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EU External Cultural Policies: A Case Study of Jordan

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Abstract

The thesis presents a comprehensive examination of the multifaceted landscape of EU cultural policies in Jordan, focusing on the diverse strategies and initiatives implemented by the EU and prominent Member States. The research starts by establishing a theoretical framework and methodology, providing a scholarly foundation for understanding the complex interplay of cultural policy, cultural cooperation, and soft power dynamics in international relations. It delves into the core of EU cultural policy and its role in projecting both soft and normative power, and the significance of culture in European integration and cultural identity formation. Through an analysis of historical developments, the study traces the evolution of EU-Jordan cultural relations, from their inception as primarily economic-focused agreements to the current landscape of cultural cooperation by emphasising Barcelona Process, Association Agreements, and the European Neighbourhood Policy. The research further explores the practical manifestations of this cultural cooperation, detailing Jordan's active participation in EU cultural programs and its collaborative endeavours with the EU and its key Member States, notably Germany, France, and the United Kingdom, both before and after Brexit. The study concludes by providing insights into the changing dynamics of EU cultural policies in Jordan, including an evaluation of whether Brexit has weakened cultural cooperation.

Keywords: European Union (EU), cultural policy, Jordan, culture, soft power

Abstrakcyjny

W pracy przedstawiono pogłębioną analizę współpracy kulturalnej Unii Europejskiej i Jordanii, uwzględniając różnorodne strategie i inicjatywy realizowane przez UE oraz wybrane państwa członkowskie. W pierwszej części zawarto rozważania metodologiczne i teoretyczne, które stanowią ramy dla zrozumienia złożonych wzajemnych zależności polityki kulturalnej, współpracy kulturalnej oraz zjawiska soft power w stosunkach międzynarodowych. Praca zagłębia się w istotę polityki kulturalnej UE, jej rolę w promowaniu zarówno miękkiej, jak i normatywnej siły, a także znaczenie kultury w integracji europejskiej i kształtowaniu tożsamości kulturowej.

W dalszej części prześlędzono ewolucję stosunków kulturalnych między UE a Jordanią, od pierwszych porozumień o charakterze głównie gospodarczym do obecnego kształtu współpracy kulturalnej, kładąc nacisk na Proces Barceloński, układy o stowarzyszeniu i Europejską Politykę Sąsiedztwa. W badaniu szczegółowo zbadano praktyczne przejawy polityki kulturalnej UE, opisując aktywny udział Jordanii w programach kulturalnych realizowanych w ramach UE oraz we współpracy z wybranymi kluczowymi państwami członkowskimi, zwłaszcza Niemcami, Francją i Wielką Brytanią, zarówno przed, jak i po Brexicie. Na zakończenie zawarto analizę dynamiki polityki kulturalnej UE, próbując odpowiedzieć na pytanie, czy wyjście Wielkiej Brytanii ze Wspólnot doprowadziło do osłabienia współpracy kulturalnej z Jordanią.

Słowa kluczowe: Unia Europejska (UE), polityki kulturalnej, Jordania, kultura, soft power

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List of Abbreviations

AA	Association Agreement
ADE	Aide à la Décision Economique
AFD	Agence Française De Développement
AICS	Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (Agenzia Italiana per la Cooperazione Allo Sviluppo)
AIFF	Amman International Film Festival
ALF	Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue of Cultures
BP	Barcelona Process
CARIFORUM	The Caribbean Forum
CBC	Cross Border Cooperation
CBHE	Capacity Building in Higher Education
CCI	Culture and Creative Industries
Cfi	Canal France International
CI	Cultural Institute
CNED	Centre national d'enseignement à distance
COPEAM	Permanent Conference of Mediterranean Audiovisual Operators
CPF	Cultural Protection Fund
CVCE	Centre Virtuel de la Connaissance sur l'Europe
DAAD	German Academic Exchange Service (Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst)
DFID	Department for International Development
EAD	Euro-Arab Dialogue
EC	European Community
EEAS	European External Action Service
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
EMEA	Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association
ENI	European Neighbourhood Instrument
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy

ENPI	European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument
EUD	EU Delegation
EUFF	European Film Festival
EUNIC	European Union National Institutes for Culture
EUROMED	Euro-Mediterranean Programme
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
GJU	German Jordan University
GMP	Global Mediterranean Policy
ICM	International Credit Mobility
ICR	International Cultural Relations
IF	Institut français
MEDA	Mediterranean Development Assistance
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MOC	Ministry of Culture
MOPIC	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation
MOTA	Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
OIF	Organisation internationale de la Francophonie
RIIFS	Royal Institute for Interfaith Studies
SCAC	Cooperation and Cultural Action Departments
TAIEX	Technical Assistance and Information Exchange
TEMPUS	Trans-European Mobility for University Studies
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organisation
YAV	Young Arab Voices

Introduction

“The EU has a lot to offer to the world: diversity of cultural expressions, high quality artistic creation and a vibrant creative industry. It also stands to benefit greatly from increased exchanges with the rest of the world. At the same time, the EU's experience of diversity and pluralism is a considerable asset to promote cultural policies as drivers for peace and socioeconomic development in third countries.” -European Commission (“Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations”, 2016)

Culture has become a cornerstone of international relations, gaining prominence as nations seek to foster deeper connections and mutual understanding. In this context, the European Union (EU) has emerged as a major actor in utilizing cultural policies as instruments of diplomacy and cooperation with countries beyond its borders. Culture serves as a unifying force, promoting understanding, empathy, and cooperation among nations. The exchange of cultural expressions bridges geographical distances and transcends political boundaries.

The EU was initially formed on economic foundations, and its engagement with third countries primarily revolved around economic interests. However, the EU's reliance on economic governance alone is no longer adequate to tackle the complex challenges of today. By recognising this, the EU has gradually incorporated cultural dimensions into its agenda, both internally and externally. This transition underscores the growing recognition of the pivotal role of culture in fostering mutual understanding and cooperation. Furthermore, power is no longer solely determined by economic or military strength but also by the ability to appeal to others and influence their perceptions, ideas, and values. Therefore, the EU has been increasingly focusing on its soft and normative power to exert its influence and shape the behaviour of its neighbours. Through cultural policies and cooperation, nations can enhance their attractiveness and effectively promote their interests on the international stage, as well as fostering dialogue and mutual understanding across borders.

The emphasis on cultural cooperation is stronger in countries neighbouring the EU, a trend that has been further intensified in the MENA region due to increased political instability. This instability has heightened the sense of insecurity and contributed to waves of migrants arriving in Europe. Through cultural policies, the EU aims to promote its democratic norms and values as well as developing the economies of its Southern neighbours. Additionally, culture is utilized as a tool to combat radicalization and extremism through intercultural exchange and the promotion of

values such as acceptance and diversity. Therefore, it is evident that the EU's external cultural policies and cooperation are guided by the belief that promoting EU values, intercultural dialogue, and cooperation can contribute to stability, prosperity, and socio-economic development. This offers a concrete illustration of the thesis's objective and its significance, as the area of culture is under researched especially within the context of EU-Arab relations. Jordan presents a compelling case study for examining the EU's external cultural policies due to its significant role in the Middle East. Despite facing numerous challenges, including the surrounding political instability, economic disparities, and cultural tensions caused by incoming refugees, Jordan maintains a stable relationship with the EU. This stability provides fertile ground for cultural cooperation and exchange between the two entities.

This thesis aims to explore the dynamics of EU cultural policies and their manifestation in cultural programmes, initiatives, and collaborations in Jordan. By analysing the distinct approaches to cultural policies and initiatives, as well as the varying levels of engagement with Jordan, by both the EU as a whole and its prominent Member States, such as Germany and France, the research seeks to understand the changing landscape of cultural policies. Additionally, the United Kingdom's engagement in the cultural field will be analysed as well, along with whether Brexit has resulted in slower or weaker cultural policies due to its historical influence on Jordan during the British mandate. Through this analysis, the research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the current state of EU cultural policies in Jordan and their implications for bilateral relations and cultural initiatives.

To answer these research questions, the first chapter focuses on exploring concepts such as cultural policies, cultural cooperation, and soft power in the context of international relations. The chapter also outlines the research methodology, literature review, and identifies gaps in research. Additionally, it navigates the nature and development of the cultural field in Jordan. In the second chapter, I will delve into the EU cultural policy and its role in projecting soft and normative power internationally by promoting its values and norms to influence other societies and nations and ability to shape international standards and principles. The chapter also highlights the EU's engagement with various regions through cultural initiatives and partnerships. Furthermore, the chapter examines the evolution of EU cultural policy and its emergence due to its significance in fostering European integration, emphasising the role of culture in fostering a sense of belonging

and shared identity among Member States and how it shapes the external image of the EU. Lastly, the chapter discusses the strategic framework for the EU's international cultural policy, highlighting efforts to define key areas for cultural policies while addressing challenges such as fragmentation and conflicting priorities within the EU. Chapter three explores the evolving cultural relations between the EU and its Southern neighbours, starting from early economic-focused agreements to more recent cultural cooperation. Additionally, it focuses on the role of culture in EU-Jordan relations and how it is used to address socio-economic challenges. Chapter four provides an overview of Jordan's participation in implementing EU-funded cultural programmes, initiatives, and cultural projects funded by EU Member States, particularly Germany and France. Furthermore, the chapter addresses the cultural projects and post-Brexit dynamics involving the UK, emphasising its historical influence in Jordan and its funding for cultural initiatives. In the concluding section, I will offer a summary of the study's findings, followed by suggestions for future research.

I. International Cultural Cooperation: Conceptual and Methodological Framework

1.1 Theorizing Notion of Culture, Cultural Policy, and Soft Power in International Relations

Commissioner for Culture Mariya Gabriel once said, "Culture is the soul of Europe". While the way people perceive culture may vary, many recognise it as a fundamental element of the EU beyond its political and economic considerations.

Policymakers increasingly acknowledge the importance of integrating cultural matters into EU policy frameworks. Many policies aim to promote creative expression, preserving cultural heritage, and fostering cultural dialogue among Member States. However, despite the progress in cultural areas and recognition of its importance, there are still obstacles in realising its potential. Economic and political matters have often dominated policy discussions, which causes cultural matters to be overlooked. However, as the EU increasingly faces challenges, such as social cohesion, migration, and political instability in neighbouring countries, there is a growing realisation that cultural factors play a crucial role in addressing them not only within the EU, but also beyond its borders.

Nations employ their cultural elements to achieve their interests and leverage influence by delving into the realm of cultural policies. But first, what is the definition of culture and what are those cultural elements? The definition is a broad one and the generalisability of much published research on it is problematic. One of the first to give culture a "modern" definition was the British anthropologist Edward Burnett Tylor. According to Tylor, culture is "a complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (Tylor, 1871). Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) propose other perspective on culture, defining it as consisting of "...patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behaviour acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values." (Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952, p. 357). Nye (2008) also defines culture as "the set of practices that create meaning for a society, and it has many manifestations" (Nye, 2008, p. 96), such as art, education, literature, and entertainment. In politics, culture often refers to arts and humanities, yet its scope extends far beyond that narrow definition. Culture incorporates values, beliefs, and systems that shape human behaviour, which are crucial to cultural policies and will be observed in

many EU policy goals. Moreover, the variety of the definitions can make it challenging to reach a practical one that aligns with the objectives of this study. However, all of them manifest in EU cultural policies in different ways despite the EU not explicitly defining what “culture” means. Additionally, culture has been connecting artistic and creative expressions and entertainment with sustainable development and socio-economic growth, which are also incorporated into cultural policies. Its importance is evident in its transformation into new forms such as cultural industries and its close ties to economies and the development of countries. Furthermore, culture has gained significance in critical areas such as migration and security. As a result, it has become an indispensable aspect of EU external policy as it is used to navigate challenges that could threaten the EU.

On 1966, UNESCO adopted the Declaration of Principles of International Cultural Co-operation, which aims to strengthen international cultural cooperation and promote peace and welfare objectives. In addition, it highlighted the importance of spreading knowledge, nurturing creativity, cultivating peaceful relations, fostering mutual understanding among people, as well as ensuring universal access to knowledge, arts, literature, and scientific advances (UNESCO, 1966). The declaration also shed light on the value of each culture and that people have the right to develop and enrich their own unique culture. Moreover, the declaration stressed that cultural cooperation is a right and duty for all nations and encourages international cooperation with respect for the uniqueness of each culture (UNESCO, 1966). Therefore, cultural cooperation is principally about mutual interests and benefits, and contributes to the exchange of ideas, values, skills, knowledge, the development of arts, literature, and sciences. Furthermore, cultural cooperation is a key foundation of cultural policy (Cvjetičanin & Švob-Đokić, 2021, p. 9), because cultural policy is not inherently one-sided; rather, it can take various forms and directions depending on the goals and approaches of the entities implementing it.

Cultural policies encompass initiatives that promote a nation's culture, identity, history, values, norms, beliefs, and artistic expressions. These policies serve as tools for cultivating positive global perceptions and building bridges between nations. However, the definition of cultural policy seems to be ambiguous too. According to Langen, there is no agreed definition of cultural policy within the EU as there is no commonly used definition in many of its documents (Langen, 2010, p. 29). Nevertheless, I will try to identify a definition that aligns with the aim of this research.

Cultural policy has commonly been perceived as encompassing all governmental efforts related to the arts, which includes "...activities within the profit-oriented cultural industry, as well as initiatives in the humanities and the preservation of heritage" (Schuster, 2003, p. 1). UNESCO also defines cultural policy as "a body of operational principles, administrative and budgetary practices and procedures which provide a basis for cultural action by the State." (UNESCO, 1969, p. 7). Moreover, according to scholars, cultural policy is a branch of public policy (Bell & Oakley, 2015, p. 45), which makes it a force shaping a nation's global standing. Dye asserts that "public policy is what governments choose to do or not to do" (Dye, 2005, p. 2). By stating that public policy is the total of what governments choose to do or not to do, it emphasises the centrality of governmental agencies and bodies in shaping the direction of societal governance. The definitions thus highlight that cultural policy emerges as the cumulative effect of governmental actions in relation to culture. These actions and decisions, made at various governmental levels, encompass a set of activities — from preserving cultural heritage and supporting the arts to fostering international collaborations and cultural exchange programmes. This aspect of cultural policy focuses on the promotion of culture, which can also involve activities like patronage and state funding, to highlight the role of government in fostering cultural development (Bell & Oakley, 2015, p. 47). Although cultural policies can play a role in developing and advancing the culture of the country where the policies are being implemented, it still functions as a soft power tool since it represents a nation through its government and agencies, influencing how people perceive them. One question that needs to be asked, however, is how culture is used in soft power?

Soft power plays an important role in shaping how countries interact on the global stage. Nowadays, the world is interconnected; thus, the influence of culture has become increasingly important as nations navigate the complexities of cooperation, cultural policies, and diplomatic relations. Usually, when people refer to the term power, it is often associated with force or violence. Scholars have also defined power in different ways, and many of these definitions emphasise aspects such as coercion, authority, or violence. It is natural that nations thrive to reach power, and there are many ways to exercise it to exert influence without engaging in conflicts and violence. There is also evidence to suggest that the most effective form of power is when conflict can be entirely avoided to achieve desired outcomes (Lukes, 2005, p. 27). This demonstrates that power is more than just the ability to force someone to do something against their will. Lukes' study also suggests that the ability to shape and even influence the interests and views of others is

a more powerful kind of power. Thus, strong actors can exert influence not only by forcing others to do things but also by influencing the perceptions and ideas of weaker actors.

Soft power, as a concept, was first introduced by Joseph Nye (1990) and is defined as “the ability of a nation to shape the preferences of others through appeal and attraction, in contrast to the coercive nature of hard power.” (Nye, 1990, p. 166). Soft power is also strongly linked to a nation's ability to set its own agenda and have a stronger presence in world politics, which highlights the importance of influencing perceptions and preferences (Nye, 1990, p. 166). Nye also argues that a state can enhance its soft power by making its actions and policies seem legitimate, thereby encountering less resistance to its objectives (Nye, 1990, p. 167).

Over time, the concept of soft power has undergone significant evolution due to the constant changes in the global political landscape. In *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (Nye, 2004), Nye delves into the ways nations could utilize and exert soft power for diplomatic success. For instance, the United States' cultural exports, such as Hollywood films and popular music, have played a role in shaping a global perception about the American culture. Furthermore, Jan Melissen explored in *The New Public Diplomacy* (Melissen, 2005), the rise of culture as a manifestation of soft power and recognised the intentional efforts to shape global perceptions through cultural exchange. Melissen also asserts that nations aim to share their ways of creative expression (Melissen, 2005, p.147), therefore, culture and creative industries can be used to strengthen cooperation. This is especially evident in many cultural institutions funded by governments, such as the British Council and EU projects that promote cultural exchange programmes through scholarships like Chevening and Erasmus+.

Soft power, according to Nye, is a multifaceted construct comprising distinct but interrelated components, which grows out of our culture, political values, and foreign policies (Nye, 2004, p. 11). In order to understand the dynamics of a nation's soft power, it is essential to break down and analyse each of these elements and explore the ways in which they interact and mutually reinforce one another, ultimately shaping global perceptions.

With reference to culture, Nye's conceptualization of soft power underscores the importance for a state to cultivate a perception of legitimacy within the international community. Nye asserts that this legitimacy is determined by the attractiveness of a nation's culture and ideology (Nye, 2004, p. 10), along with its ability to establish international norms and institutions that align with its core

values (Nye, 2004, p. 10). Power also requires the art of persuading others to align their interests with those of the state, as this makes gaining support a significant part of influencing. Moreover, there has been a shift towards co-operative behaviour and the deployment of soft power resources since it is more costly to use force (Nye, 2004, p. 168). This shift requires nations to diversify their strategies beyond reliance on military might, which could be achieved by making a nation's ideas, culture, values, and institutions seem attractive to others.

Regarding political values, democratic nations serve as an example because they prioritize principles such as human rights and the rule of law. Democratic values are attractive to others (Nye, 2004, p. 55), therefore, democratic nations possess a distinct advantage in the realm of soft power. However, this approach has its limitations, as not all political values are accepted or attractive to other nations. Thus, relying solely on political values as a mechanism of soft power is insufficient. If the nation behaves arrogantly or contradicts the principles it claims to uphold, it risks distorting the true meaning of its values (Nye, 2004, p. 6). If such distortion occurs, the positive aspect initially associated with democratic values could transform into negative repulsion.

Foreign policies are also strongly tied to political values and therefore cannot function on their own as a component of soft power. They are also extremely fragile, and the effectiveness of a country's soft power is linked to the impact of its government policies as they can either enhance or diminish the nation's reputation. When policies are perceived as inconsistent, arrogant, indifferent to others' opinions, or driven by a narrow focus on national interests, they have the potential to erode the positive influence a country may have (Nye, 2004, p. 14). This emphasises the need for nations to adopt policies that align with their proclaimed values and are considerate of global opinions. They should maintain positive relations by being consistent and avoid being perceived as hypocritical as this is crucial for preserving and strengthening a nation's legitimacy. This leads us to the importance of credibility and legitimacy, which is highlighted by Hayden's (2011) work as he states that "credibility and trustworthiness – measures that contribute to perceptions of an actor's attractiveness..." (Hayden, 2011, p. 11).

1.2 Research Design and Methodology

As indicated previously, culture plays an important part in nations' external policies to exercise their influence. Nations have recognised that becoming powerful is not only measured by military power, but also by how nations seem attractive to others to influence their ideas, perceptions, and

values through persuasion and without force. This could be achieved through cultural policies, enhancing diplomatic relations, and establishing cooperation to fulfil interests while fostering mutual understanding and strengthening cultural ties.

To provide a comprehensive explanation of how the research questions stated in the introduction will be addressed, it is necessary to clarify the methods employed in this study. A qualitative case study approach is used, with document analysis serving as an important technique. Document analysis is a methodical process of examining and assessing both printed and electronic information (Bowen, 2009, p. 27). The primary source of document analysis for this will be EU documents, agreements, reports, treaties, and similar sources. These primary source documents will be utilised to outline and assess the progression and overall background of the role of culture in EU external policies and EU-Jordan relations with attention to the growth and development of culture in these relations. It is also important to note that the range of documents extends beyond mere agreements and reports. We can consider various forms of written documents that can be used for this study, such as manuals, brochures, journals, articles, press releases, programme proposals, radio and television scripts, and surveys (Bowen, 2009, p. 28). Thus, examining this wide variety of data from various sources offers a solid foundation for obtaining relevant information and developing a better understanding and insight. Moreover, I will study how EU cultural policy has developed and changed in Jordan as it is a way to know what governments do with these policies over time and why they choose to do it (Dye, 2005, p. 4).

To further address the research question, it is crucial to establish in the first chapter clear definitions and conduct thorough analyses of relevant concepts, including cultural policy and soft power in the context of international relations. Once the fundamental concepts have been clearly defined and explained, the research will illustrate the extent to which cultural policy is overlooked not only within the EU. Additionally, I will discuss the gaps in literature and the nature of the cultural field in Jordan.

To make this research more relevant, I will analyse in the second chapter the role of culture in the EU and establish an in-depth understanding of its importance in European integration. An analysis of reports, documents, and relevant sources will be made to address the practical applications of cultural integration within the broader European project. I will also provide a historical overview

of the EU's cultural policy and examine the strategic framework that governs the EU's international cultural policy.

It is pivotal to note the regularities and peculiarities of events and processes. By gaining knowledge about the patterns and unique aspects of historical and ongoing events, one can establish a meaningful connection between the present and the past (Chodubski, 2010, p. 32). Therefore, when conducting synthesis and analysis, one should consider the relationship between what is happening now (the present) and what has happened before (the past). Thus, a thorough understanding of historical events and processes is crucial for making sense of current patterns, and this is what this paper will use and focus on to answer the proposed research questions. Consequently, the analysis of the development of the EU's cultural policies in Jordan allows for a comprehensive understanding of current trends in cultural policy. This serves as a principle in unravelling the dynamics of EU's cultural policies in Jordan. Therefore, throughout the third chapter, I will be conducting historical, content, and document analysis to establish the context for EU-Jordan cultural relations. The analysis will serve as the foundation for an in-depth review of agreements and initiatives, such as the Barcelona Process and the European Neighbourhood Policy. Furthermore, the purpose of the analysis is to identify historical trends and changes in the EU's approach to cultural policy to identify significant developments and policy shifts. This provides a historical context for understanding cultural engagements and the significance of culture in shaping the relations, agreements, and cooperation between the EU and Jordan.

The final chapter of the study examines the practical aspect of cultural policy and cooperation between the EU and Jordan by analysing cultural initiatives and projects. I will study documents discussing Jordan's involvement in cultural projects, initiatives, and programmes funded by the EU, Germany, and France. Additionally, I will analyse the UK's cultural efforts in Jordan before and after Brexit. This will allow for comparative analysis and highlight the similarities and variations in approaches that could influence the policies implemented by all of them.

1.3 Literature Review

Successful application of cultural policies and soft power enables nations to leverage their resources and strategies to appear appealing to others. However, it is worth noting that culture in international relations has not been prioritized in many aspects. Many of the research on cultural policies up to date has been descriptive in nature and has not focused much on their dynamics

especially in the MENA region. In this section, I will identify the gaps in literature, explain how culture has been overlooked in international relations, and navigates the cultural development in Jordan.

The field of international cultural relations (ICR) is a complex and dynamic one, shaped by a multitude of factors, including political, economic, and social forces. While traditional approaches to ICR have often focused on the role of states and their foreign policy agendas, a growing body of literature has begun to explore the field through a constructivist lens (Hopf, 1998). This approach emphasises the significance of shared meanings, norms, and identities in shaping international interactions and outcomes (Wendt, 1999). By emphasising cultural exchange and mutual understanding, this approach challenges earlier views that perceived cultural relations primarily as a tool for dominant powers to exert cultural imperialism (Schiller, 1976). Instead, it posits that culture can play a pivotal role in fostering collaboration, trust, and ultimately, understanding between nations without necessarily changing the identities, norms, and values of others (Flockhart, 2016). However, this constructivist approach is not without its challenges. Scholars caution that certain policy discourses, such as soft power and nation branding and their emphasis on competition, risk instrumentalizing culture and undermining its potential to foster genuine intercultural understanding (Hall & Smith, 2013; Ang et al., 2015). This is also evident in the case of Brexit and the UK potentially a competitor of the EU in international cultural relations and its impact on European cultural relations and perceptions (MacDonald, 2017).

The EU serves as a compelling case example for examining the evolving role of culture in international relations. Historically, cultural matters were not a priority for the EU. However, the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 marked a turning point, acknowledging culture as an integral part of the EU framework (Bozoki, nd, p. 4). This recognition was further solidified with the Lisbon Treaty in 2007, which formally integrated culture into the EU's structure and highlighted its significance in both internal and external relations.

The EU's external cultural policy, aimed at promoting its values, fostering intercultural dialogue, and positioning itself as a global mediator (Dodd and Lyklema, 2006), embodies this constructivist approach. By emphasising shared values and mutual respect, the EU seeks to build strong international partnerships (Näss, 2010). However, despite significant progress, challenges remain in fully integrating culture into all aspects of EU international relations and policies (Helly and

Valenza, 2020, p. 8), particularly as the changing global landscape necessitates continuous adaptation. Moreover, while the EU recognised the importance of incorporating cultural aspects into foreign policy (Liland, 1993), there is a lack of research on its actual impact and effectiveness. Furthermore, the complex dynamics of cultural policies, both within and outside the EU, remain under-explored. Fisher (2007) underscores the importance of coherent internal cultural actions as a prerequisite for an effective external cultural policy, highlighting their interconnectedness. Additionally, previous research focused on a few Member States and their perspective on cultural policy. Fisher examined Denmark, France, Latvia, Poland, and Portugal to study their attitudes towards internal and external cultural policies and the challenges that come with implementing them (Fisher, 2007). The other Member States were not researched, and certainly, five countries out of 27 Member States do not represent the whole, which is a downside and should be further studied in future research.

Implementing cultural policies within the diverse landscape of the EU presents its own set of challenges, and these difficulties are further compounded when extending such policies beyond its borders. However, "...culture could be useful in building subtle political linkages..." (Fisher, 2007, p. 18), but of course it comes with setbacks. This is particularly the case with the EU's relations with the Middle East as there is sometimes hesitancy from the EU's side to be deeply involved since "violent or frozen conflicts and problems such as those in the Middle East were thus viewed as having the potential of impacting European interests and security directly and indirectly." (Stivachtis, 2018, p. 2). On the contrary, it is argued that culture could be utilized to convey and communicate the EU's advocacy for human rights (Fisher, 2007, p. 99). Moreover, there is an important aspect of culture that advocates for democracy, countering radicalization, and conflict prevention (Trobboni, 2017, p. 6).

As a Middle Eastern country, Jordan represents a unique case as it has a history of maintaining open and peaceful relations amid a turbulent regional political environment. In the late 1980s to early 1990s, Jordan experienced a significant transition and turning point marked by a shift toward democracy after a long period of challenging political, social, and economic events (Hajawi et al., 2013, p. 9). At that time, Jordan experienced a phase of prosperity in various cultural fields, but it was short-lived as there was later a noticeable shift in the government's attitudes toward culture due to some economic and political setbacks (Hajawi et al., 2013, p. 10).

During the 2000s, emphasis on fostering growth and development of the cultural industry in Jordan was driven by the recognition that these industries serve as crucial assets in a country with limited natural resources (Isar, 2014, p. 63). However, “there is a growing divide between the state/government sector and other cultural actors.” (Helly & Lane, 2014, p. 4). The state still owns most cultural infrastructure but allocates less funds to cultural institutions (Helly & Lane, 2014, p. 4). This is problematic as most cultural industries and sectors rely on state funding, and this divide could hinder opportunities for comprehensive and inclusive cultural development. On the other hand, many initiatives are now privately organized or operated as non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and usually rely on foreign sponsorship or funding by the EU due to reduced government funding (Helly & Lane, 2014, p. 4).

II. EU Cultural Policy

2.1 The International Role of the EU as a Soft and Normative Power

An essential component of the EU's soft and normative power approach involves engaging closely with societies in other regions. By doing so, the EU aims to have a more significant impact on the actions, values, beliefs, and interests of those societies. However, the EU's ability to influence others is rooted in the legitimacy, credibility, and the alignment of the EU's narrative with democratic values in its practices. This leads us to the importance of credibility and legitimacy as a measure that affects the attractiveness of an actor (Hayden, 2011, p. 11). Therefore, soft power is the power of attractive ideas (Nye, 1990, p.66). Cultural and ideological attraction is identified as central to the EU's soft and normative power approach, suggesting that the EU seeks to influence others through the appeal of its cultural values, societal norms, and ideologies.

In 2016, the EU demonstrated its commitment to fostering a global order in a joint communication which emphasises the importance of advancing its international cultural cooperation (European Commission, 2016, p. 2). It focused on promoting peace as a fundamental element of global governance and the rule of law, democratic values, and freedom of expression to promote a culture of openness and inclusivity. Furthermore, the EU underscored the significance of mutual understanding by fostering open communication and cooperation among nations and extends to respecting and protecting human rights. These values were also highlighted in the European Neighbourhood Policy to enhance its relations with its Eastern and Southern neighbours (Tulmets, 2008, p. 66).

The EU has long utilized its soft power through various partnerships and has worked on promoting culture as a crucial component of its international relations, considering it as one of the three key objectives of the European Agenda for Culture (European Commission, 2018a). In the Southern Partnership, the EU focuses on the establishment of programmes promoting cultural exchange and socio-economic development. Similarly, the EU4Culture Programme is significant as a part of the Eastern Partnership, which seeks to advance intercultural dialogue and enhance economic development. Beyond Southern and Eastern neighbours, the EU partners with South Korea and China. For instance, the EU-Korea Protocol on Cultural Cooperation facilitates exchanges in cultural activities, goods, and services. While in China, cultural cooperation is organized under the High-Level People to People Dialogue to support policies in cultural and creative industries.

The EU soft power manifests in various roles which contributes to its influence in international politics. One significant role is that the EU acts as a mediator using its soft power in conflict resolution while positioning itself as a humanitarian actor. This mediating role extended to leading the international response in Georgia's Armed conflict with Russia concerning Abkhazia and South Ossetia in 2008 (Council of Europe, 2009). On a more international level, the EU has been always committed to engaging with international organisations such as UN agencies to support Millenium and Sustainable Development Goals, including enhancing education, advocating for human rights, and improving economies. Most importantly, the EU actively engages with UNESCO and has joined the 2005 UNESCO Convention which provides a foundation for the EU's external cultural policy (European Commission, 2018a). The EU also ensures that cultural aspects are considered in trade negotiations as it occupies a central role within key multilateral frameworks and remains a significant player in the world economy. For instance, the EU ratified the Protocol on Cultural Cooperation as a part of the EU-CARIFORUM Economic Partnership Agreement. However, the EU's soft power in this aspect seems negatively impacted by its economic underperformance due to inadequate and outdated policies (Nielsen, 2013, p. 735).

In addition, it is important to consider the EU's normative power, which refers to the ability to influence and shape international norms, standards, and principles (Manners, 2008, p. 46). Manners (2002) also emphasises the EU's role in promoting international norms to shape the definition of what is considered "normal" in the field of international relations (Manners, 2002, p. 236). These norms include "peace, liberty, rule of law, human rights, social solidarity, anti-discrimination, sustainable development, and good governance" (Manners, 2002, p. 242). We can therefore assert that the concept of normative power revolves around the idea that the EU can exert influence internationally without relying on its military and economic power, but rather through its ideological power. Moreover, normative power seems to focus more on "...the EU's normative identity and how it defined its actions in the international arena." (Dimitrova et al., 2016, p. 9). Therefore, norms do not only define the EU's identity, but also how it defines its actions on the global stage. As previously stated, the EU engages internationally with many states and organisations, which allows it to diffuse its norms and values and therefore shaping its identity as a normative actor (Skolimowska, 2015, p. 123). Nevertheless, to convey European norms and values beyond its borders, it must take institutionalized forms (Manners, 2002, p. 241), such as through the implementation of Association Agreements and the European Neighbourhood Policy.

Interestingly, the EU's normative power outside its Eastern and Southern neighbours is not strongly perceived as prominent (Chaban et al., 2016; Dimitrova et al., 2016, p. 9). This could be due to the fact that the EU prioritizes exerting its normative power in surrounding countries, as it is easier to have influence in states that are geographically close to it.

On the contrary, it is worth noting that some scholars challenge the portrayal of the EU as an "ethical" normative power. They argue that instead of genuinely prioritizing ethical considerations, the EU tends to prioritize its national interests using persuasive language and concepts such as "democracy", "liberty", and "human rights", to shape public perceptions in its favour. It is a challenge for any international actor to effectively pursue their own and global interests in a diverse and pluralist system while simultaneously claiming to uphold broader ethical principles (Hyde-price, 2008, p. 33). For instance, the EU committed to fostering peace and democracy in the Middle East, however, it paradoxically supported authoritarian regimes to prevent a large influx of migrants across the Mediterranean Sea to secure petroleum supply (Skolimowska, 2015, p. 119; Diez, 2005, p. 635). As Carr (2016) stated "the doctrine of the harmony of interests thus serves as an ingenious moral device invoked, in perfect sincerity, by privileged groups in order to justify and maintain their dominant position." (Carr, 2016, p. 75). The argument here is that the EU is believed to rely on soft and normative power strategies to serve its interests, primarily because it lacks significant military power to exert influence and maintain its role as a powerful actor to shape the international environment.

2.2 Culture as a Manifestation of EU Soft Power

After the second World War, both Germany and France emerged as models emphasising the significance of culture in soft power as they recognised the interconnection between language, culture, science, and diplomacy (Brown, 2017, p. 41-42). They also had some presence abroad, along with Italy, through cultural and academic institutions formed in the late 1800's and throughout the 1900's. Their priority was promoting their national language and culture, particularly high culture, within specific social spheres but with limited government involvement (Paschalidis, 2009, p. 277). The Alliance Française (1883) was established to disseminate the French language especially in colonies, while the Dante Alighieri Society (1889) was created to promote the Italian language abroad, and Goethe Institute (1951) was founded to replace Deutsche Akademie (1925) to rebrand Germany's image internationally (Paschalidis, 2009, p. 282).

After the formation of the EU in 1993 as a political and economic union, it has become a soft power competitor as it stands out as a distinctive entity. The EU represents a collection of states that have established highly institutionalized and cooperative relations, thereby altering the dynamics of international relations (Smith, 2014, p. 104). However, the cultural aspect was overlooked as the EU was built on economic and political interests to ensure peace among Member States. Gradually, the EU realised that the cultural aspects are needed in its soft power as it influences its portrayal on the global stage. While the initial objective of some European countries' soft power was to underscore their own national language and culture, it later developed after the union to include other cultural aspects shared by the Member States, such as values and principles. One important aspect is unity and diversity, which is evident in the official EU motto "United in Diversity". The motto signifies how Europeans, through the EU, unite for peace and prosperity while simultaneously respecting and benefiting from the diversity of cultures, religions, traditions, and languages (CVCE, 2016, p. 2). In the process of the EU's self-definition internally and beyond, Meijen (2020) refers to "the liberal-democratic myth", portraying the EU as "a model of fundamental human and social rights, democracy, the rule of law, solidarity, stability, and social welfare" (Meijen, 2020, p. 946). Portraying the EU as such can '...provide collective groups with a story about where they have come from and the values that set them apart from others' (Della Sala, 2010, p. 5). Moreover, nations with democratic values are attractive, and as the EU acknowledged that, it started to incorporate those values into its soft power strategies.

During the 1990s, the EU mainly focused on providing funds to advance cultural activities and encourage transnational cultural collaboration (Primorac et al., 2017, p. 7), and has later started incorporating and prioritizing more aspects like shared values, culture, norms, and identity (Calligaro, 2014). However, it seems that the EU's approach incorporating such aspects to exert soft power is usually most effective in neighbouring countries, therefore contributing to its enlargement and strong presence in Eastern countries. As Nielsen mentions, "The 2004 enlargement in particular is often cited as a triumph for EU diplomacy and its soft power." (Nielsen, 2013, p. 729). The EU Commissioner for Enlargement Olli Rehn has also stated that "...enlargement is at the core of the EU's soft power – its power to transform its nearest neighbours into functioning democracies, market economies, and true partners in meeting common challenges." (Rehn, 2007, p. 2).

Nevertheless, it is important to note here that the EU has little cultural identity as a whole in its soft power strategy (Nielsen, 2013, p. 729), especially if we consider Nye's (2008) definition of "culture" which focuses on art, literature, and education. However, if we consider Kroeber and Kluckhohn's (1952) definition of culture, which focuses on values, systems, and beliefs, we will notice that the EU is far more successful incorporating them to exercise soft power. Therefore, it is evident that culture has many manifestations in the EU's soft power. However, previous studies have not dealt with whether soft power can be leveraged without a common and strong cultural identity. Nielsen (2013) argues that the EU's soft power is not attractive due to its contribution to high and low culture, heritage, science, and education, because they tend to be "national in character" (Nielsen, 2013, p. 729). Therefore, they don't necessarily contribute to the EU's cultural identity and its soft power; and if they do, they would indirectly (Nielsen, 2013, p. 729). Other scholars also noted the importance of cultural identity as demonstrated through initiatives like Creative Europe, which has later extended to Eastern partners in 2022, including Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine. Throughout the years, the EU has been considering its cultural identity-building as a part of its soft power strategy. This is evident in many of the European Commission's communication by stating that apart from shared values, we should consider heritage, culture, and history as significant elements in determining Europe's position globally and its attractiveness (European Commission, 2014, p. 2), along with its cultural and creative sectors which create and strengthen the "European identity" (European Commission, 2018b, p. 1). However, challenges arise due to the diversity of the Member States, making it a delicate topic often avoided in EU projects and discussions on promoting a common European identity not only beyond its borders, but also internally (Lähdesmäki et al., 2021, p. 53).

2.3 EU Cultural Policy: Historical Overview

Culture was not prioritized during the early stages of European integration treaties as it was first discussed in 1992 with the Maastricht Treaty (Calligaro, 2014, p. 70). The treaty recognised culture as a part of the EU agenda by incorporating an article specifically dedicated to it, which marked the beginning of an escalating interest in culture and the subsequent efforts to form cultural policies. Prior to that, cultural policy was influenced by the European Community's engagement in partnerships with other actors, such as the Council of Europe and UNESCO, and this engagement still affects the EU's cultural policy to this day (Lähdesmäki et al., 2021, p. 46).

However, despite the significance of culture, the EU has yet to formally establish an articulated and explicit cultural policy (Obuljen, 2005, p. 11). While many Member States resist the notion of a 'common cultural policy', there is still an agreement on the need for some level of cooperation in the cultural sphere on an EU level (Obuljen, 2005, p. 11).

Previous research has established that "...political actors within the European Community anticipated that cultural and social integration would naturally evolve as a spill-over effect of cooperation in other policy domains such as the economy and trade" (Lähdesmäki et al., 2021, p. 46; Herrmann et al., 2004). However, after the formation of the EU and the 2004 enlargement, culture became a controversial and complicated topic. There was an increasing need to implement policies and practices aimed at promoting and regulating cultural matters by implementing initiatives such as Culture 2000, the Culture programme (from 2007 to 2013), and Creative Europe (since 2014). Although scholars generally agree that the main notion behind cultural programmes aims to cultivate a cultural identity in the EU, these notions seemed to change and develop over time. Moreover, the lack of a clear understanding of culture within EU cultural policy has led to criticism and has contributed to confusion regarding its objectives. For instance, the Committee of the Regions (CoR) has criticized the EU's Raphael programme (1997) and argued that it only emphasised high culture and material objects, while overlooking the symbolic and spiritual dimensions of culture (Smith, 2004, p. 66). Sassatelli also agrees that the initial cultural programmes developed were driven by a commitment to safeguarding the 'common cultural heritage' (Sassatelli, 2007, p. 31). Later during the late 1990s and early 2000s, scholars noticed a trend known as 'governmentalization' of culture, which involves using culture as a tool to achieve broader EU goals such as integration and economy (Barnett, 2001, p. 405). Values, norms, principles, and standards have become central elements of the EU's cultural policy to foster integration. Whereas the increased emphasis on economic rhetoric in the EU's discussions on culture was criticized due to the fear of its commercialization, particularly in programmes like Creative Europe. This is backed up by Bruell's (2013) argument that cultural policy places emphasis on profit-oriented goals (Bruell, 2013, p. 29).

Between 1996 and 1999, the EU established its first generation of cultural programmes, namely Kaleidoscope, Ariane, and Raphael. Some consider that these programmes had little contribution for integrating culture into other aspects of EU policy due to inadequate budget allocations and

failure in creating sustainable networks (Barnett, 2001, p. 18). However, Obuljen (2005) points out that these programmes will continue to be the most prominent structures for the EU's collective cultural policy efforts (Obuljen, 2005, p. 71). The EU's cultural policy then became more prominent in the 2000s after highlighting its importance again in Amsterdam Treaty (1997) and Lisbon Treaty (2007). However, until 2007, the Commission usually avoided labelling its actions in the cultural realm as policy due to concerns about undermining the subsidiarity principle (Langen, 2010, p. 41). The term 'cultural policy' was slowly and gradually introduced to EU discourse after the initial creation of cultural programmes, and EU officials were and still hesitant to discuss anything resembling policy in the cultural domain since most EU Member States agree that cultural policy should be dealt with on a national level.

2.4 The Role of Culture within European Integration

Culture serves as a core aspect of European integration and contributes to its societal model. For a political union to truly solidify, Member States must share common features of culture, rather than just a 'common market'. This requires Member States to cultivate shared cultural aspects to strengthen sense of belonging within the union by shifting people's consciousness away from solely identifying with their nation toward embracing a broader European citizenship (Shore, 1993, p. 784). Jean Monnet, one of the founding fathers of the EU, stated that if he had to start over, he would prioritize culture over economic and political dimensions. His statement reflects the importance of culture, which is a fundamental aspect of European integration. Additionally, the Commission's communication in 1988 on the "People's Europe" asserted the necessity of culture to instil some "European consciousness" and viewing Europe as a "humanistic enterprise" by fostering closer relations among people from diverse cultures (Shore, 1993, p. 785).

The process of integration in Europe is primarily a social phenomenon, lacking clearly defined goals or models, and discussions in this area are notably challenging and delicate (Vaskovics, 1992, p. 28). The primary issue within integration is navigating cultural differences, as each society maintains its distinct set of values and historical background on a national scale (Jehan, 2008, p. 90). The slogan "United in diversity", tried to tackle this issue by integrating both collective and individual senses of belonging on a local and regional level. The EU has also responded to challenges in its integration process by advocating for unity and tolerance and encouraging citizens' involvement, which requires a focus on cultural identity and membership in the EU

community (Lähdesmäki et al., 2021, p. 62). This community and identity highlight the “human aspect” and was founded on the sense of belonging European citizens feel, including culture, heritage, and shared values (Wang, 2009, p. 152). This, however, does not mean that the EU aims to create “uniformity”, but it aims to create a sense of belonging to strengthen European integration without disregarding the unique cultures and identities of Member States (Ruffolo, 2001, p. 7).

It is worth noting, however, that the connection individuals feel toward the common culture the EU aspires to foster, varies significantly from the connection they feel toward their national (Wang, 2009, p. 155). Scholars also acknowledge that a deeper understanding of European cultural commonalities often emerges when interacting with non-European cultures, where cultural differences emerge (Vaskovics, 1992, p. 28). The socio-cultural challenges that affect integration efforts are influenced by religion, language, geography, and history, and they are often excluded and neglected when discussing the role of culture in European integration. The notion of the EU as a community of shared values was also questioned by Akaliyski, Welzel, and Hien (2022). According to them, the role of culture in European integration encountered obstacles amidst several crises, especially during the 2008 financial crisis, the 2015 refugee crisis, and the rule of law crisis in Poland and Hungary (Akaliyski, et al., 2022, p. 570). These sparked disputes over interpretations of solidarity and unity, which fuelled the rise of Euroscepticism. This also caused divisions between EU Member States’ officials as they challenge the shared values, raising doubts about the legitimacy of “Union of Values” and the EU’s approach to culture to foster integration (Akaliyskia et al., 2022, p. 570).

2.5 Strategic Framework for the EU International Cultural Policy

During the Commission’s communication on the European Agenda for Culture in a Globalizing World in 2007, it has affirmed the significance of international cultural policy. This is evident in the EU’s active efforts during the 1990’s and 2000s in engaging with networks and relations on a global level, especially with international organisations such as UNESCO and foreign governments. An important advantage this engagement offers is the ability to navigate around potential obstacles encountered in a Member State’s policy strategies and foreign relations with third countries (Fisher, 2007, p. 32). Essentially, these networks also provide a platform for cross-border cultural exchange and cooperation, enhancing the EU’s cultural outreach and impact internationally.

There have been more efforts in trying to define a strategic framework through the EU Work Plan for Culture and EU's International Cultural Relations Strategy. Both identified main areas for engaging with culture abroad such as using culture to drive sustainable social and economic development, promoting intercultural dialogue, underscoring the importance of EU values, emphasising the significance of culture in EU's external relations, and preserving cultural heritage (Council of the European Union, 2022, p. 2). The aim is to portray and promote the EU as a unified entity with a cultural identity transcending individual Member States. However, this raises concerns about cultural sovereignty. This also takes us back to the question about the feasibility of the EU representing all Member States culturally and defining a cohesive cultural identity. The creation of the European Union National Institutes for Culture (EUNIC) in 2006 was a significant step to promote the EU on a global level through projects aiming at fostering cultural diversity, understanding, and international cooperation. The organisation, however, seems to usually focus on the promotion and representation of Member States' national cultures. That does not mean that it excludes the representation of the EU. The "More Europe" initiative emerged from EUNIC's efforts to "...mobilize cultural actors and policymakers to recognise and enhance culture's role in the EU's external relations and policies" (Isar, 2015, p. 503).

Member States also asserted the positives of cooperating with each other to implement policies beyond EU borders to enhance international visibility, establish an equitable sharing of governmental responsibilities and expenses, and achieve sustainability (Fisher, 2007, p. 32). However, international cultural policies implemented have been marked by fragmentation (Figueira, 2017, p. 81). Furthermore, the absence of the definition of "culture" in policy makes it challenging to agree on clear and practical policy goals (Gordon, 2010, p. 101). There are also conflicting priorities within the EU's institutional bodies which resulted in budget cuts, as well as national interests of Member States which can hinder the effectiveness of EU external cultural policies (Gordon, 2010, p. 101).

III. EU-Jordan Cultural Relations

In this chapter, I will move on to consider the evolving relationship between the EU and its Southern neighbours, while focusing on the transition from first-generation association agreements to the development of the European Union National Institutes for Culture (EUNIC). The chapter will also discuss the role of culture and cultural cooperation within EU-Jordan agreements, particularly focusing on the Barcelona Process, the 1997 Association Agreement, and the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). Additionally, I will reflect on the integration of cultural aspects into EU-Jordan cooperation and agreements, emphasising its importance in addressing social, economic, and security challenges, as well as how the role of culture in cooperation changed over time.

3.1 Mapping Euro-Arab Relations: Economic Strategies and Political Realities in the Mediterranean

As a response to the Treaty of Rome in 1957, the European Community (EC) aimed to enhance economic and social development of other European countries and former colonies (McCann, 2020). Therefore, during the 1960s and early 1970s, the EC has first initiated relations with Mediterranean countries through the establishment of partnership and bilateral preferential trade agreements with countries like Morocco, Egypt, Lebanon, and Tunisia. After becoming more institutionalized, the EC began developing new policies especially concerning the Mediterranean. Therefore, bilateral relations were replaced by comprehensive policies, and economic factors played a crucial role in these policies (Warnecke, 1976, p. 31). This was the EC's way to assert its influence and protect its economy, which eventually led to launching the Global Mediterranean Policy (GMP) in 1972. An important aspect the EC hoped to achieve through the GMP is normalising relations with Mediterranean countries after the escalating tension during the Arab-Israeli conflict and its impact on Middle Eastern oil flow to Europe, which further increased the prices during the energy crisis in late 1960s and early 1970s (Guasconi, 2013, p. 166). One year after establishing GMP, Yom Kippur War in 1973 pushed the EC to initiate further cooperation directed specifically to Arab countries, and it eventually introduced the Euro-Arab Dialogue (EAD) in 1974 (Bicchi, 2007, p. 65), which is a forum established between the EC and Arab countries to foster interregional partnership and cooperation. Politically, there were incentives for closer ties as well. The Arab side, especially after the Yom Kippur War, sought support from the

EC in the Arab-Israeli conflict (Taylor, 1978). Additionally, the EC acknowledged during the oil and energy shock the strong connection between political issues in its Southern neighbours and Europe's economy and security, recognising the political implications of relying on Arab oil. EAD was also established as Europe and the world witnessed a sharp increase in terrorist attacks and violent incidents during that period (Bicchi, 2007, p. 69). However, since EAD's inception, and despite discussions on social and political issues, it has remained without substantial progress in non-economic areas (Al-Dajani, 1980, p. 86; Taylor, 1978, p. 441). The EC remained focused primarily on economic dimensions and eventually signed cooperation agreements with Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia in 1976, and Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan in 1977. These bilateral agreements aimed at emphasising regional cooperation and included provisions for financial aid and economic cooperation, with a particular focus on agriculture.

3.1.1 Barcelona Process: A Step Towards Cultural Cooperation and Association Agreements

As explained earlier, the EC cooperation with many Southern neighbours focused on economy and trade, which reflects in the cooperation agreements in 1977. After the creation of the EU, the first significant step it took to discuss culture with its Southern neighbours was during the 1995 Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, also called the Barcelona Process (BP), which began after the Barcelona Euro-Mediterranean Conference. The partnership indicated that "...traditions of culture and civilization throughout the Mediterranean region, dialogue between these cultures and exchanges at human, scientific and technological level are an essential factor in bringing their peoples closer, promoting understanding between them and improving their perception of each other." (Barcelona Declaration Adopted at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference, 1995, p.6). Through this partnership, it was finally recognised the importance of culture in fostering ties with the Southern Mediterranean and agreeing to a partnership emphasising intercultural dialogue, cultural exchange, and respect for diverse identities. It also promised to commit to sustained cultural and educational programmes and emphasised the link between cultural, social, and economic progress and civil society's contribution to development (Barcelona Declaration Adopted at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference, 1995). The cultural aspects in Barcelona Process were stated in the third chapter, focusing on development, intercultural dialogue, media, social welfare, combating terrorism and organized crime, and migration (Barcelona Declaration Adopted at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference, 1995). Another aspect emphasised in BP was the

importance of EU norms, values, and standards in its relations and as a base for security due to waves of illegal migration. The partnership was eventually followed by an accord of cooperation signed in 1996 between the European Commission and UNESCO to address the issues of cooperation in Mediterranean culture and heritage (Schäfer, 2007, p. 338). It also seems that it has emerged as a fear of “clash of cultures and civilizations” and was therefore planned to tackle this threat by highlighting the idea of cultural dialogue and “what unites the west and the Arab world” (Schäfer, 2007, p. 338).

Barcelona Process emerged from migratory, security, social, and socio-economic concerns due to the large numbers of illegal immigrants coming from Southern neighbours, political instability in the Middle East causing a rise in terrorist attacks globally, and the economic recession in early 1990s (Rabadi, 2019, p. 39). Amin and El Kenz (2005) state that the partnership in a way “... protects the EU against possible social and political and cultural overflowing from the countries of the Southern side of the Mediterranean” (Amin and El Kenz, 2005, p. 82). Additionally, the EU expected that cooperation in cultural matters would contribute to the peace process in the MENA region (Rabadi, 2019, p. 40; Amin & El Kenz, 2005, p. 99), and most importantly, assert its dominance politically and economically (Rabadi, 2019, p. 40; Attinà, 2004, p. 147). During the Barcelona Euro-Mediterranean Conference, there was strong emphasis on social and cultural cooperation aimed at reducing migratory pressures “...through vocational training programmes and programmes of assistance for job creation.” (Barcelona Declaration Adopted at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference, 1995, p. 6). Therefore, the EU tried dealing with these challenges by developing further cooperation and cultural initiatives that had socio-economic development dimension to create more job opportunities. Considering the initiatives that emerged owing to Barcelona Process, several regional programmes were implemented and supported by MEDA (Mediterranean Development Assistance). MEDA was a significant financial instrument established in 1996 for the BP, and it aimed to provide financial and technical support for projects such as EuroMed Heritage, EuroMed Audiovisual, and EuroMed Youth. These initiatives first started from the late 1990s and were later developed by the European Neighbourhood Policy throughout mid-2010s.

EuroMed Heritage, a programme focused on conserving and developing the cultural heritage of the Euro-Mediterranean region, was the first significant and practical cultural project of the BP

(Schäfer, 2007, p. 344). The programme emphasised the role of cultural heritage in fostering understanding between cultures, preserving collective memory, promoting peace, ensuring diversity, and generating employment. The programme began in 1998 and underwent four phases, ending in 2012 and receiving a total funding of €74m throughout that period. Alongside the preservation of cultural heritage, BP has also emphasised the development of the audiovisual sector since its inception. This priority was reinforced during the 1997 Ministerial Conference in Malta, where specific guidelines for audiovisual collaboration were established (Schäfer, 2007, p. 345). The first EuroMed Audiovisual programme was initiated in 2000 and completed three phases ending in 2014, with a total funding of €46m. The programme primarily focused on cooperative projects in cinema, television, and radio to enhance the media sector and audiovisual heritage of Mediterranean nations and other EU Southern neighbours. Additionally, it aimed to raise awareness of the significance of this heritage and produce content reflecting Mediterranean culture. When it comes to youth programmes, a conference in Amman in 1996 further highlighted the importance of youth exchange between the EU and the Mediterranean. Therefore, another programme initiated for young people from Southern neighbours was EuroMed Youth. Its goal is to foster mutual and cultural understanding, facilitate the integration of youth into professional spheres, provide opportunities for marginalized youth, and combat discrimination and racism. In 1999, the first EuroMed Youth programme was adopted and continued through four phases ending in 2016, receiving a total amount of funding of nearly €35m.

BP led to closer Euro-Mediterranean relations through bilateral Association Agreements (AA), replacing previous Cooperation Agreements from the 1970s. Association Agreements are negotiated and signed individually with each country, with the terms tailored to the needs and circumstances of its partners. Yet, AAs encompass the key areas outlined in the Barcelona Process: political dialogue, economic relations, and cooperation in social and cultural affairs. Therefore, the objectives of Euro-Mediterranean AAs are multifaceted; they aim to facilitate political dialogue to enhance mutual understanding, cooperation, and joint initiatives among participating nations, such as Tunisia, Jordan, Morocco, Syria, and Lebanon. They also seek to improve economic, trade, and financial cooperation, including the gradual liberalization of trade in services and goods and the movement of capital (Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements, 2020). Moreover, these agreements further emphasised social, cultural, and educational cooperation,

emphasising intercultural dialogue, migration management, skills development, and the promotion of labour rights and gender equality (Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements, 2020).

It is evident that a significant aspect of the BP and AAs primarily centered on security, economy, and financial partnership, despite the importance of social and cultural factors due to migratory challenges. This is because economic and trade considerations often take precedence in international agreements as they directly impact the prosperity and political stability of the participating parties (Ghesquière, 2001, p. 306). Moreover, the EU falsely hoped and assumed that there would be an economic “spill-over-effect” on non-economic matters (Youngs, 1999, p. 18).

3.1.2 Evolution of the European Neighbourhood Policy: Promoting Cultural Cooperation in the Mediterranean

Shortly after the AAs, the EU had a shift in its priorities due to a series of challenges. The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) was introduced in 2003 and further developed in 2004, which aimed to prevent the growing populists’ sentiments and the new divides between the expanded EU and its Eastern neighbours. The growing political instability in the Middle East was also a major reason behind the initiation of the ENP. After the events of 9/11 in 2001, the invasion of Iraq, and the crumbling of the Palestinian-Israeli peace process, the shock prompted Europeans to recognise the pressing need for strengthened cultural cooperation between the West and the Middle East (Rabadi, 2019, p. 42). The Strategy Paper stated that “An effective means to achieve the ENP’s main objectives is to connect the peoples of the Union and its neighbours, to enhance mutual understanding of each other’s cultures, history, attitudes and values, and to eliminate distorted perceptions.” (European Neighbourhood Policy Strategy Paper, 2004, p. 19). The paper has also discussed the importance of enhancing cultural programmes, with a strong focus on improving people-to people contact between third countries and the EU.

The ENP was initially the UK’s idea to foster closer relations with Eastern neighbours in 2002, which introduced the concept of a "wider Europe" (Smith, 2005, p. 759). It was then approved in late 2002 by Copenhagen European Council after requesting that it includes Southern neighbours as well (Feridun, 2008, p. 3). While one of the primary motivations behind the proposal of the ENP was linked to security concerns, akin to the Barcelona Process, the Commission clarified that ENP didn't replace it, however, it complemented it (Rabadi, 2019, p. 42). ENP seeks to further strengthen relations between the EU and neighbouring countries without offering them EU

membership. It also further emphasised the importance of values like democracy, human rights, and good governance, aiming to boost economic development and achieve stability.

The ENP has undergone a significant review in 2011 in response to the Arab Spring (Leigh, 2011, p. 2). Therefore, it developed strong emphasis on security in the Middle East, regime change, and democratic reform in North African countries. The EU has even introduced the concept of “deep democracy” by stressing that a nation’s progress in building democracy is a condition for increased EU support (European Commission, 2011, p. 3), with potential withdrawal of funds for violations of democratic principles (Tömmel, 2013, p. 27). This indicates a strong linkage between support and adherence to EU values and standards in external relations. Another significant review took in 2015 and 2019, with a particular focus on migratory pressures, stability, and prosperity in the EU's neighbourhood. That does not mean, however, that there was no cultural cooperation after 2011. In fact, Erasmus+ was introduced for the first time in 2014, and many of other programmes were improved, such as MedCulture, MedFilm, Net-Med Youth, and other bilateral projects funded by the ENP’s financial arm, also called the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) (Helly & Galeazzi, 2017).

ENP has also influenced the EU’s strategic approach to its Southern neighbours, particularly focusing on the Mediterranean region. In a Joint Communication published in 2021, the EU proposed a comprehensive and innovative agenda tailored for this region within the framework of the ENP (European Commission, 2021a). Therefore, ‘A New Agenda for the Mediterranean’ was launched in 2021 to solidify the EU’s position as a global power in tackling various external challenges such as migration, organized crime, and energy security (Gera, 2021, p. 2). The MENA region, which is often characterized by instability, is particularly vulnerable to these threats. Consequently, initiatives aimed at stabilizing and addressing challenges in the Southern Neighbourhood are crucial for enhancing security, prosperity, and cooperation both within the region and beyond. It has also worked on improving cultural cooperation by enhancing programmes like Erasmus+ and Creative Europe, as well as intercultural dialogue initiatives to prevent extremism and radicalization (Renewed partnership with the Southern Neighbourhood: A new Agenda for the Mediterranean, 2021a, p. 14).

3.1.3 Union for the Mediterranean: Advancement in EU-Mediterranean Relations

Years after the introduction of ENP in 2003, the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) emerged in 2008 after the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean, and was built upon BP foundations (Aliboni et al., 2008). Some EU countries noted that other Member States, such as Germany and Poland, have shown greater interest in Central and Eastern Europe, while Southern European countries, including Italy, Greece, and Spain, have a bigger role in addressing challenges in the Mediterranean within the EU agenda, therefore contributing to the establishment of the Union for the Mediterranean (Seiti, 2018, p. 193). As a result, there was further advancement in the EU-Mediterranean relations and there was further improvement that occurred in the cultural realm. At the third gathering of Euro-Mediterranean Culture Ministers in Athens, amid the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue, efforts began for a new Euro-Mediterranean Strategy on Culture, focusing on dialogue between cultures and cultural policy (Council of the European Union, 2008, p. 21). Furthermore, Anna Lindh Foundation was strengthened, and a new EuroMed Heritage Programme emerged, thanks to UfM. Additionally, a new EuroMed Audiovisual Programme was planned to leverage media for intercultural dialogue and heritage promotion, along with other initiatives to boost the audiovisual sector and promote intercultural dialogue through media, such as the Terramed project launched by the Permanent Conference of the Mediterranean Audiovisual Operators (COPEAM) (Council of the European Union, 2008, p. 22).

3.1.4 EUNIC: Bridging Cultures in the Global Cultural Landscape

Despite efforts to improve cultural cooperation, there was a need for an organization that solely focuses on cultural areas. In 2006, the European Union National Institutes for Culture (EUNIC) was formed to embody a collaborative effort among EU Member States' embassies and cultural institutes (CIs) and has later established its clusters in over 90 countries (EUNIC, 2020, p. 1). EUNIC was not formed as a direct response to ENP or previous agreements, however, it was found to improve cultural cooperation on a global level (EUNIC, 2020, p. 1), and not only with Southern neighbours. EUNIC also emerged as a response to broader trends within the European cultural landscape, as well as the shifting need of the EU's broader cultural policies and initiatives (EUNIC,

2020, p. 1). EU Member States are considered full members, while the British Council,¹ despite being one of EUNIC's founders, is now considered an associate member at a global level after Brexit (EUNIC, 2021).² EUNIC actively engages in various cultural initiatives with the EU's Southern neighbours. Its CIs are increasingly involved in EU-funded projects and programmes through other clusters' CIs working together with the EU Delegation (EUD), or by operating under EUNIC Global umbrella, and collaborating as individual partners with various stakeholders, such as NGOs and universities (Smits et al., 2016, p. 58). Other prominent initiatives implemented by EUNIC include the European Film Festival, European Day of Languages, and RISE Talent Contest (see more on page 48).

3.2 The Role of Culture and Cultural Cooperation in EU-Jordan Agreements

Culture can provide an insight into the readiness of other parties to engage in cooperation (Pendergast, 1973, p. 683). It can also reveal governments' attitudes, behaviours, and their receptiveness to further collaboration to predict potential future rejection of initiatives (Pendergast, 1973, p. 683). Most Member States initiated and formed cultural cooperation with Jordan as it is an essential component of its broader foreign policy strategies. This is done through embassies and cultural institutions, such as Instituto Cervantes, Alliance Française, Goethe Institut, and Dante Alighieri Society.

While many Member States usually articulate this cooperation through agreements, projects, and programmes, there is a lack of a unified EU approach towards global cultural cooperation. Currently, there is no overarching strategy within the EU that complements or coordinates the cultural efforts of its Member States. This is because Member States prioritize promoting their own culture, while "...the EU tends (if at all) to promote the cultural infrastructures, policies, and the vitality of cultures of third countries as a part of its development aid and its stabilisation and

¹ The British Council is a UK government-funded organization promoting cultural relations and educational opportunities worldwide.

² Despite Brexit, the British Council remained as an EUNIC associate member. Associate Members represent their nation or have a degree of independence, acting for or on behalf of their country. They can be located in EU accession candidate countries, EFTA Member States, or other European nations, and they are involved in cultural activities in other countries.

democratisation programmes.” (European Cultural Foundation, n.d., p. 3). The EU regarded dealing with cultural matters as sensitive; therefore, none of the EU documents offer a precise definition of culture (European Commission, n.d.). Instead, it allows Member States and individuals to interpret culture according to their national and local level. Despite this lack of a strict definition, EU cultural programmes seem to present a broader understanding of cultural and creative sectors, offering flexibility and inclusivity in its approach (European Commission, n.d.). Therefore, the EU implements diverse cultural programmes and projects that could also be related in a way to development, migration, security, and social welfare.

3.2.1 Barcelona Process and the 1997 Association Agreement

As explained in the beginning of this chapter, Barcelona Process was a significant step towards cultural cooperation despite the slow progress. Additionally, programmes emerged from MEDA and were implemented in Jordan, such as EuroMed Heritage, EuroMed Audiovisual, and EuroMed Youth. The relationship between Jordan and the EU became even closer with the Association Agreement in 1997 which entered into force in 2002, replacing the Cooperation Agreement of 1977. The agreement would not have been possible without Jordan’s involvement in Barcelona Process, which serves as a strong foundation of EU-Jordan relations. Although the focus of the negotiations was primarily on establishing economic cooperation, the cultural aspect was further discussed in the AA in a section dedicated to cooperation in cultural and social matters. It highlighted the significance of cooperation in cultural heritage, the importance of extending cultural programmes to Jordan, and the financing of exchange programmes to promote mutual cultural understanding (Euro-Mediterranean Agreement: Establishing an Association Between the European Communities and Their Member States, of The One Part, and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, of the Other Part, 2002, p. 19). Furthermore, Title VI of the AA sets out guidelines for social and cultural collaboration, which aim at fostering dialogue between the participating parties (Euro-Mediterranean Agreement: Establishing an Association Between the European Communities and Their Member States, of The One Part, and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, of the Other Part, 2002, p. 21). After 2003, Jordan was a grant holder of many EU projects and initiatives and has actively participated in various education, tourism development, and mobility programmes, including the Trans-European Mobility for University Studies (TEMPUS), a twinning project aimed at enhancing the institutional capacity of the Ministry of Tourism and

Antiquities (MOTA) in Jordan, Capacity Building in Higher Education (CBHE), and Technical Assistance and Information Exchange (TAIEX) in diverse fields of culture such as media and heritage.

As discussed in the first section of this chapter, economic setbacks, migration, and security concerns in the EU were important to tackle through cultural cooperation, which is evident in BP and AA. According to Article 80 and 82 of the EU-Jordan AA, the role of culture here lies in fostering cultural understanding between Jordanians and Community nationals to eliminate discrimination, funding exchange programmes to create cultural tolerance between Jordanians and Europeans living in Member States, creating job opportunities through cultural initiatives, and reintegrating immigrants (Euro-Mediterranean Agreement: Establishing an Association Between the European Communities and Their Member States, of The One Part, and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, of the Other Part, 2002, p. 21). It is even remarkable that the Association Council established a dedicated working body to oversee initiatives and focus areas highlighted in the agreement, such as tackling social issues, challenges in integration, illegal migration, economic development, and cultural awareness (Rabadi, 2019, p. 115). Therefore, EU-Jordan AA and BP both had strong focus on the issue of migration and its impact on social, economic, and cultural dynamics.

However, it is apparent that the economic aspect was incorporated in different matters and concerns discussed in these agreements and partnerships as it may have been perceived as strategically more crucial for both parties, especially given Jordan's position in the Middle East. Thus, economic matters dominated these relations, and this is generally seen as a factor strongly related to the lack of long-term vision and low prioritization in non-economic areas (El-Said & Becker, 2001, p. 184). Moreover, negotiating comprehensive agreements that cover multiple dimensions such as economic, political, cultural, and human aspects require significant time, resources, and diplomatic efforts.

3.2.2 European Neighbourhood Policy

In 2005, the ENP was first implemented to further strengthen EU-Jordan relations and was adopted for a span of five years. The ENP Strategy Paper highlighted that “People-to-people projects will be encouraged, aiming at “...promoting civil society initiatives in support of human rights and democratisation, advancing youth organisations, and promoting intercultural dialogue through

educational and youth exchanges, as well as human resource mobility and transparency of qualifications.” (ENP Strategy Paper, 2004, p. 23). Additionally, it emphasised the importance of activities in the fields of media, exchange of information, and democratic values and principles, such as good governance and respect for human rights to foster stability and prosperity in the Middle East. There was also a particular focus on enhancing the YOUTH programme, Erasmus Mundus, and TEMPUS. Thanks to ENP, Jordan was also eligible for other cultural initiatives implemented by the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) programmes such as MedCulture, Anna Lindh Foundation, and MedFilm, ENI Cross Border Cooperation (CBC), Culture and Creative Industries (CCI) clusters, the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI), as well as twinning cultural projects financed by bilateral envelopes (Helly & Galeazzi, 2017) (see more on chapter 4). The cultural cooperation took various forms and was implemented in different sectors, such as education, development, and media.

Jordan received in 2011 an “advanced status” in the new ENP Action Plan which covers another period of five years, therefore strengthening EU-Jordan relations even further. The role of culture and its importance to achieve the goals of the new Action Plan was highlighted in a section under title XV of “People-to-people contacts”. The section discussed the significance of cultural cooperation that aims at preserving and promoting cultural diversity, managing cultural heritage, developing cultural industries, fostering dialogue between cultures, and enhancing Jordan's participation in cultural cooperation programmes (EU/Jordan ENP Action Plan, 2011, p. 41). The importance of European values in its cultural, economic, and political cooperation with Jordan is evident in ENP’s framework, and there was continuous monitoring of the progress of promoting democracy, rule of law, transparency, freedom of speech, respect for human rights, gender equality, and social rights. In fact, the EU stated the advanced status Jordan has received was marked by several economic and political developments, as well as the shared objective to promote EU values (EU-Jordan ENP Action Plan, 2011, p. 1). Moreover, some programmes initiated after the 2011 Action Plan, such as MedCulture, discussed how culture plays a role in addressing radicalization and extremism in Jordan (Bouquerel, 2018, p. 92). The importance of cultural initiatives in combating radicalization and extremism was further highlighted in the Renewed Partnership with the Southern Neighbourhood in 2021 (Renewed Partnership with the Southern Neighbourhood: A new Agenda for the Mediterranean, 2021a, p. 14). This could be achieved by promoting cultural activities, programmes, and projects with an economic development dimension

and creative expressions that promote tolerance, diversity, and social cohesion. The engagement in utilizing culture as a tool against radicalization implies a recognition that cultural interventions can be considered “preventive measures” as these projects help promote inclusivity, cultivation of social cohesion, critical thinking, dissemination of democratic values, and encouragement of civic engagement (European Commission, 2023, p. 3).

IV. Practical Dimension of Cultural Cooperation between the EU and Jordan

4.1 Jordan's Participation in Implementing MEDA Cultural Programmes

Programmes funded by MEDA, the financial instrument developed after the BP, served as a significant starting point of implementing cultural programmes. MEDA was first approved in 1995 and later amended in 2000 to initiate MEDA II. Their goals were “to assist partner countries in their economic transitions, promote sustainable socio-economic growth, and encourage cooperation at regional, sub-regional, and cross-border levels.” (Rabadi, 2019, p. 192). MEDA I was first implemented in 1996 until 1999 and has committed to allocating a total of €254m throughout the whole period. While MEDA II, which lasted from 2000 until 2006, has significantly raised its budget and has allocated €314m. Jordan, compared to other MENA countries, has received a generous amount of funding considering the yearly average allocation per inhabitant, receiving a total funding of €49m (Natorski, 2008, p. 45).

EuroMed Heritage was the first cultural programme to be implemented by MEDA. Each project within the EuroMed Heritage was led by a partner Member State, while from Jordan, different actors, mainly ministries, NGOs, and universities were participants. During its first phase, which started in 1998 and ended in 2003, it received €17m to fund 21 different projects in participating countries, with Jordan participating in 12 projects (EUROMED, 2006, p. 8; de Perini, 2016, p. 153). One of the first projects is “CORPUS” led by École d'Avignon (France), which lasted from 1998 until 2001 and was granted about €1m (Taboroff et al., 2004, p. 6). From Jordan, the Ministry of Culture (MOC) and Yarmouk University were the participants in these projects. This initial participation was significant as it enabled the Jordanian government to recognise heritage as a reflection of “social, economic, and cultural life” (European Communities, 2002, p. 15). Consequently, the project facilitated collaboration between different ministries in Jordan, including the MOC to protect ancient and traditional buildings from negligence and make them reflect the culture of the place (European Communities, 2002, p. 15).

Other significant -distinct but related- projects implemented by the Municipality of Hildesheim (Germany) were “Expo 2000” and “Saving Cultural Heritage Exhibition”, with the MOC being a participant from Jordan (Taboroff et al., 2004, p. 12). It received a grant of €400,000 and was implemented in 1999 for 12 months to focus on historical cultural heritage and create a forum for cultural exchange among Euro-Med partners (Taboroff et al., 2004, p. 12). “Saving Cultural

Heritage” was a follow-up mobile exhibition implemented in 2002 and received €251,000 (Taboroff et al., 2004, p. 12). The exhibition was a way to strengthen cooperation between Mediterranean countries in preserving cultural heritage and promoting dialogue as it was organized in multiple countries. Moreover, the involvement of the MOC in the project is important as this is its third participation within a short period of time despite its limited expertise and experience. The ministry also collaborated during the project with other participating countries, which reflects its commitment to regional cooperation and cultural exchange initiatives within the Euro-Mediterranean.

EuroMed Heritage II was launched in 2001 and concluded in 2008. The programme was allocated a budget of €30m to support 11 projects, with Jordan participating in only two of them. These projects had a particular and stronger emphasis on intangible cultural heritage, but also various aspects of tangible heritage preservation and capacity building initiatives in the cultural sector. For instance, “MediMuses” was funded from 2002 for 3 years with €2.9m and was led by a Greek music ensemble called En Chordais (EUROMED, 2006, p. 9). It is considered a trans-cultural project to capture the Mediterranean's heritage in classical music by studying preserved oral music traditions and written ancient records, particularly Byzantine manuscripts (European Communities, 2002, p. 22; ADE, 2009, p. 6). From Jordan, The National Music Conservatory of Noor Al Hussein Foundation was a participant, and classes were conducted for Jordanian universities’ professors specializing in music, while musicians attended concerts of traditional Mediterranean music that took place across Europe (European Commission, 2005, p. 3).

Meanwhile, EuroMed Heritage III started in 2003 and concluded in 2008, with a budget of €10m only. Out of the four projects funded by the third phase, Jordan participated in two. In 2004, the first project Jordan participated in was “Discover Islamic Art”, led by an international non-profit organization called Musée Sans Frontières and was funded €2.6m (EUROMED, 2006, p. 10). The project showcased the artistic and cultural legacy of Islam, encompassing not just nations around the southern Mediterranean but also extending into Europe. Three virtual exhibitions were created, each demonstrating Islamic and figurative art, as well as the Westernization of culture in former Ottoman lands (Naghawy, 2009). The exhibitions were created by collaborations between Germany and the UK with Jordan Archaeological Museum, as well as other Southern Mediterranean partners (Naghawy, 2009).

The last phase of EuroMed Heritage was implemented from 2008 until 2012. However, it was no longer funded by MEDA as it was replaced by the new financial instrument ENPI (UNESCO, 2010, p. 1).

Considering the cultural component in other MEDA projects, EuroMed Youth Programme is a great example of efforts towards encouraging cultural exchange between Europeans and Southern neighbours. The first phase (1999 to 2001) was funded €9.7m, with €6m allocated from MEDA (ECOTEC, 2001, p. 1). The programmes's activities mainly revolved around "...facilitating youth exchanges, enabling European Voluntary Service, and providing support measures to promote its objectives" (ECOTEC, 2001, p. 1). Out of the 134 projects implemented by collaborating with NGOs and national coordinators, 23 were led by Southern neighbours, including Jordan (ECOTEC, 2001, p. 2). However, the majority of the projects were led by EU organisations, with notably active countries such as France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Italy (ECOTEC, 2001, p. 2). Many of these projects were organized with the help of SALTO EuroMed Resource Centre and they had a cultural aspect, including seminars and long-term training courses on cultural topics such as intercultural learning and participation (Matanie et al., 2006, p. 131). Details about projects during the first phase lack a database of their funding, scope, participating countries, and host organisations; therefore, it was not possible to list all the projects Jordan participated in. This could be due to the fact that it was considered a trial phase since all the elements and foundations of the project were developed from scratch (Matanie et al., 2006, p. 151)

The second phase of the programme was allocated a budget of €14m for the years 2002 to 2004, with €10m funded by MEDA (SALTO, n.d.) Between 2001 and 2004, 54 Jordanians participated in SALTO training courses that offer youth an informal space for intercultural learning and deepening cultural understanding (Gelabert & Neisse, 2004, pp. 38-77). Another training organised under the "Course on Active Citizenship and Democracy" project was conducted, with two Jordanian organisations participating: Young Women's Christian Association of Amman and Ashab (Matanie et al., 2006, p. 179). The other participants in the project came from various Euro-Mediterranean countries and diverse backgrounds. Regardless of their differences, the training encouraged them to exchange ideas and learn from each other's experiences (Matanie et al., 2006, p. 181). A similar project implemented in Belgium and centered on intercultural exchange was "The Big Europe of the Little Youngsters", with the participation of Shabab Al Arabia from Jordan

and other partner countries (Matanie et al., 2006, p. 196). The aim of it was to encourage young people to express themselves and share their opinions while being culturally sensitive when interacting with people from other cultures (Matanie et al., 2006, p. 196).

The third phase (2005-2008) was the last one to be funded by MEDA and was allocated €5m (Göksel & Senyuva, 2016, p. 12). This phase focused extensively on cultural training projects, such as the "Dialogue among Civilisations" project, which worked on tackling cultural misunderstandings, eliminating stereotypes, and promoting intercultural dialogue (Kirby & Demicheli, 2009, p. 4). Training courses were conducted in Greece and Cyprus to equip participants from Jordan, as well as other Arab and European participants, with skills to navigate the challenges of intercultural work.

Moving on now to consider the audiovisual sector, culture plays a huge role in cinema, television, and radio. Therefore, EuroMed Audiovisual programme was initiated due to the BP to foster cooperation and cultural exchange between the EU and Southern neighbours. The initial phase started in 2000 and was allocated €18m (Kéfi, 2009, p. 85), funding six projects over a span of five years.³ The projects ranged from "...the production of animation and documentary series to the support of the conservation and advancement of the Euro-Mediterranean audiovisual industry." (de Perini, 2016, p. 136). Among these projects is "Cinemamed", which promoted the cultural diversity and heritage of the Mediterranean region in collaboration with the Jordanian Royal Society of Fine Arts and other MEDA partners. Additionally, it raised awareness on cultural heritage preservation, encouraged technological innovation, and increased the visibility of the Euro-Mediterranean cinema (CINEMAMED, n.d.).

In the subsequent phase of the programme (2005-2007) with a budget of €15m (Newman-Baudais, 2011, p. 71), the "Generation Big Screen Project" training project was introduced. The project aimed to train cinema operators and film distributors, with the objective of expanding audiences for Euro-Mediterranean cinema in Southern Mediterranean countries (European Commission, 2006, p. 6). Some Jordanian participants were chosen to attend the training, including a workshop held at the Venice Film Festival in 2006 (European Commission, 2006, p. 6).

³ 'Euromediatoon - Viva Carthago', 'Medea', 'Capmed', 'Women...Pioneers', 'Europa Cinemas', 'Cinemamed'.

Two years after the conclusion of the second phase, the last phase commenced and lasted until 2014. However, it was no longer funded by MEDA, as it was replaced by ENPI.

4.2 Projects of the Anna Lindh Foundation

After 9/11 and the rising political tensions in the MENA region, there was a growing awareness that institutionalization and co-ownership of the EuroMed cultural regime was required to facilitate cultural exchanges and address misperceptions about Islam and the Arab world (Walton, 2012). After 2002, the topic of culture became central in efforts to build peace in the Middle East, and experts were consulted to discuss and research the structure and framework of an institutionalized and decentralized foundation focusing on cultural areas (Obenhuber, 2011, p. 58). In 2004, The Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue of Cultures (ALF) was approved by the Sixth Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (ALF, 2009, p. 1). It was then officially launched in 2005 to provide a platform for cultural exchange that could bridge divides and foster mutual understanding between Europe and its Southern neighbours (Obenhuber, 2011, p. 59). The foundation and projects' budget and financial support come from both the EU and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership countries (Annex 5: Action Fiche for Egypt, n.d., p. 38).

The foundation's Jordanian network was established in 2007 and currently consists of 118 members, including cultural and research centres, non-governmental organisations, and universities as project partners and implementers. Although Jordan has made little to no financial contributions to the ALF, it participated in many projects and programmes in the cultural realm. Among them was the "Alwan Baladna Festival", which was the first common action organized in 2011 by the head of the ALF Jordanian network, the Royal Institute for Interfaith Studies (RIIFS). The festival celebrated cultural diversity and pluralism in Jordan while promoting unity and understanding. Additionally, civil society organisations and other 53 institutions affiliated with ALF joined the festival to promote cultural awareness and feature various cultural and artistic activities (Ayad, 2011). Activities included theatrical performances, workshops, cultural and religious dialogues, and artistic concerts showcasing folkloric dances, crafts, children's literature, and fashion shows (Ayad, 2011).

On a more regional level, Jordan, along with Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Lebanon, and Palestine, participated in the “Young Arab Voices” (YAV) programme. In the aftermath of the Arab Spring and increased restrictions on political debate and freedom of speech in Jordan, the programme was launched in 2011 by ALF and the British Council to “...foster a culture of dialogue, enhance critical thinking, increase resilience to radicalization, and even strengthen effective social and political engagement” (Knox & Donaldson, 2016). Many NGOs and academic institutions in Jordan collaborated to host debate training and sessions focusing on intercultural and democratic dialogue (Karanàsou & Gemayel, 2020, p. 9). Having achieved a great success in the region, in 2016, the programme was expanded to "Young Mediterranean Voices" and was funded by the European Commission and co-funded by the government of Finland, the British Council, and the World Bank Group (Karanàsou & Gemayel, 2020, p. 20). It ran from 2018 until 2020 and focused on intercultural and political dialogue between youth in the MENA region. In Jordan alone, the programme engaged 691 debaters and facilitated online engagement and encouraged participation in intercultural debate groups virtually (British Council & ALF, 2020).

Another significant project implemented during COVID-19 and funded by ALF was the "How I See You" project. In this initiative, Jordan Youth Innovation Forum partnered with organisations from Spain, Poland, and Egypt (Autokreacja Foundation, n.d.). The project lasted ten months and involved 100 young people from both the EU and MENA countries (Autokreacja Foundation, n.d.), allowing them to produce their own digital content focusing on the topic of cultural identity and diversity. The aim was to break cultural barriers, eliminate stereotypes, foster dialogue among youth, and encourage respect for cultural differences. This was also achieved through conducting study visits, screenings, local workshops on intercultural communication, and visits to different locations to learn about cultural diversity (Autokreacja Foundation, n.d.). The project was then concluded in Jordan, where participants reflected on their experiences and discussed the outcomes of the project.

4.3 Projects Implemented in Cooperation with the Delegation of the EU to Jordan

The EUD to Jordan has been operating and representing the EU beyond its borders for nearly 50 years and has considered implementing and funding cultural projects pivotal to maintain diplomatic relations in the region. The nature of these cultural projects differs, ranging from cultural heritage and creating job opportunities to fostering inter-cultural dialogue, providing

platforms for people from different backgrounds to engage in cultural exchanges, and promoting mutual understanding. Certain projects and programmes were also designed to combat extremism by addressing the root causes of radicalization through cultural interventions.

MedCulture was one of the significant programmes funded by the EU in the Southern Mediterranean. The programme lasted from 2014 to 2018 with a budget of €17m to enhance cultural policies and practices across cultural sectors (Šešić et al., 2016, p. 25). As a response to emerging security concerns after the Arab Spring in 2011 and the Syrian refugee crisis, the Jordanian MOC was assisted through the programme to develop a national strategy for culture, which focused on combating radicalism and extremism through cultural initiatives (Nasser et al., 2019, p. 28). Therefore, activities were implemented to involve the government, civil society organisations, and artists in addressing cultural issues and providing suggestions for cultural policy development and strategy. Additionally, regional forums were organized to create a network involving academics, trainers, cultural practitioners, and institutions to collaborate on cultural management programmes and policies (Nasser et al., 2019, p. 19). Additionally, one particular forum was focused on discussing future strategies for leveraging culture to promote cultural diversity, social cohesion, and creative expression as a means of countering radicalization and extremism (Nasser et al., 2019, p. 19).

Considering cultural projects with socio-economic development aspect, "Creative Mediterranean" was initiated in 2014 and ran until 2019 to focus on developing clusters in selected creative and cultural industries (CCIs) in seven countries across the Southern Mediterranean region, including Jordan. The project was implemented by the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), with the EU playing a major role by funding €5m to the project (AICS, 2019, p. 1). As a part of this initiative, "Creative Jordan" was established to facilitate designers' access to the creative market (Sandri et al., 2022, p. 20). One of the notable outcomes is the creation of the first industrial-based Jordanian fashion collection called "JO!" (EU Neighbours South, 2020, p. 55), representing a cultural preservation and economic empowerment initiative. This collection draws inspiration from Jordanian cultural heritage, particularly the Bedouin tradition, and aims to celebrate the country's cultural identity through fashion. Subsequently, in 2020, the EU allocated approximately €2.2m to fund a four-year-long project called CREAT4MED (EMEA, 2022, p. 1), which also focuses on CCIs. The project was coordinated by the Euro-Mediterranean

Economists Association (EMEA) and focused on the creation of job opportunities within the CCIs across the region. Furthermore, it aimed to establish a regional CCI hub that would serve as a platform for collaboration among stakeholders from MENA region and Europe (EMEA, 2022, p. 2).

Cultural exchange also marks as an important part of EU-funded projects which started growing with Jordan's first participation in TEMPUS in 2002. 12 years later, the first phase of Erasmus+ was launched, covering capacity-building, education, training, cultural initiatives, and youth activities.

The Trans-European Mobility Scheme for University Studies (TEMPUS) was created to promote increased exchanges and mobility of teaching staff and trainers. It also facilitated the movement of educators, enhanced cross-cultural understanding, fostered collaboration in educational practices, and promoted the sharing of knowledge and expertise among institutions (European Commission, 2008, p. 6). According to Erasmus+ Office in Jordan, thousands of mobilities occurred and 54 projects under TEMPUS were implemented from 2003 until 2013 in two phases (phase III and IV) (Abu-El-Haija, 2018, p. 1). Phase III (2000-2007) had a budget of €98.5m to cover Southern and Eastern Partner Countries, while Phase IV (2007-2013) had a budget of €258.7m (EU Neighbours South, 2009).

In terms of Erasmus+, there are various sub-projects, including Erasmus Mundus Joint Master's Degrees, Leonardo da Vinci for vocational education and training activities, Youth in Action for non-formal and informal learning activities, and cultural projects within CBHE. The first phase (2014-2020) was funded €14.7b (Helly & Galeazzi, 2017, p. 71), with 250 Jordanian students selected for Erasmus Mundus programme and Jordan being involved in 53 projects implemented for CBHE (European Commission, 2021b, p. 1-2). Additionally, nearly 5,729 incoming and outgoing students and staff members took part in the International Credit Mobility (ICM) (European Commission, 2021b, p. 1), engaging in educational and cultural exchange activities, studying, teaching, or receiving training abroad.

In 2021, the EU-Jordan Partnership Priorities (2021-2027) was adopted, which further emphasised the significance of maintaining intercultural cooperation and enhancing cultural projects (The Association Council, 2022, p. 8-10). Therefore, Jordan remains a partner of Erasmus+ in its second

phase (2021-2027), with the EU allocating €26.2b to the programme (European Commission, 2021c, p. 1).

Considering other prominent EU-funded projects, many of them have been jointly implemented by the EUD's and EUNIC members since 2012. This collaboration allows the EU to communicate with the public through EUNIC, provide the cultural institutes with resources to implement projects, and establish presence of EU Member States that do not have representation in Jordan (Smits et al., 2016, p. 58). EUNIC Jordan's cluster was established in 2011 and stands out as the most prominent in the MENA region, consisting of 16 members.⁴ The collaboration between EUD and EUNIC initially started in 2012 with the implementation of European Day of Languages (Smits et al., 2016, p. 58). Each year, the project raises awareness on the diversity of European languages and cultures and promotes multilingualism to improve intercultural understanding. It also aims to encourage people to learn about Europe and its languages through free language courses, workshops, and music (EEAS, 2019). Another noteworthy initiative is the European Film Festival (EUFF), which began in 1989 and launched its 35th edition in 2023, making it Jordan's most longstanding foreign film festival as it has been consistently held over the years. The festival includes both European and Jordanian film screenings and workshops to foster dialogue around the films and strengthen ties between Jordan and Europe (EEAS, 2023). Additionally, the EU has funded the largest talent contest in Jordan called "RISE Talent Contest", which was launched in 2018 for a span of four years. The contest was designed to showcase and celebrate the artistic talents of youth to promote creative expressions across four categories: dancing, singing, arts, and music (EEAS, 2020).

4.4 Projects Implemented in Collaboration with EU Member States

Cultural projects receive funding not only from the EU as a whole, but also its Member States to enhance bilateral cooperation in cultural areas. Previous studies have not provided detailed information on yearly funding from EU Member States for cultural projects and initiatives.

⁴ Jordan's cluster Full Members are Goethe-Institut, Embassy of Sweden, Embassy of Czech Republic, Embassy of Hungary, Embassy of Italy, Embassy of Spain, Embassy of Ireland (mandated), Embassy of Poland, Embassy of Austria, Embassy of Greece, Embassy of Romania, Instituto Cervantes, Società Dante Alighieri, Institut français, Embassy of the Netherlands. The only Associate Member at is the British Council.

However, when considering funding across all sectors, Germany emerges as the largest funder among EU Member States and the second-largest funder to Jordan after the US (MOPIC, 2021a, p. 6), while France follows as the second-largest funder from the EU (MOPIC, 2021a, p. 6).

From 1962 until 2009, Germany provided Jordan with over €2b to fund various sectors (MOPIC, n.d.-b). While in 2021, Germany offered €483.69m during the annual Jordanian-German discussions on development cooperation (MOPIC, 2021b), and has allocated other hundreds of millions of euros in financial assistance to Jordan in the past few years. (MOPIC, 2022; MOPIC, 2021a, p. 6). As for France, an agreement between Jordan and the Agence Française De Développement (AFD) was signed in 2003, which became the main bilateral donor to Jordan, along its subsidiary PROPARCO (The Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, 2020). The agreement was then followed by a round meeting of the Joint French Jordanian Committee for Cultural, Scientific, and Technical Cooperation in 2006 (The Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, 2020), which further discussed the importance of cultural cooperation. A year after, France offered approximately €141.6m to Jordan in a form of grants and concessional funds to support different sectors until 2010 (MOPIC, n.d.-a). Additionally, the Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2019 included allocating €1b in loans and donations to support various initiatives in Jordan from 2019 to 2022 (The Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, 2020).

In this section, I will explore the most prominent cultural projects and initiatives funded by two of Jordan's largest funders from the EU: Germany and France. Additionally, I will delve into each country's approach to cultural cooperation, their funding initiatives and projects, and the cultural areas they prioritize.

4.4.1 Germany

Germany has a longstanding history of investing in development projects in Jordan. However, the interest in funding cultural projects, particularly following the establishment of the German Jordanian University (GJU) in 2005, is relatively recent. The university provides students with German language courses and opportunities to study abroad in Germany for a year and undertake internships. As a result of the university's initiatives, Jordanians have shown increased interest in Germany and learning the German language.

Germany's presence in Jordan, however, is not recent. In fact, Goethe Institut, a German cultural association, has been active in Jordan since 1961 (Goethe Institut, n.d.-a). Nevertheless, it began implementing more cultural projects after the establishment of GJU, and later initiated the Dialogpunkt project in 2022 in collaboration with the university (Goethe Institut, n.d.-a). Dialogpunkt is a lounge on the university campus created as an interactive space for education and culture, as well as a hub for cultural activities organized by the Goethe Institut. Additionally, the institute provides opportunities in the cultural sector for youth and professionals, including funded travel grants for participants applying for "International Music Projects" in Germany (Goethe Institut, 2022). This project invites artists from Jordan and other countries to contribute to cultural, musical, and artistic events and festivals. Another funding opportunity is the "Shadowing Programme for Young Theatre Professionals", which offers artists an opportunity to stay in Germany to participate in theatre shows (Goethe Institut, n.d.-b).

An important project that the institute and the German Embassy took a part in was the Image Festival Amman 2023, which is a cultural event and project that allows photographers to present their work. The institute and the embassy featured the work of 12 German photographers affiliated with a German photo production agency called "OSTKREUZ". The exhibition, titled "Roots", was dedicated to celebrating the 70th anniversary of German-Jordanian diplomatic relations (Goethe Institut, 2023a). The institute in Jordan also supports a regional project called "Ta'ziz Partnership", which is a programme by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). The programme receives funding from the German Federal Foreign Office and was built on the Transformation Partnership initiated in 2012 as a response to the Arab Spring (DAAD, 2022, p. 1). The partnership provides platforms for individuals and institutions particularly in the MENA region to engage in dialogue, share ideas, and work towards societal and educational reformation (DAAD, 2022, p. 1). Moreover, it supports development initiatives to enhance employability and promotes diversity by engaging participants from Germany to communicate with Arab participants. The programme provides funding for projects of up to €125,000 annually, spanning from 2023 to 2025 (DAAD, 2022, p. 2).

The amount of funding and financing allocated to most cultural projects implemented in Jordan by Germany remains unclear, as most of the projects are merely announced on the Goethe Institut's website without comprehensive details. While the institute is primarily financed by the German

government, it also generates revenue through its language courses and educational programmes which can be used to fund projects as well (Dev-Practitioners, n.d., p. 1). Project funding can also come from various sources, including the EU, the Federal Foreign Office of Germany, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, as well as other public and private institutions (Dev-Practitioners, n.d., p. 1).

4.4.2 France

The French language and culture have long been popular among Jordanians before the recent surge in popularity of German over the past two decades. Many schools, particularly private ones, offer French language classes in their curriculum. The widespread interest in the language was caused by the French Mandate in Syria and Lebanon in early 1920s and its colonial influence in the region. In 1963, the French Cultural Institute (Institut français) was established, further solidifying France's efforts to promote the language and implement cultural projects in Jordan. This was later followed by the establishment of a French elementary school in 1972, operating under the National Centre for Distance Education (Centre national d'enseignement à distance – CNED). Furthermore, in 2013, the inauguration of the French International School of Amman (Lycée Français international d'Amman) provided a comprehensive French curriculum, along with opportunities for student mobility through exchange programmes in France (LFiA, 2020). Beyond language promotion, France extends support for postgraduate studies in France through scholarship programmes like the Eiffel and Cooperation and Cultural Action Departments scholarships (SCAC) to enhance its role in promoting academic and cultural exchanges.

Similar to Germany, the allocation of funding for cultural projects and programmes in France remains somewhat ambiguous. However, France appears to prioritize investment in annual festivals and events over long-term projects. For instance, the Franco-Arab Film Festival is one of France's most prominent initiatives in Jordan and has ran over 20 editions in Amman (Touq et al., 2018, p. 16). In 2020, it was integrated into the Amman International Film Festival – Awal Film (AIFF) and is now known as the “Franco-Arab Rendez-Vous” (IF Jordan, n.d.). The festival showcases films in both Arabic and French. Furthermore, the French Institute organizes a short film competition to demonstrate the work of young Jordanian filmmakers and offers winners an opportunity to participate in the Franco-Arab Film Festival held annually in France. Additionally, Fête de la Musique (Music Day), originally a celebration in France, has been extended to Jordan

for over a decade, with musicians invited to share their music in public spaces (Khaldi, 2015, p. 14). The celebration transcends cultural boundaries and unites individuals from diverse backgrounds through music and art by featuring not only French music but also traditional Jordanian music and other genres.

Long-term projects seem to be implemented on a regional level, among them is “QARIB” project initiated in 2020 and funded by the AFD with €10m over a span of five years (CFi, n.d., p. 2). The project operates in Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, and Palestine to strengthen investigative journalism, enhance media independence, and combat misinformation. While the cultural component is not the project's primary focus, QARIB also seeks to integrate communities, empower women, and foster public debate and cultural dialogue by encouraging discussions on local news and societal issues.

Surprisingly, despite the AFD and PROPARCO being Jordan’s main bilateral funders, almost all their projects tend to focus on infrastructure and social cohesion issues (AFD, n.d.). In fact, there is no mention of prioritization or intent to improve the cultural sector. France’s cultural projects in Jordan are mostly implemented by the French Embassy and Institut français, and they tend to collaborate with other EU embassies, NGOs, or EUNIC to organize joint projects and programmes. This includes the European Film Festival and European Day of Languages, where the embassy and the institute promote French language, films, and culture along with other European embassies (Taha, 2021). For over ten years, the embassy has been also organising with the institute, schools, and universities, to celebrate Francophonie month. The celebration brings Jordanians to immerse themselves into the French culture by attending film screenings, concerts, gastronomic experiences, and literary meetings that highlight the cultural heritage and artistic expressions of France and the Francophone world (Dupire, 2018). Additionally, the importance of the French language is highlighted through cooperating with members of the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF). This includes Belgium, Romania, Canada, as well as some MENA countries like Lebanon, Morocco, and Tunisia. By collaborating with their embassies, the celebration emphasises the shared linguistic, diversity, and cultural heritage of French-speaking countries and promotes cultural exchange with the Francophone members.

Interestingly, both France and Germany established in 2003 the Franco-German Cultural Fund to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Élysée Treaty (Goethe Institut, 2024), which is managed

by the German Foreign Office in collaboration with the Goethe Institut and Institut français. The fund not only promotes the cooperation between both countries, but it also supports cultural and artistic projects and aims to have a lasting impact in third countries by promoting cultural exchange and dialogue. These projects typically fall within various categories such as film, literature, dance, theatre, visual arts, and architecture. Among these projects is “Motasa’a”, which was implemented in 2023 by the Goethe Institut, Institut français, and MedeArts. The project worked on promoting sustainability within cultural sites located in Jordan, France, and Germany, with four of them located in Jordan (Goethe Institut, 2023b). These sites also served as cultural hubs that facilitate knowledge exchange on improving economic, social, and ecological sustainability practices (Goethe Institut, 2023b). This was achieved by organizing visits to allow the representatives of these cultural sites to exchange ideas, practices, and discuss common challenges related to the intersection of cultural sites with economic, social, and environmental sustainability.

4.5 UK Cultural Projects and Post-Brexit Dynamics

Moving on to consider the UK, it is worth noting that before Brexit, it followed France as the third-largest EU Member State funder to Jordan (MOPIC, 2021a, p. 7), and has retained its position even post-Brexit (MOPIC, 2021a, p. 7). The funding was provided through the Department for International Development (DFID) but was later merged in 2020 with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), creating the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). Previous reports have not dealt with the exact amount of funding the UK provided to Jordan before the 2010s. However, from 2014 to 2018, the UK's financial support to Jordan totalled approximately €354m (UK Government, 2019). Even amidst economic uncertainties surrounding its decision to leave the EU, the UK extended considerable bilateral support to Jordan in 2019. This support amounted to €767m over five years (UK Government, 2019), marking a substantial increase and doubling the amount from the UK's previous funding. The funding is mostly allocated to humanitarian aid and socio-economic development projects. However, some of the funding also goes to cultural projects implemented by the British Council.

The UK has had post-colonial effects in Jordan, and it is rather surprising that it contributes less than France and Germany. When Jordan came under British mandate in 1921, it was influenced by the British structure of political landscape, establishment of governmental institutions, legal systems, bureaucratic frameworks, education, and the presence of the English language in the

country. English was introduced as the primary foreign language in Jordanian education, both before and after the country gained independence in 1946 (Dweik & Mohammad, 2019, p. 1). Following the independence, English became a compulsory subject in all Jordanian schools from an early age. Therefore, colonialism facilitated the gradual emergence of English as a lingua franca in Jordan, and has shaped political practices, institutions, and governance structures.

Two years after independence, the British Council was established as the UK's international organization for educational and cultural relations. While the FCDO provides funding accounting for approximately 14% of the British Council's total income (Loft et al., 2021, p. 13), the organisation primarily generates revenue through its educational activities and services. Despite the small funding from the FCDO, the British Council serves as a crucial instrument for projecting the UK's voice on the global stage, representing its interests and values (FCDO, 2023, p. 261). The British Council is widely recognised for teaching and promoting the English language. Additionally, it plays a pivotal role in facilitating cultural exchange by promoting studying in the UK for international students and studying abroad for British students. Moreover, it actively promotes British culture through a diverse array of cultural programmes, events, and exhibitions. In Jordan, arts and culture are a priority to the organization (British Council, 2022, p. 6). Therefore, many cultural projects are implemented, often in collaboration with governments, embassies, and NGOs to further enhance their impact.

The British Council's involvement in cultural projects started gaining prominence in early 2000s, particularly through collaborations with other organisations and the Jordanian MOC. In 2004, as part of the "Communication with the World" cultural exchange programme, the Centre of Applied Arts, under the MOC, partnered with the British Council and the UK Communication Theatre to stage a play involving youth from Jordan, Britain, and five other countries (Hajawi et al., 2013, p. 22). In 2011, YAV programme was initiated, which was partially funded by the British Government's Arab Partnership Initiative and facilitated by the British Council and ALF. This programme stands out as one of the most significant regional initiatives in promoting cultural exchange and dialogue across the MENA region (Karanàsou & Gemayel, 2020, p. 8). The British Council also remains actively engaged in EUNIC's initiatives despite being transitioned from a full member to an associate member. Such initiatives include the European Film Festival and the

European Day of Languages, where the UK promotes the British film industry and expertise, as well as the British culture and English language.

While the UK often engages in joint projects, it also undertakes independent initiatives, with a notable focus on cultural heritage preservation. In response to the threat posed by conflicts in the MENA region, the Cultural Protection Fund (CPF) was established in 2016 (Haswell-Walls et al., 2021, p. 1). During its initial funding period from 2016 to 2020, the CPF allocated €27.9m to support projects across various countries, including Jordan (British Council, 2023a, p. 6). Subsequently, in 2022, the initiative received additional funding of €34.9m, extending support for projects until 2025 ((British Council, 2023b, p. 3). Jordan actively participated in over five projects throughout two phases (British Council, 2023a, p. 40), including "On the Tracks of Music - Folk Music in the Levant and Mesopotamia", which received a grant of approximately €626.000. This funding facilitated research and preservation efforts aimed at safeguarding cultural traditions, folk music, and musical instruments of marginalized rural communities in Jordan and other Middle Eastern countries (British Council, 2023a, p. 40). The project fostered intercultural dialogue and strengthened connections by promoting the shared culture and music of different countries.

Additionally, the British Council expressed its support to CCI through the "Masarat" grant programme in 2021 led by MedeArts. The grant offered financial aid to cultural projects, practitioners, and artists to improve their professional growth in the cultural sector (Baltà, 2021, p. 76). The programme was originally initiated as a response to challenges faced during COVID in the arts and cultural sectors in Jordan (British Council, n.d.), and it aimed to empower youth by providing them with a platform to share their experiences and ideas with artists from different Jordanian cities.

Conclusion

The EU and Jordan first strengthened their cultural relations through the Barcelona Process in 1995, focusing on political dialogue, economic, social, and cultural cooperation. Moreover, Jordan signed the Association Agreement on 1997, which also focused on EU-Jordan cultural and social cooperation. Later during the 2000s, the EU became a prominent actor in supporting many of the cultural activities and initiatives in Jordan. Despite financial setbacks in the cultural sector, the EU has been continuously allocating funds to Jordan throughout the years, recognising the cultural sector's social and economic importance in the country.

This thesis has explored the multifaceted nature of EU-Jordan cultural policy, examining its evolution and key dynamics. The analysis reveals that culture plays a significant role in fostering understanding, promoting EU values, and achieving broader EU interests in the region. The EU's cultural policy in Jordan prioritizes cultural exchange programmes, particularly those focusing on youth, to create spaces for dialogue and mutual understanding. Additionally, the EU invests in socio-economic development projects that address the needs of disadvantaged and marginalized communities to foster social cohesion and stability. Notably, this approach aligns with the Barcelona Process' goals of promoting regional cooperation and tackling challenges that could potentially destabilize the security and interests of the EU. However, the strength of this cooperation lies not only in the collective power of the EU, but also in the enduring cultural ties and interests maintained by individual Member States. While the EU has made positive progress in the cultural field, its cultural policy in Jordan yet faces challenges. A key concern lies in the lack of a unified definition of "culture" not only within EU documents, but also within the context of bilateral relations between EU Member States and third countries. For instance, collaborations in media projects can be considered as either cultural exchange, economic development, or initiatives aimed at promoting democratic values such as freedom of speech and access to information. Similarly, programmes focused on youth support and training raise questions about their categorization as cultural cooperation or development aid. This introduces ambiguity in attributing specific actions to cultural policies. Moreover, the inherently nuanced nature of cultural cooperation presents challenges in assessing its effects. The absence of established indicators that directly link cultural activities, such as the organisation of a festival, to specific long-term outcomes, hinders the ability to measure and evaluate the efficacy of such initiatives. This lack of

quantifiable data further complicates the assessment of the overall impact of the EU's external cultural policy. Despite the implementation of numerous cultural policies and the witnessed progress in cultural areas since their inception in Barcelona Process, it appears that the EU lacks a clear vision of the direction these policies are heading. This could also be due to the fact that the EU does not have a clear internal cultural policy, but also, both parties find it rather difficult to prioritize cultural matters as economic interests take over, which shows in previous EU-Jordan agreements and partnerships.

However, these challenges also present opportunities for improvement. The EU can develop a more cohesive cultural policy for Jordan, outlining specific priority areas, goals, and objectives for its interventions. Furthermore, establishing an annual report on all the funding, objectives, and results and cultural projects implemented by the EU and individual Member States is crucial as the data so far seems to be scattered and not clear. This is crucial for transparency, evaluation, coordination, knowledge sharing, and strategic planning in EU cultural policy. Additionally, a more unified and less fragmented vision for its external cultural policy could advance its ability to leverage its cultural resources effectively by cultivating a more strategic framework for its external cultural relations. This requires a shift from short-term objectives towards long-term goals to foster more sustainable partnerships and policies that bring lasting change.

The thesis also underscores the potential of EU cultural policy to address regional instability and promote its norms and democratic values. This is particularly relevant in a region often characterized by political turmoil and social tensions. However, the EU's efforts to address and combat extremism and radicalism in Jordan requires a nuanced approach as they need to be sensitive to local contexts and avoid imposing Western values and neo-colonial tendencies. This is particularly pivotal considering that the EU must first tackle challenges related to its legitimacy and public perception. The colonial history of some European countries in the Middle East has created distrust or scepticism among people in the region, which emerges when the EU tries to promote itself as a peacemaker and a promoter of norms. in the region. As a result, people may find it difficult to accept or be influenced by the norms and values promoted by the EU, which makes its cultural policies in this area rather questionable. Moreover, the recent exacerbated political tensions in the Middle East with differing political stances of Member States and the departure of the UK raises questions about the EU's unity and its ability to deliver on its promises.

The research also highlights the distinct cultural priorities of Germany, France, and the UK. Germany emphasises long-term cultural projects that foster deeper cooperation and was successful in gaining prominence in cultural areas in the past 20 years, surpassing the visibility achieved by France and the UK. Conversely, France seems to prioritize annual events and festivals, and usually implements less frequent and joint projects by collaborating with other embassies and organisations. This approach may inadvertently diminish the perception of France's prominence in Jordan from an external perspective. Concerning the UK, despite the uncertainties posed by Brexit, it continues to maintain its status as a significant player in cultural policies, with its funding to Jordan seemingly unaffected. However, despite its deep-rooted historical ties to the region, the UK appears to wield a less prominent post-colonial influence on cultural matters compared to Germany. While not ranking among the top five funders to Jordan, the UK demonstrates a notable success in branding itself, positioning as a major contributor, and sustaining its presence in Jordan through the development of frequent independent projects as well as collaborative initiatives with other stakeholders. Therefore, the UK's exit from the EU has not demonstrably weakened its commitment, and it continues to be a significant player by actively funding cultural projects and collaborating with various institutions.

Finally, there is a need for ongoing research and evaluation to assess the effectiveness of EU cultural policy initiatives to avoid stagnant or outdated approaches that may no longer align with evolving cultural dynamics and societal needs. By continually monitoring the impact of these initiatives, policymakers can make informed decisions about where to allocate resources and adjust strategies as needed. Additionally, ongoing research and evaluation help ensure accountability and transparency in the implementation of cultural policies to enhance the overall credibility of the EU cultural agenda.

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