



5 September, 2024

Delyth Jewell
Committee chair
Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport & International Relations Committee

Culture and New Relationship with the European Union Inquiry

Dear Delyth,

Thank you for your letter of 9 August, regarding your inquiry on Culture and New Relationship with the European Union and requesting a written response from Arts Council Ireland.

We have pleasure in providing the following information which also reports the information shared with us by our colleagues at Creative Europe Desk Ireland.

The Arts Council does not have specific data on the impact of Brexit on artistic activities between Ireland and Wales; however, through our ongoing engagement with the sector, we are generally aware of some of the issues that have emerged since its implementation. For instance, while the Common Travel Area has mitigated mobility issues between the two countries, we have seen the emergence of barriers and tariffs affecting the movement of art goods across borders (e.g. visual arts material, technical equipment, etc.), which has had an effect on individual artists working between the two countries in particular.

The main impact is represented by the exclusion of British organisations from Co-operation Projects supported under Creative Europe programmes. Until 2021 it was possible for Irish organisations to work in partnership with British organisations under these European frameworks, which contributed to an overall strengthening of relationships with Wales also.

As mentioned above, we are aware that some more detailed information about past European initiatives has been provided through Creative Europe Desk Ireland and the Department of Culture. Please see below for reference:



MEDIA:

Distribution and Sales

The audio-visual sector has long been tied to a single UK/IE territory model and works on Box Office figures rather than admissions. All deals that are made are UK/IE. Given the buying power of the UK Distributors, it is very challenging to acquire rights for Ireland only screenings particularly for European and indie titles as there are only 3 arthouse cinemas in Ireland plus a federation of Film clubs (Access Cinema). Some Irish distributors act as sub-distributors for the UK Distributor in Ireland but tends to be an unequal relationship.

When world sales agents sell the rights for the UK and Ireland to a UK Distributor, the Distributor automatically presumes they have the Irish territory and this sometimes causes problems when Irish broadcasters and Film Funds are involved in the financing.

There are no dedicated Film Sales Agents in Ireland and Irish producers traditionally work with UK Sales Agents which makes those Irish films ineligible for the Films on the Move scheme.

Producers support schemes

Irish Producers have traditionally worked with Producers and Broadcasters in the UK and in particular Northern Ireland. Brexit has impacted access to Creative Europe funds in some cases where, for example, the UK broadcaster is not an eligible broadcaster for the TV and Online scheme or a UK production company is not eligible for the Co-Development scheme.

However, Irish companies have proved to be adept in sourcing new partnerships in other European countries and some Northern Irish companies have set up companies in the Republic in order to access Creative Europe funds. Shareholders in these companies have the advantage of being Irish citizens and so fulfil the majority EU shareholding requirement.



CULTURE:

Co-operation Projects

Between 2014 and 2019, a total of 609 cultural projects involving UK beneficiaries received funding from Creative Europe.

Within this same timeline, under the Creative Europe Culture Sub-Programme's main funding strand (Support for European Cooperation Projects) there were 55 projects funded with Irish organisations with 30 projects involving at least 1 UK organisation (or 54% of the overall projects). However, when you look at projects led by UK organisations the number falls to 10 which represent 18% of all 55 projects.

While Irish organisations worked with 50 UK based organisations (2 in Northern Ireland) during this period they also partnered with 351 non-UK European partner organisations in 33 countries.

Individual Mobility

Irish artists travelling to the UK for residencies are not eligible to apply for Culture Moves Europe funding such as the Individual Mobility Award.

In conclusion, the Arts Council welcomes bilateral initiatives that strengthen connections between Ireland and the UK, including Wales. Current and recent examples include:

- Disability Access Card: UK Arts Councils' ALL IN Arts Access Scheme, which the Arts Council Ireland has been invited to join as a Founder Partner
- 14 Nations – Open Call: partnership initiative aimed at artists' mobility involving Ireland, UK and Nordic Countries.
- Beyond Borders: programme supporting the creation, touring and promotion of music across UK and Ireland

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We are looking forward to meeting with you on September 20th and to discussing this further.

Kind regards,

Maureen Kennelly

Director

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