



BULGARIA AND ALL EU REGION

# ONE NIGHT, ONE CONTINENT, THOUSANDS OF DISCOVERIES

COUNTRIES ACROSS THE EU REGION MARKED EUROPEAN RESEARCHERS NIGHT IN STYLE, WITH HUNDREDS OF EVENTS THAT ALLOWED PEOPLE OF ALL AGES TO GET HANDS ON WITH SCIENCE.

British Council Bulgaria set the tone, leading partners in the FRESH (Find Research Everywhere and Share) consortium in a programme spanning 11 towns and cities. Events in Sofia alone took place in 14 places, with appearances by the Minister of Education and other EU and Bulgarian officials. On and around Researchers Night, teams across the EU region took part in local science festivals. In Romania, we held a student talk with the European Space Agency.

A 'Hall of FameLab' event, broadcast live from London's Natural History Museum, celebrated European winners of our international science communication competition, FameLab. This acted as a digital bridge between all our local EU Researchers Nights, and a demonstration of our commitment to young scientists in Europe and worldwide.

'I would like to personally thank the British Council and their Director [Bulgaria] Lyubov Kostova for organising European Researchers Night in Bulgaria.' Mrs Yordanka Fandakova, Mayor of Sofia

Image credit: Ivailo Milanov



POLAND

# CONNECTING THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE CAMERA

WE PARTNERED WITH POLAND'S LEADING ARTHOUSE FILM EVENT, NEW HORIZONS, TO GIVE EMERGING FILMMAKERS THE CHANCE TO DEVELOP THEIR SKILLS AND INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS.

During the four-day Studio+ programme in Wrocław, we helped 20 young professionals develop projects, with lectures from award-winning British producing company Intermission Film and London Film Academy lecturer David Pope.

The T-Mobile New Horizons arthouse film festival is among the most popular in this part of Europe, attracting 115,000 spectators and acting as a hub for international filmmakers. As partners of Studio+, we stood alongside some of Europe's most important film organisations, such as German Films, European Audiovisual Entrepreneurs and Creative Europe Desk Poland. In doing so, we supported talented young creatives in Europe and provided a space to share UK and international expertise.

'We hope to have provided an inspiring and nourishing environment for both directors and producers... We, for sure, will leave Wrocław feeling inspired by their vision and drive.' Statement from the Studio+ jury

**Image credit**: Filip Basara for the 17<sup>th</sup> T-Mobile New Horizons International Film Festival



CZECH REPUBLIC AND ROMANIA

# REWARDING EXAM SUCCESS EVERY STEP OF THE WAY

ENGLISH QUALIFICATIONS OPEN DOORS FOR STUDENTS – AND THROUGH OUR ADDVANTAGE NETWORK OF EXAMINERS, WE'RE GIVING BOTH CANDIDATES AND THOSE WHO HELP THEM TAKE THEIR EXAMS THE RECOGNITION THEY DESERVE.

Exams can be expensive for families in difficult financial situations – so in the Czech Republic, our Addvantage Exams For All initiative offered up to ten free exams to students at partner schools. Meanwhile in Romania, more than 80 teachers and examiners turned out to the Addvantage awards ceremony at the British ambassador's residence, where we recognised those who had prepared their students exceptionally for exams.

Addvantage continues to help us strengthen our relationships with education professionals across the region, inspiring students to study English and excel.

'I am very grateful for this opportunity as it helped me financially as well mentally – I didn't feel such pressure when taking the exam. I think it is a great idea and great way to help those candidates who lack financial support but would like to focus on language studies.'

Sabina, Cambridge exam candidate, Czech Republic

Image credit: Octav Ganea



SEVEN EU REGION COUNTRIES (AND UK)

# THIS STORY IS ABOUT ME – NOT MY HEADSCARF

IN 2012, THE BRITISH COUNCIL LAUNCHED INTERNATIONAL THEATRE PROJECT *THE HIJABI MONOLOGUES* IN EUROPE. FIVE YEARS ON, IT REACHES ITS FINALE IN A SELL-OUT LONDON RUN.

The Hijabi Monologues enables Muslim and non-Muslim women from different countries to share experiences creatively and in a safe environment. Participants develop performances in workshops or can enter an international story contest. When the British Council hosted the European premieres in Belfast, Dublin and the Netherlands, we involved women from Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, Ireland, Spain and the UK.

In September this year, *The Hijabi Monologues* culminated in four performances at London's Bush Theatre. The story contest will continue with the British Council as a global partner – a testimony to the work of our EU teams to drive forward an inspirational piece that supports inclusion, understanding and creative expression.

'The Hijabi Monologues [is] perhaps one of the most relevant and necessary representations of this time.' Elisabeth Oosterling, reviewer for Dutch website Theaterkrant

Image credit: Marc O'Sullivan



**IRELAND** 

# A CHALLENGE TO PREJUDICE AND PRECONCEPTIONS

IRISH PRIME MINISTER LEO VARADKAR WAS AMONG GUESTS AT THE OPENING OF GAZE, DUBLIN'S INTERNATIONAL LGBTQI+ FESTIVAL, WHICH PARTNERED WITH THE BRITISH COUNCIL FOR THE FIRST TIME FOR A SPECIAL UK FOCUS.

Around 12,000 people turned out across the five-day programme of films, talks, workshops and events. As well as helping to organise the festival, British Council Ireland screened 20 UK films, held discussions with British experts and assisted the UK Queer Film Network in hosting its annual conference.

The attendance of Ireland's first openly gay prime minister was indicative of how LGBTQI+ rights are high on the agenda in Ireland, the first country to legalise same-sex marriage by popular vote. Our partnership with GAZE was an opportunity to support cultural collaborations that break down stereotypes, whether of gender, nationality or otherwise.

'It is very appropriate for us to include [a UK] focus for our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. In the wake of Brexit, we want to strengthen our cultural ties and look forward to how we can continue to develop artistic relations with the United Kingdom.'
Roisin Geraghty, GAZE programmer

Image credit: Patrick O'Leary, Thursday 03 August, Light House Cinema, Dublin



TEN EU COUNTRIES TO DATE

# **QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED**

FROM THE MIGRATION CRISIS IN GREECE TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN ELECTIONS – WHAT STARTED AS AN EU PILOT HAS DEVELOPED INTO A GLOBAL PROGRAMME. WE HAVE JOINED THE BBC WORLD SERVICE TO TAKE THEIR WORLD QUESTIONS BROADCAST TO 14 COUNTRIES SO FAR.

Live studio audiences put questions to panels of those shaping local and international policy. Chairs have included Jonathan Dimbleby, Nancy Kacungira and other BBC interviewers. In addition to European cities such as Amsterdam, Budapest and Paris we have taken the debate to Beirut, Bogota and Johannesburg. Panellists have included Leo Varadkar, now Ireland's prime minister; Lebanon's deputy prime minister Ghassan Hasbani; and Polish film director Agnieszka Holland.

More than 3,200 people have attended the debates, and the show is broadcast three times on BBC World Service, reaching a weekly global audience of 75m.

'We couldn't do this without our partnership with you. Working together on the quality of the panels, securing great venues, bringing in strong audiences – these are all essential ingredients to making these important programmes.'

Mary Hockaday, BBC World Service Controller

Image credit: BBC World Service



**SPAIN** 

# **BRITISH LITERATURE ON TOUR**

SUMMER NIGHTS IN SEGOVIA SEEM A WORLD AWAY FROM WALES... UNTIL HAY LITERATURE FESTIVAL, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE BRITISH COUNCIL, BRINGS UK WRITERS TO THE BEAUTIFUL SPANISH CITY.

This year the British Council presented 12 events at Hay Festival Segovia introducing British contemporary fiction, cinema and political debate to an international audience. We were joined by writers and philosophers such as Nikesh Shukla, Ben Okri, Jeanette Winterson and A.C. Grayling, as well as artists from other disciplines such as Spanish architect Luis Vidal.

This year's festival saw a 32% increase in attendees since last year, bringing the total number of visitors to over 35,000. As Hay's international partner, we also work with the festival to promote UK literature in Mexico and Peru, and in Colombia, where we train local writers. We will join Hay in Aarhus in Denmark this year, as the joint European Capital of Culture hosts International Children's Literature Hay Festival.

'It has been a beautiful way to make different cultures work together and create something beautiful. Not just the British and Spanish cultures, but many others.'
Olivia Santamaría, volunteer at Hay Festival Segovia

Image credit: Hay Festival



**GFRMANY** 

# **WILLS AND KATE IN BERLIN**

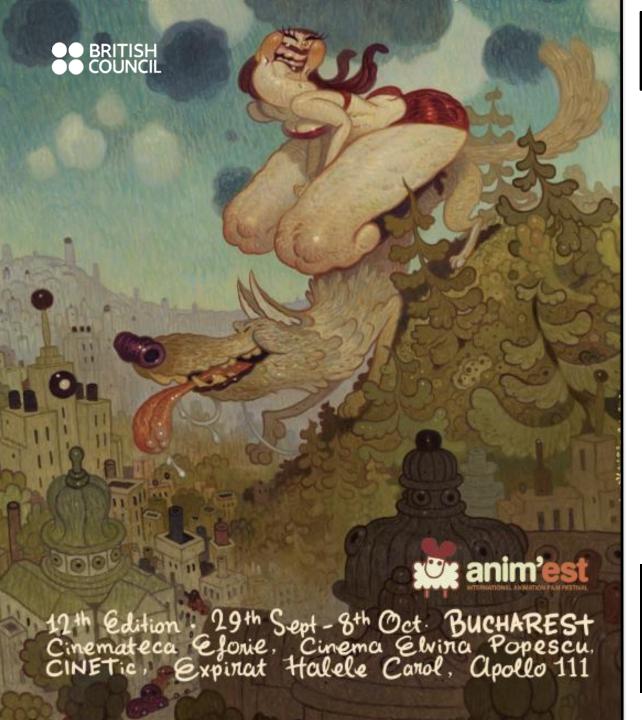
THE DUKE AND DUCHESS OF CAMBRIDGE MET MORE THAN 120 MEMBERS OF THE GERMAN CULTURAL SECTOR AT THE BRITISH COUNCIL'S ROYAL RECEPTION IN BERLIN.

We partnered with the British Embassy for an evening that introduced the Duke and Duchess to members of Germany's rich artistic scene, from the Barenboim-Said Academy to Festival Pop-Kultur. On the decks was Goldierocks, DJ of the British Council's Selector radio. During the royal visit, UK and German foreign secretaries confirmed a joint doubling of funding for the UK-German Connection, a British Council-supported scheme that promotes teaching initiatives between our two countries.

Articles reached over 33m people online, with front page coverage in all major national dailies. Early media focus on Brexit shifted to UK-German cultural ties, a testimony to the success of the event at highlighting connections over divisions.

'Their Royal Highnesses thoroughly enjoyed their evening at the "super cool" venue and having the opportunity to celebrate Germany's creative and cultural industries and their links to the United Kingdom.' Miguel Head, Private Secretary to HRH the Duke of Cambridge

Image credit: Bernd Schoenberger



ROMANIA

# NOT YOUR USUAL SATURDAY MORNING CARTOONS

WE PARTNERED WITH ROMANIA'S INTERNATIONAL ANIMATED FILM FESTIVAL, ANIM'EST, WHICH BRINGS TOGETHER FILM MAKERS AND THEIR WORKS – FROM THE BIG NAME AWARD WINNERS TO EXPERIMENTAL STUDENT FLICKS.

The UK was centre stage this year, with London International Film Festival and the National Film and Television School, London (NFTS) named 'Guest Film Festival' and 'Guest Animation School'. We held a student talk and live Facebook interview with Professor Robert Bradbrook of NFTS, and developed teaching materials based on NFTS student films to be used by British Council English teachers worldwide.

As well as sharing news about British entrants to the festival, we featured Anim'est in the global British Council *Voices* webzine – an example of our support for all initiatives like Anim'est that enable young people to find new routes to artistic expression.

'It's an advantage that 95% of the content at Anim'est is international. It encourages collaboration between people of different cultures. Students can meet and exchange impressions with experienced producers, filmmakers and graphic designers.' Mihai Mitrica, founder of Anim'est

Image credit: Anim'est – Raluca Descends on Bucharest by Dave Cooper



**SPAIN** 

# JOINING THE UNIVERSITIES AT THE HEART OF EUROPE

THE BRITISH COUNCIL'S STUDY UK CAMPAIGN BROUGHT TOGETHER UNIVERSITIES FROM ENGLAND, NORTHERN IRELAND, SCOTLAND AND WALES AT THE LARGEST MULTINATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION CONFERENCE IN EUROPE.

More than 6,500 representatives from higher education institutions joined this year's European Association for International Education (EAIE) conference in Seville, including 450 from the UK. The event is fertile ground for forging new and cementing existing partnerships with international counterparts. This is a high priority for European universities as the future of UK-EU educational exchange remains unclear during ongoing Brexit negotiations.

As well as joining panels and hosting a reception for delegates with the British Embassy, we presented our research into the benefits of university-city 'internationalisation' strategies – where both sides find mutual strength by reaching out to international students and visitors together.

'It is essential that the UK HE sector finds ways to campaign together... No university can do it alone.' Carolina Jiménez, Head of Higher Education and Society, British Council Spain

Image credit: La Pepi Films and British Council Spain



**FINLAND** 

# **MEET THE DESIGN DIPLOMATS**

THE BRITISH COUNCIL'S ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE AT HELSINKI DESIGN WEEK BECAME CULTURAL AMBASSADORS THANKS TO OUR JOINT PROGRAMME WITH THE BRITISH EMBASSY DURING THE BIGGEST DESIGN FESTIVAL IN THE NORDICS.

Our selected UK design duo FRAUD joined Finnish designers Susan Elo and Pasi Savolainen for a public discussion at the British Ambassador's residence. The packed event also involved student designers from Aalto University, and was part of a wider 'Design Diplomacy' programme involving 12 embassies.

The British Council's annual residency at Helsinki allows a UK designer to learn from Finland's famously rich environment. This year's partnership with the embassy exemplified our efforts to ensure arts and culture remain embedded in the diplomatic and political agenda.

'It was great to get involved with Design Diplomacy during Helsinki Design Week. It gave us the opportunity to network with new people in Finland's vibrant cultural sphere in a dialogue that allowed us to show our openness and how similar our points of view are at a time when we are looking to cement our relationships across Europe.'

Richard Shackleton, Deputy Head of Mission, British Embassy Helsinki

Image credit: FRAUD



CZECH REPUBLIC

# IS DEMOCRACY TOO OLD FOR YOUNG PEOPLE?

METE COBAN WAS 21 YEARS OLD WHEN HE BECAME A LONDON COUNCILLOR. NOW 25, HE'S FOUNDED A CHARITY TO 'REBRAND' POLITICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE. WE INVITED HIM TO SPEAK AT ONE OF PRAGUE'S HIGHEST PROFILE DEBATE FORUMS.

Founded in 1996 by the late Czech president Václav Havel, Japanese philanthropist Yohei Sasakawa and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Elie Wiesel, Forum 2000 provides a platform for those who support democracy and human rights and who want to make a positive difference through politics. This year, the discussion was around tackling young people's disengagement with politics. As the founder of all-party parliamentary group 'Better Brexit for Young People', Mete was an ideal UK representative.

Mete joined other young, politically engaged speakers from the Czech Republic, Canada, Hong Kong, Iran and Venezuela. He exemplifies the positive voices that the British Council aims to promote from post-referendum Britain – a passionate young person working towards a brighter future.

'Brilliant to be at Forum 2000 and speak about how NextGenUK17 can empower young citizens.' Mete Coban, tweeting from Forum 2000

Image credit: Denise Waddingham, British Council



**GERMANY** 

# HOW BERLINERS WELCOME REFUGEE CHILDREN

WE BROUGHT A DELEGATION OF TEACHERS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND TO BERLIN TO LEARN FROM THE SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTIONS INVOLVED IN INTEGRATING REFUGEE STUDENTS.

The teachers came from schools in Ulster where large numbers of students speak English as an additional language. Their visit took in all institutions involved in helping children fleeing from conflict zones as they become part of German society, from the education senate to rehabilitation centres and finally 'Welcome Classes' in Berlin schools.

The teachers were keen to learn about effective integration strategies in Berlin, where 80,000 refugees have arrived since 2015 and the number of pupils from diverse backgrounds and with limited German language capability has risen significantly. They shared examples from their own schools, supporting inclusive education in both countries.

'Every child needs to have access to the education system... [this] is what we heard at the senate and the trade union, and from teachers and NGO workers. We've been impressed how this mandate is shared and being acted on in Berlin.'

lan Gilchrist, teacher from Northern Ireland

Image credit: Lydia Ciesluk, British Council



ITAI Y

# STANDING UP TOGETHER FOR EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

WE LAUNCHED OUR FIRST EVER UK-ITALY CULTURE SERIES WITH A SCIENCE AND RESEARCH CONFERENCE IN CAPRI TO SUPPORT RESEARCHER MOBILITY.

Scientific collaboration is in a critical place as negotiations proceed about the future UK-EU relationship. This was why we kicked off our two-month UK-Italy Culture Series with a meeting between representatives from both countries' education and science sectors, including Universities UK International, the Italian Research Council and the Economic and Social Research Council.

Our conclusions, which were presented to the Italian Ministry for Cultural Heritage, included frameworks for a bilateral postgraduate exchange programme, a researcher passport and a researcher mobility task force. Science will remain central to our Culture Series; we will examine joint degree programmes and other mobility schemes, and build high-level talks around our Study UK fair in November.

'We are proud that this event kicks off the UK-Italy Culture Series. Science is culture.'

Professor Massimo Inguscio, President of the Italian Research Council

Image credit: Italian Research Council



**GREECE** 

# PARTYING ALONG WITH THE WHOLE OF EUROPE

BY WORKING WITH PARTNERS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION NATIONAL INSTITUTES FOR CULTURE (EUNIC), WE'VE DEVELOPED JOINT PROGRAMMES PROMOTING CULTURAL RELATIONS AND DIVERSITY.

At the annual European Literary Walk, we welcomed award-winning young adult writer Tanya Landman from the UK, introducing her to school-age readers and writers who in turn had been invited by our EUNIC partners. On 23 September, we again joined EUNIC and European institution partners for a European Day of Languages festival involving music, dance, competitions and games, celebrating each of our countries individually and as a diverse and multicultural family.

Each organisation benefited greatly from shared communication plans that extended the reach and resonance of our events. Through EUNIC, individual projects became European celebrations.

'I felt I was amongst friends... I found it really stimulating and arrived back in the UK still buzzing. I very much hope I can return to Athens to visit the school and talk to the students.'

Tanya Landman, British Writer, Carnegie medal winners for 2015

Image credit: Dimitris Michalakis



FRANCE

# YOUNG SCIENTISTS ON STAGE

CAN YOU EXPLAIN A SCIENTIFIC CONCEPT IN UNDER 180 SECONDS? THIS WAS THE TASK WE SET FOR SCHOOL STUDENTS IN SOME OF FRANCE'S MOST CHALLENGED AREAS – AND THE RESULT WAS ASTOUNDING.

SchoolLab, a 15-year-olds' version of the British Council's international FameLab science communication competition, went to 12 schools in Lille this year. In this area, many schools are classed as 'education action', meaning students tend to come from low education backgrounds. Mentors from UK universities helped students develop their performances and winners got a trip to London with a tour of the University College London labs.

Feedback from French education ministry partners has been excellent. We plan to double the number of schools involved next year, reaching out to two more local education authorities.

'The concept [has proven] very rich, not only for participating pupils who went on to excel during their national Brevet exam when they chose to present their work on SchoolLab, but also for the teachers involved. Oral work like this is particularly beneficial for teenagers.'

Teacher, Denis Diderot School in Dainville

Image credit: British Council / Mat Wright



**GREECE** 

# IS YOUR EXAM CERTIFICATE ALL IT CLAIMS TO BE?

THE BRITISH COUNCIL'S TRANSLATION AND VERIFICATION SERVICE IN GREECE HAS BEEN HELPING STUDENTS, ALUMNI AND YOUNG PROFESSIONALS TO PROVE THE QUALITY OF THEIR UK CERTIFICATES FOR OVER 20 YEARS.

Greek students who have studied in the UK may need to verify their certificates to Greek authorities, while students hoping to study in the UK often need translations of Greek documents. The British Council has built connections with over 800,000 certificate holders, providing officially recognised translations and verification documents.

In doing so, we help build trust towards UK education institutions from Greek employers and students alike, at the same time as enabling young people to study abroad and gain international experience.

'I would like to thank the British Council for the exceptionally effective cooperation with the Ministry inspectors... You were able, due to your outstanding professionalism, to inform us within a tight deadline about fraudulent certificates.'

Paraskevas Nomikos, Ministry of Administrative Reform and E-Governance, Inspector-Controllers Body for Public Administration

Image credit: British Council