

From Holland Promotion to international cultural policy

Inez Boogaarts Dutch cultural policy abroad has lacked a clear and shared vision since World War II. The end of 1990s finally witnessed the changes needed.

Dutch arts and cultural activities are usually associated with state involvement. One might therefore expect that Dutch international arts activities would also be a state affair. However, active involvement on the part of the state or national government in this area began only recently - in the mid-1980s. It took another ten to fifteen years for the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs - the main characters in this play - to come up with a joint international cultural policy statement.

Disclaimer

The state is not the only player in the field of international cultural policy and probably not even the most important one. Some say only 10 per cent of all international activities are national government initiatives (Commissie Gevers, 1993). However, the involvement of the European Union in Dutch cultural policy and activities, has to date been quite limited, especially in the Netherlands, because of the so-called subsidiarity principle.¹ Regional (provincial) administrations in the Netherlands are limited in their scope for international cultural relations and policy, usually due to a lack of funds. There are exceptions, though. Some provinces have always been active on the international (Euregional) stage because of their location close to national borders and their good relations with neighbouring regions. For instance, the border-provinces of Limburg,

Brabant and Zeeland have good relations with Germany and/or Belgium. They organise international co-productions, exchanges of museum expertise and events and festivals which involve a number of provinces on both sides of the border.

Even more intensive connections are maintained between cities or other municipalities and counterparts abroad, traditionally because of so-called town twinning, but increasingly also within complex multidisciplinary and multilateral exchanges. This is particularly the case with migrants and their countries of origin, but is also the result of historical international links. Some cities are more active than others. Usually, major cities have greater resources for developing and supporting international exchanges and hosting artists-in-residences; such initiatives are sometimes prompted by local councils or local cultural foundations but more often by cultural organisations, institutions, artists' initiatives or individual artists themselves. Amsterdam, for example, has always had an important cultural import and export function and has hosted many artists from abroad. Local councils and cultural organisations in other major cities like Rotterdam, The Hague, Utrecht, Eindhoven, Maastricht and Groningen have recently become more internationally active in the field of import, export and co-producing. They facilitate artists on an

individual and exclusive basis (residencies, networks, long-term exchange programmes). On a more ad hoc basis, they also participate in international festivals or events such as the European cultural capital (Amsterdam 1987, Rotterdam 2001).

Aside from all governmental or quasi-governmental involvement in international cultural traffic, it has been the arts world itself which has initiated, developed, supported, and produced most international cultural activities and projects. They are the real actors in the international cultural arena. This article, however, will focus primarily on the role of national policy and policy-related initiatives.

Holland Promotion

As early as 1946, the state developed certain ideas on the role of Dutch culture in international relations but for many years the major players - the ministries responsible for Culture and Foreign Affairs - merely competed with each other. The Ministry of Education, Arts and Science (OKenW)² declared 'that the promotion of economic, political and cultural activities should fulfil one goal: to promote goodwill for the Netherlands abroad' (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science 1998, 160). This vision influenced the development of bilateral cultural agreements, since political and economic relations with a particular country were valued more highly than a potential cultural surplus (Veltman 1992, 115). The first document on international cultural relations did not appear until 1970 and it did not change the situation at all (Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken 1970-1971). The main objective of international cultural policy still was Holland Promotion, a marketing tool to stimulate the Dutch economy and to facilitate Foreign Affairs (Ministry of Welfare, Health and Cultural Affairs and Council of Europe 1994). Between 1945 and 1970, the state's attitude

towards international cultural policy was predominantly passive.

In 1976, a second government document was released, which continued to stress the importance of a foreign policy over cultural policy (Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken 1976-1977). However, this time the arts world and a number of politicians criticised the lack of a clear vision in terms of international cultural relations and policy objectives. They felt that the way international cultural policy was organised was inefficient and also that funding was insufficient, according to Maarten Mourik (1981, cited in Tiesinga-Autsema 1995, 416).³ In fact, international cultural policy primarily took shape through bilateral cultural agreements, of which 33 were being signed between 1946 and 1985 (Beyers 1993, 145). The third government document on the issue, in 1985, again failed to produce any clarity on which direction the state should take on international cultural policy (Voortgangsnotitie 1984-1985).

The debate was given fresh impetus by a publication from the Scientific Council for State Policy (WRR) (Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid 1987). This document recommended a clear distinction between cultural policy and foreign policy objectives. The WRR also suggested that international cultural policy should be part of a policy 'which serves to improve the international position of culture or cultural expression in the Netherlands as part of the general cultural policy' (Ministry of Welfare, Health and Cultural Affairs and Council of Europe 1994, 173; see also Veltman 1992, 117). The ministries of Culture and of Education - then still separate departments - were to be the major players in international cultural policy.

The national government more or less agreed to these suggestions, but nothing much changed

and the ministries of Culture and Foreign Affairs both continued to be responsible for international cultural affairs. The ministry of Culture had adopted a view very different from that of 1946: the objective of foreign cultural policy was to be the improvement of the quality of Dutch cultural expression in general. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, though, held on to the general idea of Holland Promotion and was oriented towards those countries with which the Dutch government maintained cultural relations for political reasons (Ministry of Welfare, Health and Cultural Affairs and Council of Europe 1994, 174).

Even in 1987, a shared vision was still a long way off. The case of the Dutch cultural attachés illustrates the problem that arises from this situation. Embassies and consulates play an important role in the implementation of international cultural policy, stimulating cultural exchange and providing information about local circumstances. Although these diplomatic posts act almost as liaison offices, their resources have been quite limited. Cultural attachés change every few years and the quality of their involvement and input is variable. Only a few of them have a background or training in the arts; this field has never been very prestigious among diplomats. In general, cultural attachés work for the Dutch community abroad and have always been sympathetic to the idea of Holland Promotion. Their objectives therefore differ from those of the arts world. Artists travelling abroad prefer to work for local people and to get in contact with artists; they are generally not interested in 'performing' for the Dutch ex-patriate community or being part of a Dutch cultural 'goodwill scene'.

Having to choose between an instrumental international cultural policy - culture as a means of selling Holland - or an independent international cultural policy, designed to

stimulate national cultural activities, seemed an insurmountable problem (Van de Minkelis 1995, 437). Two recurring issues can illustrate this dilemma: the ongoing debate about a semi-independent institute and the need for a co-ordinating body, and the role of large-scale official (state-initiated) projects and events.

A semi-independent institute and a co-ordinating body

Two interlinked aspects of international cultural policy have proved to be a real problem for the national government. On one hand is the question of whether to back an Institute for International Cultural Affairs, and on the other, how to co-ordinate international cultural policy and activities.

In 1956 the state established a quasi-independent Institute for International Cultural Affairs. This institute was supposed to operate in a similar way to the British Council or the Swedish Institute, but it never really took off. Officially because the state decided shortly after its establishment that international cultural affairs should remain an in-house affair, under the responsibility of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Commissie Gevers 1993, 7; Veltman 1992, 115). Unofficially however, it became clear that the lack of co-operation between the ministries of Culture and Foreign Affairs made the work of the institute almost impossible. Besides, the arts world mistrusted the Institute, since most of the board members were administrators rather than representatives of the arts world. This affair further fuelled the competition between the two ministries. Although the institute failed and lasted a mere four years, the idea of establishing an international cultural institute continued to haunt the Dutch State until the 1990s.

Meanwhile, from 1967 onwards the government attempted to stimulate

co-ordination between the ministries involved in international cultural affairs: Foreign Affairs, Culture and Education, Finance, Internal Affairs and Trade. The hope was that this would put an end to the continued competition between them (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science 1998). To this end, the Committee for the Co-ordination of International Cultural Affairs (CICB) was set up. Despite the best intentions, the CICB did not prove strong enough to get all the parties pulling in the same direction. All the members - there were initially four and later twelve delegates, drawn from several ministries - guarded their own autonomy and ideas jealously, thus frustrating any co-ordinating initiatives (Veltman 1992, 115). The CICB continued to exist but had hardly any power. A report from the Scientific Council for State Policy in 1987 recommended that the CICB play an even more limited role (Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid 1987). The problem was that over the previous thirty years, nobody had seemed to agree how and what had to be organised or co-ordinated and by whom. This despite the fact that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had in 1984 appointed an Ambassador for International Cultural Co-operation to the committee. This proved to be another vain attempt to end the competition between the members of the CICB (Veltman 1992, 117; Ministry of Education, Culture and Science 1998, 161). The state, however, continued to stress the importance of this commission throughout the 1990s.

In the early nineties, a special committee - the Gevers Committee - was set up by the Minister of Culture and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to sort out the matter of an independent international cultural institute and a co-ordinating body once and for all. Since the state had never been very active in the

international cultural arena and allocated little money to international cultural affairs and activities, a permanent institute would, according to the committee, be a waste of time and money (Commissie Gevers 1993). Instead of spending the money on an office, a director and a secretary, it would be much better to finance international activities directly or through the 'arm's-length' cultural foundations (Leffring 1998).⁴ The Gevers Committee concluded that since the co-ordination of (inter-departmental) policy issues was now taken care of by both Ministries and there was no need to take any new measures in this area. The CICB was officially abandoned with little fuss in 1997/1998.

The Gevers Committee also recommended supporting a private association to take care of co-ordinating international cultural activities. This association would enable artists and organisations to decide for themselves what was important and how they should co-ordinate their own affairs. In 1994, within a year of the report of the Gevers Committee, the private Netherlands Association for International Cultural Relations (*Vereniging voor Internationale Culturele Betrekkingen*, VICB) was established with some 60 members, all arts and cultural organisations and universities. In contrast to the CICB, the VICB aimed to co-ordinate international cultural activities and provide information, instead of co-ordinating cultural policy.

The government at first supported the recommendations of the Committee, including the proposed private association, although never explicitly. However, the VICB enjoyed little assistance or financial support from the state, the individual ministries or the 'arm's-length' cultural foundations. Fear of competition and favouritism, lack of confidence in the board, and too many misunderstandings between government, foundations and the board

of the VICB - especially on the question of what the VICB should or should not do - led to an unworkable situation. Some of the 'arm's-length' cultural foundations feared that the VICB wanted to be a producing or organising cultural institution as well. During 1998, the Board of the VICB realised that there was no future for the VICB. A consultant advised them to start from scratch and set up a new organisation. The VICB ended its activities by the end of 1998.

Meanwhile, other representatives of the Dutch cultural world had been working on a new organisation and in January 1999 a new independent Foundation for International Cultural Activities (*Stichting Internationale Culturele Activiteiten*, SICA) was set up to promote the exchange of information and documentation between the different arts and cultural sectors, to improve co-ordination, and to encourage a vigorous exchange of expertise and experience within the field of international culture. The SICA receives assistance and financial support from both the Ministry of Culture and the majority of the arts and 'arm's-length' cultural foundations. In essence, there is little difference between the VICB and the SICA. Like the VICB, the SICA was set up by practitioners in the arts world, but the former were mostly actively involved in international cultural activities through their own organisations, whereas the latter have a lot of expertise and experience in the international cultural arena but do not represent a particular organisation. The VICB was a membership organisation and the SICA is an independent organisation. Yet a fundamental change of climate has taken place, which becomes more apparent in the ambience around and expectations towards the SICA. The SICA regards itself as a service centre, disseminating information and documentation B through its

website and magazine, face-to-face meetings, etc. - on international cultural activities, with a special remit to the EU. It will only co-ordinate projects and events on an incidental basis.⁵

Large-scale projects and events, initiated by the state

Cultural presentations as part of official, major international projects or flagship events such as world fairs, Olympic Games, bi- and tricentennials, initiated or stimulated by the state, have often turned out to be battlefields for the participants as well as for 'arm's-length' cultural foundations. These events are usually not primarily organised for cultural, but for economic or political reasons. The cultural performances are treated as side-shows to the 'official' programme designed to stimulate exports. This becomes apparent in the lack of money for programming, expertise et cetera. Arts and cultural organisations are simply no longer interested in participating in these 'Holland Promotion events' since their participation will only cost money, and the events are not interesting in an artistic sense, nor are they useful for networking, media coverage or for building or extending new audiences.

A very good example is the Texas Netherlands Exchange Project. During the 1980s the Ministry of Culture experimented with a so-called 'concentration policy', meaning that money and attention were concentrated on a few selected regions - like Texas - that would prove to be beneficial in economic and cultural terms (Veltman 1992, 122).⁶ The Texas Netherlands Exchange Project lasted only a couple of years, cost a lot of money but did not lead to much beyond frustration and mistrust of state-related international initiatives on the part of the arts and cultural world. The exhibitions and performances in Dallas and

other Texan cities did not attract a large number of American visitors or media coverage. In fact it was unclear why Texas had been chosen in the first place as a location to promote Dutch arts.

Since the beginning of the 1990s, arts and 'arm's-length' cultural foundations and the Council for Culture have asked for evaluations of the cultural presentations at international or flagship events, in order to achieve a better use and implementation of expertise and for a clear framework (in time) for the participation in these official events. After the World's Fair in Seville (1992) a 'black book' was unofficially published, but did not lead to changes. Once again, many (and very much the same) things went wrong in the preparation and organisation of the Peter the Great Festival and the world's fair in Lisbon, and there are already signs that the cultural programme's celebrating 400 Years of Dutch-Japanese relations (2000) and the Hanover Expo (2000) are not going smoothly. In the new international cultural policy reports of 1999, the importance of participation in official events has been mentioned, but without the intention of monitoring or evaluating them. The Council for Culture regretted that the cultural-political significance of those events is not maximised as much as it could be (Raad voor Cultuur 1999).

Towards a joint international cultural policy

In the beginning of the 1990s, there were signs that radical changes were underway. For instance, in 1990 the Ministry of Culture assigned a Dutch cultural expert to the consulate general in New York to streamline cultural relations between the Netherlands and the US. In this so-called 'New York model' the expert functions as a broker. The arts world seems quite content with this approach.

In 1992 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

claimed in a new international cultural policy memorandum that 'the aims of foreign policy and cultural policy were in the process of converging' (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1991-1992). Both the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs seemed finally to agree upon a policy to stimulate cultural exchange and further to the development of national cultural activities. They reached consensus on the importance of foreign cultural policy as opposed to foreign policy (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science 1998, 161). Nevertheless, there was still no clear shared vision, even though the possible effects of European unification with respect to national cultural identity, the Treaty of Maastricht (1992), the growing number of European cultural networks and funds called for such a vision rather than an ideological policy (Bever 1993, 147).

The then director of the foundation for fine arts, design and architecture (*Fonds Beeldende Kunsten, Vormgeving en Bouwkunst*), one of the major cultural foundations, suggested that this lack of a shared vision was caused by the fact that the policy objectives were not pragmatic, for instance they took no account of the Netherlands as a multiform society. He put forward the question whether there was even any need for the state to interfere in international cultural policy; he detected 'a persistent desire of the state to regulate, co-ordinate and control everything' (Dales 1997).

Halfway the 1990s there was some evidence of a renewed desire to bring together the aims of foreign and cultural policy, firstly through the so-called HGIS-Culture Fund, a joint fund set up by the two ministries, and secondly through the policy memorandum *Armour or Backbone* issued by the Ministry of Culture.

In 1995, the government started to reshuffle and reorganise all foreign policy, including

foreign-cultural affairs (Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken 1995). By the end of 1997, this had led to the joint HGIS-Culture Fund, *HGIS-Cultuurmiddelen* (Ministerie van OCenW en Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken 1997). The government argued that foreign cultural policy and foreign policy needed each other and could reinforce one another. This fund was to be managed by both ministries. This was in itself an extraordinary situation, since the Ministry of Culture had been in the process of decentralising its executive tasks to semi-independent bodies, actually quasi-governmental foundations, over the previous ten years.⁷ The foundations played no significant role in the HGIS-Culture Fund in the period 1997-1999.

The HGIS-Culture Fund has been allocated 16 million guilders a year for the period 1997-2001 (recently extended to 2003) and is to be used only as a supplement to the regular funding. These extra financial resources are basically temporary and are meant for major projects only (at least 100,000 guilders). However, changes in procedures are expected after 1999. The fund is used to support four different types of activities: thematic projects ('Holland: international haven' and Dutch cultural heritage overseas); regional projects in so-called priority countries; participation in official large-scale (state-initiated) projects and events; and activities to strengthen the cultural infrastructure. A new aspect was the identification of so-called priority countries, an idea that was simultaneously developed for the 'International Haven' chapter.

In 1996, the Ministry of Culture released its cultural policy memorandum for the period 1997-2000 (entitled *Armour or Backbone*). The international cultural policy chapter of this document ('an International Haven') presents the Netherlands as an international meeting point, a haven. Priority was given to what the

Netherlands has to offer in cultural terms, rather than to the export of Dutch art. International cultural policy was no longer to focus exclusively on foreign affairs, but also on activities with a link to the territory of the Netherlands, especially on a residential programme for visiting artists, international festivals and internationally-oriented courses in the Netherlands, visitor programmes and the construction of various centres for international networks (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science 1996, 31). The bilateral cultural agreements, never much favoured by the arts world, were judged to be no longer of their time and were reduced in scope (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science 1998, 163).

To improve the promotion of Dutch arts more effectively and efficiently it was considered better to concentrate money on a limited area than to spread it all over the world. This resulted in the idea of priority countries. Significant co-operation exists with neighbouring countries of the geo-cultural region (Flanders, Rhineland-Westphalia). Other important activities include support for democratisation, particularly in Middle and Far Eastern countries, activities in countries with cultural ties to the Netherlands i.e. former colonies (Surinam, Indonesia), with the home countries of ethnic minorities living in the Netherlands (Morocco, Turkey) and with major economic and cultural partners (Japan and the United States).

Practically speaking

The HGIS-Culture Fund and the international chapter in the cultural policy memorandum *Armour or Backbone* were seen as a political acknowledgement and an extra financial stimulus for international cultural policy. Nevertheless, the arts world was not entirely satisfied. Still cultural organisations felt that no clear choice had been made to support them

solely for artistic reasons. The priority countries, for example, seem to have been chosen purely on foreign policy grounds. As far as artists are concerned, relations with foreign partners should be initiated and developed for very different reasons, related to new challenges and the exchange of expertise. In general, the advancement of expertise is considered to be even more important than the import and export of Dutch art. The arts world and its individual members have their own networks that are not bound by political or regional priorities. Members of Dutch cultural organisations have always travelled intensively and exchanged with other artists and organisations in France and the UK. However, since France and the UK are not priority countries, Dutch artists have difficulty getting funding to travel to or work in these countries or to organise exchanges.

It is interesting to note that the 'arm's-length' cultural foundations don't seem to take the criteria set by the two ministries very seriously. The artistic choices and priorities of the cultural foundations and sector institutes rarely coincide with those put forward in *Armour or Backbone*. The 'arm's-length' cultural foundations and sector institutions have certain international tasks, although limited in scale and scope. They mostly concern ad hoc projects abroad or foreign partners. There are differences between the individual foundations and institutions. The sector institutes have only limited tasks as financial supporters in this respect (for instance, the National Pop Institute has a 'tour support fund') but they give practical support to artists and organisations by advising on financial support, marketing and publicity, networking and contacts. Some of the institutes are also involved in the (co-)production or organisation of certain large-scale international projects (e.g. *Theater Instituut Nederland*).

The Council for Culture has stated that the rationale for the new HGIS-Culture Fund was primarily rooted in foreign policy priorities, as became apparent in the choice of countries, in the emphasis on large-scale thematic and regional projects and in the lack of cultural policy choices (Raad voor Cultuur 1998, 16). The Council also commented on the direct role of both ministries. The HGIS-fund contradicts the arm's-length-principle of Dutch cultural policy in general; normally, independent cultural funding bodies decide whether to support a proposal or not, but in the case of this fund, a committee drawn from the two ministries decides. The Council for Culture and the arts world have also complained that the criteria for decisions are rather unclear.

Closer than ever before

At the end of the 1990s, international cultural policy is finally considered to be an important and valuable pillar of government policy. 'International cultural policy and foreign policy need each other and can strengthen each other' (HGIS-Culture Fund documentation). This point of view formed the basis for the joint document on the revised role of thirteen Dutch cultural diplomatic representations abroad: 'to maximise the international aspect of cultural policy the cultural representatives/attachés will be strengthened and the attachés will have a direct relationship with the Ministry of Culture' (1998).

However, there were still some surprises in store. For instance, in 1998 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs set up their own Cultural Desk (*Cultuurbalie*) to support the cultural attachés abroad. This was again a solitary move: the Ministry of Culture was not even consulted.

In 1999 two memorandums were released: one by the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs reviewing the HGIS-Culture Fund and one by the Ministry of Culture in

advance of the cultural policy document for 2001-2004: *Culture as Confrontation*. Both memos point out that international cultural policy should be part of a national cultural policy to improve the international position of the Netherlands. This way of thinking had already been put forward - in vain - by the Scientific Council for State Policy (WRR) in 1987.

The joint memo from the two ministries (July 1999) reflected upon the experiences with the HGIS-Culture Fund and formulated policy objectives for the short term. The first was to emphasise the importance of the fund with respect to the broader context of (international) cultural policy. Secondly, attention will be focused on strengthening cultural diversity, on projects for large (especially young) audiences, on Dutch cultural trends that attract foreign interest, and on the co-operation with the UK, France, neighbouring countries, Central and Eastern Europe (especially candidates for EU membership), the home countries of minorities, countries with historical ties with the Netherlands and of course Japan, the United States and Canada. In contrast to previous years, about 50 per cent of the 16 million guilders will be managed by the 'arm's-length' cultural foundations. The thematic projects ('an International Haven') get less attention, as do the official large-scale events and projects. Some regions that were not on the list before have been added (UK, France, Berlin) others have been removed (Egypt).

The Council for Culture responded to the memo (in October 1999) by formulating a number of remarks both positive and negative. The Council was positive on the extension of opportunities for foreign artists to visit the Netherlands and the emphasis on cultural diversity. On the other hand, the Council called for the exchange of professionals for projects

even if they are not aimed at large audiences, and for less co-ordination with certain priority countries. The Council also called for greater attention to be given to official large-scale projects and events, and strongly advised that the management should be improved and that co-ordination between all parties involved should begin at an early stage of those events. It also recommended that room should be created for international cultural networks and Dutch cultural and scientific institutes abroad.

In the first half of 1999, the Secretary of State for Culture, Rick van der Ploeg, published his ideas (principles) on a cultural policy for 2001-2004, *Culture as Confrontation*. There was no mention of international cultural policy. Van der Ploeg explained that he thought that everything was going smoothly in this field, so that not much needed to be said about it. In October 1999, however, he released a memo (his Principles) on international cultural policy. This memo was also signed by the State Secretary of Foreign Affairs. The introduction to the memo indicates how much money is being spent on policy and stresses the successes of Dutch arts abroad. When it comes to operating internationally, the Dutch cultural world is encouraged to show what it is good at, in its own outspoken way, especially for a large, young and culturally diverse audience.

From now, on the context for implementation of international cultural policy (in fact set out in 'an International Haven') and the priorities set, would be executed much more actively than before. The choice of priority countries and specific sectors are not without their consequences and therefore need to be implemented jointly with the 'arm's-length' cultural foundations. Key terms in the memorandum are co-operation, coherence and monitoring. Hence the priorities of national cultural policy are to be 'translated' to interna-

tional cultural policy, policy instruments to be tuned to each other, the roles of the individual actors to be described and all trends and activities to be monitored more actively. It seems that there is an urgent desire to control and monitor more than ever before. We will have to wait and see how other politicians, the cultural foundations and the arts world will react to these ideas.

Estimated expenditure (in guilders) on international cultural policy in 1999*

Total of Ministry of Culture (all departments)	7,450,000
Cultural foundations	5,650,000
Workshops, studios, etc.	5,900,000
Institutions (specialised)	6,400,000
Institutions (an estimated 7 per cent)	79,150,000
Total	104,555,000 **

* It has never been exactly clear how much money is absorbed by international cultural policy. Those involved seem to work with an annual figure of approximately 6 million guilders (2.7 million Euro) directly through the Ministry of Culture. The latest figures from the Ministry of Culture reveal that about 7.5 million guilders (3.4 million Euro) were earmarked directly for this in 1998 (Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschappen 1999). This does not take into account the money made available indirectly. According to estimates by the Ministry of Culture, in 1998 another 90 to 100 million guilders (40.9 to 45.5 million Euro) was dispensed indirectly through the foundations, sector institutes and organisations etc. for international cultural activities. In total, about 105 million guilders (47.7 million Euro) went on international cultural activities and 5 million guilders (2.3 million Euro) was contributed directly by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (see table).

** Exclusively arts education 75 million guilders, HGIS-Culture Fund 17.1 million guilders; Ministry of Foreign Affairs 5 million guilders. The HGIS-Culture Fund officially has an average of 16 million guilders annually, but this may go up or down slightly each year.

Source: Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschappen, oktober 1999

Extra: International cultural policy in Flanders

The situation in Flanders is apparently similar to the Dutch one, although much more limited in scope and in the amount of money involved. In 1995 about BEF 238 million was spent on international activities, including BEF 160 million on the cultural ambassadors (Baeten 1995, 7; *Vlaamse Vereniging voor Cultuurdiensten* 1995, 553). Flemish international cultural policy was, until recently, partly the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture and partly that of the Prime Minister. 'The Flemish Government pursues a sustained policy of offering our own culture every possible opportunity to develop as well as bringing it into contact with other cultures' (Ministerie van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap 1998, 6). Since 1993, one of the major elements (financially) of international cultural policy have been the cultural ambassadorships. These ambassadorships (41 in 1998) have been awarded by a jury of cultural experts since 1996. A large proportion of the ambassadors appointed have a background in theatre or (classical) music. The Ministry of Culture (*Administratie Kunst*) also dispenses smaller grants to support and promote Flemish art abroad, with funds awarded especially for participation in the Biennials (Sydney, Tokyo, Venice) and art gallery expos (Basel, Madrid), bilateral cultural agreements, travelling grants and international festivals (see also Baeten 1997).

It is expected that the organisation of international cultural policy will soon change, following the formation of a new and young cabinet in 1999. A clearer distinction will be made between the promotion of Flanders abroad and support for Flemish artists internationally for cultural-political reasons. To this end, international cultural policy will come completely under the aegis of the Ministry of Culture. It is expected that the

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system of 'cultural ambassadors' will be abandoned. The resources available for international cultural policy are BEF 280.2 Million. Added to this will be BEF 195.1 Million from the foreign policy budget. These figures assume that the proposed budget is accepted by the Flemish parliament (source: Administratie Cultuur, in a personal correspondence oktober 1999).

The basis for this updated and extended article was a paper for the 1999 CIRCLE conference in Cracow.

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Notes

1. The total amount of money targeted at the cultural sector within the EU has been very limited. In 2000 a new framework programme will start: Culture 2000 (look at: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/dg10> of <http://www.sicasica.nl>).
2. The names and composition of the departments have been repeatedly changed. Therefore the more general term 'Ministry of Culture' has been used throughout this text.

3. Mourik always stated that international cultural affairs belong to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and culture should serve Foreign Affairs.
4. There are still two exceptions: the Institut Néerlandais in Paris (1956) and the Erasmus House in Jakarta (1970) which are financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
5. Besides the SICA, there are other information and documentation centres like Trans Artists, for Dutch and foreign visual artists, artists' initiatives and cultural institutions specialised in information on studios for artists, workshops, master classes, exchange programmes etc.
6. The then Minister for Culture, Elco Brinkman, stated that culture should be a way of facilitating exports. He literally used the term 'culture as a lubricant for exports'.
7. The Ministry of Culture no longer serves as a direct financial supporter or executive but delegates these tasks to the foundations and to a lesser degree the sector institutions.

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