

### **1. The impact of the new relationship on artists and creative workers touring and working cross border (including touring and working in Wales)**

Welsh artists and creative workers in our sector (with the exception of the individuals who hold EU passports) have lost freedom of movement and are no longer eligible to be remunerated for their work, such as performances at festivals, running workshops, taking up residencies and giving readings in EU27 countries. Obtaining a work visa / permit for a short visit or even a multi-location tour is not a viable option with each country's requirements being different. See also comments under 3.

Similar conditions apply for incoming artists and creative workers coming to Wales from EU member states (other than Ireland) as fees can no longer be paid, unless the UK host has sponsor status. In addition, artists and creative workers coming to Wales from EU member states now need passports to enter the UK, as identity cards are no longer valid for this purpose. This adds another barrier to entry, especially hitting certain societal or socio-economic groups. It is our understanding that the UK rejected an offer of a blanket EU visa waiver for artists during the withdrawal agreement negotiations.

These factors have raised significant new barriers for artists and creative workers – both inbound and outbound – and as such it is now far more difficult and much less attractive for Welsh artists and creative workers to be offered opportunities to connect with peers and audiences in other European countries. In the same way, the new bureaucracy and obstacles to freedom of movement restrict Welsh audiences' access to creative work and experiences provided by artists and creative workers from other European countries. Collaborations and joint projects, especially multilateral projects involving Welsh partners are becoming a thing of the past. See also 4 below.

### **2. The impact of the new trading arrangements relating to cultural activity**

Books and magazines are subject to increased import / export bureaucracy and cost. This affects buying (and selling) books and magazines, and the overall trade in cultural products between Wales and its closest geographical neighbours. This also has an impact on our partners, including publishers in different countries, who publish Welsh books in translation and are required to send a set of copies back to Wales.

### **3. The availability of guidance and support for the sector relating to the new relationship between the UK and EU.**

The increase in bureaucracy means that it is necessary to have guidance and support for each of the EU 27 separately in terms of relevant rules and regulations. There is a lack of clarity on how this can

be managed with small scale activity and limited human resources. The current system favours large arts institutions with sponsor status and resources.

#### **4. The impact on access to funding programmes and networks**

The impact of the withdrawal of the UK from the Creative Europe programme is far-reaching for our sector in Wales:

- (a) Our Wales-based programme – Literature Across Frontiers – was successful in capturing multi-annual competitive grant awards from 2001 until 2021 when UK was no longer eligible to submit and participate. The last successful applications were submitted in 2018 (as lead organization) and in 2020 (as partner). As a result of the non-participation in Creative Europe, this investment which amounted to several million Euros over two decades is no longer coming to a Wales-based organization.
- (b) Wales has lost a leading role in network coordination and multi-partner platform projects. As a result, we no longer lead significant European initiatives from Wales. These roles are now taken by other European countries, and very rarely by organizations based outside the state capital.
- (c) Welsh artists, writers and creative workers are no longer participating to the same degree in exchange programmes, festivals and workshops with their European peers. There are some, very limited opportunities for a small number of emerging Welsh writers (e.g. our current projects Ulysses Shelter and Counterpoint), but the opportunities for established writers to engage with European audiences and readers, as well as with their peers, are very limited indeed. Writers who have reached a successful point in their careers, with some of their books published in translation into other European languages, are unable to promote their writing as they would have been before Brexit. The additional bureaucracy and the ineligibility of UK partners to join networks mean that it is prohibitive to invite a Welsh author to an event compared to an author from, say, Ireland.
- (d) In addition, Wales-based organisations in various sectors are no longer invited to participate in new networks, or new activities, again due to the prohibitive bureaucracy and non-membership of Creative Europe. Other non-EU member-states, such as Norway, Iceland, Georgia or Serbia, are in a different position as they are participating in Creative Europe and as such can lead projects and are approached for partnerships as any EU27 member state, without hesitation. Some organisations in these countries have done very well as project leaders and partners in European programmes with the current 80% level of co-funding.

As a result, our cultural impact and footprint has diminished, and our visibility as a cultural nation has decreased. We are no longer part of European conversations, we no longer hear what our counterparts in different European countries are discussing and no longer make a contribution to the collective European voice.

Wales has contributed significantly to this collective voice in the literary translation sector and intercultural exchange over the decades. One specific example has been the influence that Wales-based Literature Across Frontiers and Wales Literature Exchange have had in

emphasising the importance of bilingualism and promoting respect for languages with smaller numbers of speakers or languages without a state, and advocating for the artists who use them and their creative outputs to be treated equally with global or major languages. As a result, in literature-based cultural exchange, where there is a focus on translation, bilingualism and multilingualism, Welsh and other languages with similar numbers of speakers, such as Basque, Maltese, Latvian, Breton and Irish, have been given equality of platform with European languages such as French, German, English and Spanish.

- (e) The UK's withdrawal from the Creative Europe Programme, as well as the wider narrative of exiting from the EU, has exacerbated the overall withdrawal of cultural engagement with other European countries on the part of institutions and organizations with a cultural exchange mission. The 'Global Britain' trope and similar narratives place the emphasis on bilateral exchanges with countries and economies in other global regions, e.g. SE Asia. Whilst engaging with other global regions can be important and beneficial, there is a substantial environmental and economic cost to prioritising connections with counterparts where travel requires long-haul flights. Digital exchanges can clearly be successful, but for emerging writers, and for the younger generation who have lost their right to freedom of movement and access to various European programmes, the missed opportunities cannot be overstated in terms of developing sustainable connections with peers, getting to know other European languages and cultures through travel and study, and developing citizenship and identities that correspond to the 'globally responsible Wales' as named in the goals of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act. A globally responsible nation seeks meaningful collaboration with its closest geographical neighbours first and foremost.

**5. Any changes to the UK-EU relationship that might improve cross border working for the cultural sector.**

- a) Re-join the Creative Europe Programme along the same lines as the decision to re-join Horizon Europe in September 2023.
- b) Negotiate a visa-waiver for artists and creative workers in order to facilitate cultural exchange, touring and implementation of the benefits of re-joining Creative Europe.
- c) Reduce bureaucracy for cultural products – books, magazines, etc – so that import/export can be improved and Welsh publishers and book sellers can reach readers in other European countries with direct sales (as per pre-Brexit conditions), in order to support the sector in Wales economically and to enhance cultural exchange with our closest geographical neighbours.

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