# Cultural cooperation of EU-Russia – Kajaani Process

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Dear participants,

Ladies and gentlemen,

First of all, I’d like to thank the organisers for the invitation to attend this important event. For Finland this workshop has a particular meaning because it was during the Finnish EU Presidency three years ago that the first EU-Russia expert meeting convened in Kajaani. This set off the Kajaani process. The Kajaani process has now gained speed, and today’s meeting can genuinely add to the momentum with concrete proposals and conclusions.

As a contributor to Section 1, I think I should first tell you how the Kajaani process came about and how far we have progressed in developing EU-Russia cultural cooperation through it. In the second part, I’ll share with you practical experience of cultural cooperation and good practices in it. To illustrate this, I’ll use our ten-year experience of the Finnish-Russian Cultural Forum as an example. It has helped launch a large number of art and cultural projects and given impetus to cooperation between cultural administrations at the regional and ministerial levels.

There are **five important events** behind the establishment and progress of the Kajaani process which you need to know:

1. At a Summit in 2003, the EU and Russia decided to develop cooperation in different sectors by means of four Common Spaces. The fourth of these concerned cooperation in education, research and culture. At the same time the parties decided on strategic partnerships between them.
2. In 2005 at a Summit in Moscow, all the Common Spaces were given Road Maps, which set the main goals for the cooperation and outlined the routes through which the parties were to proceed towards the common goals.
3. In 2006 experts from the EU and Russia met in Kajaani. Their Conclusions set an aim to devise a Culture Action Plan and to convene the first Permanent Partnership Council on Culture. The proceedings of this meeting have been compiled into a publication titled The Kajaani Process. The publication can be downloaded on the net.
4. The first ministerial-level Permanent Partnership Council met in Lisbon in 2007 during the Portuguese EU Presidency. The Permanent Partnership Council considered it important that the Culture Action Plan be drawn up and implemented between the EU and Russia.
5. As an important intermediate point, today’s seminar convenes operators and experts from the diverse cultural scene in Moscow. The proposals put forward by the Sections and the conference conclusions will add concrete expert content to the Culture Action Plan.

The EU-Russia Strategic Partnership and the Kajaani process have now paved the way for increasing the relative weight of culture in foreign policy and in international interaction.

**Why did the Kajaani process start during the Finnish EU Presidency?** After all, culture was already included in Article 85 of the EU-Russia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement of 1997. The fact is that the culture Article had not been put into practice before the St. Petersburg Summit and the four Common Spaces defined there.

**In the background of the Kajaani process there are three factors** which may clarify the premise and potential of this cooperation. These are:

1. **The interlinking Russian and Western European cultural heritages.**
2. **The opportunities and challenges inherent in globalisation for cultural cooperation.**
3. **The long-standing experience which the Nordic countries and Finland have of multilateral and bilateral cultural cooperation with Russia and the results obtained within it.**

**1.** We all know well the geographical and historical facts which have put, and still put, European nations into interaction with one another. This encounter of different cultures has shaped the entity we call European culture. Interaction between Russian and Western Europe intensified in the 18th and 19th centuries. This resulted in the Western cultural heritage, of which Russian culture is an essential part.

Western cultural heritage has certainly also greatly influenced Russian culture, and this links a major part of the multicultural Russian civilisation with the western cultural sphere. In their time, Tsar Peter the Great and Empress Catherine the Great were forerunners in international networking and important reformers also as regards art and culture. It would be difficult to imagine present European culture and our common cultural heritage without the contribution of the foremost Russian poets, authors, artists, composers, directors and actors alongside their West-European counterparts. It is in such cultural cooperation over centuries that Europe has achieved the best and most enduring results. These we know as our cultural heritage.

This was the ethical outlook that underpinned the decision to launch the Kajaani process. The ultimate aim was to create opportunities and conditions for the cultural sector to carry on this tradition. During the Finnish EU Presidency, Russia, Germany, the EU Commission and Finland agreed on this point of departure for EU-Russia cultural cooperation. One year after that the Permanent Partnership Council on Culture convened in its firs meeting, and now we are here in Moscow to develop practical cooperation between cultural operators and actors.

**2.** The second important thing relates to the rapid pace of change in the globalised world. The world-wide financial crisis is only one example of the close interlinkage between us in economic and other respects. The **Kajaani process enhances the possibilities of the cultural sector to respond to the challenges of globalisation.** And on the other hand, it helps us make use of the great opportunities inherent in globalisation.

There have been two developments in the economic foundation of culture in European countries over the past decades. First, the cultural institutions have had to adjust to relative cuts in public funding and seek additional financing elsewhere. Secondly, content production based on culture and creativity (recordings, videos, games, publications) has emerged as one of the most profitable industries in the world economy and as a significant export industry. At the same time, copyright has become a significant part of the financing of artistic activities and of the overall economy of culture. This means that culture has become a major player in the market and a growing and advancing sector in the western production economy. Recent UN and EU studies have found that the growth potential in the culture-based creative economy is vast. Culture has also significant labour policy effects. The development of the creative economy is in line with the strategies of the EU and its member states. We can promote growth in cultural business by targeting Community and member states’ programmes to boost culture-based creativity and entrepreneurship. Now is the time to invest in creativity stemming from cultural know-how and cultural capital, in immaterial cultural services and in sustainable development. The best benefits will accrue if this is done in close collaboration between the EU and Russian cultural sectors.

**3. In the beginning of my address I mentioned the importance of experience in the development of cooperation.** I’d like to share one aspect of knowledge accruing from experience with you here and now. We in Finland have ten years of experience of a Finnish-Russian Cultural Forum. This is a model of cooperation based on equal partnership, which annually convenes policy-makers and cultural actors from Finland and North-Western Russia to discuss concrete collaboration. To date, the Forum has provided a platform for negotiations on some 1000 practical collaborative projects and for outlining future cooperation at the political and officials level.

This success in bilateral cooperation encouraged us to share our experience during our EU Presidency and to launch cultural cooperation between the EU and Russia and the development of a Culture Action Plan in support it.

We are convinced that both the definition of policy lines and concrete cooperation should be taken forward side by side in the development of EU-Russia cooperation. This will enable us to constantly assess and update the activities and their aims. Cooperation between the administrations is also crucial for finding solutions to difficult but important issues. In the cultural field, these include the implementation of two important treaties – the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (known as the Diversity Convention) and the European Convention on Transfrontier Television concluded within the Council of Europe – and promotion of and support to the ongoing ratification process in Russia.

Similarly, the Nordic countries have experience of multilateral cultural cooperation dating back decades. Russia has actively taken part in it since the 1990s. On the strength of this cooperation, we embarked on a project to develop a Northern Dimension Partnership on culture. The recently revised Northern Dimension policy aims at promoting dialogue and concrete cooperation between equal partners as well as welfare and efficient economic cooperation in the region, the competitiveness of northern Europe, and sustainable development. The Northern Dimension is a regional reflection of EU-Russia cooperation. These forms of cooperation are mutually supportive.

In conclusion, I would like to note that we have now moved on from political lines to various joint cultural and creative-economy projects.