

Senedd Cymru / Welsh Parliament

Pwyllgor Diwylliant, y Gymraeg a Chyfathrebu / Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee  
Ymchwiliad i'r achosion o COVID-19 ac effaith y feirws ar ddiwylliant, y diwydiannau creadigol, treftadaeth,  
cyfathrebu a chwaraeon / Inquiry into the COVID-19 outbreak and its impact on culture, creative industries,  
heritage, communications and sport

CWLC COV75

Ymateb gan Cyngor Celfyddydau Cymru a Celfyddydau Rhyngwladol Cymru / Response from Arts Council of  
Wales and Wales Arts International

## Briefing note

# An update on Brexit and the potential impact on the arts in Wales

Arts Council of Wales / Wales Arts International

10 July 2020

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## Introduction

1. The arts in Wales are facing a “double whammy” because of the negative impact and uncertainty being caused by Covid-19 and Brexit.
2. Re-setting our work within the context of the climate and equalities emergencies will require careful and determined planning. Embracing the provisions of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act offers us the best ‘roadmap’ to navigate our way through the combined risks of Covid and Brexit.
3. We made a submission to the Senedd’s Culture Welsh Language and Culture Committee on the impact of Brexit on the arts in Wales in 2018.<sup>1</sup> We provided subsequent evidence on the impact of COVID-19 last month.<sup>2</sup> We’re planning a full response to the pending European and External Affairs Inquiry in the autumn.

## Funding

4. The Arts in Wales have received substantial benefit from European funding programmes.<sup>3</sup> Our relationship with Europe has also helped to build networks and relationships, exchange skills and develop new markets. Our concern is that future replacement funds will not be able to replicate a programme with 27 partner nations.
5. We have responded to the UK Parliament’s Welsh Affairs Committee’s recent enquiry<sup>4</sup> as well as the Welsh Government’s consultation on the proposals for the Shared Prosperity Fund. We are also taking part in the DCMS consultations around a proposed UK replacement programme for Creative Europe.
6. We continue to support Welsh and Scottish Governments’ devolved legitimacy to decide on participation in future European programmes, if that is an option. However, we would stress our preference would be for the whole of the UK to continue to engage positively with Creative Europe and other transnational programmes.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://business.senedd.wales/documents/s79742/BREXIT11%20-%20Wales%20Arts%20International.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://business.senedd.wales/documents/s101532/COV03%20-%20Arts%20Council%20of%20Wales.pdf>

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<sup>3</sup> <https://arts.wales/sites/default/files/2019-12/Assessing%20the%20European%20Unions%20contribution%20to%20the%20arts%20in%20Wales%20since%202007.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/5532/pdf/>

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7. We're broadly supportive of the Welsh Government's Wellbeing of Future Generations approach to the Shared Prosperity Fund. We agree that a central role for the cultural sector in a future regional development programme is important. We also strongly welcome the proposal to enable international connections to be a part of projects under future programmes.
8. We endorse the proposal that the Welsh Government should be given the option to continue to participate in EU programmes, including Creative Europe, subject to value for money (which should be in line with the values of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act). We would strongly advocate the benefits of continued participation in the Creative Europe programme.
9. Any UK replacement programme should:
  - Enable the sector to find and nurture longstanding partnerships and networks
  - Be an equitable and collaborative programme with partner countries
  - Be a long-term programme that enables long standing relationships to grow and develop in key markets
  - Prioritize and value multilingualism
  - Value transnational partnerships of more than countries.
  - Focus on the participation in networks funded through programmes like Creative Europe.

## International perceptions of the UK

10. We're concerned about the international perceptions of the UK at this current time. Through arts and culture we believe that we should be nurturing a wellbeing culture in Wales and building our reputation as an open and outward-facing country in line with the values enshrined in the Wellbeing of Future Generation Act.
11. We would argue that any future funding programmes (both devolved and centralised) are able to be used to grow international cultural partnerships and collaborations. This is the best way to ensure that Wales-led branded initiatives can co-exist alongside a Global Britain replacement to the Creative Europe programme (as indeed they were able to be funded by the structural funds and Interreg etc).

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12. We have concerns that the UK Government's "Soft Power" strategy and "GREAT" brand will dictate new international investment. Culture is devolved and Welsh

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Government's international Cultural relations agenda and investments. These should be led by Wales and fronted internationally by the Cymru Wales brand and guided by wellbeing values. The Cymru Wales / Global Britain brands can co-exist, but cultural sensitivity and respect will be needed in the UK and internationally.

## Trade, Borders and Immigration

13. We've previously raised a number of concerns about the proposals currently being introduced through the new Immigration Bill. Its impact on the immensely fragile arts sector's ability to continue to work in an agile and flexible way in and with EU countries after 31 December 2020 has been severely hit by Covid-19.
14. The impact on international touring circuits; on venues' ability to re-open at this moment in time, let alone put on an international show; and all the associated cost implications of this is a major concern. Whilst this is a global concern, shared by the arts sector worldwide, artists, companies and venues in Wales will be further disadvantaged by additional costs and bureaucracy required as a result of changes to the immigration laws coming into effect post Brexit.
15. Through our membership of the Creative Industries Federation, we are supporting their advocacy work with the UK Government's DIT on the needs of the wider creative industries sector regarding the FTAs.

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