

Brussels, 21 January 2009

First arts-focused event of the European Year of Creativity and Innovation (EYCI) 2009

The European Association of Conservatoires (AEC) and the European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA) organised the first arts-focused event of the European Year for Creativity & Innovation 2009 on Tuesday 20 January in Brussels. The two organisations presented a set of recommendations to EU institutions and Member States, focusing in particular on the role of arts education in the EYCI 2009 and beyond.

"I believe that the investment in art education and the mobility of students in this sector can help boost Europe's future competitive potential" said Ján Figel', European Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Youth, continuing with a quote from Albert Einstein: *"imagination is more important than knowledge"*. Katerina Batzeli, MEP and Chair of the European Parliament Culture Committee supported this view, reminding that artistic creation, education and mobility should be placed at the centre of the EYCI. At the same time, this European Year is transversal in scope, covering very diverse fields, from enterprise to culture and from transport to research.

Chris Wainwright, President of ELIA and Johannes Johansson, President of AEC, presented joint recommendations to European institutions and Member States, which are meant as *"an input for policy-making and more importantly, to actions deriving from it"* in the field of arts and creativity and innovation. As Mr. Johansson recalled, *"the link between creativity and the arts is very deep, since the arts are among the foundations that constitute us as human beings"*. Therefore the EYCI 2009 should focus, among other topics, on the artistic side of creativity and its contribution to innovation. Moreover, the joint paper asks for more synergies between education and culture and for funding of cultural projects with an educational dimension.

The event including interludes of artistic performances from young dancers and musicians, as well as short films produced by film students throughout Europe, for the competition "Languages through lenses", organised by the European Commission and ELIA.

ELIA and AEC are the largest representative European organisations for higher arts education, representing more than 600 institutions in all European countries.

More information:

AEC website:

www.aecinfo.org/creativity-innovation

ELIA website:

www.elia-artschools.org/creativity-innovation