



Association Européenne des
Conservatoires, Académies de
Musique et Musikhochschulen

Brussels, 23rd June 2017

Dear colleagues,

The AEC has great pleasure in inviting you to the next edition of

**The AEC Annual Meeting for International Relations Coordinators in
European Institutions for Higher Music Education (IRCs meeting)**

which will take place at the

**V. Saradjishvili Tbilisi State Conservatoire
Georgia, 21-24 September 2017**

What for and for whom?

The Annual Meeting for IRCs is meant for administrative and/or teaching staff members in conservatoires who deal with international relations and European programmes (such as ERASMUS+). The meeting is open also to students interested in the international dimension of their learning. During the meetings, relevant topics in the field of mobility and international cooperation are discussed in plenary sessions, workshops, discussion fora and parallel sessions. The meeting is also a unique platform for networking at European level: participants have the opportunity to develop relations with fellow IRCs, meet project partners and potential partner institutions and show projects and activities that have been developed within their home institution.

Over the years, the AEC Annual Meeting for International Relations Coordinators has seen strong development and a substantial increase in numbers of participants. The 2016 meeting, which took place in Krakow, was attended by 209 participants from 30 different countries.

Diversity - Independently Together

Working in the field of international relations means to deal on daily basis with the concept of “diversity”. Diversity means acceptance and respect; it means understanding that each individual is unique, and recognizing our individual differences; it is the exploration of these differences in a positive, and nurturing environment; it is about understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity of each individual. In other words: it means to be “independently together”.

Nowadays the theme of diversity is being address at several levels, from national governments to European institutions, from media to NGO’s, and last but not least it has become a key requirement of European funding programmes and a central theme within the AEC community, which has already

addressed this issue within the Pop and Jazz Platform and the AEC Annual Congress and General Assembly in the last years.

During their 2017 meeting, the International Relations Coordinators of AEC members institutions are also invited to reflect on this theme of “Diversity” starting from its intrinsic definition: independently together. If from one side working in an international environment naturally means to be surrounded by “diversity”, are we really ready to make an effort to accept our differences and work together, going beyond our prejudice and horizons? Are we ready to cross our safe “Erasmus borders”? Are our institutions ready to accept and endorse commonly agreed international policy, standards, guidelines and tools which would allow us to better work together?

This theme will be symbolically debated in the furthest location the IRCs Meeting has ever taken place: Tbilisi, Georgia, on the border between East and West, Europe and Asia, in a country rich of history, culture and traditions beyond the European Union.

This special IRCs Meeting edition, which falls between the end of the FULL SCORE project and the beginning of the new “SMS = Strengthening Music in Society” funded by Creative Europe, will feature 3 pre-conference activities:

- EASY Workshop (Thursday 11:00-- 18:00) - European Online Application System Pilot Project: this seminar, given by Dreamapply, the IT company who has developed the system, is meant for institutions which already took part in Pilot Year 1 and to new institutions willing to join the system in Year 2. The system will undergo some further testing and development during the Summer and will be presented in detail during this seminar with some hands-on simulations. This seminar is FREE of CHARGE and open to all institutions.

- Seminar 1 on Branding (Friday 10:00 - 13:00): how can institutions market themselves at international level? Is a branding strategy necessary to compete on the modern and worldwide higher education market? How can conservatoires build an international branding strategy? Which are the necessary steps? The case study of Berlkee College of Music in Valencia will be presented as an exemple. Extra fees apply to this seminar and a maximum of 30 participants will be allowed.

- Seminar 2 on Quality and Internationalization (Friday 10:00 - 13:00): Higher music education institutions are recruiting an increasingly diverse and international student body. As such, there is a growing need to ensure that their educational programmes and environment are adapted to students coming from different (teaching) cultures, within as well as outside Europe. How can higher music education institutions take the responsibility to ensure the relevance and quality of their educational provision in such an international context? Which intercultural challenges do institutions encounter? Which quality enhancement tools can be used or developed to assist institutions in improving their internationalisation process? This seminar on quality and internationalisation aims to offer participants a platform to share experiences and exchange practices and ideas about these various challenges. Extra fees apply to this seminar and a maximum of 30 participants will be allowed.

During the conference, an inspiring keynote speech will trigger group discussions around the theme of “diversity”, while parallel sessions will give the opportunity to explore various topics related to the core activities of the IRCs: Recognition and Diploma Supplement, Employability, Jean Monnet Programme and Knowledge Alliances, Capacity Building and Credit Mobility, Quality. A plenary session will be dedicated to the outcomes of the first pilot year of the EASY - European Online Application System and, more in general, to the “technological” trends that the Erasmus Programme is facing, which will be presented by the representatives of the project Erasmus Without Papers.

Last but not least, all participants are welcome to share their “diversity” during the Information Market, where the possibility of presenting projects and activities of international relevance will be

given to the audience (please subscribe for this via the registration form) and during the last Networking with Refreshment sessions, for which all participants are invited to contribute by bringing typical food and drinks from their country! Finally, on Sunday we will explore Georgia during our Networking Trip to the Georgian vineyards where the tradition of wine making was born and flourished.

Practical information and procedures to attend the meeting

Further information, such as the programme of the meeting, information on travel, accommodation and participant fee payment, as well as the links to the online registration can be found at www.aec-music.eu/irc2017.

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We are very much looking forward to seeing you in Tbilisi in September!

Kind regards,

The AEC Office Team and the IRCs working Group