

A man with dark curly hair and a beard is wearing a white button-down shirt. He is holding a green champagne bottle in his right hand, tilted towards his face. A large spray of white foam and liquid is erupting from the bottle's neck, hitting his face and chest. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

# EU REGION: IMPACT STORIES

JULY - OCTOBER 2019

## EU REGION: OUR PRIORITIES

The roots of the British Council lie in Europe and our long-standing presence here.

We have been supporting educational and cultural relations in European countries since as early as 1937.

In all that we do, we follow two core principles: collaboration and reciprocity. This approach is all the more crucial as Europe responds to the UK's EU referendum result.

## EU REGION: WHERE WE ARE

**We include 30 countries in our EU region:**

- Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland
- **Priority countries:** France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Romania and Spain
- Physical presence in 24 countries
- A strategy of amplification (mainly digital) in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden, with representatives based remotely.



Picture: Domingo Fernandez / British Council

## FEATURED STORIES

In this report, we share case studies from the following countries:

- **Arts:** Ireland, Slovenia, Sweden
- **Civil Society and Justice:** Estonia
- **English and education:** Czech Republic, Greece
- **Higher Education and Science:** Belgium, Greece, Ireland, Slovenia
- **Skills and Enterprise:** Italy, Poland
- **Testing and assessment:** Spain

'I hope that by improving my education I can contribute to improving our society. Thank you so much for believing in my values, my energy and my enthusiasm, and for allowing me to fulfil my dreams.'

**Estela González-Gualda,**  
IELTS Award Winner



## EU EUROPE: ARTS

### FOCUS ON IRELAND SCOTTEE AT DUBLIN FRINGE FESTIVAL

<b>FIVE</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>ONE</b>	<b>FOUR</b>
PERFORMANCES	PEOPLE REACHED	YEAR OF COLLABORATION	NATIONAL MEDIA REPORTS

**We promote and showcase examples of exchange of arts and culture between the UK and other European countries. Such exchange supports economic and social development, helps to bring together divided communities, and builds trust between the UK and countries of Europe.**

Dublin Fringe Festival commissioned UK artist Scottee to develop a new performance work, as part of a long-term partnership with the British Council. Scottee spent one year working with five Irish artists who identify as working class to explore issues of class in Irish cultural discourse. One of the shows was followed by a discussion between Irish artists and the audience on political

performance making and working-class access to the arts.

The collaboration demonstrated that the UK is a source of progressive creative practices, where new and diverse voices are valued, and showed industry professionals that we are a valuable cultural relations partner, able to connect UK-Irish artists and arts organisations long term.

'Director Scottee creates a carefully choreographed tossing around of ideas and personal experiences, about the complexity of class definitions.'

**Deirdre Falvey, The Irish Times**

Picture: Holly Revell





Picture: STA

## EU EUROPE: ARTS

### FOCUS ON SLOVENIA

#### GECKO AT THE SLOVENIAN NATIONAL THEATRE FESTIVAL

**900**  
LOCAL  
STAKEHOLDERS

**TWO**  
UK PARTNERS

**60**  
MEDIA  
REPORTS

**20**  
MEDIA MENTIONS OF  
BRITISH COUNCIL

**The British Council provides platforms for people in Europe to access the cultural riches the UK has to offer. Our EU arts programme is built across four strategic regional platforms: showcasing, creative economy, arts and disability and cultural skills.**

We partnered with the British Embassy, with support from the GREAT Friends in Europe challenge fund, to ensure the UK had a high profile at the Slovenian National Theatre festival, the biggest performing arts event in Slovenia. For the opening night, we brought internationally acclaimed Gecko theatre company to Slovenia to perform their multilingual show *The Wedding*.

Our contribution to the festival

reaffirmed our role as a key international cultural relations partner for Slovenia. It showed that the Slovenian audience is receptive to the UK creative arts sector and it provided an opportunity to connect and engage further with other key arts stakeholders in the country.

‘The show, which is inspired by a diversity of images, provides an excellent examination of everyday reality. Diversity is also one of the fundamental values of the British Council, which promotes intensive cultural relations between different nations and regions.’

**Dragan Barbutovski, British Council Country Director, Slovenia**



## EU EUROPE: ARTS

### FOCUS ON SWEDEN

#### BRITISH AUTHORS AT THE GOTHENBURG BOOK FAIR

**TWO**  
EVENTS

**20**  
STUDENTS

**150**  
ATTENDEES

**684**  
PEOPLE REACHED  
ONLINE

**We are recognised across Europe as a trusted representative for artistic and cultural connections with the UK. We are developing digital strategies and partnerships to ensure people across Europe can view and engage with UK artists and their work.**

In September we collaborated with the British Embassy in Stockholm to amplify the UK presence at the Gothenburg Book Fair, the largest cultural event in Scandinavia. We promoted the involvement of ten UK authors on websites and social media, and co-hosted two events: Helen Pankhurst, one of the leaders of the 21<sup>st</sup> century women's rights movement, gave a talk at Gothenburg University, while

bestselling author David Nicholls was interviewed by 20 school students at the fair.

The events combined to increase visibility of the UK's literary scene and academic sector in Sweden, and demonstrated our continued engagement with the themes these authors encompass: gender equality, media literacy and youth.

'David [Nicholls] comes off as a true pro and you can really see how much the students are enjoying talking to him and vice versa.'

**Mrs Katie Larsson, Teacher  
at the English School  
Gothenburg**





## EU EUROPE: CIVIL SOCIETY AND JUSTICE

### FOCUS ON ESTONIA

### CHANGEMAKERS SUMMER ACADEMY

**TWO**  
WEEKS

**FOUR**  
SOCIAL  
ENTERPRISES

**100%**  
IMPROVED  
COMMUNICATION  
SKILLS

**9,000**  
ATTENDEES AT  
FINAL EVENT

**On behalf of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, we run People to People projects in the Baltic states that support empowerment, social change and greater engagement through education, the arts and social enterprise.**

In Estonia we support Changemakers Academy, run by the Estonian Social Enterprise Network, which brings together groups of 16-19 year-olds to learn about social entrepreneurship. 18 young people took part in this year's Summer Academy, where they worked in teams on short tasks to develop their business, communication and co-operation skills. The group presented their final ideas at the Opinion Festival in Paide, attended by around

9,000 people.

Participants in the Changemakers Academy report positive developments in their language skills and recognition that diverse groups in the country have more in common than what sets them apart. In all the Baltic states, People to People projects help participants become more able to take an active role in decision making in their own communities, country and beyond.

'I spent a year in the USA and came back to Estonia in June. At first, I had issues talking in my native language, let alone Estonian... By the end I felt that I could speak much better.'

**Arina Jermitsova, participant**

Picture: Kelly Phillips





## EU EUROPE: ENGLISH AND EDUCATION

### FOCUS ON GREECE EUROPEAN DAY OF LANGUAGES 2019

1,000

ATTENDEES

15

INSTITUTES AND  
EMBASSIES

SEVENTH

ANNUAL EVENT

10,000

ATTENDEES SINCE  
2013

**Demand for English as a vital 21<sup>st</sup> Century life skill has never been greater. It fuels economic growth, international trade and communication and builds trust between the UK and countries in Europe.**

The European Day of Languages is the leading event within our EUNIC cluster in Athens, held every year since 2013. This year, we celebrated language and diversity through three multilingual events: a discussion on English language and digital literacy, an English song performed by students from our partner school, I.M. Panagiotopoulos, and Little Scientists, an activity for 6-12 year-olds combining English and scientific experiments. We also ran an exhibition stall providing

general information to the public.

The annual event gives us an opportunity to strengthen the relationships between the UK and other European institutes and stakeholders, to build relationships with schools and to disseminate and showcase UK creativity in Greece, all of which encourage people to study, travel and do business with the UK.

‘The European Day of Languages brings us together every year and has continued to build trust and cooperation with the British Council since 2013.’

**Maria Sargiannidou, Goethe Institute Athens**





## EU EUROPE: ENGLISH AND EDUCATION

### FOCUS ON CZECH REPUBLIC ELT REVOLUTION

**170**  
TEACHING  
PROFESSIONALS

**FOUR**  
KEYNOTE  
SPEAKERS

**EIGHT**  
WORKSHOPS

**93%**  
RATED EVENT  
EXCELLENT OR  
GOOD

**We share our decades of expertise with teachers, teacher networks and education policy makers, supporting teachers' professional development and helping to embed the most effective learning methods across Europe.**

Our English teaching conference, as part of the British Embassy's centenary celebrations, marked the huge advancement in English proficiency and English teaching in the Czech Republic since 1989. It reflected on the part the UK and the British Council played in advancing English teaching during the 1990s and 2000s and presented some of today's contemporary English teaching practice.

The conference provides a useful example of the contribution of our work, over the last 30 years, in preserving a strong relationship between the UK and the Czech Republic, and highlights our ongoing commitment to remaining a valuable education partner in the Czech Republic.

'The conference made me look back once again and realise how much teaching English has influenced my professional and private life. It provided an opportunity to meet both old friends and new people.'

**Miluska Karaskova,**  
conference speaker





## EU EUROPE: HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

### FOCUS ON BELGIUM

### AFRICA-EUROPE CONFERENCE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

**FIRST**

EVENT OF  
ITS KIND

**450**

PARTICIPANTS

**FOUR**

HIGHER EDUCATION  
PARTNERS

**EIGHT**

HIGHER EDUCATION  
EXPERTS

**We provide platforms for the UK higher education and research sectors to build international connections. Working with partners, governments and institutions, we ensure that the UK's educational and cultural links continue to grow stronger in Europe and beyond.'**

We co-organised the first Africa-Europe conference on higher education in Brussels with the European Commission, the African Union and three European agencies. Our delegation of eight higher education experts from Nigeria, South Africa, Ghana and Kenya joined 450 higher education policymakers and experts to debate and discuss improved collaboration.

The event increased visibility for the UK's higher education sector and established our expertise as a trusted European partner and a key stakeholder in Africa, creating networking opportunities and generating potential for future partnerships.

'What we are doing, we are doing in a partnership, which we would like to reinforce in the future because we all know that education and skills are key to provide people with knowledge and competences they need in life.'

**Marjeta Jager, Deputy Director-General for International Cooperation and Development, European Commission**

Picture: European Commission



CELEBRATING  
80 YEARS  
OF CULTURAL  
RELATIONS  
IN GREECE



[www.britishcouncil.gr](http://www.britishcouncil.gr)



## EU EUROPE: HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

### FOCUS ON GREECE

#### FAMELAB AT EUROPEAN RESEARCHERS' NIGHT

<b>100</b>		<b>FIVE</b>		<b>SEVENTH</b>		<b>80th</b>
ATTENDEES		FAMELAB ALUMNI		YEAR		ANNIVERSARY IN GREECE

**The British Council helps students, teachers and researchers in the UK and European countries gain access to partnerships, training and collaborations which develop their careers and produce high quality teaching, learning and research.**

As part of our 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations in Greece, we joined the European Researchers' Night with the Hall of FameLab, a unique series of short presentations to celebrate our global science communication competition, FameLab. Five FameLab alumni from Greece returned to the stage to wow the crowd and judges with short scientific talks.

We have contributed to European Researchers' Nights across the EU since 2013, with the aim of helping students and researchers gain access to a wider audience, sharing the UK's experience in science, research and communication, and deepening engagement between science and society.

'It is the collaboration between the British Council and the National Research Foundation back in 2013 that really made Researchers' Night a hit and a truly public event.'

**Eleni Grammatikopoulou,**  
**REN and Athens Science**  
**Festival curator**





## EU EUROPE: HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

### FOCUS ON IRELAND SCIENTIFICALLY SPEAKING

**95**  
RESEARCHERS

**NINE**  
FAMELAB ALUMNI

**FIVE**  
CITIES

**98%**  
RATED THE COURSE  
HIGH QUALITY

**The British Council shares the UK's experience in science, research and science communication, collaborating with other European countries to deepen engagement between science and society.**

In August and September we held a series of science communications workshops in partnership with higher education institutions in Galway, Limerick, Cork, Belfast and Dublin. The workshops were delivered by leading science communication trainer Malcolm Love from Ulster University alongside FameLab alumni in each of the five cities.

Through the workshop, we strengthened our collaboration with higher education partners

and raised the UK's profile as a leader in science communication. As a cross-border project, Scientifically Speaking also helped to tighten links between Northern Ireland and Ireland.

'We had a great group of people willing to improve their communication skills. We explored all things from engaging content, confidence, communication, body language, story telling and communicating in the media. What a day!'

**Emer McGuire, FameLab alumna and co-trainer in Belfast**



## EU EUROPE: HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

### FOCUS ON SLOVENIA MEETING THE NEXT CLASS OF UK STUDENTS

80

PARTICIPANTS

10

ALUMNI

200

MEMBERS OF NEW STUDY  
UK FACEBOOK GROUP

**Students and staff from Europe and beyond make a significant contribution to the UK and the success of its education institutions. We continue to help students and researchers benefit from educational exchange, both before and after the UK's exit from the European Union.**

Together with the British Embassy, and with support from the GREAT challenge fund, we held an intimate event for around 80 prospective UK students in Slovenia. We invited ten alumni of UK universities to share their experience of studying in the UK and provide further information about studying in the UK.

Our event positioned the UK as an open and welcoming place

for students. Research shows that those who study in the UK are more likely to do business with the UK in the future.

'The Slovenian government will make every effort to have the best possible relations [with the UK] in the future. With regard to future relations, the Slovenian government will clearly promote reciprocity, i.e. both sides should take care of students the same way.'

**Minister of Education,  
Science and Sport Jernej  
Pikalo**

Picture: Melani Pavlovic





## EU EUROPE: SKILLS AND ENTERPRISE

### FOCUS ON ITALY NEXT GENERATION ITALIAN MAYORS

40

YOUNG MAYORS AND  
OFFICIALS

TWO

DAYS

35

MAXIMUM AGE OF  
PARTICIPANTS

**We aim to connect with young people across Europe and support them by sharing UK expertise in innovation and social entrepreneurship.**

The British Council in Italy supported a leadership conference in London in partnership with the National Association of Italian Municipalities and University College London. The conference focused on the role of culture in regeneration. Through discussions and networking events, we helped the young elected mayors to develop their skills, capabilities and networks to support their leadership of their cities and municipalities. Stevie Spring, Chairman of the British Council,

hosted a lively and engaging working lunch with Jackie McNerney from the Mayor of London's culture team.

With the conference, we provided a platform for the UK and Italy to share examples of best practice in driving urban regeneration through culture, enabling participants to build international connections and strengthened cultural relations between the UK and Italy.

**'Culture is an important part of all our lives and sits at the core of our cities.'**

**Stevie Spring, Chairman  
British Council**





Picture: British Council

## EU EUROPE: SKILLS AND ENTERPRISE

### FOCUS ON POLAND CREATIVE MIKSER

20th  
EVENT

FOUR  
SPEAKERS

80  
PARTICIPANTS

83%  
GAINED NEW  
KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

**We work with UK and European partners to support education, training and capacity-building projects that promote inclusiveness and strengthen civil society in Europe.**

Creative Mikser is a series of networking events for Warsaw's creative community, organised jointly by the British Council and the City of Warsaw. The 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition of the project was devoted to exploring the challenges cities will face in the future and brought together professionals from the UK and Poland working in urban development, ecosystem design and future trending. We invited Rory Hyde, a designer and curator from the Victoria and Albert Museum,

London, to give an inspirational talk and share his experience.

Through this series of events, we provide a platform for stakeholders, entrepreneurs and freelancers from Poland and the UK to share insights, inspire each other and find potential business partners.

'Creative Mikser is one of the longest collaborations between the city and an external partner as renowned as the British Council, in the field of creative economy.'

**Grzegorz Wolff, Deputy Director at the Department of Economic Development, City of Warsaw**





## EU EUROPE: TESTING AND ASSESSMENT

### FOCUS ON SPAIN

#### FIVE YEARS OF THE BRITISH COUNCIL IELTS AWARD

**€10,000**  
SCHOLARSHIP  
AWARD

**1,200+**  
APPLICATIONS  
OVER FIVE YEARS

**1.6million**  
AUDIENCE REACH

**26**  
SPANISH CITIES  
DELIVERING IELTS

**The British Council provides individuals, businesses and institutions in Europe with internationally recognised UK qualifications and assessments that are trusted across the world.**

In Spain we celebrated five years of the British Council IELTS Award, our scholarship which gives one IELTS student each year the opportunity to study at internationally renowned universities.

A special programme surrounding the award included online and face-to-face sessions on IELTS, the promotion of the exam and the award in our annual education fairs, and the award ceremony with previous winners in which we reflected on the impact of the award.

The programme of activities further strengthened bilateral educational relationships between the UK and Spain. We run the annual British Council IELTS award in three countries in the EU region (Germany, Greece and Spain), to support students and showcase our excellence in creating opportunities for educational exchange.

*'I hope that by improving my education I can contribute to improving our society. Thank you so much for believing in my values, my energy and my enthusiasm, and for allowing me to fulfil my dreams'*

**Estela González-Gualda,**  
IELTS Award Winner

Picture: Domingo Fernández / British Council