



# European Civil Society Platform for Multilingualism

<http://ecspm.org>



# Guðrún Gísladóttir

## General Secretary of the ECSPM

- On ECSPM, I first represented the European Council of Artists, which recently seized to exist, but European Artists' Rights have taken over the membership
- I am a visual artist/photographer and translator, my university studies were in Scandinavian Studies, General Linguistics and Political Science
- I myself am a multilingual subject. Besides my mother tongue which is Icelandic I speak 6 more languages, including English. As such, I have a personal interest in the promotion of multilingualism in Europe and beyond.
- All the different “processes” mentioned today, of being in a new language environment, I have constantly been in, all my adult life. I am aware of the fact that I am a privileged nomad, migrant, immigrant, emigrant, but never a foreigner
- I enthusiastically support the learning of languages and apart from starting to learn Lithuanian, several years ago, I have begun to learn, not only a new language, but a new alphabet: “Γηράσκω αεί διδασκόμενη”



# The European Council of Artists

- The ECA was one of the founders of the CSPM, later the ECSPM
- In their own words, in 2009: “ECA gathers interdisciplinary artists' councils and organisations from 26 European countries - among them are writers' and translators' unions and also associations or unions for film directors, stage directors, actors, singers and songwriters. These groups of artists are preserving and developing their native languages when creating and/or performing. But their works are also assets when it comes to promoting multilingualism in Europe”
- I became involved in the ECA in 2012. I was their representative in the big conference on Multilingualism in Cyprus that same year and attended my first CSPM meeting in Brussels. For me, this has been welcome return to linguistics



# Then ECA - Now European Artists' Rights

## <http://earights.org>

- We did not put the ECA on the list of presentations, since it has now developed into European Artist's Rights, and it did not feel proper to have that name on the list, as long as the General Assembly had not been informed
- Artists are a very mobile and versatile group, used to adapting to different circumstances and would welcome working in collaboration with other networks and organisations on the ECSPM, to combine and share knowledge and experience
- I can envision photographic projects that document multilingual communities and spaces; explorations of urban graffiti and the 'marking' of communal space through language



## To fit in

- If there is anything I personally have experience in, it is to try to fit in. Having lived in “other countries than my own” for 40 years, last September, I have both forced myself to assimilate and then seen the light and tried to integrate instead
- It may not be obvious how an artists' organisation fits into an organisation like the ECSPM, but we'd like to think that it makes good sense. We would like to work towards a better intercultural understanding in Europe and be involved in the development of communication skills for young and old Europeans, for old and new Europeans. People from different cultures with different languages and different social experiences.
- And we know that ART is a language we all share.



