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THE RESULTS OF THE AICA SURVEY ON

"ART TODAY: PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SUPPORT"

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1. The questionnaire and the aims of the survey

As a preliminary to the 1978 AICA congress on "Art today: public and private support", the Swiss section of AICA conducted a survey among the other sections. The questionnaire which was circulated contained the following 12 questions:

1. Who is in charge of sponsoring and promoting the Fine Arts in your country (Minister of Culture, National Arts Council, local authorities, etc.)?
2. What action do these various organisations take to promote the Fine Arts?
3. Does your country have any private, public or subsidised foundations? What are their attitudes towards art and artists?

4. What bodies are mainly concerned with contemporary art? (Museums, Colleges of Fine Art, collectors, associations: please specify names of museums, etc.)
5. Is private patronage known in your country? If so, what forms does such patronage take?
6. What major private collections do you know of in your country that are open to the public, but which are not housed in museums?
7. Is private patronage encouraged by the state, and if so, by what means?
8. How does the artist earn his living in your country?
9. What methods are employed to train artists? (Scholarships, foreign study, colleges of fine art...)
10. What are the main vehicles of art criticism in your country? (boards of critics, newspapers, books, discussions, schools, the mass-media...)
11. Which institutions in your country are concerned with art on an international basis? Please specify names.
12. What "special field" is your country able to present in connection with the general theme at the 1978 congress?

In conducting this survey the Swiss section aimed to "take stock" of the present situation in the context of the theme chosen for the congress. The survey was intended to indicate what is meant by "public support" and "private support" in the various countries, where this support comes from, and in what institutional forms it is manifested. Further, it was intended to provide a picture of the relationship between state and private patronage of the arts, together with their respective objectives and effects. The survey also aimed to cast light upon the conditions under which artists live and work, and the extent to which efforts are made to promote art among the general public, by stimulating interest in art among a wider section of the population. The intention was to provide the congress with a report covering all these topics, to serve as a basis for its work.

Unfortunately, the results of the survey did not come up to expectations. As a result, it will not be possible to present a complete picture of the structures and problems associated with the promotion of art in the AICA member-states, and the report which follows is of only very limited usefulness as a basis for our work; at the same time, several interesting observations and conclusions do emerge from the results of the survey.

2. List of the sections which answered the questionnaire, and the quality of the answers given

From the 50 or so AICA sections to whom we circulated our questionnaire, only 19 replies were received. Our report therefore refers only to the situation encountered in the 19 countries for which information is available to us. These countries are as follows:

- German Democratic Republic (East Germany)
- Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany)
- Argentina
- Australia
- Canada
- Chile
- Spain
- Finland
- France
- Great Britain
- Hungary
- Italy
- Mexico
- the Netherlands
- Portugal
- Switzerland
- Turkey
- the USSR
- Venezuela

It is striking that this list does not include any Asian or African countries. It should come as no surprise, then, that the problems of developing countries are not even touched upon in our report.

Unfortunately the answers which were received vary greatly in thoroughness and detail. Whilst some sections contented themselves with little more than a few key-words, others took the trouble to produce carefully thought-out reports of up to 20 type-written pages. Several sections were in the fortunate position of being able to supplement their answers by enclosing one or more publications on different facets of the theme chosen for the congress. Among these the following major publications were received:

Federal Republic of Germany:

Kulturförderung und Kulturpflege in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, published by the German UNESCO-committee. Cologne, 1974.

Australia:

Building private sector support for the arts - a review of the economics of the arts in Australia with recommendations relating to private sector support. Published by the Meyer Foundation. Melbourne, 1977.

Canada:

Twenty plus five - a discussion paper on the role of the Canada Council in the arts, after the first twenty years (1957-77) and over the next five. (1977)

Cultural property export guide/Guide pour l'exportation de biens culturels. Published by the Secrétaire d'Etat, Canada (1977)

Règlement concernant l'exportation de biens culturels en provenance du Canada, Published by the Secrétaire d'Etat, Canada (1977)

France:

Raymonde Moulin: Les aides publiques à la création dans les arts plastiques. Published by the Council of Europe Culture Ministers' Conference (1976).

Les aides publiques à la création artistique en France. Published by the Secrétariat général du gouvernement and the Secrétariat d'Etat à la Culture. Paris, 1976.

Secrétariat d'Etat à la Culture: activités 1975.

Fondation de France, Rapport (1976)

Great Britain:

Arts Council of Great Britain, Thirty-second annual report and accounts (1976/77)

Venezuela:

Boletín Histórico No 42, September 1976. Published by the Fundación John Boulton

Resoluciones sobre estructuras y funcionamiento del Museo de Bellas Artes y de la Galería de Arte Nacional, Published by the "Consejo Nacional de la Cultura" of the Republic of Venezuela (1976).

Naturally, the very existence of such publications is a first indication of the importance of art and cultural policy in the mind of the general public in a particular country. In most countries which replied to our questionnaire, cultural policy and support for the arts seem to be very sparsely documented, and in most cases the private sector is totally neglected in any background literature. In these cases information must be pieced together - often very painstakingly - and it should therefore come as no surprise that numerous AICA sections did not bother to do so in any depth, if at all. The AICA sections in most countries are ill-equipped for such tasks, since as a rule they possess neither an autonomous administrative machine nor the necessary resources to have a major investigation carried out by qualified researcher. It is of course no coincidence that it was the replies received from AICA sections in socialist countries, particularly the USSR and East Germany, which stood out as being both full and informative; AICA sections in socialist countries receive substantial government support compared with those elsewhere.

The generally rather poor response to our survey shows that AICA on its own is not in a position to conduct an authoritative international investigation into the promotion of art. The only organisation which would be capable of doing this is UNESCO. During the early stages of its preparation for this congress, the Swiss AICA section got in touch with the relevant UNESCO departments and it became apparent that UNESCO was deeply

interested in the subject chosen for our congress: as a result UNESCO commissioned two papers to be presented to the congress, and made a contribution toward the costs of holding it. It is also possible that UNESCO will be willing to take up the theme and continue the work begun by AICA at the congress.

The report which follows attempts to provide a brief summary of the results of our survey. For the sake of clarity the information extracted from the replies has been gathered together under five headings, which were implicitly suggested in the questionnaire itself, and which cover the following five areas: the structure and sources of "public support" and "private support" for art, the relationship between "public" and "private" support, the situation of the artist, and official policy towards art and the promotion of interest in art among the general public.

3. The structure and sources of "public support" for art

The basic structure of "public support" in a particular country, that is the promotion of art by the state, depends on the constitution. The survey clearly shows that the 19 countries in our sample are split into two fundamentally different camps, comprising the socialist states on the one hand, and the free-enterprise democracies on the other.

With reference to artistic creation the West German statute book lays down that "Art and science, research and teaching shall not be subject to constraint.", while the Italian constitution declares "Art is to remain free". Similar guarantees of freedom from intervention in art and the work of the artist are to be found in many other non-socialist states. By contrast, Article 47 of the Soviet constitution declares that "The freedom of Soviet citizens to perform creative work in the scientific, technical and artistic fields is guaranteed within the framework of the didactic aims of communism." (tr. "La liberté de création scientifique, technique et artistique est garantie aux citoyens soviétiques conformément aux objectifs de l'édification du communisme.")

As laid down in the constitution of such countries as West Germany and Italy, the state is strictly forbidden to define political or other aims and limits for the work of the artist. The basic machinery for the promotion of art in these countries is therefore primarily designed to protect the arts as far as possible from the influence of governmental authority. To this end many countries have established organisations which are either independent of the government, or at least not directly responsible to it. Probably the best-known example is the British "Arts Council", the members of which are appointed by the government for a period of five years, and who are completely free to allocate funds as they see fit whilst in office. Similar institutions also exist in Australia, Canada, Norway and Sweden. A second type of semi-autonomous institution is represented by the various Arts Commissions (Cantonal and Federal Commissions of Fine Arts in Switzerland; the Central Arts Committee and the Provincial Arts Committees in Finland.)

We are presented with a totally different picture of "public support" in socialist countries, where the government has the constitutional duty to ensure that artistic creation conforms to "the didactic aims of communism." Freedom from state intervention is therefore not one of the aims of socialist cultural policy. But even in socialist countries "public support" is not solely in the hands of the government. In answering the question about the institutional structure of "public support", the Soviet AICA section distinguishes between "State Organisations" and "Social Organisations". Among the former it includes the central government and the governments of the Soviet republics, as well as those of the autonomous republics, whilst the most important "social organisations" which are concerned with the promotion of art are the "Artists' Union of the USSR" (tr. Union des Artistes de l'URSS) and the "Artists' Union of the USSR" (tr. Unions des Artistes des Republiques Autonomes et des Republiques Fédérées de l'URSS). Similarly-structured artists' associations are presumably also to be found in other communist states.

The statutes of these "Social Organisations" reflect the constitutional provisions for state influence upon the kind of work produced by artists, and the subject-matter they deal with. For example, the statutes of the Soviet "Artists' Union" declare that "The Artists' Union of the USSR is a non-profit-making social organisation embracing artists and art critics who are actively engaged in the development of the Fine Arts in the USSR. Inspired by the policies of the Communist party of the USSR and the Soviet government, the Artists' Union organises and directs the creative work of artists and critics in such a way that the arts may play their part in the struggle of the Soviet people to promote the ideals of communism."

4. The structure and sources of "private support" for art

Can "private support" for culture exist at all in a country in which private ownership of the means of production is unknown? Surprisingly enough, the Hungarian section gave an unambiguous "yes" in answer to the question "Is private patronage known in your country?" This patronage is provided, they say, by "Purchases at exhibitions, in studios, through dealers and at auctions." In contrast, the East German section does not answer this question so directly, but points out that the GDR has a socialist system of production and that the means of production are therefore owned by the nation as a whole. Yet it emerges from the East German answer that there, as in Hungary, works of art are bought by private individuals. However, it is not clear from either East Germany's or Hungary's answers how widespread such purchases are and how important they are for the livelihood of the artist. In the Soviet Union works of art are also bought by private individuals and, according to the Soviet delegation, "very many people collect them". But here again, no figures are quoted by the Soviet section, especially regarding the purchasing power of private individuals. It also becomes clear from the Soviet reply that private patronage does not exist in the USSR in the sense implied by the term "private support", although both the state and the "social organisations" do patronise artists. However, this must be classed as "public support" - as it presumably also is in the eyes of the Soviet government itself.

A borderline case is presented by industrial concerns in socialist states, which apparently both buy and commission works of art on their own initiative. Although it is true that these are state-owned concerns, it does not look as though the government interferes with their own initiative. Although it is true that these are state-owned concerns, it does not look as though the government interferes with their art purchases, so that it is in fact possible to speak of a systematic promotion of the arts by industrial and commercial bodies even in socialist states.

Nevertheless, truly "private support" for the arts is to be found only in non-socialist states. It is only in countries where private enterprise exists, that "private" persons have the resources and opportunity to engage in patronage of the arts in the true sense. Thus, in the tradition established by Gaius Maecenas in ancient Rome, an important role is still played in many countries today by the wealthy private individual whose financial resources and critical awareness are put to altruistic use in the support of artists and the arts. In the last few decades, however, there seems to have been an increasing tendency for the major contribution to "private" patronage to be made by foundations and other such semi-charitable institutions and associations, as well as by industrial concerns.

To deal first with foundations, it emerges from our survey that foundations engaged in cultural activities exist in all 16 non-socialist countries which answered the questionnaire. In the USA, the traditional home of charitable foundations, the scene is dominated by a number of major organisations such as the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Andrew Mellon Foundation and the Samuel Kress Foundation, to name but a few of the best-known ones. A detailed report on the structure and activities of American foundations will be presented to the congress by Hélène Lassalle.

As far as can be gathered from the answers we received, only two of the 16 non-socialist states that took part in our survey have American-style giant foundations, namely West Germany and Portugal (Gulbenkian Foundation). Only in isolated cases was any information given as to the size of the foundations in terms of the capital with which they were endowed and the amount of money they handed out each year; neither did any section specify the actual number of foundations engaged in cultural activities in their country. In many cases these figures would doubtless be hard to establish; in Switzerland, for example, where there are numerous small and medium-sized foundations, no such figures are available, since many foundations avoid any form of publicity.

Foundations, however - be they great or small - are only one aspect of "private support" for the arts. In many countries comparable importance may be attached to private associations, several of which have very large memberships, and which are often responsible for the financing and running of important museums and galleries. Unfortunately, this is one major aspect of the private patronage of the arts upon which our survey shed little light, as was also the case with private companies, although in the USA, West Germany and Switzerland such commercial organisations have become very active in this field. In 1976 one single organisation contributed \$221m. to the promotion of the arts: this was the the "Business Committee

for the Arts", a cultural committee to which over 100 of the largest companies cannot be regarded as "patronage" if they are associated with advertising or directly serve to promote public relations.

There remains the question of whether, in non-socialist countries, the kind of artistic creation at present made possible by "private support" could not equally well be fostered by the state, given the necessary extra resources: no information on this point emerges from our survey. It is open to question, however, whether any state would in fact channel such extra resources into the promotion of the arts, and particularly into supporting the work of contemporary artists. It would therefore be interesting to know to what extent "private support" still provides a guarantee today that the artistic freedom promised by the state is actually enjoyed by artist and public alike.

5. The relationship between "public" and "private" support

Since "private support" is of relatively small significance in socialist countries, this part of our summary must be restricted to the non-socialist states. Among the 19 countries dealt with in our survey, only in Portugal is the promotion of the arts almost entirely in the hands of the "private" sector, with the Gulbenkian Foundation clearly leading the field. However, it would seem that the Foundation does not provide a truly equivalent alternative to the state sponsorship found in other countries; at any rate, the Portuguese section complains of the lack of any organised state structure for the promotion of the arts. In the USA, too, private sponsorship has always been of outstanding importance, and is in the hands of major foundations and funds, the business world, private associations and wealthy private individuals. In recent years, however, the Federal government has also stepped into the arena with the creation of the National Endowment for the Arts, into which it has channelled substantial financial resources. The 1978 budget for the National Endowment for the Arts is \$123.5m, which represents approximately 0.3% of the total American Federal budget. For 1979 the government has proposed an increase to \$150m.

In recent years a trend towards increased "public support" has also become apparent in a number of European countries, some of which have a tradition of state support for the arts going back over several decades. Members of this group include France, Holland, Italy, England, Finland and Switzerland. It is certainly in Holland that "public support" is now most extensive, and although space does not allow us to explain the Dutch system in any detail here, it will be dealt with in the 4 reports to be presented by the Netherlands section.

There is a direct relationship between the importance of "private support" and the attitude of the state towards private patronage, which is largely determined by political and ideological considerations. It is of course no coincidence that America, with her "free enterprise" ideology, encourages "private support" through a liberal system of tax laws.

Under American law, donations for charitable purposes - which include the promotion of the arts - can largely be deducted from one's taxable income. With the American system of progressive taxation, this means that the decision to become a patron of the arts is an easy one for many people to take. Among the remaining non-socialist countries which replied to our survey, apparently only three encourage private patronage of the arts to any extent by means of tax concessions, namely Australia, Canada and France. These countries have legal provisions for private individuals to make tax deductions in respect of valuable works of art which they donate to public museums. In recent years, state-owned museums in France have been given works of art worth some 20m-25m French Francs annually as a result of this regulation. Nevertheless, significant tax concessions to encourage private patronage of the arts are unknown in most of the countries which took part in our survey.

6. The situation of the artist

Faced with the question "How does the artist earn his living in your country?", the Venezuelan section answered laconically, "By working, and working hard." (tr. 'Trabajando, mucho trabajando.') In that pithy phrase they hit the nail right on the head as far as most artists in practically all non-socialist countries are concerned. It is clear from the answers given to our questionnaire that only a small minority of artists in these countries (meaning the most prominent ones) can make an adequate living out of art. No statistics were quoted by any section, and few countries have probably ever examined the question. In Switzerland, some approximate figures are given in the "Clottu Report", a government-financed investigation of the conditions under which artists and others engaged in cultural activities work. This report states that 10-15% of all professional artists receive an adequate to good income from their work. Since some 2500 artists live in Switzerland, this would amount to about 250-375 individuals. Half of the remainder do not earn even a basic living wage from their work, and thus have to rely upon a so-called bread-and-butter job.

This picture of the precarious material situation of the artist, which emerges from our survey, is confirmed by a Report on the Situation of the Artist produced by the International Labor Organisation (ILO) in 1977. This states, among other things, that "The fortunate position of a few famous figures must not blind us to the fact that for a number of reasons, artists as a whole today constitute an underprivileged social and professional group. The difficulties they face... are sufficiently serious to jeopardise their very survival and, by extension, that of the culture which is enshrined in their work."

It seems that artists in socialist states have fewer material cares, so long as they do not come into conflict with the implied political conditions which surround the work of the artist. In these states there exists an apparently fairly comprehensive system of aid, which offers the artist a considerable degree of social security, and about which more detailed information will be given in the report to be presented by Peter H. Feist from East Germany. This system is based upon the national artists' unions. Of the 3 AICA sections which replied from socialist countries, only the

Soviet Union quoted membership figures, which it put at 15000 for the "Artists' Union of the USSR". This membership, however, is by no means exclusively made up of creative artists, since actors, film and TV workers, craftsmen, art critics and so on also belong to the union. However, considering that there are some 2500 creative artists in Switzerland, which has only a fortieth of the population of the USSR, the latter ought, proportionately, to have in the region of 100,000 active artists. As is immediately apparent from this statistical conjecture, there are in fact limits to the number of artists who can be assured of a secure livelihood by the state, and there then arises the question of just who qualifies as an artist, and who should be recognised as such. It is probably true to say in the case of non-socialist states that, to quote one of the conclusions reached in a French government report, "In spite of various attempts to define what is meant by establish any definition which corresponds to the real conditions under which members of the profession work, nor any specific and legally recognised status."

Among non-socialist states, it is certainly in the Netherlands that we find the most advanced system of provisions for the material security of artists. Details will be given in the report to be presented by H. Paalman from Holland. Efforts to improve the material situation of artists in all non-socialist countries hinge upon the question of the quality of their work. Is it right to support all creative art, irrespective of its quality, which would mean social security for every artist, or should only work of a certain quality receive support, which implies selection among artists? In this respect the Dutch model seems to aim towards a generous compromise.

Perhaps the oldest form of sponsorship for the arts - and one which is still of great importance today - is the provision of grants. Space does not allow us here to go into any details about the structure of the system and the sums involved in each of the countries which replied to our questionnaire, but our survey suggests that there is not a single nation which does not provide grants for artists on at least a minimum scale. In most countries, however, the grants provided are too small and sporadic to free an artist from material worries for even one year. In Switzerland, for example, Federal grants are reserved for up-and-coming artists under the age of 40 and are worth between Fr. 5000.- and Fr. 8000.-, which is less than the officially-defined annual living wage. The statistics concerning grants which emerged from our survey are too sketchy to allow any form of comparison to be made, but a relatively generous system apparently exists in Finland, where grants are calculated on the basis of a year's living and working costs, and not only one-year but also two and three-year grants are awarded.

In West Germany an interesting means of improving artists' incomes was created by the 1965 Copyright Law (Urheberrechtsgesetz), under which artists receive a share of any increase in the value of their work. If one of his works is resold by a dealer or at an auction, an artist receives 5% of the profit made on the sale, if this is more than 100 DM.

In several countries, attempts are apparently being made to provide material security for at least part of the artistic population by creating suitable regular jobs for artists, especially in education. But since in

most cases it is only established artists who are given these posts, this, too, can be regarded as another form of qualitatively selective backing. Perhaps the most attractive proposition for an artist is a post at university or technical college level, such as have been offered by France, the USA and the USSR for many years. A new member of this group is Finland, where a law passed in 1970 created university professorships for artists. Artists of standing are thus given the opportunity to take up a teaching post for a limited or even unlimited period of time, whilst their teaching duties are so arranged as to leave them both time and energy to pursue their own creative work.

Apart from Portugal and Switzerland, all 19 countries which replied to our questionnaire today appear to have academies of art, technical colleges or university departments which not only provide teaching posts for established artists, but which also train artists themselves.

7. Official policy towards art, and the promotion of interest in art among the general public

As a result of the direction taken by the creative arts in free-enterprise democracies, with their constitutional guarantees of artistic freedom, the state authorities responsible for the arts repeatedly come into conflict with the tastes and opinions of wide sections of the population. A statement by the Swiss delegation to the Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policy in Europe (Helsinki, 1972) described this conflict in the following terms: "The policies adopted by public authorities towards the arts are bound to run into criticism again and again. The main difficulties arise from the complex attitudes of the public towards contemporary artistic output. Whilst qualified art critics, specialists from museums and exhibitions, progressively-minded collectors and young artists themselves sometimes regard state policy towards the arts as too conservative, the public at large criticises particular decisions by the authorities from precisely the opposite point of view: that they are too progressive and encourage modernistic art which most people cannot appreciate. Here a gulf becomes apparent between a progressive elite on the one hand, and a broadly-based section of the population with more traditional tastes on the other. Both federal, cantonal and local authorities are thus faced with the moral dilemma of whether public funds should be channelled into art forms which most of the public fail to appreciate, at least as yet, or even actively denounce."

At least in western democracies, this is a problem which faces all those concerned with the promotion of the arts, so that it ought in fact to be possible to define specific objectives for "public" and "private" support to pursue. It should be the aim of "public support" to narrow this gulf by increasing public appreciation of the arts, to which end two alternatives exist: either art itself can be encouraged to accommodate itself more to popular tastes ("popularisation", tr. Popularisierung), or the public can be encouraged to take a more active interest in the arts ("education", tr. Demokratisierung). Since the constitutions of western democracies do not allow the state to exert any influence over the kind of work produced by artists - which therefore excludes any attempt to "popularise" art in the sense defined above - the only option open to

the state is thus to encourage and educate the public taste for culture. What "education" (Demokratisierung) means in this context was once expressed by Bertold Brecht in the following terms: "...turning a small circle of connoisseurs into a big circle of connoisseurs."

It appears, however, that in all the western states which took part in our survey the efforts being made in this direction are very limited. Experience in Switzerland and other comparable countries shows that the traditional institutions for the promotion of culture meet with only very slight success in persuading a larger percentage of the population to take an active interest in the arts. The facilities which already exist for the promotion of culture are used by only a small minority of the population.

"Private support", on the other hand, is much less dependent on popular taste and the approval of the majority, so that it is free to encourage the work of an artist and to further the artistic life of the nation, even in cases where the public at large disagrees or indeed responds with hostile disapproval. One example of this aspect of "private support" is provided by certain American foundations, which have frequently given support - and still do - to projects of a distinctly avant-garde nature. For instance, a substantial grant from the DIA ART Foundation made it possible for Walter de Maria to produce his "One Mile Piece" for last year's Documenta in Kassel.

The gulf which exists between the majority of the population and the work of the artist has a close bearing upon the problems of art criticism, although the results of our survey are not conclusive on this point. Nevertheless, it does seem that art criticism would benefit from an injection of new life in many countries. The popularisation of the press in the free-enterprise democracies has in many cases greatly reduced the openings for the publication of competent criticism in the daily press, whilst many countries are apparently also threatened with a scarcity of specialised periodicals.

In socialist states the situation is quite different, since those who control "public support", that is the government and the "social organisations", are able to have an influence upon the nature and objectives of the art produced in those countries. Thus it is possible to exert pressure upon artists to produce work which is more accessible to the mind of the man in the street. In this way, so long as artists and intellectuals do not rebel, any potential gulf between the creative artist and the majority of the population can largely be avoided.

8. Concluding remarks

The results of our survey, and the work of the 1978 AICA congress as a whole, may be seen as a contribution to the international study of the promotion of culture which UNESCO is undertaking. It would be desirable if the AICA initiative were to induce UNESCO to include "private support" within its field of investigation, since up to now, the work of both UNESCO and the Council of Europe has been concerned mainly with the promotion of culture by the state. Two studies which should be mentioned in this context are the UNESCO series "Politique culturelle: études et documents", and the study of the promotion of culture by the state in the various countries of Europe, which was instigated by the Council of

Europe Cultural Ministers' Conference (tr. Conférence des ministres responsables de la culture) in Oslo in 1976. Another such study is the French publication "Les aides publiques à la création dans les art plastiques" (1976), whilst the same year saw the publication in Switzerland of the "Clottu Report", an official study of the entire question of cultural policy and the cultural machinery of the nation - though even here the matter of "private support" is not dealt with at all thoroughly.

Last year the ILO published a report on the subject of "La condition de l'artiste - Aperçu général des problèmes de l'emploi et les conditions de travail et de vie" which, although still a very fragmentary study, was based on an international survey in which 31 nations took part. The ILO initiative was taken up by UNESCO, and from August 29th to September 2nd 1977 the two organisations jointly ran a specialists' conference on the situation of the artist. This conference was charged with the task of preparing a report which could form the basis of a preliminary study of the technical and juridical aspects of the problems; this preliminary study was then to be submitted to the executive council of UNESCO.

Improving the artist's living conditions and encouraging his work is, however, only one of the two main objectives of an enlightened policy for the promotion of the arts; the other is to foster an active interest in the arts among the general public. In the long term, it is probably only through progress towards this second objective that governments and - presumably - also "private" sponsors can be motivated to intensify their support for art and the artist. Due regard would have to be paid to this fact in any UNESCO study which also dealt with the private sector. Such a study ought not, therefore, to restrict itself to examining the performance record of a country's "private" and "public" sponsorship in the cultural field, but should also investigate the extent to which the general public takes an interest in contemporary art in the various nations, and what is being done by the state and by private bodies to further this interest.