



# TELLING THE EU REGION STORY



## EU EUROPE REGIONAL ARTS

### THE ARTISTS AT THE FRONT OF EUROPE'S STAGE

MEMBERS OF MAJOR EUROPEAN ORGANISATIONS CAME TO LONDON ON A BRITISH COUNCIL STUDY VISIT WHICH PROMOTED OPPORTUNITIES FOR ARTISTS WITH DISABILITIES.

National arts council directors and representatives from culture ministries, city councils and European Capital of Culture designate cities were among the 18 leaders who joined the visit. They met UK counterparts shaping inclusive artistic policy, from institutions such as Tate, Arts Council England and Creative Scotland to high-quality organisations such as Unlimited and Candoco Dance.

Immediate results include an invitation from Portugal's arts council DGArtes to the British Council to sign an MOU for a programme to develop disabled access to arts. Such initiatives strengthen the UK's reputation for inclusion and create a basis for innovative British artists to flourish in Europe.

*'I found the study visit very useful... I can now better develop our policy and programmes for disabled artists and disadvantaged groups. It was very good to meet so many experts with whom I can discuss our strategic plan later on.'*

Jozef Kovalčík, Director, Slovak Arts Council



## EU EUROPE

POLAND

### HOW DO YOU TRANSLATE ‘SCIENCE COMMUNICATION’?

AS PART OF THE POLISH-BRITISH YEAR OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION, WE HELD A NETWORKING EVENT FOR PARTICIPANTS IN THE INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE COMMUNICATION COMPETITION, FAMELAB.

Ahead of Poland’s FameLab final in May, our event brought together current and former FameLab participants with Polish and UK scientists. Media members also took part, including Quentin Cooper of BBC Radio 4’s *Material World* and Polish journalist Wojciech Brzeziński.

The event was not only an occasion to share UK expertise. Participants questioned whether ‘talking about science’ might be a better way to describe the mission of FameLab than the more one-sided ‘science communication’. It was a chance to reflect on how scientific progress relies on our ability to question ideas and test theories.

*‘Now I have friends from all over the world – young scientists, just like me, with whom I share experiences and plan joint projects. Without the British Council’s help that would have been impossible and I will always remember this.’*  
Monika Koperska, winner of FameLab Poland 2012

## EU EUROPE

MALTA

### CULTURAL RELATIONS THAT STAND THE TEST OF TIME

MALTA IS OUR OLDEST BRITISH COUNCIL OFFICE. THIS YEAR'S 80<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION EXPLORED OPPORTUNITIES THAT ARE EMERGING THANKS TO THE UK AND MALTA'S CLOSE HISTORY.

The Maltese city of Valletta is joint European Capital of Culture this year, making it a focus for cultural policy formation. Malta's membership of both the EU and the Commonwealth also presents advantages for UK and Maltese universities forming long-term partnerships.

During our anniversary programme, delegates from British universities met their Maltese counterparts and education officials to discuss collaboration. British Council trustee Yasmin Diamond joined them, and met Maltese journalism students on our Capturing Valletta project who are covering UK artists at Valletta 2018. Our anniversary reception brought together influencers from the arts, culture and education sectors to discuss ways of working together for many years to come.

*'The British Council has always been a trusted source for Maltese academics. This delegation on the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary will allow us to work together in new and different ways.'*

Charles Zammit, Chairman, Education Malta



## EU EUROPE

EIGHT EU REGION COUNTRIES

### OUR GUIDE TO BECOMING A STUDENT IN THE UK

MORE THAN 44,000 VISITORS ATTENDED OUR STUDY UK FAIRS ACROSS EUROPE FROM 2017 TO 2018. AMONG THEM WERE STUDENTS AND PARENTS EAGER TO EXPLORE UK EDUCATION.

In contrast to the overall decline in applications from EU students to UK universities since the EU referendum, the number of visitors to our European fairs has remained steady since last year. High-achieving students continue to aspire to study in the UK, and turn to the British Council for reliable information as they embark on their academic journey.

The events also provide a service for UK providers. Feedback suggests that the partnership activities we arrange with local institutions and student influencers are particularly valued by universities as they strive to maintain their European connections. At our exhibition in Milan in March, for example, we held well-received agent networking events and were joined by 50 UK institutions, up from 43 last year. With this student- and institution-facing approach, we aim to sustain the strength of UK higher education in Europe.

*'This was a great fair – a very good and busy event.'*  
Visitor, Study UK exhibition, Milan



**EU EUROPE**

GERMANY

## **FRIENDSHIPS PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE**

A VALENTINE'S DAY PARTY KICKED OFF OUR UK/GERMANY 2018 SEASON, A YEAR IN WHICH WE CELEBRATE THE PASSION OUR COUNTRIES SHARE FOR ARTS, CULTURE AND EDUCATION.

Some 200 guests from the German and UK creative scenes enjoyed the best of British and German visual arts, music and performance at the launch event. Collaborations were forged as artists networked – as just one example, UK choreographer Rachael Nanyonjo and German dancer Maria Pohle are now working on a joint project. More than 16,800 organic users joined the show on Facebook.

With studies suggesting the adverse effect of Brexit on young German people's perceptions of the UK, UK/Germany 2018 aims to promote diverse British artists and widen education opportunities. We will reach at least 20,000 people face-to-face and a million online, sharing the creativity of British culture and encouraging open discussion about the future.

*'A fantastic, vibrant, eclectic celebration of cultural exchange and ideas. Full of warmth, laughter and potential pathways to continue exciting dialogues.'*  
Irenosen Okojie, award-winning UK author and judge of the Berlin Writing Prize

*Image credit: British Council*



## EU EUROPE

ROMANIA

# EMPOWERING TEACHERS TO TRANSFORM COMMUNITIES

THE ENGLISH FOR THE COMMUNITY PROJECT SUPPORTS TEACHERS AS THEY BUILD THE EMPLOYABILITY OF THEIR STUDENTS IN NINE LOCATIONS IN ROMANIA.

In partnership with the Romanian-American Foundation, the three-year project works with teachers in areas with high potential for sectors such as ecotourism. The project baseline study showed a need to make English language teaching more communicative and interactive. We delivered five days of face-to-face training to 158 participants and are developing teacher activity groups with local facilitators in each location. Teachers will continue to meet and support each other's professional development.

The project promotes wider knowledge of UK culture while listening to the demands of teachers and learners in the locations. It promotes English as a language of opportunity, and positions the British Council as a leader in English teaching.

*'The course was very important to me as an English teacher. I will work with my students using these new skills and techniques I learnt.'*

Project participant, Suceava, Romania



## EU EUROPE

FRANCE

# UNITING TO BREAK THROUGH THE GLASS CEILING

ON INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY, WE INVITED 30 HIGH-ACHIEVING WOMEN FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE TO DISCUSS HOW TO INSPIRE FUTURE GENERATIONS OF FEMALE LEADERS.

Participants ranged from young refugees who have successfully launched start-ups to accomplished professionals. A panel of five influential women shared personal stories related to their careers and the group brainstormed ways to push for progress in the world of work. At the end of the workshop, participants set up an online discussion forum. This has expanded to involve more female entrepreneurs from across the culture and business sectors. Plans for future face-to-face meetings are underway.

The project created new links and partnership opportunities with several French businesses. Organised with the British Chamber of Commerce and the British Embassy, it highlighted the UK's efforts to address gender inequality. We demonstrated the British Council's mission to create opportunities worldwide.

*'Congratulations for a great and inspiring event – very well organised.'*

Workshop participant

*Image credit: Lizzy Maddison*





**EU EUROPE**  
CZECH REPUBLIC

## **A FESTIVAL OF FILMS IN A DIVIDED WORLD**

WE SUPPORTED BRITISH DOCUMENTARIES AND DIRECTORS AT THE PRAGUE EDITION OF THE WORLD'S BIGGEST HUMAN RIGHTS DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL.

The One World festival reaches over 120,000 people worldwide. In Prague, we partnered with the British Embassy to screen three UK films: *Almost Heaven* by Carol Salter, *A Cambodian Spring* by Chris Kelly, and *Brexitannia* by Timothy George Kelly. We also organised talks with Carol, Chris, and the Venerable Loun Sovath, a Buddhist monk who features in *A Cambodian Spring*; and held a *Brexitannia* Q&A, inviting discussion on the UK's departure from the EU.

The One World in Schools programme takes films to children around the Czech Republic. We also screen films in Brussels for European officials. Our participation in the festival is a showcase of UK creativity and the ability of arts to address difficult topics and unite people.

*'I thoroughly enjoyed the screenings at the One World Prague film festival. I was very impressed by the audience turnout and the number of people who stayed behind afterwards for the Q&A.'*

Chris Kelly, documentary filmmaker



## EU EUROPE

GERMANY

### WRITING THAT CROSSES THE GENDER DIVIDE

THIS YEAR'S BRITISH LITERATURE SEMINAR IN BERLIN INTRODUCED A WORLDWIDE AUDIENCE TO UK WRITERS WHO ARE EXPLORING SEXUALITY AND IDENTITY IN PROFOUNDLY NEW WAYS.

Each year, '#BritLitBerlin' brings UK writers who tackle topical themes to an audience in Berlin and online. Authors Kerry Hudson, Juno Dawson, Monique Roffey and Paul McVeigh; poet Nick Makoha; and playwright Sabrina Mahfouz read from their works in which they question gender stereotypes. Views of our live stream more than doubled this year as people tuned in from 45 countries.

We engaged more successfully than ever with a younger audience through workshops, a Facebook competition, an artist in residence programme, and an influencer campaign targeted at young creatives. Participants from the 21 to 34 age group increased from 27 per cent in previous years to 63 per cent. The seminar is a highlight in our UK/Germany season. It challenges traditional perceptions of the UK and portrays an open-minded Britain.

*'Don't even have the sentences to say how truly inspiring the #britlitberlin seminar is.'*

Kerry Hudson, author



## EU EUROPE NETHERLANDS

### **BUILDING OUR NETWORK OF TEACHERS IN EUROPE**

ENGLISH TEACHERS AND EXAMINERS ATTENDED THE BRITISH COUNCIL'S CONFERENCE IN UTRECHT, AND WELCOMED THE ADVANTAGE EXAMS MEMBERSHIP SCHEME TO THE NETHERLANDS.

Following successful pilot workshops in December 2017, 130 English language teachers from institutions across the Netherlands attended our conference. They met English examination experts from Cambridge Assessment and the British Council, and had the chance to improve teaching skills and learn from fellow teachers.

The British Council's Advantage member scheme helps schools, teachers and candidates perform to the best of their ability by offering value added products and services. It enables us to connect better with teachers, promote UK exams providers, and encourage more effective English teaching. In turn, English learners achieve better results and gain access to life and career opportunities.

*'It was good to meet other teacher trainers and share ideas. There was a lot of information to be had. The facilities were excellent and easily accessible.'*

Workshop participant



## EU EUROPE

SPAIN

### FINDING FREEDOM THROUGH ART AND MOVEMENT

WE SUPPORTED A JOINT VENTURE BETWEEN UK AND SPANISH CULTURAL PARTNERS THAT PROMOTED WORKS BY ARTISTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES.

For 12 months, Welsh choreographer Cai Tomos worked with the Naves Matadero arts venue and the association Debajo del Sombrero. The project, entitled 'Some Things from Somewhere', focused on artistic movement as a channel for disabled people to express themselves. It shared works by artists with learning disabilities and followed the experiences of those involved through workshops and interviews. An exhibition at the Naves Matadero that presented the outcomes of the project through a series of videos and artworks attracted over 3,000 visitors.

The partnership reinforced the British Council's commitment to diversity and inclusion. We backed an innovative UK practitioner as he collaborated with Spanish partners to change attitudes to disability.

*'A new culture where disabled people have the opportunity to voice their opinion and share their way of understanding the world is what we expect and demand from contemporary Spanish society.'*  
Lola Barrera, Debajo del Sombrero



**EU EUROPE**

AUSTRIA

## TOP TIPS FROM ACROSS THE EDUCATION SYSTEMS

WE LED STUDY VISITS TO VIENNA FOR TEACHING DELEGATES FROM ENGLAND, NORTHERN IRELAND, SCOTLAND AND WALES TO SHARE BEST PRACTICE IN SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY POLICY.

The British Council arranged two visits – the first with six Northern Ireland delegates and the second with representatives from all four UK education departments. We set up meetings for them with a range of Austrian stakeholders in education policy, including the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research, the Chamber of Labour, the Chamber of Commerce, businesses, and schools.

The dialogue helped all countries reflect on current and future education policies. We compared strengths and weaknesses across the UK with those of the Austrian system. Relationships flourished between institutions and social partners. It was an opportunity for the British Council to strengthen our reputation in the sector in both countries.

*'The visit to Austria was timely for me. I got to see at first hand how the education system to include the dual-system apprenticeships works well in Austria.'*  
Samantha Traynor. North West Regional College, Northern Ireland

*Image credit: British Council*



## EU EUROPE

ROMANIA

### **BUSINESS AND CULTURE MEET FOR BREAKFAST**

WE LAUNCHED THE 80<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE BRITISH COUNCIL IN ROMANIA WITH A BUSINESS BRIEFING THAT HIGHLIGHTED THE COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITIES THAT ARTS AND CULTURE HAVE TO OFFER BOTH COUNTRIES.

Thirty business leaders from the British-Romanian Chamber of Commerce's network attended the event along with British Embassy representatives. Members of the Romanian cultural sector presented their work, and participants discussed ways of promoting British business interests by supporting emerging artists in Romania.

Among the immediate results of the event was a new partnership between Daniel Kearvell, Managing Director of DHL Romania, and Ioana Ciocan (pictured), UK alumna and curator of Romania's largest art event, Art Safari. At the start of our anniversary year, the event engaged an influential community and emphasised the diplomatic importance of arts and culture.

*'I enjoyed the opportunity to connect and the potential for new relationships. It was a great event and I look forward to similar ones with the British Council.'*

Ioana Ciocan, General Manager, Art Safari Bucharest



## EU EUROPE

GREECE

### WORKING WITH LEADERS TO BUILD A BETTER WORLD

THE PRESIDENT OF GREECE (PICTURED LEFT) WAS AMONG THOSE WHO ATTENDED THE AWARDS CEREMONY FOR OUR 'SAY NO TO CYBER-BULLYING' COMPETITION.

The competition is part of the Respecting Diversity programme that the British Council runs in partnership with the Olympic Truce Foundation, reaching more than 3,000 students from over 200 schools in 50 Greek cities. This year, with further support from the Greek Ministry of Education and Samsung Hellas, we co-organised more than 50 workshops. These were delivered in English and encouraged children to value diversity. Some 215 school groups entered the anti-cyberbullying competition.

We aim to expand the Respecting Diversity programme across Greece. It strengthens our reputation and partnerships in government and business, and encourages children to share British values of tolerance and respect.

*'The British Council's campaign is a fantastic example of British values in action. It was great to see the British Council's role being recognised by all involved, from the President down.'*

Kate Smith, UK Ambassador in Greece



## EU EUROPE

CROATIA

### PROVIDING A PLATFORM FOR RENEWAL AND REFORM

UK EXPERTS JOINED US AT A POLICY DIALOGUE ON CROATIA'S NATIONAL CURRICULUM – A CHANCE FOR BOTH COUNTRIES TO EXPLORE COMMON CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN EDUCATION.

More than 70 specialists joined the summit, which we organised in partnership with the British Embassy and Croatia's Ministry of Science and Education. Among participants were education leaders from the UK, Croatia and the rest of Europe, such as Graham Donaldson, Honorary Professor at Glasgow University; Andreas Schleicher, Director for Education and Skills OECD; and Gregor Mohorčič of Slovenia's Ministry of Science, Education and Sport.

UK experts provided fresh perspectives on the polarised debate about curriculum reform in Croatia. The event created a neutral space for discussion and laid the foundations for future collaborations.

*'It was a really great and useful event. It shows that working together on important, even provocative topics can be fruitful. Thank you for your initiative and to your team for your organisation and supporting us.'*

Blaženka Divjak, Croatian Minister of Education and Science

*Image credit: Damir Tiljak*



## DESIGN WITH THE POWER TO WELCOME EVERYONE

'INCLUSIVE DESIGN, OR WHEN DESIGN GOES UNIVERSAL' WAS THE TITLE OF THIS YEAR'S CREATIVE MIKSER NETWORKING MEETING FOR WARSAW'S CULTURAL COMMUNITY.

Accessibility is an emerging area of focus for Polish designers of urban spaces, interiors, products and services. The British Council ran this Creative Mikser workshop in partnership with the City of Warsaw to share UK expertise in disability access. We presented a panel of speakers including Iain McKinnon from Global Disability Innovation Hub in London, who worked on disabled access at London's Olympic Park.

Participants discussed ways in which policy can encourage inclusive design. We are producing a post-event guide for architects and other professionals, which will highlight UK expertise. The initiative creates advantages for British designers and helps embed an understanding of inclusivity into the European artistic sector.

*'I really enjoyed speaking at the event... and made some good contacts afterwards.'*

Iain McKinnon, Director of Inclusive Design, Global Disability Innovation Hub



## EU EUROPE

HUNGARY

### IMPROVING SYSTEMS AND INSPIRING SCHOOLS

WE BROUGHT A GROUP OF HUNGARIAN TEACHERS TO THE UK TO DISCUSS TEACHER RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING AND SHARE EXAMPLES OF BEST PRACTICE FROM BOTH COUNTRIES.

The Hungarian government is developing a new national curriculum, and is seeking to work with international sector experts to improve pedagogy and practice. The UK model for teacher CPD is highly decentralised, giving schools the autonomy to make decisions, and sector bodies freedom to innovate.

Our delegation included Hungarian education stakeholders, from the Prime Ministerial Commissioner for Teacher Development to faculty heads and practitioners from urban and rural schools. Delegates met UK education leaders, visited schools, and took part in roundtable discussions. The Hungarian Ministry of Human Capacities is now exploring a long-term collaboration with UK authorities and education institutions from both countries plan to work together.

*'This tour was very interesting, exciting, well organised and useful. I've learnt many things during the programme. Lots of things may be applied in our system.'*

Delegate from Hungary



## EU EUROPE

GREECE

### HITTING THE ROAD WITH THE GREAT BRITISH BUS

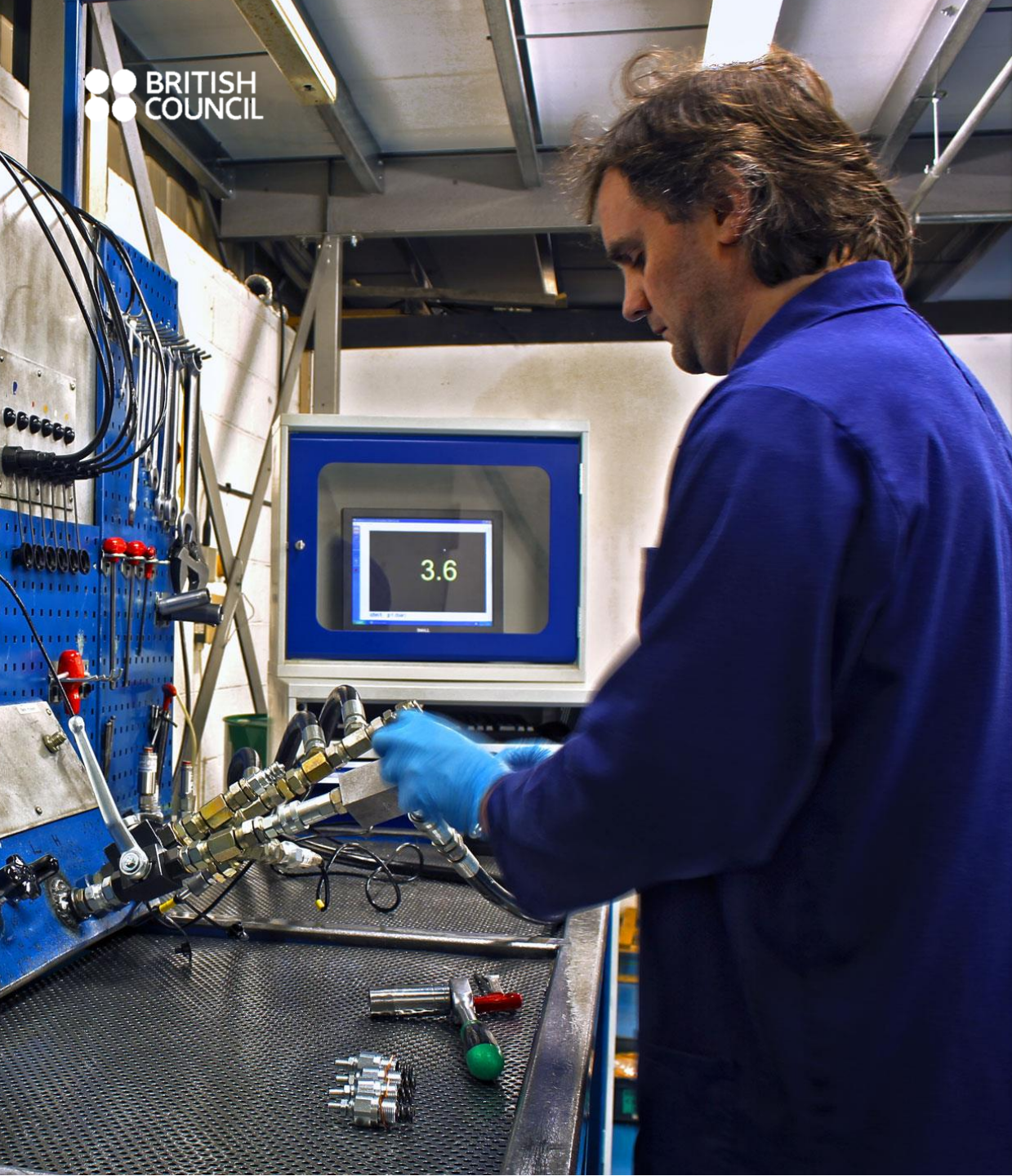
WE TOURED GREEK CITIES WITH MEMBERS OF BRITISH UNIVERSITIES, INVITING STUDENTS ON BOARD A 'GREAT' BRANDED BUS TO FIND OUT WHAT UK EDUCATION HAS TO OFFER.

The aim was to promote the excellence of UK education in cities outside the capital which have high student populations. We were joined by the British ambassador and representatives of 12 UK institutions. Over the three-day tour, more than 650 prospective students participated in our information seminars on study in the UK and more than 800 visited our three pop-up exhibitions. In Patras, where 70 per cent of aspiring postgraduates hope to study abroad, the local university and commercial chamber partnered with us to run the events.

Amid concerns about the future status of EU students in the UK, we provided welcome information for young people across Greece who aspire to study at British universities. The tour was a unique way for UK institutions to promote their courses.

*'Great roadshow! Bus amazing and students very well informed from the presentations.'*

Jamie Pipkin, Regional Manager (Europe), Royal Holloway, University of London



## EU EUROPE

DENMARK

### INTERNATIONAL EXPERTISE TO BUILD BRITISH SKILLS

NORDIC COUNTRIES ARE RENOWNED FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION. WE PARTNERED WITH THE GATSBY FOUNDATION TO BRING MEMBERS OF UK COLLEGES AND TECHNICAL INSTITUTIONS TO DENMARK TO EXPLORE WAYS OF STRENGTHENING THIS SECTOR IN THE UK.

The six UK delegates met staff and students at institutions including the Ministry for Education, Metropolitan University, the Confederation of Danish Employers and Technical Education, the Hotel and Restaurant College, and Esnord further education college. They learned how vocational education aligns with the labour market in Denmark, and discussed teacher training.

Future technical education visits are planned, including to Finland and Norway. Although the British Council does not operate a physical presence in the Nordic countries, we make use of our contacts and sector knowledge to support British institutions as they build their European networks.

*'We are delighted to be collaborating with the British Council in arranging these visits.'*

Jenifer Burden, Director of Programmes, Education,  
The Gatsby Foundation