

European Culture Forum 2013

4th Novembre - BOZAR - Brussels

Platform for Intercultural Europe

- Flash Session -

“A future for Civil Society?”



Cuts and changes to funding regimes for Civil Society Organisations have been rolled out across Europe in recent years. They are going too far - achievements of the past are being undermined.

As the EU enters a new budget period, the cuts are being applied to EU funding programmes. European organisations and networks that have helped create a European identity and European public space fear for their existence.

We have examined this emergency, gathered patient statements, issued diagnoses and prescribed remedies. A sample was shown at our “Intensive care ward for Civil Society” session at the EU Culture Forum. This is the full set of patient statements.

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Patient case files

EU Culture Forum 2013 – Intensive Care Ward for Cultural Civil Society	
PATIENT FILE No 1	
Name of patient:	Platform for Intercultural Europe
Spokesperson of patient:	Sabine Frank, Director
Anamnesis (patient's statement):	
<p>"The Platform for Intercultural Europe started as an initiative in 2006, - carried by Culture Action Europe. It was a welcome civic response to the European Year for Intercultural Dialogue 2008 – one which, it was thought, could ensure the longer term impact of the EYID. The only way for PIE to receive EU financial support, however, was to set it up as a separate association, that meant a piecemeal organisation building process starting from zero. In 2009, PIE was taken as an example of 'structuring' civil society – with two more platforms, it was thought, the cultural sector could be organized for its dialogue with the EU. Operating grants were made available, and three years of such support allowed PIE to develop, professionalise, build intellectual, social and political capital. However, the overall recipe for 'structuring' the cultural sector didn't work out. Dedicated financial support to platforms is therefore no longer to be in 2014. And two months before 2014 begins, only 41% of our operating costs for next year are secure."</p>	
Diagnosis:	
Loss of seven years' work in environmental disaster.	

EU Culture Forum 2013 – Intensive Care Ward for Cultural Civil Society	
Patient File No 2	
Name of patient:	Eurozine
Spokesperson of patient:	Veronika Leiner
Anamnesis (patient's statement):	
<p>"Eurozine is the network of leading European cultural journals (85 partner journals from 34 countries) and a netmagazine, in which the most interesting articles from the partner journals are published in the original and in (mostly) English translation. We are one of the few promoters of a European public sphere in the media – just what is needed in times of (again) rising fragmentation and nationalism!</p> <p>As a European network, Eurozine is obviously highly dependent on European funding. As cooperations with private foundations are increasingly difficult to come by because of the financial crisis and EU funding for 2014 is still not in reach, only around 15 per cent of Eurozine's budget for 2014 are fixed at this time (end October 2013). This is an emergency situation with dire consequences for staff and collaborators."</p>	
Diagnosis:	
Financial malnutrition - onset of starvation.	

EU Culture Forum 2013 – Intensive Care Ward for Cultural Civil Society	
Patient File No 3	
Name of patient:	Trans Europe Halles
Spokesperson of patient:	Anaid Sayrin
Anamnesis (patient's statement):	
<p>"At Trans Europe Halles, we support and connect civic initiatives all around Europe which unleash the creative ability of people to build a more sustainable society. Developing and nurturing international collaboration takes time and needs a long-term strategy. With the current funding gap and insecurity concerning operating grants, we as a European network are severely hindered in this work."</p>	
Diagnosis:	
Scissures in leg muscles from jumping over large funding gaps.	

EU Culture Forum 2013 – Intensive Care Ward for Cultural Civil Society	
PATIENT FILE No 4	
Name of patient:	Intima teater (one of Sweden's oldest theatres , dedicated to the work of August Strindberg)
Spokesperson of patient:	Ture Rangström, Director
Anamnesis (patient's statement):	
<p>"In the "Strindberg Year" 2012 we performed over 300 shows. Almost half of our 20.000 spectators were young people. The theatre has two employees - a theater director and a producer. We are in the process of working life out of us. Since 2003 we have been receiving the same amount of operating grant. In 2013, the operating grant was taken from us. In 2014, our theatre will try to survive on projects - we are in a quagmire of 18 insecure project applications. They want to keep us on the gridiron and make hash of our well thought out business."</p> <p>http://www.svd.se/kultur/kulturdebatt/teatern-bjuds-upp-till-en-dodsdans_8540138.svd?fb_action_ids=10201567898071784&fb_action_types=og.recommends&fb_source=other_multiline&action_object_map={%2210201567898071784%22%3A228378730652218}&action_type_map={%2210201567898071784%22%3A%22og.recommends%22}&action_ref_map=[]</p>	
Diagnosis:	
Second-degree bureaucratic burns suffered in the fire of project applications. / Burn-out through multiple budgetitis	

EU Culture Forum 2013 – Intensive Care Ward for Cultural Civil Society	
Patient File No 5	
Name of patient:	Institute for Conflict Research, Northern Ireland
Spokesperson of patient:	Kati Radford
Anamnesis (patient's statement):	
<p>"Like others, the Institute for Conflict Research operates in an environment where there is an expectation that we sustain our ethos of providing pro bono support to others. We are sought out by communities to represent and support their needs and rights. We are asked to provide advice, give presentations, and moderate meetings for free. Lack of core funding and reduced project funding is eroding our capacity to do so."</p>	
Diagnosis:	
Inadvertent lowering of free service capacity (below point 5 of public expectation scale)	

**EU Culture Forum 2013 –
Intensive Care Ward for Cultural Civil Society**

Patient File No 6

Name of patient:	Unidentified European cultural network (coma patient)
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Spokesperson of patient:	Associate of the patient who preferred to remain anonymous
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Anamnesis (patient's statement):

"Apart from cuts to public funding programmes, it has become more and more difficult to solve cash flow problems and bridge the time until final payments on public grants are made. Our banks don't accept our contracts for public funding as guarantees for loans anymore. Imagine this: Banks that were rescued by governments with tax payers' money are no longer trusting government grants and the NGOs that receive them!! We can live of the motivation for our cause for so long and work for stretches of time without pay, but the price is our health."

Addition: A lack of credit to bridge cash flow gaps can lead organisations to underspend their budget. This in turn lowers their turnover, which has repercussions on the grant amounts they can apply for subsequently.

Diagnosis:

Workaholicism and self-exploitation due to acute cash deficiency

**EU Culture Forum 2013 –
Intensive Care Ward for Cultural Civil Society**

PATIENT FILE No 7

Name of patient:	Gothenburg City Theatre
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Spokesperson of patient:	Anna Takanen, Artistic Director
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Anamnesis (patient's statement):

"Theatre work evolves over minor eternities. We are now working on something that will bear fruit in about two years' time. The artistic process requires live research, which is difficult to predict. Many people are needed to create the meeting with the audience. Now the free theatre people we draw into our work have the little operational support they had withdrawn from them. They are to nibble on projects instead."

[http://www.svd.se/kultur/kulturdebatt/teatern-bjuds-upp-till-en-dodsdans_8540138.svd?fb_action_ids=10201567898071784&fb_action_types=og.recommends&fb_source=other_multiline&action_object_map={%2210201567898071784%22%3A228378730652218}&action_type_map={%2210201567898071784%22%3A%22og.recommends%22}&action_ref_map=\[\]](http://www.svd.se/kultur/kulturdebatt/teatern-bjuds-upp-till-en-dodsdans_8540138.svd?fb_action_ids=10201567898071784&fb_action_types=og.recommends&fb_source=other_multiline&action_object_map={%2210201567898071784%22%3A228378730652218}&action_type_map={%2210201567898071784%22%3A%22og.recommends%22}&action_ref_map=[])

Diagnosis:

Severe institutional breathlessness due to insufficient supply of talents from free theatre groups.

EU Culture Forum 2013 – Intensive Care Ward for Cultural Civil Society	
PATIENT FILE No 8	
Name of patient:	Orion Theatre, Stockholm
Spokesperson of patient:	Per Sundgren, Chairman of the Board
Anamnesis (patient's statement):	
<p>"The assessment criteria of commodity production have been downloaded to the public sector with disastrous results. The fulfillment of artistic quality, audience reach, inclusiveness, efficiency etc are in the first instance inferred from project applications. The artistry has to go into the application, before it can go into the show. We are judged for the wrong talents."</p> <p>http://www.svd.se/kultur/kulturdebatt/bygg-stodet-pa-tillit_8600822.svd</p>	
Diagnosis:	
Demoralisation after withdrawal of trust in the production of artistic quality.	

EU Culture Forum 2013 – Intensive Care Ward for Cultural Civil Society	
PATIENT FILE No 9	
Name of patient:	Swedish popular cultural movement "Folkets Hus och Parker"
Spokesperson of patient:	Gunno Sandahl, Head of culture department
Anamnesis (patient's statement):	
<p>"With project funds, public authorities increase their control over popular movements, distract them from their mission, and shrink their freedom as well as their energies. Public authorities at national, regional and municipal levels should provide core support to cultural organisations. Project funds should be the domain of other funding organisations."</p> <p>http://gunnosandahl.wordpress.com/2012/09/24/projekttrötthet/</p>	
Diagnosis:	
Acute projectification and loss of focus.	

**EU Culture Forum 2013 –
Intensive Care Ward for Cultural Civil Society**

Patient File No 10

Name of patient: **Unidentified national association, probably from Eastern Europe** (coma patient)

Spokesperson of patient: Associate of the patient who preferred to remain anonymous

Anamnesis (patient’s statement):

“Due to the severe economic and moral crisis, we rely mostly on the time and donations of volunteers. But they can only give what they have, which isn’t much. Very few organizations can receive funding from our national government. And when we are so lucky as to take part in EU projects, we are discriminated against with the ceilings that apply to staff costs and daily allowances. We still often have to dip into our own pockets in order to participate fully in partner meetings in other countries. And while we get less out of the projects than partners from richer EU countries, our proportion of self-financing is the same. It is terribly unfair.”

Diagnosis:

Mental trauma of abandonment



**PLATFORM FOR
INTERCULTURAL EUROPE**

An action of Platform for Intercultural Europe (EU Structured Dialogue Platform, 2009-2013)

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