



PRESS RELEASE

2nd European Project Fair facilitates exchange and partnership of cultural centres all over Europe

Berlin, October 9, 2007. Last week, the 2nd European Project Fair of Cultural Centres entitled “Bringing cultures together – Approximation through exchange” gathered around 110 participants from 14 countries in Riga, Latvia. The 60 international representatives came from Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovenia and Sweden. The conference was organised by the European Network of Cultural Centres (ENCC) in cooperation with its Latvian member network Latvian Cultural Centres Association (LCCA) and aimed at discussing and exchanging project experiences and ideas, daily work know-how, networking perspectives and funding opportunities.

Ms Dace Melbārde, Deputy State Secretary of the Latvian Ministry of Culture, welcomed everybody by saying “Latvia is small in its size, but we Latvians strongly believe that we are big in the sense of culture [...]. Latvia appears rich and diverse in cultural heritage and history, which’s particular feature is the Latvian language as one of those remaining from the ancient languages of the Baltic provinces. Today, the forms of national identity [...] give us the necessary foundation for building cultural dialogue between different nations and people, religions and social clubs. We are ready to share our values, to learn from each other and to enjoy differences.” By choosing Riga as hosting city of the event, the ENCC continued to develop its substantial relationships to Eastern European partners.

The 2nd edition of the European Project Fair proved once more the necessity of providing cultural centres with the opportunity to meet and to exchange with colleagues and practitioners from other European countries. Participants mentioned repeatedly that time for individual exchange could never be too much. The fair itself represented one of the central activity of the conference.

The ENCC highly appreciated to welcome amongst many interesting panellist Ms Monica Urian de Sousa, Policy Officer at the DG Education and Culture of the European Commission, who outlined the following. “The Commission and particularly our Commissioner Mr Figel’ thought that a European Year of Intercultural Dialogue would be a good way to explore new ideas and a new philosophy to deal with cultural diversity, because this diversity is the roots of the European project. [...] We need to explore these new ideas and to bring this topic forward, to talk about Intercultural Dialogue, to seek for new solutions and to evolve into a society where we have a dialogue that is managed with respect and with a lot of openness and tolerance with the others and where we try to benefit from this diversity and to life better together. These are the aims of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue.” The annual European Project Fair is dealing with exactly these aims and so does ENCC as part of its long-term strategy.

The 3rd European Project Fair of Cultural Centres is going to take place in Brussels at the beginning of October 2008.

ENCC Coordination Office | Voßstr. 22 10117 | Berlin | Germany | office@encc.eu | www.encc.eu