



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

EVIDENCE PAPER TO THE CULTURE, COMMUNICATIONS, WELSH LANGUAGE, SPORT AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

The impact of the UK's exit from the EU on the culture sector.

Introduction

The impact of the UK's exit from the EU has been felt across the cultural sector. Under the arm's-length-funding principle, all Welsh Government funding for the arts in Wales is channelled through the Arts Council of Wales (ACW). Wales Arts International (WAI) is the international agency of ACW. WAI provides advice and support to artists and arts organisations from Wales who work internationally. It is a contact point for international artists organisations and agencies working in, or connecting with, Wales.

The impact of the new relationship on artists and creative workers touring and working cross-border.

From a freedom of movement perspective, for artists and creative workers from Wales working in EU countries, the impact of the UK's exit from the EU is that without freedom of movement, artists need to understand the regulations for whichever EU member state they are travelling to – both in terms of border entry/visas and any work permit regulations relevant to what they are planning to do and how long they are planning to stay.

This is made more complex when artists or companies are touring as there's a need to understand different rules in different countries. The Schengen area rule of allowing maximum visitor stays of 90 in 180 days can be prohibitive for touring companies and individual creative workers. WAI reports that it has impacted in particular on the music industry and UK crew who would have previously been booked to work on lengthy European tours.

The existence of the Common Travel Area has gone some way to enabling the movement of people between Wales and Ireland to continue, which is helpful in the arts sector when working cross border on some short term and longer-term projects. Equally, artists and creative workers from the EU who come to work in Wales have had to understand the new UK border entry requirements and routes that apply to them, as have some of the venues and festivals here. These have generally been through Permitted Paid Engagement, Creative Worker Sponsorship and also some festivals have used the Permit Free Festival route.

The impact of the new relationship on European artists and creative workers touring and working in Wales.

Overall, WAI is being told by the sector that there is an increased administrative and financial burden on the sector, especially individuals and smaller companies (which is predominantly what we have in Wales), due to the processes involved and the associated costs. In a recent survey from UK Music, almost one in three music creators who responded to the survey said their earnings had been affected since the UK's official exit from the EU, and 43% of those hit by Brexit said it was no longer viable for them to tour the EU.

These issues will also have an impact on emerging bands and musicians in particular, on the offers and opportunities to tour internationally. Some organisations funded by ACW have direct experience of the increased administrative and financial burden on them when touring in the EU, including NoFit State, Hijinx and National Dance Company Wales.

At a cultural level, there is a willingness to continue with collaborations between individuals and companies in Wales and the EU - but there is also a perception and sometimes a nervousness expressed that working with the UK/EU will be more problematic.

From a linguistic perspective, there is a significant loss in terms of omnilingual projects coming into Wales supported by the Creative Europe programme. There is also a gap for the Welsh language in terms of the support available for collaborations between minority languages, through Territorial Cooperation projects (Interreg). Whilst there is good will from other minority cultures within the EU, and a sympathy toward Welsh language and culture, it's both more expensive and harder in term of barriers for our artists to be involved in projects funded by the EU.

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

Since the UK's exit from the EU, there are a number of places offering guidance and support for the cultural sector, but there are also gaps in that provision. WAI/ACW leads on the Arts Infopoint UK initiative, in partnership with Creative Scotland, Arts Council England and Arts Council Northern Ireland. Arts Infopoint UK has been supporting the sector in looking at some of the practical issues for artists – with a focus mainly on incoming to the UK, but also with outgoing mobility to the EU as many practical questions have been raised by the sector.

Arts Infopoint UK offers free, practical information to support and help artists, creative professionals, and organisations to understand the rules and administrative requirements for creative visits to the UK. This support has been in the form of webinars and online guides. Some of the webinars have had a focus on practical aspects such as visas or carnets, whilst others have looked at international funding opportunities (e.g. the Four Nations International fund).

Arts Infopoint UK is part of a wider network of Mobility Information Points across the EU and beyond. This group sits under the umbrella of the artist mobility network On the Move, which WAI/ACW is a member. The other mobility points provide practical information for artists travelling to their countries. Seven of them are based in EU member states. In particular, Touring Artists in Germany and Cultuurloket in Belgium have developed guidance and resources specifically for post Brexit questions.

In parallel, many of the UK sector lead bodies have set up specific support and guidance for their members. The music industry in particular has been at the forefront of this. Those who have developed resources include Independent, Musicians Union, Arts Admin, Association of British Orchestras, Outdoor Art and Help Musicians UK. The UK Government has a page on their website for visiting the UK as a creative professional.

PEARLE (Live Performance Europe) has several resources on their website that are useful for UK based creatives working in the EU. Overall, there is guidance available but, for example, the Mobility Information Points do not exist in every country so it can take a lot of time for individual artists and companies to find the information they need. Support, in terms of the financial support needed to cover the costs of the additional administration is needed.

The impact of the new relationship on trading arrangements relating to cultural activity.

WAI reports that the new trading arrangements with the EU have had an impact on the cultural sector, in particular those who are moving goods temporarily. For example, those moving theatre sets and props, musical instruments and equipment and artworks for exhibitions.

In many cases, where goods are being temporarily imported/exported and not being sold, no customs duties are due. However, there is often confusion surrounding this temporary admissions process and whether an ATA carnet is needed or not.

The ATA Carnet is expensive, and not always applicable to artists. There can be low confidence with artists preparing to use a carnet. The performing arts sector used it regularly and while it was suitable for large scale sets of regular performances or larger organisations, smaller organisations found it was not fit-for-purpose.

Musicians in particular, need to be aware of travelling with an instrument containing protected materials (such as ivory), will need a CITES certificate when crossing the EU-UK border. This is applicable to props and costumes too.

The BBC National Orchestra of Wales has told ACW that “we have to commit more resources (time and expertise) in relation to CITES requirements, cargo, and freight. Similarly, there are additional costs where items need to be imported/exported – e.g. if we are ordering equipment from EU countries. This is usually an additional 20% of costs”.

Any changes that would improve the operation of the UK's new relationship with the EU for the culture sector.

Wales has been hugely disadvantaged in several ways that impact the cultural sector, as a result of the UK leaving the EU. The seamless movement of people, and the single market in services and goods that supported the culture sector directly and indirectly, have been replaced with a very limited UK-EU agreement, the Trade & Co-operation Agreement (TCA). Whilst the TCA is fundamental to the Welsh economy as a basis for Wales (and the rest of the UK) to trade in goods with the EU, it does not provide a basis for free trade in services or a basis for the free movement of people to support the delivery of traded services.

The loss of free movement of people moving to perform and to engage in cultural activities has been very detrimental to opportunities for the promotion of Welsh culture across Wales, and for EU artists to come to Wales. Many of the UK sector lead bodies, especially in the music sector, have been lobbying the UK Government for a visa waiver for the cultural sector when touring in the EU/UK and for the reduction in administration burden especially for the temporary movement of cultural goods.

Recent reports and recommendations include Let the Music Move from UK Music Paying the Price from the ISM. While they are music specific, the issues cut across much of the performing arts sector.

Arts Infopoint UK partnered with On the Move for a webinar on EU/UK exchanges in the Visual Arts, resulting in a policy paper with recommendations on the EU side.

In addition, from outside the EU, Wales has no access to funds from the structural funds and Creative Europe that were very directly beneficial to a range of organisations. Following the UK exit from EU, the UK is no longer able to participate in the Creative Europe (MEDIA and Culture) programme which had facilitated valuable European co-production partnerships and funding for independent production companies across the UK to develop productions with international scope.

To counteract the UK no longer being able to access Creative Europe support, the UK government's Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), announced The Global Screen Fund (UKGSF), financed by DCMS and administered by the British Film Institute (BFI). The UKGSF was specifically designed to boost the international competitiveness of UK screen content through supporting international development, production, distribution, promotional and collaborative opportunities for the UK's independent screen sector and to provide targeted support across the screen sector, including film, TV, Documentary, animation and interactive narrative games content.

However, despite the remit of the UKGSF being to support independent companies across the UK, ensuring a UK-wide benefit and addressing geographic imbalance within the industry, it has not achieved the success of the former MEDIA and Creative Europe programmes and Wales has seen limited results, with disappointingly low level of Welsh applicants and grant recipients of the UKGSF to-date, compared to the far greater benefits (which were proportionally equal across UK recipients) that Welsh companies achieved from the MEDIA and Creative Europe Programmes.

There is a clear need to promote the UKGSF to better serve all the nations and regions, as well as exploring new European and International co-production and collaboration programmes to encourage overseas investment in the TV and Film sector.

The UK has continued to press the EU in recent months for a simplification of visa restrictions that would make touring the EU more affordable and straightforward for creative professionals such as musicians and visual artists. However, the EU view is that as a country that chose to be outside the EU, the UK has no particular basis to make a claim for such flexibilities. The Welsh Government will continue to press on this issue but realistically we do not expect a swift and satisfactory resolution of it.