

## Foreword

The Guide to European Foundations whose first issue, entitled « Directory of European Foundations », was published in 1969, has been substantially successful over the years.

It bridged a gap and responded to a need for information felt by the Foundations themselves and by European private and public cultural and research institutes.

The following pages outline the concepts and methodology underlying the third edition.

May I just point out that it is much easier to collect information now than it was 10 years ago and for this I can only thank all the Foundations that have replied to us and without whose help this volume would not be appearing today.

May I also thank all the experts who have cooperated with us in various ways over the years, particularly Giovanni Granaglia, Deputy Director of the Agnelli Foundation.

I consider the cultural information and economic data contained here to provide an accurate picture of foundations in the principal European countries. They confirm once more the role and importance of Foundations in western society. Two interesting and, to some extent, contrasting phenomena might be stressed in this regard: the economic crisis, particularly inflation, limits Foundation resources and, consequently, their activities; at the same time, the number of Foundations has grown because traditional, namely private, ones have been joined by others promoted, for instance, by parties and trade unions.

The Foundation concept has thus acquired new strength: its traditional connotation as an institution born of pure philanthropy has made room for another which is perhaps more complex: that of an institution whose aim is to pursue cultural and social ends in a society that intends to preserve a high degree of pluralism.

While in effect the economic crisis curtails the resources private citizens can lay out for purely philanthropic and cultural purposes and thus seems to limit the growth of foundations, it is equally true that European societies are witnessing a very important ongoing phenomenon involving the debureaucratization of their institutional structures and a search for new organizational modalities to enrich pluralism and enhance the operating flexibility of social organization.

It is my firm belief, then, that Foundations will have an important part to play in Europe in the near future, perhaps more important than in the past, precisely because they appear to be particularly able to make a positive response to the demands of contemporary European society.

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