

## Storm of Change 2012

### Situation:

After hosting two „Storm of Change“ conferences in 2005 and 2006 we managed to establish a comprehensive and unique independent-music-network in Central and Eastern Europe with partners from 25 states. These two meetings were and will continue to be the basis for a diversified pool of projects between Kultur Aktiv and its partners at home and abroad. Both conferences were constituted by great success and many new contacts for all participants. However, there remain three general problems, which demand special further attention:

1. Impeded partners have almost no means to participate and enlarge their network.
2. Continuity is not achievable by meeting once a year.
3. Cooperation's between the different partners (excluding the involvement of Kultur Aktiv) exist, but remain unstable.

The former is an immanent problem caused by the participation of partners abroad in other projects, which will also not allow them to attend future meetings. Possibilities of integrate these important partners need to be found for the future.

The situation analysis of the independent music scene in Central and Eastern Europe outlined five major areas of problems, which shall be dealt with by constantly strengthen and enlarge the network. One problem is the poor financial basis of the parties involved in cultural exchange in this area. To support these participants financially is one of the long-term goals of our project, since this weak financial position hinders multipliers from socialising and bands to avail themselves of the opportunity of performing abroad.

Costs of mobility (problem area A) play a major role, since most of the time travel expenses cannot even be covered by the honorariums paid. Even the absence of adequate means of transportation sometimes constrain exchange projects. As the second challenge one can define that contacts (problem area B) are made by chance mostly. Multipliers meet at events, where they are engaged in some project and cannot find the time to deepen contacts, strengthen the so important trust in each other to push forward future cooperation's. Chances to meet are rare. Whereas pop music fairs provided some space, independent music mostly is the odd one out at such occasions. The third problem (problem area C) is a discontinuous and unsystematic information flow. Just as with the above-mentioned difficulty of making contacts, information's between partners flow mostly haphazardly. Those able to access the Internet regularly have a clear advantage. Other paths of communication are not yet established. After all, even the Internet does not offer a precise and systematic basis for all partners. As a fourth problem, one has to deal with the different levels of professionalism (problem area D) of multipliers and musicians. Especially in the independent music scene, multipliers are individuals or small groups planning and organising their projects autodidact. This "trial-and-error"-strategy costs a lot of precious resources in means of time and money. The situation is pretty much the same for musicians from Central and Eastern Europe. Very rarely there are institutions such as agencies, publishing or distribution houses. This problem arises due to the lack of knowledge how to found, built up and lead such structures. In this context one again is confronted with the problem that the term "business development" (problem area E) is an unknown one in Central and Eastern Europe and even here in Germany. The independent music scene suffers even more under this problem of perception than pop music does. The music business as an economic factor is not an issue. To formulate this demand and communicate him towards politic simply misses the adequate people (problem area F). By that, the sixth problem is not yet completely stated. It also contains the almost not existing appreciation of what the participants actually do. It is seldom, that multipliers do know representatives of culture offices or politics or even see the

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connection between their own and those peoples work. They are not aware of the immanent meaning of their projects for Europe sometimes. For example a festival with bands from different countries communicates the vision of a diversified but nevertheless united Europe very well, but someone has to effectively outline that towards the target group and the European structures.

#### **Goals:**

- cultural: a self-sufficient network for the vivid and boarder-crossing exchange of culture in the independent music scene of central and Eastern Europe
- culture-political: to let diversity in the unity of Europe become reality through music, across boarders and help to obviate conflicts, strengthen the music business and parlay foreign culture politic with this valuable contribution
- institutional: a Europe-wide association (sustainable)

„Storm of Change 2012“ is the invigoration of cooperation's in our network in Germany and Central and Eastern Europe above the yet existing contacts. The process already initiated by the “Storm of Change” conferences shall be pushed forward explicitly to make meetings of participants and systematic collaboration possible more than once a year and in a durable and sustainable way.

#### **Areas of problems and need for development:**

- A Sponsorship of mobility of musicians and multipliers
- B Advancement of contacts of musicians and multipliers
- C Promotion of continuous information
- D Professionalising of musicians and multipliers
- E Business development and consulting offers for the stabilisation of small businesses
- F Increase public awareness and effectiveness of the network

#### **Phases of the project:**

- Pilot phase 24 month, starting 2007: test of best practices and evaluation (“Culture 2007”, cooperation project)
- Implementation: 36 month, starting 2009 (“Culture 2007”, cooperation projects over several years)

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**Concrete measures:**

A Sponsorship of mobility of musicians and multipliers

- A1 exploration trips for multipliers in Central and Eastern Europe
- A2 travel expenses grants for bands and multipliers
- A3 special agreements with travel agencies for musicians and multipliers

B Advancement of contacts of musicians and multipliers

- B1 conference "Storm of Change" in Dresden, every year
- B2 regional meetings in Central and Eastern Europe (Baltic states, the Caucasus, Balkan states, Russia) if so in informal talks at festivals (network intersections)
- B3 support of multipliers to participate at expert fairs in Western Europe with information points

C Promotion of continuous information

- C1 construction of a user-friendly and customised website (including interactive means such as mailing lists, postings and forums)
- C2 establishment of other information systems than internet-based ones, due to partially non existing internet access in Central and Eastern Europe (information distribution via sms, fax or telephone)

D Professionalising of musicians and multipliers

- D1 training of musicians and multipliers (traditional and internet-based seminars)
- D2 musicians and multipliers as trainees/guest auditors
- D3 login-secured forum at website with "tips'n'ruses" section

E Business development and consulting offers for the stabilisation of small businesses

- E1 grants for covering labour and apprenticeship costs (in cooperation with the respective labour market policies and instruments)
- E2 grants for investments
- E3 grants for institutions
- E4 commercial partner exchange market
- E5 consulting offers concerning entrepreneurship in the music industry, law advice and other areas of consulting

F Increase public awareness and effectiveness of the network

- F1 selective lobbying in culture administration and politic, especially to increase economic and societal awareness of the potential of independent music industry
- F2 provide qualitative presentation material
- F3 advertising of the idea of Europe towards musicians and consumers, broad effects possible due to large target group

The following measures shall be used and evaluated in the pilot phase:

B1, B2, C1, C2, F1, F2, F3

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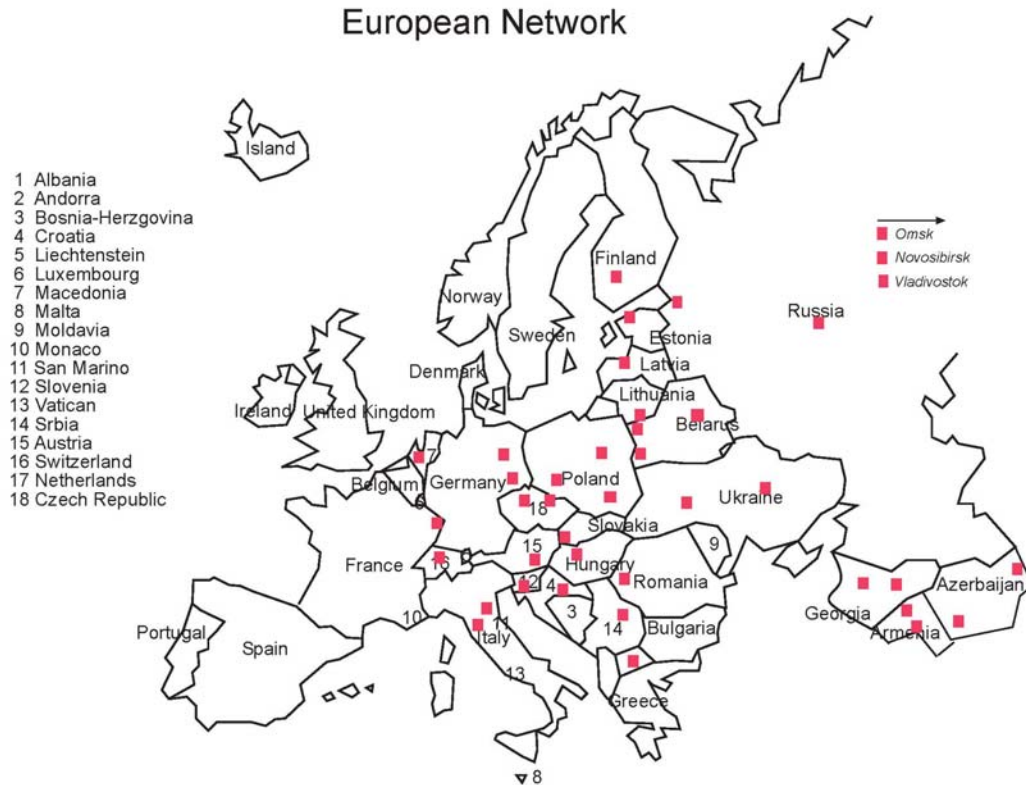
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**Network of Kultur Aktiv e.V.**

*(Status from: 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2006)*



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