course if you don't have contacts you can use the Eunic contacts, so you can use the elaborate network Eunic have.

4. What is the best feature of EUNIC?

- And the worst?
- What do you think is the main assignments for Eunic?

Well the best is the cooperation, not only concrete programs but also the cooperation between the institutes are also growing, and if you have a cooperation with some of the other institutes then you can get their audience and their partners and this is spreading like rings in the water, and this is very positive. Well negative I haven't had very negative experiences, sometimes the meetings are much too long and there is no output from the people which is siding and talking to much about nothing relevant.

Subsequently the forum also should be mere streamlined to Eunic matters, not so much individual matters.

5. What is your preferences towards EUNIC

a. Active suggesting programs?

b. Passive partner?

I want to be very active and I think that we already are very active and if we have some ideas or we can use some already used ideas from other countries so I think it's very good to promote every program and not only to take part of existing programs, I think it is much more better to have fresh ideas and different ideas and points of views which can give us something unique.

6. Is the current status of Eunic sufficient developed?

Well there have been always pros and cons towards should it be more centralized or should it be like it is now, well the only thing which seem to be good is that Brussels creates some fund which the clusters could apply, then off course then we have to move towards a more centralized movement, but I don't see these funds coming right now, there were two years ago where the Eunic organized a small seminar for the junior members of the institutes and when they were here in Budapest I was there to promote our programs I heard that it was the task of the small group to work out this founding proportions, how to create funding, but I haven't heard anything. Now it functions in the way that we have our own money and then we can apply for European money or projects can apply for funds. I think too much regularized or centralized functions that is not optimal because the institutes are very different, some of them are part of cultural fields, and some of them are in the foreign field and finally some are independent, so how to say how they should pay is difficult and even now it is difficult, plus the embassies, it should not go this way from the national funds, it should come from the EU in the Eunic network. It should not be a high structure, but under the Eunic cooperation.

a. Should it expand

i. More countries

I think we have almost all the possible countries in our cluster, we can't get much more into the cluster, and we have some very active associates members like the Dutch Embassy is very active and sometimes responsible for a lot and, and we don't notice that they are not a institute because they are very active, we also have the Japanese, Israeli, Swiss, because they are always our auditors so they must have some independent so they can stay diplomatic, that is quite interesting, they have been a part of our cultural cooperation from the beginning.

ii. Legislation?

iii. Strategy?

iv. Do money play a big role in the development? And how to get these?

7. What can the Eunic cooperation do better than you can alone?

Promote, to be more visible together, because we don't always that all the institutes should part of the programs, as you know three institutes can do something and then you can promote it under the umbrella Eunic if they have something or a program in common, so they can still show some European values together the European values.

I think for us I like those specific cultural project because in this field there is a big difference between big institutes and small institutes, because I can't do a project about a dance just alone somewhere or music, I can't just bring a band, because who will come and listen for it, the French institute can do it, a France singer or a French band can play and they people will go there, we can't do that because of our limited influence. even when we are together in Eunic arranging music arrangement as we saw it in Pech (Euro mania festival) arranged by the Dutch embassy. we had two stages there, there was a big stage for known

artist Hungarian and foreign and then there was a small one for the institutes to bring their guests, and even this was a failure and some bands had only 10 as audience, so only one would be there it is possible to know how people would react but together it is difficult to know and the bigger institutes have a wider network. Eunic can bring together the young people with project like Alter Ego and these kind of project and this is not specific cultural, but to have a possibility to bring young people together and then promote Eunic and then the values.

8. Could a legislative administration be a part of the solution of the cooperation?

9. Could a single independent structure within Eunic make the expansion of culture stronger?
You mean in Brussels?

Lasse: No under our structure within the Eunic cluster

It could be very interesting and could be a way we should look upon. If we can get the support this could be an interesting idea and also a way to promote more heavy subjects to another level. Eunic have the possibility to make the differentiated countries come with different solutions and opinions on common programs, and this is worth looking at, if support is available.

10. Who do you think would prefer a strong Eunic?

a. Who do you think would have the most benefit of it?

I am not sure that it is so simple about the stronger Eunic, I am not sure that that is the issue, it depends on the countries and the institutes whether they want to take part of the organization and the experiences in the origination, I am not sure that the small institutes want a more strong Eunic. A specialization could be a progress where we all prefer the Eunic, because in the moment we have some meetings which is not govern, we have projects we can do every year and which is ready made f.x the European cocktail bar, and the literature night. the sad thing is our status right now where we don't have any strategy or plan where we could say let's do that in the beginning of the year with Eunic, because sometimes the ideas are coming during the years, and then off course then is the question whether if it a part of a bigger project and do we have the time to be a part of this. So it is better to know before what is going to be the Eunic plan and clear cut strategy. Less programs together but then bigger and stronger, between these big planned programs there could be the smaller cooperation between 3 or four 4 countries, but all institutes together then it would be nice to have some strategically means or plans.

11. Is the cooperation in the organization filled with prejudices?

a. Are there any institutes which you prefer?

b. Why?

Well I think that is during the year there is some partners there is more easy to work with f.x the Romanian institute which were very helpful and the finish because they are so close and we have much of the same things, last year we had 2 programs together and it is very easy with them, even the language is more easy, once we wrote an letter to the Estonian in Finnish, so sometimes we don't need a second language in. We had the Polish also because of the geography and they invited a Estonian artist last year, where they

wanted an artist which didn't come from Poland, and earlier we have had very good cooperation with them and shared our exhibition rooms and things like this.

With the Romanian we don't have any cultural contacts or relations at any level, Romanians don't know anything about the Estonian culture and vice versa, and if you ask Estonians about the Romanian culture they don't know anything. But somehow I think it is easy when we have music programs f.x mixing the culture on the countries jazz scene and make a jazz locomotive. Furthermore I have to say it was a very nice cooperation during the Baltic Sea Festival with the institutions and countries and if you ask the huge institution like the Goethe it was also very good and professional and reliable, when they say it is working, and then it is working. Furthermore during the language day there was more work than this year, but then again with the Goethe institute it just works. We haven't got anything with the French institute, we haven't even tried, but the French institute haven't either, there is not much where we have common interest, maybe some within music, but they don't have any interest in us and they don't need us. it is a very pragmatic field with emphasizes on personal contacts especially, and last year the Eunic had the idea that we should give those premises to each other so the smaller institutes having small offices could use the bigger institutes offices to organize something, and during the Merlin night and institute night, the Romanian institute always offers their premises and the Portugal program was at the Italian, and years ago we could use the Italian institute big hall or concert hall for our symphony orchestra, so even in that field you can cooperate very easy.

12. What about the non European partners, do they contribute to the internal European construction?

Yes they do so in a very high degree, and why not when they are partners in several programs, if they have something to contribute that is fine. If they are somehow not necessarily here geographically or culturally par of some project then we might say no to them. well we had the exclusion of the Russians when we did the Baltic sea festival, and they were not a part of it, so actually it was easy because we were prepared to answer the press questions and the and answer would be, that they are not in the European Union and not a part of Eunic, but nobody asked, it is funny that nobody asked but Russia is somehow not a part at all of this cooperation although they have a big institute here, they were much more active some years ago, and always got their programs every month even printed, but nowadays the last program I have seen is a year ago, and they are more for the experts than for the big audience, maybe I am mistaken,, but this is the cultural institute which is not part of Eunic and I have never heard of institutes which are working with them. Portugal is also part of Eunic, but they are very small and the institute's director is teaching so Portugal institute started as a school and they are a part of ELTE, so this take a big part of their work but they try to be in EUNIC, and Spain yes they are trying to work for themselves. The Bulgarian institute is a part of Eunic but as they are very small and they have been in projects one time.

13. How do you see the future of Eunic?

a. Development?

well there must be something overarching and not only that every country is bringing their own concepts we put together, there must be some ideas, really some ideological, some message to promote, I think somehow that through the literature it came out nicely that it is European but then everyone have their single forces and they can promote their languages and translating, that is at least some message and ideas, and then the Hungarians can perform them, so there was not so much about authors but about the

reading and listening and through this get more common ideas, that was somehow a ideological idea, you have to have messages, it is always nice to put jams or bands together but there is no message in this, and any festival is the same, so we need to find these subjects overarching. but you can't find where all Eunic members can be a part of, so sometimes it is more easy to have some ideas regionally or locally. environmental issues could be something that through the culture you can promote the issues of this, because some of the European countries like Denmark and Nordic countries are very strong in this, and southern countries are very weak in this segment, this is a field where we can do something together, lets protect our nature for the country, I think that every country there are a lot of artist or scientist there are working this issue. when we made this Baltic Sea festival our first idea was to promote this environmental issues more strongly, but then to bring some scientists in, but then the Goethe institute was not much for Scientific issues, and that we had to stick to culture, and a little bit of this green design where <Estonian Danish Finland institutes was with, and that was our small exhibition and was part of Hungarian exhibition and this exhibition was part of their series of green design, so it was not the best one and good organized, but the ideas was there and part of a Hungarian program, with our own program, it was very good for all the participations and that is what is important.