

## Appendix D

### Cultural Information and Research Centres Liaison in Europe (CIRCLE)

#### **Mission**

The Cultural Information and Research Centres Liaison in Europe (CIRCLE) is an independent think-tank dedicated to developing cultural policy models for Europe. CIRCLE brings together different people concerned with cultural policy including researchers from many disciplines, scholars, documentalists, cultural practitioners, policymakers, and politicians. CIRCLE is also a forum for institutions such as university departments, arts institutions, research organizations, national ministries, arts councils, documentation centres, and networks. In bringing together these different entities, CIRCLE acts as an intermediary, putting particular emphasis on ensuring that conclusions from its debates are disseminated to those in a position to benefit from them.

CIRCLE identifies new issues, maps out what currently exists in terms of research and information, and makes this information available through on-line resources and databases. CIRCLE's unique work crosses the whole of Europe, a variety of disciplines, and a myriad of interested parties. For more than two decades, CIRCLE has maintained its reputation for being at the forefront of cultural policy research and influencing current and future policy actions.

#### **Activities**

CIRCLE is a Dutch association (with a board and paid secretariat). CIRCLE fulfils its mission through the following permanent activity program:

- *Permanent secretariat.* An executive manager has been contracted to facilitate the work of CIRCLE and build links between the members.
- *Cultural Policy Research Online (CPRO).* CPRO is a unique database of current or recently completed research, conference reports, and scholars' papers on cultural policy in Europe and beyond and is produced as an information service for individuals working in the field of cultural policy.
- *Notice board on the Web.* CIRCLE produces a notice board for its members that contains information on forthcoming conferences, debates, and workshops in the cultural policy arena and gives other news about forthcoming publications, etc.
- *Membership details and links on the Web.* CIRCLE's Web site includes a comprehensive links library that details organizations which are associated to CIRCLE's work. It also holds contact details and biogra-

phies for all of CIRCLE's associate individual and institutional members.

- *Round table.* CIRCLE's main activity is its annual round table event and much effort is employed to ensure that the event brings together the very best minds. Research themes developed during CIRCLE's previous round tables have repeatedly become popular research areas, not only for CIRCLE members but also for other institutions. Policy issues put on the European agenda by CIRCLE include: labour markets in culture (Spoleto), privatization and culture (Amsterdam), cultural diplomacy (Cracow), social cohesion and culture (Edmonton and Vienna), cultural education and cultural policy (Rotterdam), and culture and volunteering (Newcastle).
- *Conference reader.* This is an important tool in CIRCLE's work. Expert papers are commissioned in advance of the meeting and a national survey is carried out and analyzed by academics. These are then presented in a round table reader, which is distributed amongst the participants in advance of the meeting. The reader is crucial as it provides background information and sets the tone and high standard of the meeting. (The conference reader for the CIRCLE/CCRN 2000 round table is available on-line at CIRCLE's Web site: URL: <http://www.boekman.nl/circle>.)
- *Annual publication.* CIRCLE publishes a full report on the findings of each annual round table. The findings and policy recommendations are distributed to policymakers and international bodies including the Council of Europe, the European Union, and UNESCO.
- *Circular.* CIRCLE produces a biannual newsletter called *Circular*, which features research, publications, and in-depth articles on issues of relevance. *Circular* is currently developing a new emphasis on critical content while working more closely with other CIRCLE information activities that are currently available on-line.

Other occasional activities include:

- *Seminar/symposium/workshop.* In recent years, a number of CIRCLE members have found the need to explore particular policy areas more profoundly and therefore have turned towards CIRCLE members to provide a European dimension to their understanding of a particular subject. In these cases, CIRCLE has been invited to hold a seminar, symposium, or workshop to which members are invited to debate and discuss the issues at hand.
- *Supporting events.* CIRCLE also supports members' events by supplying speakers, chairs, and rapporteurs and by designing workshop(s) within member conferences. In doing so, CIRCLE facilitates a dialogue amongst the various stakeholders that make up its membership.

- *Specific projects.* CIRCLE is prepared to help people from the cultural field of Central and Eastern European countries in issues that concern cultural policy. CIRCLE's experts from the European Union and Central and Eastern Europe can organize courses, share experiences, and initiate joint cultural projects.

Forthcoming activities include:

- E-Culture – Round Table, Zagreb, April 2002
- Gambling on Culture – Lotteries Round Table, Rome, November 2002

Forthcoming publications include:

- *Beyond Cultural Diplomacy: Whose Agenda is it Anyway?*, proceedings from Cracow, 1999
- *Social Cohesion and Cultural Policy*, proceedings from Edmonton and Vienna, 2000
- *Volunteers at the Heart of Culture*, proceedings from Newcastle, 2001
- *Circular* (biannual)

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